

MANLEYS AND BLACKWOODS



Mrs. Susan Scott Manley  
1820-1903  
Great Great Grandmother



Mr. Riley Manley  
1821-1884  
Great Great Grandfather  
and  
Great Great Grandmother



Mrs. Jennie M. Blackwood\*  
1853-1924  
Great Great Aunt



Rosetta and Jennie



Josiah Eaton Blackwood  
1846-1911  
Great Grandfather



Mrs. Rosetta M. Blackwood  
1845-1873  
Great Grandmother

\*Married George Blackwood, brother of Josiah Eaton Blackwood

## CHAPTER XV

### GRANDPA MANLEY'S FARM

#### Grandfather's Preface

The father of one of Grandmother's chums - Eddie Cole - had a small farm just outside of Brodhead and Eddie and Grandfather sometimes rode up to the farm with Mr. Cole and, so to speak, helped. Now Grandfather is not going to write about farm life - that is Grandmother's special privilege in this book, but Grandfather wishes to record his impression, which was that farming was an excellent occupation for Mr. Cole, for he seemed to enjoy being out in the sun all day, plowing and raking hay, but Grandfather thought he would prefer to work out his destiny, arguing before juries in law courts, and Eddie also failed to wax enthusiastic about the job and he became bank official.

This is all preliminary to recording that from our earliest married life, Grandmother and Grandfather agreed that they did not believe that Fate intended them to be devotees to the art of agriculture. However, Grandmother will now take the "mike" and tell you about life on a real farm.

#### Grandmother's Story

I was born on a farm in a small white house, the second of the four homes Grandpa Manley built during more than forty years he owned the land. My birthplace was a house of the New England type common in the country districts of Cape Cod, Massachusetts, even today.

My mother died before I was two years old and my father and I came back to the farm to live. My grandparents told my father we were

both welcome to make our home with them always but that if he ever decided to establish another home, as he did four years later, he must never ask to take me with him. He lived up to his agreement.

Grandpa obtained this farm, 640 acres of public land, from the Government in 1840, and moved with Grandma and my mother, who was less than two years old, from Northeast Ohio. They traveled by covered wagon all the way, except they ran the wagon on a boat crossing Lake Erie. In Milwaukee they joined other settlers who were going in their direction. Many times they had to fell trees and make a road after leaving Milwaukee.

There had been a recent Indian scare and they did not dare to locate on their land with the women and children for two or three years, but lived together in Barton and went back and forth while clearing the land. Grandpa put up his first building, little more than a shack, I expect, on the "island" and while his family stayed in Barton, he and his hired men spent some nights of the first three years here on the "island".

This "island" is a small mound in the center of a large grassy meadow. Every spring the river overflows this meadow and the mound becomes really an island. When I went back to the farm as a baby to live, they had just moved into the third house. It was a large home, built in the homely style of architecture just following the Civil War, with an upright and a wing. A kitchen, woodshed and wood yard followed on back of the wing. This house was always painted yellow and was roomy and comfortable.

When Uncle George and Aunt Jennie bought 160 acres of the farm and came there to live, they took the yellow house and Grandpa built a small brick house on the land he had reserved for himself across the road

from the yellow house. The land around our new brick house had been cleared of all trees except some large wild black cherry trees, and our place was always known as Cherry Grove Farm. The yellow house burned while Uncle George's family were living in it. They moved back into the old white house for a time, then sold their land and moved to New London.

Well, I think this is enough for a background to my childhood, as this is to be a story of Grandfather and me and not of our ancestors. If you are interested in this early history, read Hamlin Garland's border stories in which he relates pioneering of his family in Wisconsin. Incident upon incident that he relates are practically the same as the stories told me by my Grandma.

As I said before, I did without all the things Grandfather has told you and never even guessed I was missing anything. In addition to this, except for the brief happy years that Cousin Susa and her family lived across the road, I was without playmates, except at school and when friends came to visit.

Another difference was that we got our drinking water from a big deep circular stone lined well, going down sixty feet perhaps, into the ground. There was a "well sweep" and a bucket to help us get the water. A post was erected a few feet from the well curb. Attached to the top of this by a movable joint was another pole in an inclined position with the higher end over the well. Attached to this higher end was a chain, possibly there was a pole hanging part way and only a chain at the lower end. I cannot seem to recall the exact picture. Attached to the chain was a bucket that hung inside the well curbing and about on a level with

the platform. To get a bucket of water, one pulled the chain down by hand until the bucket struck the water and then pulled it up again. The water was always deliciously cool, even on hot summer days.

Unlike your grandfather, I cannot remember that I was ever asked to draw water, but many times a day, almost continually, it seemed to me, my grandma would say: "Run quickly, Daisy, and pick up some chips to start this fire up." We burned wood entirely at that time, both for heating and cooking.

There was always an abundance of little dry splinters in the woodshed or in the wood yard that never ran low. I used to wish that they would! Wasn't that naughty? It must have been a great help to my grandma. She certainly had too much work for one woman. Sometimes she had a daughter of one of our German neighbors to help her. I am sorry I did not think more about being helpful and less about being called from my play.

We had a small pump in our kitchen sink. This pump was connected with a cistern which was filled with rain water that fell on the roofs of the house and flowed through tin or copper tubes into the cistern. This "soft water" was used for bathing and laundry purposes.

Without the colored supplement of the "funny paper", without the comedy picture in the movies, you may wonder what we found to amuse us. Well, in those days I was as much of a "giggler" as your Aunt Ruth or Aunt Grace, and there was always something funny happening. My grandfather was a very witty man and things were lively when he was in the house if he was not taken up with his newspaper or almanac.

As I write, an incident comes to my mind that I have not recalled for years. Great care was taken in washing the milk pails, strainers, pans and cans, rinsing thoroughly with boiling water and then placing them on a high shelf outside for sunning and airing. One day my grandma, being very busy as usual, and not realizing quite what she said, called to me: "Run out and get the milk pails and carry them in the parlor." I knew perfectly well that she meant pantry, but I did exactly as she said. Now, I expect you think a parlor was like your living room. Ah, no! it was very, very different. It was a room entirely shut away by itself. It was never used except for company, and very special company at that. The shades were drawn so the bright flowered carpet and other objects of art would not be faded by the sun. There was nothing lacking in this parlor of ours - we had the stiff black shiny slippery mohair furniture, the feather and hair flower wreaths framed and hung on the wall and a "what not" which was all the name implied, a little corner ornamental bit of furniture, with shelves, one above another, containing our souvenirs and objects of art.

You can scarcely imagine how funny it seemed to me to see these milk things standing in a row the length of the parlor. I laughed until I could no longer stand or even sit, but rolled on the floor in an agony of mirth. My grandma, hearing the commotion, came to see what was going on, and when she found out she sat down and held her sides with laughter, for she, too, greatly enjoyed a joke. I was beginning to get quieted down by then, but she started me all over again.