

The Old House

It is of this old home where we are today, that I would like to speak. The home build by the son of Laban Jenks, Sr, Morris Jenks. Here he lived for many years and it was here he died.

Here his children Leman, Esther, Oliver, and Minerva spent their childhood and youth. It was here that Esther, our hostess of today, was married to Charles Lee. Here their only son was born and here she was widowed. Here is the home of her youth and the home of her old age.

Here her only sister Minerva left the old home as the bride of Nathaniel Barnes.

Here her brothers Leman and Oliver brought the brides of their youth and here their oldest son's, Arley and Fred were born. And here their beloved wives passed away .

Here in after years, Leman brought his wife Lucinda and here their two oldest children, Justin and Anna were born. When they moved away, Oliver with his family came home to stay with the old people. It was at this period that his father, Morris Jenks, died and his mother went to live with his sister Esther Lee.

Then, Marian, his wife died and Nellie, his daughter, was married to Charles Moore. While this was still her home, her little babe Marian Moore was born. In the Fall of 1885 they moved to Farmington and Oliver, with his sons Charlie and George kept bachelors hall in the old home through the winter. This style of living not suiting Oliver's taste he spent the winter trying to convince me that there was no home like the old home, so, in the spring, as his bride, I came here to live and for ten years it was our home. My first year in the old home was inexpressibly saddened by the death of my dear mother here. By the death of my beloved sister, Julia, wife of Oliver's cousin, Frank Jenks, and of the little granddaughter of the house, Marian Moore. My second year saw the birth and death of our first babe, our little brown haired, brown eyed, girl who staid with us only long enough to leave a lasting memory. Next our boy, Seymour, was born and for a few years the old home echoed with his happy voice and footsteps. Unless he was out in the fields with his father or as was often the case, tight to the heels of his uncle Charlie or cousin Willie Lee. Then came the baby, Irene, the last child born in the old home, who was "Auntie" before her first birthday to one who helped her celebrate her last Christmases in the old home, the little granddaughter Elva Moore. One day in the old home I shall ever remember. It was Seymour's 7th birthday, October 7, 1895. And Fred, who first saw the light of day there in the old home; dear sunny hearted Fred, shook his father's hand - kissed the children and I goodbye, and returned to his work in Detroit. Just one month later, he came home for the last time, but in his casket. Borne by the loving hands of brothers and friends and for the third time the sad symbol of death waved from our doorway.

The next spring we sold out am moved toBirmingham. When we again visited the old home, it was occupied by Effie Lee Weaver and family and Lee's were the childish steps that pattered through the old home and no doubt followed as Seymour's had done, only it was Grandpa and Uncle Willie Lee for him.

Later, I came again, but alone. Oliver was sleeping his last sleep, and Esther, her husband, and son were living here in the old home.

How well I remember one evening when Leman and Lucinda were here with Charles and Esther, so happy in the love and company of each other. And I so lonely for the one who had gone on before, missing him so much here in the old home where we had spent so many happy years. But, today, we three, Esther, Lucinda, and I alike bereft meet for the first time in the old home where we each have spent part of our lives and they can say with me, "But oh I miss him here at the dear old homestead. He comes no more to meet me. I alone, alone."

But, not always was the old home sad and lonely. Many, many times have its walls echoed with joyous voices at the pleasant gatherings of friends and neighbors at the birthday parties the Thanksgivings, and the Merry Christmases and today this grand happy reunion outshines them all and the old home has one more memory to make it seem more sacred and dear to us all.

Eva Seymour Jenks

August 17, 1912