

Incident in the life of William Clements Horsley
as related to Linda Horsley Cook (granddaughter) by her father, A. Burt Horsley

When my Grandfather, William Clements Horsley was taking a trip on a train one time, he struck up a conversation with the porter who happened to be of African American decent. After chatting for a short time, the porter went on with his duties and my Grandfather returned to his own reflections. A white man sitting in proximity addressed my Grandfather and expressed the opinion that my Grandfather should not be talking to a man of color. My Grandfather readily disagreed and the man was clearly angry. Later on my Grandfather had another opportunity to chat with the porter. He found out that the gentleman had obtained a university degree but that he had not been able to procure employment in his field of expertise and had resorted to the job as a porter. The white man who had earlier expressed his bigoted views was clearly agitated that my Grandfather ignored his comments and seemed to actually enjoy yet another conversation with the porter.

When the end of the trip came and as people were trying to leave the train, the rude, white man came down the aisle in the opposite direction that my Grandfather was going. The aisle was too narrow for two people to pass each other without one stepping aside. The man spoke in harsh tones and told my Grandfather, "I never move aside for white trash!"

As my Grandfather in true gentleman fashion moved aside to let the man pass he answered, "I always do."

I think that as the thick headed man barreled ahead, he probably went a ways before it struck him that it was he who had been made the fool.

I was always appreciative of the fact that I never heard any words from either my Grandfather or my Grandmother that would show contempt for any other race of people. It was my Grandmother whose own father had been killed by a man who was of African American decent. But she must have recognized that it was one man, not an entire race who had killed her Father. She did not harbor anger for any of God's children. I found that to be remarkable and worthy of emulation in my own life.

AS related to Linda Horsley Cook (granddaughter) by her father Andrew Burt Horsley

When my grandfather, William Clements Horsley, was a young boy, it was his job to go and bring the cows back from where they grazed during the daytime. At one point, the cows had to be ushered across the railroad tracks. At this particular crossing there was a place dug out underneath the tracks where the hot coals from the train could be dumped as the train went by. When Clem (as he was called) reached that point on the tracks, he found that a boy who was a known bully was waiting there. The boy forced Clem down into the hole under the tracks. A train came along and dumped its fiery contents on top of Clem's hip. He was left burned and as a result, formed a carbuncle. When the doctor came to take care of Clem and to attend to the carbuncle, the boy went through the painful procedures without the benefit of any kind of anesthetic. In those days alcohol was often offered to help a person through such a painful experience. But because of Clem's devotion to the teachings of the word of wisdom, he refused to partake and chose instead to tough it out. I have always admired my Grandfather for his great courage and loyalty to the commandments exhibited even at such a young age in life.