




Fairfield Genealogical Society NEWSLETTER

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**HOPE
EVERYONE
HAS A VERY
MERRY
CHRISTMAS
AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

FAMILY PHOTOS

This is the time of year that families get together to celebrate the holidays, exchange gifts and sometimes even exchange stories of Christmas past. This would be the perfect time to also share family photos.

With the computer age, it makes it a lot easier to reproduce old family pictures. Lets say you have a picture of your great grandparents but your siblings do not. You could scan your photo, print it and share your old photo with your siblings, so every family member could have a little piece of the past. You could send them along with a Christmas card, a letter or put it in a frame, giving it as a gift on Christmas day. However it is done, don't forget to identify on the back who they are, their age if known and if you know the occasion or date also include that information. Also don't forget to include photos in your family tree.

Just remember "There's no place like home for the holidays" and what better way to take people back home, than through pictures.



'To Grandmother's House We Go' By Margaret Rast Mack

“OVER THE river and through the woods to Grandmother's house we go," my father would sing to us as we neared his mother's house.

A visit to Grandmother Maggie's was a big event for us. Feverish activity the night before and hectic confusion the next (Sunday) morning. After all, with six or seven children bumping into one another, shining shoes, sorting ribbons, etc., there was bound to be confusion. Finally we would all be ready and after a close inspection by Mother, we older ones ran outside and piled into the car, fussing about who would sit next to the window and who next to who else. By the time my mother got to the car with the current baby in her arms, my poor father's nerves were so badly frazzled that he vowed he'd never take us anywhere again. We paid no attention at all to this harmless threat because we knew from experience that though he was quickly exasperated, our father had a heart of gold and just as quickly forgot.

Once crammed into the car, we started for Daddy's home at Cameron, S. C. Born and raised there, he firmly believed Calhoun County to be the Promised Land, a conviction I've found shared by many other Calhoun natives. I have read recently that this county is rated internationally as one of the finest farming areas in the world.

On the way down, we children played a game thick concerned counting mules, horses and cows by the roadside. A white mule doubled your points. A dairy passed would throw the score into a quandary.

As we neared Calhoun County, Daddy would begin to brighten, "Ah," he'd smile, "Just look at that land.

Boy, that's real land!" Daddy would always inform us when we rolled over "County Line."

The closer to home that we got, the more excited we all became. We shared Daddy's enthusiasm. Then we passed through the small town of Cameron, went a little beyond and turned off the highway. Just across the swamp was home. Suddenly, it would come into view, a big and sprawling frame house with miles of piazza all the way around the main house and dining and kitchen ell.

The wide yards were bordered by giant pecan trees. Long avenues of pecan trees led to green pastures and fertile fields. There was the lot with the stock inside, edged by barns, a pigeon house, machinery sheds. Further around stood a carriage house, now used as a garage, a pump house, the smoke house, dark and delicious smelling inside. There were the chicken houses and the long wash shed where the clean odor of home-made lye soap lingered. There was any number of buildings for any variety of purpose.

How it thrilled us to drive into the yard and right up to the back porch and see all our relatives come pouring out of the different parts of the house, smiling and shouting, "Yinnah get out and come on in!" "Yinnah" seems to be sort of a Geechee contraction for you-all.

My father was the only married child at this time, therefore seven children were left at home with our grandmother. My grandfather had passed away before this time. There was my grandmother, with white hair and patrician features, tall and proud, four uncles and three aunts. An aunt who taught school would be there on weekends. The uncles were jolly and friendly, the aunts gay and affectionate. All of them had laughing blue eyes, and dark curly hair . . . also a sense of humor.

Since we were the only grandchildren, we received an abundance of attention from our uncles and aunts. They played musical instruments for us, sang to us, played games with us and told us stories.

If we arrived early enough, we went with them to Four Holes Baptist Church and sat in "Sister's" class. Florence, the oldest sister, was called "Sister" by the others. Crippled since ten, she still managed a full and useful life. She had graduated from Newberry College with honors. We all dearly loved and respected her. She sewed and cooked, counseled and comforted.

All the folks talked at once. There were loud and lusty arguments among the menfolk about the merits of coon dogs, the integrity of a fishing tale, the latest practical joke, of which there were many. One uncle claimed to be able to tell from eating the cooked meat whether a hog had been a red or black one. Good natured and happy, they had the time of their lives. I always thought, "What fun they have, to be grown-ups."

Grandmother's dining ell was as large as some modern homes. Joined to the main house by porches, there was a dining room with its fireplace, a roomy kitchen and a

good sized pantry. Behind this was the "wood porch" where the fire wood was kept. Next to the back door steps stood a heavy iron frame, almost waist high. From it was suspended a big bell whose deep peal meant one of two things . . . dinner or diaster, such as fire.

The pantry was my favorite place. Here earthenware bowls of milk cooled or sat while cream rose. Colorful jars of canned foods lined the shelves. Luscious pies cooled in here and everywhere was a clean, spicy smell of goodness.

The dinner table was truly a sight to see. The long table was laden with fresh string beans and butter beans cooked with ham, tender yellow squash, golden corn pie which nobody could make like Grandmother, chicken, fresh or home cured meats, rice (always rice), a variety of pickles and relishes, crisp salads, light biscuits and rolls, home churned butter. Different vegetables and fruits appeared in season. Grandmother could fry guinea squash (egg plant) to perfection. She also made wonderful little golden puffs of fried bread called roll cakes. I especially loved the fat orange sweet potatoes, baked and covered with thick cream.

The desserts always included all kinds of pies and cakes. Fruit pies, sweet potato pies, coconut pies and tight yellow cakes with different frostings. At Thanksgiving and Christmas there were rich, dark fruit cakes, heavy with nuts and candied fruits. There was always so much from which to choose that a child didn't know which to take.

Dinner over, we retired to the porches where swings and rocking chairs were shaded by banks of wisteria vines. In winter, we went "up to the front of the house" where an open fire blazed. Often we children browsed about while the adults visited. We might creep into the dim parlor and read some of Uncle Norman's books of poetry or tinkle on the piano. Another uncle would let us experiment with his accordion and guitar. Then you could always just walk around and look.

Soon it would be time to leave and Mother and Daddy would gather us together. We washed up and went into the dining room for our farewell snack. My grandmother would lift the clean white cloth from over the leftover dinner and we would have milk and a bit of this and that. Then Grandmother would fix a package of good food for us to carry home.

The uncles would load our car with whatever vegetables or fruits and nuts that were in season while the aunts gathered bouquets of flowers. I have ridden home between sweet potatoes and chrysanthemums, or pears and rutabagas, according to the season.

With much ado, our relatives would all stand about the car, tucking us in, joking and waving good-bye, calling, "Come back soon." And we were off.

In winter time the darkness came early and often crept upon us on the way back home. I can close my eyes now and see us, tired and happy, black and yellow heads

sticking out amongst the turnip tops, heading back home, our hearts warmed by close fellowship. Deeply attached to his family and home, my father would be refreshed and gladdened by our visit.

Blessed indeed is the child who "over the river and through the wood" to grandmother's house can go.

This article appear in The State Newspaper, Columbia, SC Sunday, November 30, 1958

This article touched my heart because it brought back memories of when I was a child and we would go to my grandmother's house every Sunday.

It is stories like these that should be written down along with the photos in your family tree. For once we are gone so are the stories. So don't forget to write your story.



WORRY CLINIC

By George W. Crane

CASE L-483:

Martha K., aged 78, is a feeble grandmother.

Her spinster daughter Joanna has cared for her almost exclusively for the past 25 years.

In fact, Joanna turned down two proposals

of marriage because she was the sole caretaker of Martha.

For Martha's other daughter, named Eve, had married young and left.

Martha had some property and everybody expected her to leave most of it to faithful Joanna. In fact, she had bequeathed two-thirds of it to Joanna in her will some 20 years ago.

But Eve was suave and during the last couple of years, she came back to see her mother occasionally.

Eve "honeyed up" to the old lady and brought her a big bouquet of flowers, plus a fancy new hat.

Joanna, who was stuck with the hard work of caring for her bed-fast mother, often made Martha angry, for the old lady was now childish and resented the bossy behavior of Joanna.

Yet without Joanna's bossiness, Martha would have been forced into a Nursing Home, among strangers.

After six months of deft persuasion by foxy Eve, the old lady decided that it was Eve who really

loved her, so Martha called a lawyer and reversed her will.

When she died, neighbors were shocked! For the Prodigal Daughter Eve, who had hardly lifted her hand to bear the heavy burdens of Martha's last 25 years of constant care and nursing, got the bulk of her estate.

And this unfairness occurs constantly and this can be wheeled into favoring the son or daughter who is least deserving.

The faithful workhorse, who may have had to decline marriage to look after the ailing old folks, thus gets rebuffed and cheated.

All of us at 50 or 60 may be very alert and fair-minded. But we should realize as we pass 75 to 80, that we tend to grow more childish.

So we ought to arrange our property so that our later whims or senile favoritism, will nor produce the injustice that Martha showed.

Make gifts to your child while you are alert. Don't give away all your property, thereby rendering yourself a pauper, but take advantage of the \$30,000 gift exemption to each of your children.

And set up trusts which are irrevocable, so you may obtain the income during your lifetime, but at your death, it will then go to the children and grandchildren who should have it.

President Kennedy's father has wisely set up such trusts for all his children, but so can you parents with more modest wealth.

It is smart for us to arrange our money so that we can't even get hold of the bulk of it in our old age, for senility makes us easy dupes.

For example, an 80-year-old man recently met a designing widow in Florida. Against the advice of his clergyman, he proposed to her.

He was a wealthy man. So she demanded that he first buy a new house for her, to which he agreed. She picked it out. It was greatly over-priced, but he bought it to please her.

Before the wedding, she ran away. And he then found out he had bought her own house, at twice its proper price, which she had been trying to sell via a real estate firm.

At the age of 50, he probably would not have been this gullible, so all middle aged folks should protect themselves against their own senility!

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Happy Holidays

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