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In The Backwoods Of Nowhere



Synopsis

"In The Backwoods Of Nowhere" chronicles the life of Alma Cross Owen. Alma, the fifth of nine children, was born in 1910 in lower Davidson County, North Carolina "as she says, "fifteen miles south of Lexington, off number 8 Highway, between Newsom and High Rock, near Jackson Hill and Bald Mountain, in the backwoods of nowhere." Alma lived with her mama and daddy, who were poor sharecroppers, in a small shack-like house on the edge of the large Reid farm that lay between Cabin Creek and Lick Creek on the Yadkin River. In her own words, Alma resurrects now forgotten times and places as she shares with us the everyday trials of life as a sharecroppers in the early 1900s. Through vivid descriptions she leads us through their daily customs folklores and hardships. She speaks of how they had to make do with what they had and how the little that they had was treasured. At age twelve Alma's family left the sharecropping way and moved twenty miles north of the backwoods to Lexington, the county seat. In Lexington her life changed dramatically. First, her one room school was replaced with more modern schools. Then, at a young age she was forced to quit school to help out the family. The biggest change came in her late teens when she met and married Odell Henderson Owen, and in the years that followed, became the mother of eleven children. During the chaotic years of raising eleven children she never forgot her upbringing, how her mama and daddy had instilled in her the importance of family, church and community. Like her daddy, she worked hard, always putting her family's needs first. And in times of personal need, she sought strength through the church. The beauty of this book is in the voice of the book "Alma's voice. Alma tells her story with a warmth that leaves you laughing at times and at other times holding a tissue to your eyes.

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Customer Reviews

Nancy B. Owen has done an amazing job providing insight to a time now gone by. This story was so touching and yet at times humorous as you are led through the life of Alma Cross Owen. The reader is given a window into a time when you didn't run to the grocery store for daily provisions, jump into your car and head to town, or simply check the internet for the latest news. Alma's story shares so much that today's society can only read about. There was also a joy in getting to know Alma personally as she recalls in her own voice the history and happenings throughout her life. Her obvious spunk and yet gentle ways draw you in and have you looking forward to all that comes her way. Learning about Alma's life from her youth to raising eleven of her own children during this time period in North Carolina is truly worth the read!

I found this book very interesting and, once I started reading it, I did not want to put it down. Alma shares her experiences with the reader with an openness that is refreshing. Many thanks to the author for writing it.

Alma Owens narrates a very interesting picture of life in the days without running water, indoor plumbing and having baby after baby and loving each and every one of them (the children, not the hardships). Its written in a way that if you close your eyes and listen to her words you feel as though she is speaking just to you, regarding her life when times were very very hard. Not driving she had a very limited means of getting around places until she was older and then she learned to drive. Her husband was not encouraging in her getting out and about on her own, and in some way, not real supportive, but that was the way men were in those days. I loved this book and highly recommend it to anyone wanting an very interesting peek into America's history.

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This is a very well written account of the life of Alma Owen and I found it very entertaining as well as informative about the way of life for the time period.

"In the Backwoods of Nowhere," is a true story about Alma Lee Cross Owen. It is wonderful. This book portrays a way of life and a family in the hills of North Carolina, beginning in the 20th century. The author is Alma's daughter-in-law; and she has captured in verse the "speech" and "thoughts" of a modest, humble, woman dedicated to making the best of every day. The reader cannot help but compare Alma's life with the life of women today, where women still face the same issues; but most readers will find their own personal setting quite different. Alma has little advantage in a backwoods existence, except for her depth of love and strength of character.

This is a really great book. She shares things with the world that I never dreamed happened especially in the USA as recently as the early 20th century. It was very inspirational to me to journey along with the big family and learn how they existed on so little. It was especially interesting to me because I lived close to there in the 1970's. I had no idea people of the 'back woods' were still living without running water or telephones. Just a great read. I wish everyone who has an aged loved one would recognize how important it is to record their journey through life. There are billions of people in the world and each life is different. How inspiring

I was drawn to In The Backwoods of Nowhere by Nancy Owen by the cover and title. It reminded me of my grandmas from Arkansas. I can remember back to times when they lived similar to Alma during the fifties and sixties. Granted, I was very young and never allowed to roam as the children in the book were, but I related to the stories and experiences because I had listened to many conversations around the dining room table or on the front porch as we rocked and listened to gospel music that conjured the same images as this novel does. I would recommend this book,

mostly, to readers over forty who fall victim to nostalgia for the stories they heard told by grandparent or parents. I believe these readers would agree a trip down memory lane is relaxing, amusing, and cathartic to the soul.

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