



Family in 1908; Teodor, Lennart, Elis – Karolina, Karl Johan, Mia – Uno, Alice, Anton

Below follows a translation from Swedish of what Teodor Granholm wrote in 1937. This was published in the booklet that was given out at the family reunion of his father, Karl Johan Granholm's descendants in Terjärv, Finland on July 7, 1982.

MY HOME

My childhood home is situated in the village of Hästbacka in the Terjärv parish. My parents moved there in 1888 and built a small house in the Smedjebacka homestead during 1888-89.

That site has a vast view overlooking the village with its fields and rather magnificent hills. One can even follow the tranquil river's winding turns for kilometers on its journey through the green meadows. Here I had experienced my happy childhood. My father ran a small country store, combining that with farming. Even though we were many children who had to have food and clothing, our parents managed relatively well, considering the conditions and needs of those times. We had good parents and a good home, which we always longed to visit, even after we were self-supporting and had established our own homes.

The relationship between children and parents was always good, as well as among the siblings. Even now, though we have flown the nest, has any disagreement marred the close relationship among the siblings as established in the home. That this feeling grew strong through the influence of good parents, I can best describe by citing a letter I found after father's death. In 1908 he built a new store with an office and on the second floor a "gathering room" for the family.

Since he, in this letter, with no word mentions the new business facility, I assume that he considered a happy, shared considerate family life more important than "gathering in the barns". My father had not attended even grade school, because there was none then in the village. He had a beautiful handwriting and through self-education obtained an abundance of knowledge in widely varying subjects.

The letter reads as follows:

MY THOUGHTS AND REFLECTIONS

I sit today - a Sunday - contemplating my half finished new dwelling, which will contain a heated room on the upper floor. The thoughts wander to a long harbored wish to make this a room for the family to gather. May this be our "gathering room" where we together will be able to exchange views of the experiences of life, both in the material and spiritual world.

The need for a closer understanding of each other within the family, in these social times, is clear. The young get enthusiastic and are cradled in the different maelstroms of life, both good and bad, healthy and harmful, for body and soul. The elder in the family, who, in accordance with the laws of nature, are more conservative - with a narrower, older view of things - often have a difficult time comprehending and appreciating the justification of all the new ideas, because of the reason that the older ones have passed their development phase, that is, experienced their youth and won a certain perception of the wisdom of life, as well as learned the value of life, and realized that not everything that glitters in the fantasies of youth is gold. Only a small percent of the carats, which are contained therein, are real. These differences in viewpoints, it appears to me, should already within the home and family be settled to the extent possible in order to be applied in the practical life. All achievement must have a reason (inner conviction) to gain understanding.

Every society requires cooperation among its members to attain the goals of the society. The state requires loyal and cooperating citizens. How important, for this reason, is cooperation in the home, which must lay the foundation for all civic and spiritual life. If this is neglected - which often is the case - the reasons and consequences are clear. The family members find no compassion for each other and consequently can not act in consonance with each other. The outcome will be disagreements and fights. Initially in thoughts; thoughts give birth to words and reap action.

Going back to my reflections about the half-finished new building, I wish we would reach a higher plateau in this warm attic room, here we could bring our higher and warmer thoughts to be exchanged. The elders' thoughts to possibly rejuvenate, and the youngsters' to mature. The thought itself in neither young nor old. It is eternal - immortal, though always new. But sowed, it gives birth to action, good or evil.

May we learn to live a life in real unity. To now and then isolate the thought from the everyday; its struggles and worries for tomorrow, taking one day at a time, as it is us given. Share its pleasures and pains in common understanding among young and old. Let us remember, when we look down from our new attic window over the hills and vales, that we are no higher beings. Let us turn our eye toward the height from where the all-seeing eye, in its mercy, looks down upon us, searching out the innermost thoughts in our hearts. May He lead and teach us to think and live the real family life!

W. J. Granholm