

all members of the family, and those courting age paired off afterward for a lingering walk home in the moonlight. Church services were held infrequently and often in school houses. Then, occasionally there were those protracted meetings which aroused so much fervor and sent shivers up and down the spines of the children. These meetings drew crowds that reached out beyond the confines of a school district. There were also fish fries held in the summer and spelling bees in the winter, and the annual social event of the summer, the FOURTH OF JULY PICNIC. The picnic alone would provide enough material for a book, for decisions were often made concerning futures, and courtships were cemented at these colorful affairs.

Life now amid these hills is less colorful and picturesque, but far easier, for prosperity has come to the Ozarks. The log cabins and tar paper shacks have been replaced by attractive, substantial homes, complete with all modern conveniences. Country dwellers may look as attractively dress as their city cousins and often do. Every family has at least one car, so with greater mobility, social horizons have widened.

The young people leave home in ever increasing numbers to institutions of higher learning, returning to take their places of responsibility at home or elsewhere. Thus parents realize a fulfillment in being able to accomplish for their children, what in many instances could not be done for themselves. The young generation looks ahead to a future when ills will be cured and wrongs righted. Let it not be forgotten, however glorious the future may be, that the forefathers laid a secure foundation of fortitude and hope and endurance.

The years have brought a change in living and in the pace thereof, but the natural beauty of the Ozarks remains unspoiled. The spring fed rivers and streams, clear and cold, wind their way along banks lined with stately trees, one of the most beautiful being the sycamore. Colorful bluffs rise steeply

from the rivers on the one side, dotted with cedars, redbud, dogwoods and hard maple, but predominant are the oaks. On the opposite side of the streams lie the fertile valleys, with deep soil that produces lush, green crops. The winding country roads that lead one over hills and across valleys are a never ending delight and often just around a bend in the road or at the crest of a hill, bring into view a landscape, so breathtakingly beautiful that it is enough to send the most sluggish artist scurrying for brush and palette. A deep blue haze envelops the entire Ozark landscape, softening and enhancing the picture as a wisp of a veil sometimes makes a homely lady beautiful.

To the occupants of this scenic region, both those who have inherited it by birth and those who have claimed it for their own through adoption, may none forsake the God given duty and privilege of protecting this heritage of beauty.

Ethel M. Plunkett

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School teacher at Frank Switch 1944-1966
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