

Duluth News Tribune

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“My Bave Little Man“

Author: T.A. Degner

Local connection: The author was born in Cook, Minnesota in 1945. He spent three of the first four year of his life on his grandparents' 30-acre farm a half-mile from the shores of Lake Vermilion and one year in Morgan Park. In 1950, the author's mother moved to Duluth. Destitute, she put the author and his two younger siblings into an orphanage called the Children's Home, where they spent the next three and a half years of their lives. The unique building that was at one time the Children's Home, an apartment complex today, is across from Chester Park.

Synopsis: In 1950, a doctor in Duluth wrote in his medical me that a 4-year old boy had been admitted to St. Mary's hospital with a "rather severe be-havior problem." "This is," the doctor notes, "a broken home and the mother-child relationship is not good." That boy is the author. He had been shuffled from one nesting arrangement to another for all of his short life. First, he had lived with his grandparents on their rustic farmstead in the heart of Minnesota's north woods, then with his intellectually disabled mother and a mostly absent alcoholic father, and finally with a boorish relative. In spite of a dysfunctional family life, he had been relatively happy. The real problems started when the author's mother dropped him and his two younger siblings off at an orphanage. A week later, they ran away to find their mother, and he ended up at the hospital in a straightjacket. Thus began the author's journey of triumph over misfortune. Eight years later, while lying on the banks of a river on his adoptive parents' farm south of Wendell, Minnesota, and inspired by the many Dickens novels he had read, the author promised God he would share his story with the world. "My Brave Little Man" is the fulfillment of that promise .

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Information: Go to www.tadegner.com.