

AN ODE TO “TOOTS” AT 80 YEARS YOUNG

Arriving in July of 1923

The third child of six she was to be,
Both shouts of joy and cries of sorrow that day,
For her feet had her going the wrong way.
But correction was made with some suffering and pain,
And the joy of success was now the claim.
She must always wear shoes and for a time she wore boots,
Her hair was red and Dad called her “Toots”.



(“Toots and her barefooted older sister)

On a trip to the country, maybe along in the fall,
Grandpa Ewing bought her new shoes at H. R. Saul.
After a long day, and the oncoming of night,
She would not remove her new shoes without a fight,
So they put her to bed and gently tucked her in,
And came back to remove the shoes, and again they didn’t win.

Several years later she was blessed with a fine little brother,
And it was her job to ride him in style, like no other.
Sometimes this was a small chore for such a little tyke,
So she told mom to take him back or she was gonna strike.



She never grew much; she was always skinny,
And her big sister often thought she was a ninny.
But she had to work in the fields like all the rest,
She would hoe cotton and corn and do her best.

With stockings on her arms to keep off the sun,
Bouncing that hoe off rocks was not much fun,
So she picked out a skovel hoe that fit her just fine,
With a homemade handle probably made of pine,
She chopped that cotton and dug the grass,
Until about sundown then she could quit at last.

When the weekend came, there was no respite,
There was cleaning the yard if it took 'til night,
Edna would "supervise" and Toots would fume,
They swept the yard clean with a dogwood brush broom.

Then it was back to the field, there was soda to drop,
With her stockings on her arms, and a big hat on her top,
She marched down each row with her bucket in hand,
Dropped the right amount at each plant, just like a man.

Soon would come fall with cotton to pick,
Out came the stockings for the boles they would stick,
The pick-sacks were readied for all that were there,
It was plenty of "cotton-pickin" work for all to share,
Beware of the stinging worms, especially the packsaddle,
But you just keep on picking; you don't dare to daddle.

Rook was a card game all young folk liked to play,
But Toots was befuddled by it, to everyone's dismay,
When to bid, when to trump, what to play, required some skill,
She confused the object of the game and played at will,
Some would trick her and some would make fun,
But she stayed in the game; they never made her run.

When it came to dating she was not at all late,
She was sweet on a boy by the name Hoyt Cates.
He made Dad anxious and squirm in his seat,
And he often said things that I shan't repeat.
There were others you see, Foxie Britt in particular,
I don't think she liked him, she was sort of a stickler.
And then it was back to the farm for a weekend workout.

Now school was over, she must look for employment,
She found a job at a Bank that gave her enjoyment,
At the Trust Company of Georgia in Atlanta on Pryor Street
But soon a new boyfriend she did meet.

His name was "Red" Lewis, a young soldier with a smile,
Her life now changed, for him she would travel many a mile,
She would fly to meet him when he returned from overseas,
Soon there was a big buzz about the thing to be.

So then they were married and began their life together,
She thought she would be “Millie” the grocery lady forever.
Their hard work and dedication brought success and joy,
Then along came a baby girl, and next came a baby boy.

Remember that fine baby brother in her past,
Well he caught up with her once again at last,
He lived with the family and worked in the store,
But joined the Air Force and would return there no more.

A new house was their dream, and their plans were made,
It was built in the woods, and there they stayed.
“A plantin” and “a trimmin” shrubbery galore,
But it was all worth it when they came home from the store,
To sit on the back sun porch, relax and just look out,
There they were so happy, they sometimes wanted to shout.

Well it seems she is 80 and still going strong,
But I must tell you, one thing has gone wrong,
When it rains her car leaks mighty bad,
So she stays home, oooh it’s kinda sad.
We all pray for sunshine and hope it will come,
So she will get out amongst us – at least some.

With many good memories that bring you a smile to recall,
It’s not time for you to slow down, no not at all,
A spirit of adventure you have always shown,
You should continue to reach out, even on your own.
Life is a journey, not a destination,
You can still have great fun exploring in Gods Creation.
So happy birthday this 80th time
May you have many more, - but without my attempt at rhyme.



(Feb 2003, age 79 ½)

By:

Baby brother

Thomas H. (Pap) Ewing

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