

The Authors Corner

by Dutch Rhudy

Welcome to The Authors Corner.

Special thanks to my dear friends for the many wonderful comments in your e-mails.

For new visitors: The following article was intended for last months edition, but got pushed back due to time and space constraints. So many changes have taken place, as I moved between different critique groups, and changed editors a few times. Those group members who stayed in touch and followed my progress; suggested I write a recap, to avoid confusing new acquaintances to Roaring Falls.

I have altered this document slightly since the e-mailed version was sent out. It now includes details I forgot to mention, and answers some questions never before talked about. One major topic was where I got the idea for Roaring Falls. So this is where I'll begin.

My original concept for the series has not changed, it simply expanded further back in time, as each new question about the background arose. In a broad sense, Roaring Falls is like a memoir of my home town characters, its history, and the growth of a detective agency. The mystery stories are based on unique crimes solved by the agency.

Mystery stories are often written backwards, starting at the end, and working toward the beginning of the story. An integral part of Roaring Falls is the development and growth of the worlds largest detective agency, which posed several questions. When did it begin, who started the agency, and where did the founder come from.

My ancestors were some of the first settlers to build in a newly opened territory, and instrumental in organizing early forms of law enforcement. They were directly involved with the founding of our town, and later incorporating as a city. Because of these family ties to the area, I was an active town historian, and inherited the task as our family genealogist.

As a historian for the town, I had access to several documents, including case files from some of the large detective companies who served our area. In the process of tracing the history of these agencies, it took me back to their origins, the founders, and their histories.

The detective agencies of my initial research interests, included The Burns Detective Agency, Pinkerton's largest competitor; Thiel Detective Services Company, and Furlong Secret Service Company, who later became the Thomas Furlong Detective Agency.

Their early development and growth was not as interesting as my own home town's establishment of a Mutual Protective Association, which later became the Law and Order Society. Members of both the Association and the Society went to work for, or became a part of the larger detective agencies.

Some of the most interesting criminal cases solved by the detective agencies, are what gave them notoriety and were influential in their major growth periods. This presented another

new problem, because they occurred prior to where I intended for my series of mystery novels to begin. As I worked on the backgrounder for my fictitious detective agency, I found myself stepping back time and again to include these stories.

One problem led to another in moving backwards in time. I was drifting further away from a nineteen-hundreds mystery era for my novels. Outlining the historical aspects leading up to the crimes, which were the basis for founding a detective agency.

I initially used an eastern setting, for the rough draft of my mystery novels. When I decided to use my own home towns development in the story, it introduced time line conflicts. The criminal elements found in eastern cities, and national events that triggered many, could not occur in a young undeveloped town.

After spending close to a year studying U.S. History, plotting and adjusting events parallel with a growing city. I find the types of crimes to be far removed from those of eastern cities during their early growth years.

Once everything concerning the need for a detective agency finally came together, and the type of crimes for each time period aligned with the cities development; another ugly fact reared its head. The town was too close to highly developed eastern cities who already had established detective agencies eager to expand.

An authors mind runs a mile a minute when an idea forms. I found some interesting anomalies in U.S. History I used to my advantage. The wheels began to spin, and Roaring Falls became a far mid-western city. The short lived Jefferson Territory was the perfect alternative location for the highly probable state of New Clemons.

I could not rewrite recorded history, or change national events to fit my story line. So I embarked on the long slow task of world building, from nothing, without changing history. How does one go about creating an alternate history while maintaining historical accuracy?

This endeavor consumed hundreds of hours of study. Writing factual national events, adjusting local stories to different time lines, and altering details to fit recorded history. Folks must settle in the new town, build homes, establish the town, watch it grow to a large metropolitan city, and crime rise with the population density.

Every person, pet, livestock, home, business, church, and school, required genealogical tables to track them throughout their lifetimes. Which homes were renovated, razed, or became historic monuments, during the 175 years span of the series. Who married whom, and had kids who married, and went on to found the city, the detective agency, etc.

Six years of development went into the world building process for Roaring Falls, and a book evolved. The History of Roaring Falls, New Clemons, reads like a history book for any major metropolitan city. This book is the overarching outline for the entire series, and may be released as a prequel at some future date.

Respectfully submitted
Dutch Rhudy