

President Harry S. Truman's Grandson, Clifton Truman Daniel coming to Oak Ridge

(As published in The Oak Ridger's Historically Speaking column on February 25, 2013)

Did you know that the "S" in Harry S. Truman did not stand for anything? His parents evidently added that "S" in their son's name as a way to please both of his grandparents, Anderson Shipp Truman and Solomon Young. I didn't know this, but when I sent out an email blast to the Oak Ridge Heritage and Preservation Association's membership to announce the upcoming special event where President Truman's grandson, Clifton Truman Daniel plans to speak at Oak Ridge, I received the following response from Dick Raridon:

"Just a little trivia. Harry Truman didn't have a middle name so the period after the S is redundant. I researched him a lot about 40 years ago when a sign was posted in Pickett State Park overlooking a house down in the valley. The sign stated that the home once belonged to Truman's grandfather. I knew the house, built in 1790 and one of the two oldest in the State of Kentucky, once belonged to my g-g-grandfather, Washington Young."

"I found that Truman did have a grandfather Young, but it was Solomon, and there was no timeline connecting the two. I never could find who arranged for the sign to be put there. It was disturbing to the Sharp family who had bought the farm from my family in the 1870's and were still living there in the 1970's, and were being disturbed by people pestering them. Dick"

This was also the case with Ulysses S. Grant. His "S" was given him at the age of 17 when Congressman Thomas L. Hamer nominated young Hiram Ulysses Grant for a position at the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York. "Ulysses S. Grant of Ohio" was what Hamer chose to put on the nomination thinking the "S" represented Ulysses' mother's maiden name of Simpson.

Interestingly enough, while at West Point, Grant chose to adopt "Ulysses S. Grant" with the middle initial supplied by Hamer. Students at the academy nicknamed him "Sam" or "Uncle Sam" using his "U. S." part of his name. According to Grant, however, the "S" did not actually "stand for anything."

Why all this interest in the "S" in Truman's name or Grants name? On Thursday, March 28, 2013, at 7:00 PM at the New Hope Center, Harry S. Truman's grandson, Clifton Truman Daniel will be the featured speaker in an event sponsored by the Oak Ridge Heritage & Preservation Association. The cost to attend the event and meet Harry S. Truman's grandson is \$20. Tickets are available online at www.orhpa.com or at The Ferrell Shop in Jackson Square.

This event is intended to be an opportunity to meet Clifton Truman Daniel personally and to hear him speak about his unique experiences regarding his grandfather. This will be an exciting event for those of us who are interested in the "why's" and "what's" of the decision President Truman made to drop the atomic bomb in order to end World War II. I am constantly approached by individuals who tell me emphatically that "I would not be here if not for Harry Truman's decision to drop that bomb using uranium 235 separated at Y-12!"

These people are serious and truly believe that the decision President Truman made to drop the atomic bombs saved their dad's or their granddad's life. You see, these men were on ships headed to Japan and were intended to be part of the invasion of the mainland of Japan, known as *Operation Downfall*.

One study done at the time for Secretary of War Henry Stimson estimated the cost of invading Japan might reach 1.7 – 4 million casualties with upward of 800,000 killed. Think about that...and I am convinced those creating that report did not have all the information about Japan's plans to defend an invasion of their homeland.

In a website <http://www.theabsurdreport.com/2007/1945-invasion-of-japan-plans/> the following is found:

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"One can only guess at how many civilians would have committed suicide in their homes or in futile mass military attacks. In retrospect, the **1 million American men who were to be the casualties of the invasion, were instead lucky enough to survive the war.** Intelligence studies and military estimates made 50 years ago, and not latter-day speculation, clearly indicate that the battle for Japan might well have resulted in the biggest blood-bath in the history of modern warfare.

"Far worse would be what might have happened to Japan as a nation and as a culture. When the invasion came, it would have come after several months of firebombing all of the remaining Japanese cities. The cost in human life that resulted from the two atomic blasts would be small in comparison to the total number of Japanese lives that would have been lost by this aerial devastation."

Also noted in the recently released documents describing *Operation Downfall* is the fact that the plans far underestimated the number of kamikaze planes the Japanese had (possible over 12,000) and the plans already in place for the Japanese civilians to fight to the death to defend their homeland. I am convinced the invasion would have been far more deadly than the atomic bombs. Thus, I am certain the use of atomic bombs was the best thing that could have been done to end World War II.

Here is one of the comments to the above web site: "I just wanted to thank you...My father was one of the soldiers spared when the invasion was no longer necessary. He was part of the initial occupation and I recall him describing the Japanese preparations for every person on the island to fight to the death. Ironically, my Dad and Mom settled in 1946 in Richland, near Hanford where the plutonium was made for the Nagasaki bomb."

So, how does Clifton Truman Daniel deal with his famous middle name? What must it be like to live in the shadow of such a great man? The man who made the decision to use the Little Boy atomic bomb that had been the product of Oak Ridge's efforts during the Manhattan Project. Don't you think he might have wondered about that decision? Don't you think he might have had to answer tough questions?

Daniel recently went to Japan to the actual city where his Grandfather made the decision to destroy the city with one atomic blast. The mayor of the city spoke with him. Wouldn't you like to know what was said? On the 67th anniversary of the bombing, he attended the ceremony commemorating that anniversary.

He is quoted by Abby Ohlheiser in *The Slatest* as stating that his attendance at the ceremony was "a good first step toward healing old wounds ... and to better understand each other." Ohlheiser went on in the article to say, "Many of the survivors likewise spoke positively of the meeting, but others made it clear they're not willing to forgive and forget," She continued by quoting, "I would like him to know that some of those who lost their family members in the bombings will never forgive (the United States) no matter what," said Reiko Yamada, a 77-year-old female survivor.

For the full article see the web site:

(http://slatest.slate.com/posts/2012/08/03/clifton_truman_daniel_harry_truman_s_grandson_meets_hiros_hima_nagasaki_survivors_.html)

It is a complex thing, this decision to use atomic weapons. President Truman made the decision, I firmly believe, thinking it was the best and quickest way to end the killing of that awful war. Debate continues regarding the pros and cons of his decision. What does his grandson think? What is the real and personal impact of such a decision on the family of the man who had to make it?

Clifton Truman Daniel will discuss these personal aspects of the world changing event. He will discuss his personal approach to dealing with the issues surrounding that momentous decision. You will not want

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to miss this once in a lifetime opportunity to experience the realities of history making decisions and the impact on family, friends, the country and the entire world.

Get your tickets and come to the New Hope Center for "An Evening with President Truman's Grandson, Clifton Truman Daniel." If you have ANY questions, please call me at 865.482.4224 or email me at draysmith@comcast.net. I will help you get your tickets.



Clifton Truman Daniel – President Truman's Grandson who will speak at the New Hope Center on March 28, 2013, at 7:00 PM



President Harry S. Truman – the man who made the decision to drop atomic bombs to end World War II