

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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### **The Two Teddy Bears**

This Christmas time I will tell you about the Teddy Bear – an adorable little bear which all children love. They take one to bed with them at night, they often carry one around by his ear all day and have one cuddled in their arms for their daily afternoon nap, seeming never to outgrow their affection for this little stuffed animal. Even “Dennis, the Menace,” carries one around and is always accompanied by one when he sits in his rocking chair in the corner, a punishment for one of his misdoings.

But this story is about two special bears “The Roosevelt Bears, Their Travels and Adventures,” by Seymore Eaton (Paul Piper) and illustrated by V. Floyd Campbell. The Teddy Bear we know today was named for these two adventuring bears who traveled all over the world and made friends as they traveled. They were named for the late President Theodore (Teddy) Roosevelt, “Teddy B. and Teddy G.” They still are popular Christmas gifts, for even the buyer falls in love with one as he or she shops for a child's Christmas gift.

Vol. I, No. I was published in Philadelphia in 1907. The author, Seymore Eaton of Lansdowne, Pa., writes in his introduction: “The Story of Teddy B. and Teddy G. would never have been written if there had not been some real live boys and girls to give it inspiration: “Nin” to criticize, “Ruth” to suggest, and “Jack” to praise. They made the story possible, and dozens of the most interesting incidents were suggested by their own unrecorded mischiefs.

“The story made a hit at once by standing the public test which has lasted 58 years. It was published serially in twenty leading daily newspapers and has been received favorably by hundreds of thousands of children. No literary merit was claimed for it. The story is simply a good, wholesome yarn, arranged in merry jingle and fitted to the love of incident and adventure which is evident in every healthy child.

“Since the name ‘Roosevelt’ has been used in the title, it may be of interest to know that President Roosevelt and his boys have been pleased with the story as it has appeared in serial form.

“When in the autumn of 1905, I created the characters

of Teddy – B. and Teddy – G. I builded better than I knew. I brought these bears out of their mountain den in Colorado and started them on their tour of the East to teach children that animals, even bears, may have some measure of human feeling; that the primary purpose of animals is not necessarily that of supplying sport for the hunter. That this lesson has been abundantly taught is proven by the overwhelming welcome given the Teddy Bear by the boys and girls of the United States; and it is safe to say that the traditional ‘bear will get you’ has now and forever lost its frightening significance.”

The second book is a sequel to “The Travels and Adventures of the Roosevelt Bears,” and completed the story of the tour of Teddy B. and Teddy G. from Colorado to Washington. The third volume, which I do not have, reports in jingle and many pictures the tour of the Teddy Bears abroad.

The first adventure of Teddy B. and Teddy G. is the leaving of their mountain home: “Two Roosevelt Bears had a home in the West, In a big ravine near a mountain crest, Where they ate their meals and took their rest, And gathered sunshine and strength and cheer, And welcomed friends from far and near, They chopped down trees and hunters dared, And bossed their ranch and panthers scared, And preached to goats and big horned sheep, And ordered that the laws should keep ... The black bear's name was Teddy B. The gray bear's name was Teddy G.; The G. for grizzly or gray or gay, for he was as full of fun as a bear can be. Not B. for bad and G. for good, The black bear wanted it understood.

“The ‘Teddy’ part of the name they found, On hat and tree and leggings round, On belt and boot, and plates of tin, And scraps of paper and biscuits thin, And other things that hunters drop, When they chase a bear to the mountain top.”

The two volumes of The Roosevelt Bears were loaned to me by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Bentley and had been a Christmas gift to Mr. Bentley when he was a very young child and later they have been enjoyed by their young son. The books are now collector's items, I am sure, and certainly must be difficult to obtain.