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New York N.Y.





The Home Insurance Company

NEW YORK.

ORGANIZED 1853.

J. S. PEAL, SR. & SON, AGENTS
LA CENTER, KENTUCKY

Darling!

The old home town was very bleak under an April rain when I arrived. I was very shocked to see the gray skies when I first looked out in Paducah. I had somehow never thought but that I would find sunlight - in spite of having seen snow in Pennsylvania and Ohio.

Mammy seems very well - as do all the others except Zellner who has a slight attack of laryngitis.

I happened to notice the enclosed clipping from the Paducah papers in which Mrs. Magruder discusses two things I remember with affection: service-berry trees and the Doc Moore home, which is now Gladys Brooking's home. The lynching which is referred to is the only one in the history of the county, and took place when my father was sheriff, but at a time when he was absent on official business. He always thought that his deputy could have stood the

mob off if he had dared to resist.

Everyone asks about you and regrets that you couldn't come. And I miss you very much.

Loveingly,
Hugh

Regarding Things Old And New

By Mary Lanier Magruder

When the delicate windflower or anemone broke buds in woody places, on windy March nights, the early settlers of our section looked out to behold tall sheeted ghosts towering in their back yards. Under the clear spring moonlight, the serviceberry trees gleam wraith-like, all pale with blossoms and no green leaf yet out for shadows. Even by day the many-petaled flowers are a spectral white and thin as gauze. But they are durable enough to withstand the rough caresses of the March wind, and their fringed petticoats sway and



Mary Lanier Magruder

swing as the breeze wake or die. For the service berry is indigenous to the Ohio Valley. Here they lose the bush-like form they assume on the slopes of the Sierras and in Alaska, and attain the height of the average apple tree, being slenderer, however, and far more graceful. The tree, by its beautiful and early flowering and its pink and luscious fruit ripening in June, delighted the appreciative eyes and palates of those Virginians and Marylanders who had migrated to this Purchase section. Hence every yard or lawn in my childhood boasted one or more of these trees which had been transplanted from rich woodland or creek bottom.

There were three trees here at Lane's End when we bought this farm forty-one years ago. I was always possessed with the idea that one of my own little chaps would fall out of a tree in Junetime, but it was my neighbor's boy instead, Monty Lack, who took a tumble and cracked up an arm. The trees are long gone now and the species itself fast becoming extinct. But yesterday, on a hillside at the boundary of Bink Hinkle's lawn, mine eyes were truly gladdened by the charming vision of a slim young serviceberry tree in full flower. And Carrie Hinkle and I stood looking at it for a long time, sharing perhaps some long, long thoughts of those glad days of girlhood, when we risked life and limb in climbing to the topmost boughs of serviceberry trees, and let the wind rock and sway our lofty perch as we feasted upon the rosy fruit. No matter how many fistfuls of the sweet little berries we surrounded in an afternoon's foray, no ill results would follow. The berries never produced the upsets and agonies that too often accompanied a gorge upon May cherries, June apples, and early, watery peaches.

A Hint To Managers

May I drop a hint to the managers of the new parks in this section that they search out some of the few remaining serviceberry trees and transplant them, thus helping perpetuate a lovely and useful tree? The birds will give them a flying vote of thanks, and those of us who are half pagan and devoted to trees and birds and bees and blossoms, will erect suitable memorials in our grateful memories. The birds are having harder shift every year with the frequent droughts, the drying of streams and springs, and the skinning of the earth's surface by removal of all trees and shrubs where they nest.

Driving down to a club meeting at the Hinkles' yesterday with my good friend, beyond Kevil a scant mile we passed in sight of the old Doc Moore homestead whose history is inerascably fixed in my memory. The house, re-modeled, yet preserves its air of colonial Virginia, and the garden is still planted where in the old years it was the garden of my delight. Peonies brought from Virginia still blossom there, but perhaps the beds of camomile, thyme, and tansy are long gone. How busy the bumblebees used to be in the bee-balm, until satiated with sweetness, they rested and clung! Never anywhere in this world in my rambles have I tasted such grapes as once hung, lucent and palest green, through the interstices of the arbor! What a place to dream and drowse! But I was too young then for dreams and too wide awake to drowse, but in the years after I have sometimes felt that I could write a poem that might be remembered if I went back to that garden and the past of an un-

shadowed childhood. But I never did. Perhaps I knew in my heart that we do not "recapture the first fine careless rapture."

Romance In Curves

A half mile further on one turns at a sharp angle into a narrow country road that winds as roads used to do, with neither rhyme nor reason, but with strange fascination, for who knows what is just around the hill's curve? (Nowadays it is not romance but likely another car that misses ones fender by a thumb's breadth.) Here on a hillside a great clump of daffodils light the sward, all that remains to mark the site of a tragedy that once stirred all Ballard county, to its farthest boundaries. Here in an old farmhouse, on a windy October day in 1887, good old "Aunt Sally Moore," mother emerita to the neighborhood, was foully murdered. Struck from behind by a heavy club or implement, she fell upon the hearth and there her sons found her when they came in at noon from fighting fire in their fencerows. Nothing so dreadful as this murder had ever taken place in the county. Arrests were soon made, but the trials dragged on for several years until feeling ran so high a change of venue was necessary. One man was acquitted, the other accused was given a life sentence. But evidently there was an element not at all pleased with the final verdict, and so a mob took the prisoner from the Wickliffe jail one night and turned him over to Judge Lynch beyond whose sentence there is never appeal.

This farmstead then passed into other hands, and no shadow of the tragedy haunted the large and happy family of Overbeys who grew up there, and music and song sounded in the room where once a good old woman lay in her own blood, murdered for her money. Sometime in these later years the house burned, and nothing is left but the daffodils planted by hands long dust. All the principals and witnesses in the trial are gone to their long homes, even the judges and the lawyers who heard or argued the case have passed, with perhaps one exception, to appear before the Great Judge who alone really knows who killed "Aunt" Sally Moore.

A Letter From Texa

A letter from Sara Gertrude Knott, now at Dallas, Texas, and very busy about the National Folk Festival, tells me it will be held in June during the Texas Centennial. And she urges us to appeal to the powers that hold the purse strings of the state to get an appropriation for the purpose of sending our mountain singers of song ballads and the runners of "sets" in the folk dancing to take part in the Festival in Dallas. This is a consummation for which all of us who are interested so devoutly wish. And I seem to have a yen to include the Southern Harmony Singers at Benton. I was told recently that the original singers in this Benton Festival of music are growing old and that many are already dead. The younger generation does not, perhaps, have quite the feeling about the songs that the oldsters do. At any rate this unique festival of our Purchase should be represented at the Centennial also. Will someone who is politically inclined and wised up as to what to do, please start the ball rolling?

Miss Knott, assisted by Anna Blanche Magill, our own Kentucky writer and journalist, and by Gladys Knott, her sister, will hold county festivals over the state of Texas under the auspices of the Homemakers' Clubs of the state. My, but it does seem as if Texas were two laps ahead of us as well as the sheriff!