

My Great-Grandmother . . .

LILLA ADAMS

A few years back if you could by chance have visited a certain little town in Texas and walked a mile north of the town, you might have heard the sound of song coming across to you from what seemed to be the middle of a big wood. Then, if you had cared to follow the song, you would have come into a clearing. In the middle of the clearing sat a house, grayed by the weather and surrounded by a small plot of land, about twenty acres, neatly divided into yard, garden, small orchard, cow and horse lot, pasture, and field.

On entering the gate you might have stood for a minute and let your eyes wander across the field; and there you would have discovered the object of your inquiry, a little, old, dark brown woman who looked somewhere near sixty years

of age and was, in reality, seventy. There would have been leaves or small branches stuck under the battered old straw hat she wore to shade her face from the sun. Her long dress would have been rolled up around her waist and held in place with a string. She would have been stockingless, with brogans on her pigeon-toed feet. In her mouth she would have held a small elm twig, chewed at one end for the purpose of dipping snuff. Somewhere along the turn, now, she would reach into her pocket, bring out the snuff box, shiny from use, and take that soul-satisfying dip.

By this time you would be able to catch the words of the song which had attracted your attention . . . "Low, chillun, low is da way—Da way to git to heben is by faith an' humble prayer."

. . . Grandma O' Mine

DORIS CAMPBELL

Tart as vinegar, sweet as cider—that is Grandma. Despite having several score blood relations, she includes everyone on the block in her list of "acquired" relations.

Of sturdy Tennessean stock, Grandma still clings to the old custom of a "dram" before breakfast. To any Hoosier a "dram" means the same as a "swig" or a "snifter." Whatever it may be called, it has a pleasing effect on Grandma,

sharpening her wit and appetite and mellowing her disposition.

Grandma has always been intrigued by "bargains," a fact which probably accounts for her purchase several years ago, for only fifty cents, of a pair of horn-rimmed spectacles which magnify objects to twice their actual size. Those glasses have earned their keep throughout the years, and there is little possibility

that anything but death will part them and their owner.

Old and young alike are on an even plane where my grandmother is concerned; she has solved the whole problem by calling everybody "kid." Of late, however, Grandma has felt she is not worth much to anyone, and her "Hi, Kid," comes out with less vehemence. This feeling of uselessness has begun to wither her spirit.

Her faith holds no stock in doctors, or any phase of the medical profession, but Grandma has occasionally betrayed this faith. To make amends, however, for a week before and after each visit to a doctor, she prays fervently for forgiveness. I feel sure the doors of Heaven will not close against her, for who could resist so simple a plea?

There is a bit of the show-off in Grandma, and she is not reluctant to entertain any and all with her versions of the various dance steps. She also brags about the fine husbands she has checked off her list, and she considers the man-power situation of today a source of great amusement. Like many of the older generation, she also has tales of hair-raising adventure to which all who know her listen with amused scepticism.

Grandma has never grown away from the colorful language of Tennessee, and we hope she never will. She is like a breath of autumn in the summer, then in a moment she is like a whisper of spring, all gentleness and kindness; she is a blend of all races, like America, and, like America, she has great memories to cherish.