

*I, Alone, Remember.* By Lucile Carr Marshall. Volume XVIII, Number 3, Indiana Historical Society *Publications*. (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1956. Pp. 100. Illustrations. \$1.00.)

The much overused word *nostalgia* best describes this little volume of delightful reading, whether it is viewed by one in his youth or by one who has reached the age when memories are more important. It is an account of ancestors and descendants. In the words of the author, "Now that I am a grandmother I know, too, what descendants really are. *Ancestors, descendants*—the dry, parchmentlike flavor, associated with genealogical records has been removed from both words for me" (p. 245).

Miss Marshall carries us through the generation of people, through the development of the farm home and community, and through the vicissitudes of history with such clarity that we feel that we are actually living the experiences that she relates. It is not a bewailing of "the good old days" that are best but an appreciation of both past and present. Let her speak again:

"Descendants are babies. Descendants are people who come into the world as individuals with whom we are not yet acquainted. Immediately they set about developing into endearing folks with cuddly, funny ways. When I have been looking into the eyes of my grandbabies, I have wished my parents might have enjoyed them too, for they would have loved them so. From that point I have gone on to bestow pity upon my ancestors. They missed so much of which they did not dream, because they could not know the babies who are arriving in the pulsing present" (p. 245).

The picture presented runs all the way from the cabin and fireplace, presided over by an ex-slave woman of uncanny knowledge, through the building and the subsequent rebuilding of the newer permanent homestead down to the modern leave-taking of the old place for an abode in an urban center. It is typical of the Hoosier scene. We see the black-silk gowned, severe appearing ancestral ladies of the household as they stare down from their frames, long after black silk and severity are only memories. We can hear the clanking of the chain and the dripping of the water as the bucket is cranked up from the depths of the well, and we long for it after the well has gone dry and a more modern method has been installed. We suddenly realize that grandmother's

fireplace dinners are no longer part of daily living and that now better cooking is served from a cooking stove. Then we are suddenly brought to the realization that "stove personalities" all over the house, those stoves that we both loved and feared, are also gone, and in their places only the whirring of the fan that keeps the place so evenly and comfortably heated.

A visit to the sugar camp during the February molasses run, as Miss Marshall describes it, is an experience to remember. The sap had to be collected and boiled to exactly the right degree of density for molasses or wax or that tasty delicacy, maple sugar candy.

Even the domestic diplomacy that the wife and mother had to use in managing the household to which she had been brought as a bride brings either a smile or a frown to the reader, depending on his own experience and memories, as do the fussy uncles, the exacting aunts, and the unchangeable pictures and pieces of furniture.

This fascinating account of memories runs through wheat fields, larkspur, weddings, fine riding horses, and the entire galaxy of possessions and experiences that made Hoosier life of past generations complete and satisfying. Just climb into the surrey with the family as they leave the old homestead and try to catch some of the emotion they experienced as they drove away, never to return with the same intimate relationship of coming home. Father "handed the reins" to another man, and the surrey jolted down the hill and out of the gate as one era ended and another began.

*I, Alone, Remember* is a worthwhile addition to the collection of personal memoirs and to the folksy accounts of the middle period of Hoosier life. Our ancestry is not an object of apology; on the contrary, it is to be proudly remembered as the foundation on which our present day culture rests.

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*The American Collector*. Edited by Donald R. McNeil. (Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1955. Pp. 61. Foreword. \$2.50.)

This little volume consists of three symposium papers and a banquet address given at the 1954 Draper Centennial of the Wisconsin State Historical Society in commemoration