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Second

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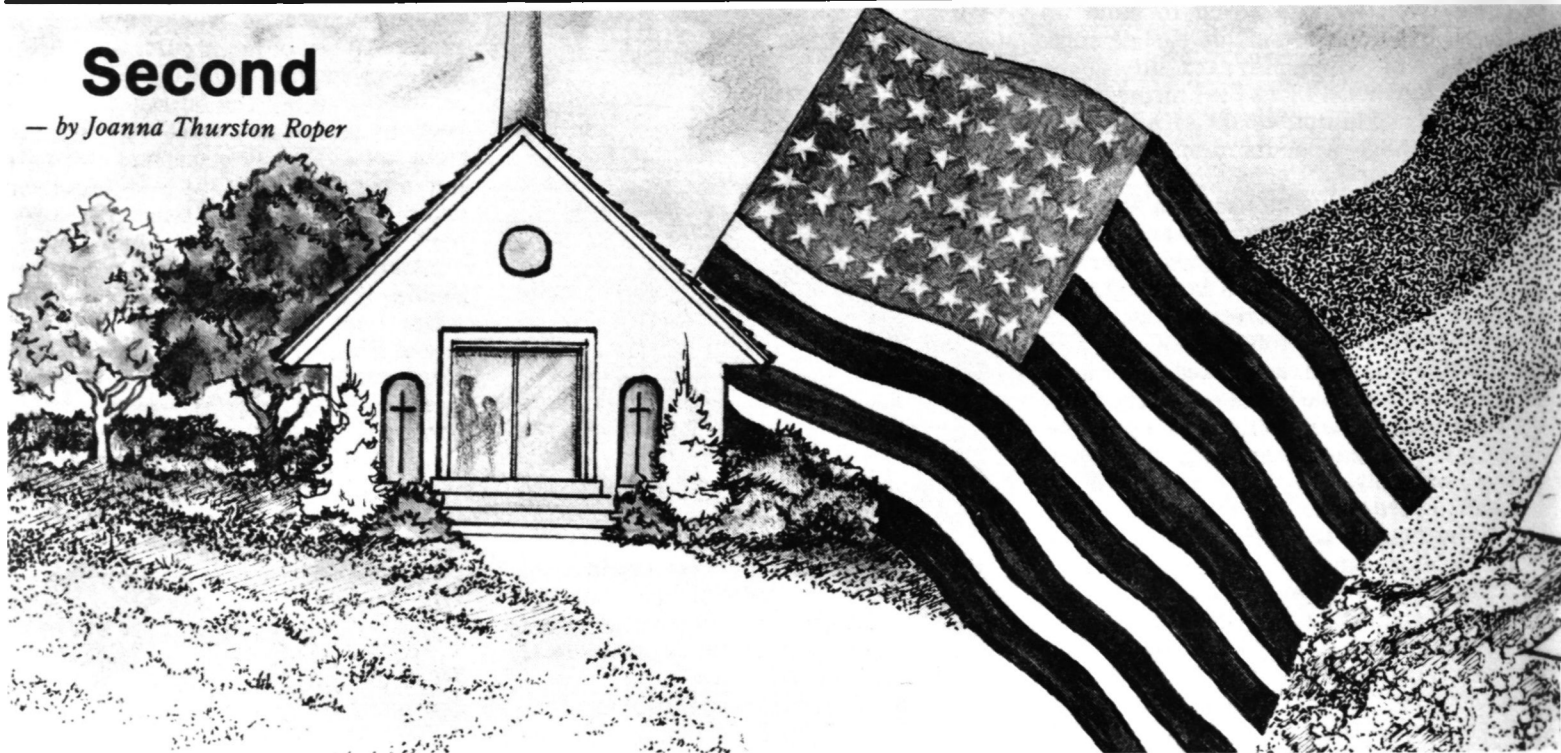
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PERSPECTIVES

Second

— by Joanna Thurston Roper



Trina had just said "I do" to the man she loved. She felt the love of her family and friends filling the tiny chapel — and she knew they were happy about her marriage. Just moments before, her big handsome son had kissed her on the forehead and whispered, "Go for it, Mom!" before he escorted her down the aisle. As they walked toward the minister waiting with Jacob, Trina saw happy tears glinting her daughter's eyes. "Marry him, Mom, or I will!" Helen had told her. Helen, of course, was teasing me — she always has. A perfect little imp! She has Charles and her beautiful family — my grandchildren! My baby girl is forty-seven. My little boy is forty-five. It's ridiculous for an old lady like me to be getting married. This is when people retire — not start over. . . .

Trina's attention came back to the minister as he spoke to them of love. Jacob turned and smiled down at her — Trina's heart skipped a beat. Ah, Trina thought, you're a fine little preacher, but you haven't lived long enough to know about love. Especially not the kind of love that lies in the heart unspoken for years — not even looked at after awhile.

"I pronounce you husband and wife." Trina turned to Jacob — he looked at her with smiling face and took her in his arms. "God has been good to us," he whispered. The minister turned them around. "May I present Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Gottfried." Then everyone there

swarmed around them — happy, happy. Finally they could walk into the parlor where champagne and little cakes were waiting. Trina fingered the silken pleats of her dove gray dress — so unlike the other one, the heavy satin. No pretending at this wedding, either. . . .

. . . No father to take her aside and confess the brutal lie he had lived ever since Jacob had left. "For your own good, Trina. Your own good. You must not leave your mother country." Trina's heart had gone cold and hard at that wedding forty-eight years ago. On her marriage bed she had made Bruno promise to leave Germany, to go to the United States. But not for love — for hate of the lie. It would be enough to know that Jacob was somewhere within the American boundaries — boundaries her father would never cross. . . .

Trina's mind flinched away from the past — she smiled and talked and danced — first with her new husband, then her son, then her son-in-law. Trina felt pretty. She knew she was pretty — she always had been. Perhaps remembering that he had called her "my little gazelle" made her stay slim when others had thickened with age. Trina stood watching Helen and Jacob dance. My life has been full, she thought. Bruno was a fine and caring man, and the children were everything — sometimes I even forgot.

If it hadn't been for the invitation to the festival in Rudesheim — no, she remem-

bered, I ignored it. It was Helen who had found it on the buffet one morning. "Go! she had said. "You haven't been anywhere since Papa died. Go celebrate the three hundred years of history with your hometown people." Trina sipped the champagne. Jacob's son had sent it from the Napa Valley.

. . . So I went back to Germany, she remembered, and there in the court square, looking as American and out of place as I did, was Jacob. I saw him first from the back. I knew that dignified man was my young sweetheart who had left Rudesheim to make a fortune in America and then come back for me.

She and Jacob were awkward at first — very reserved. "Ah — you married," he had said above the wail of the calliope. "Your father wrote that you were betrothed. He didn't say who."

"I'm a widow now," was all she could say then.

A grave light lit his eyes. "So am I," he had said. "I came back to Rudesheim to look at my beginnings again." It was nearly the end of her trip that she had told him. He had finally asked why she never answered his letters.

"I wrote a letter every Saturday night like I promised," he had said.

"Jacob, Jacob. I waited and waited for a letter. I never got one —"

"Never?!"

"First Papa said maybe the boat sank — finally he said, 'There are good boys

(an often-seen Western Oklahoma entertainment area)

All That Glitters. . .

— by Donita Lucas Shields

Validity of the old adage, "All that glitters is not gold," might well be questioned by those living and working in Deep Anadarko Basin. Gas, not gold, creates this region of booming economy, but the end product of the great Gas Rush is gold, a golden payroll of wealth never before known in Western Oklahoma.

As for glitter, the most glittering place in Deep Basin is Schreck's Western Ballroom at I-40's Foss Junction. Beneath

gleaming lights surrounding Schreck's are acres of asphalt surface covered with shining Continentals, Cadillacs, and other top lines of chrome on wheels. Seldom do more than a few economy-minded vehicles mar the brilliance of the hillside parking area.

Upon entering Schreck's, the kings and queens of this Prairie Kingdom transform the Ballroom into an indigo sea of Levi's, bedecked with Western regalia of satins,

here, Trina. Marry one.' So I did after two years."

Trina remembered Jacob's stricken eyes as she watched him waltzing now with her daughter-in-law. It would be nice if his son could have been here to dance with me — the son in California whose voice sounds now like Jacob's did — even so, he gave his blessing. Yes, this wedding, she thought, is much better. . .

"I married Bruno," she had told him. "After the wedding Papa took me to the library — I thought he would give me money. He gave me your letters. He said he'd done it for my own good — so I'd stay in Germany."

"Oh, Trina, Trina, my little gazelle," Jacob had said. He remembered! . . .

Trina looked around the parlor bright with flowers and music and love. She remembered her father's library — heavy, dark, musty with his leather-bound books. Always more the professor than the father. He had taken the letters from a copy of ANNA KARENINA. What if I'd ever decided to read it? What if? But if I had, there wouldn't be Helen and Arnold. . . .

Jacob stopped beside her. "I was wondering, Mrs. Gottfried, if I might have this dance?"

Trina danced away with him, supremely happy.

