

Unnamed

By Ethel McLean Johnston

*When I stand alone on a mountain
Under the arching sky,
There comes a tug at my heart strings,
A longing that can never die.
Realizing the beauty about me,
I feel that it's not complete;
My mind turns away from nature
And I think of the city street.*

*Oh, those masses of human beings
Whose lives will never know,
The sight of those royal mountains,
With their summits crowned in snow.
Their poor tired eyes never rest
On the moonlit timbered hills,
Their aching feet never tread
The soil that the farmer tills.*

*They never know the pleasure
Of hunting cattle on the range,
They never follow the deer paths,
Through the forests weird and strange.
How I long to bring them forth
Under the sunny skies,
And show them the wonderful beauty
That in sweet nature lies.*

MESSAGE of the WIND



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This little book to Lorna
with more love than I can say
From great-grandmother
Ethel M. Johnston

Illustrations by

Marie Sanderson McLean

1958

Notes On The Author

Ethel McLean Johnston, fourth of the seven McLean children was born in a log cabin on the banks of the Clearwater River in Idaho when that state was very new. She was four years old before she was taken on horseback over the old Indian trail 18 miles to the recently founded town of Kooskia.

Her father was a bonny Scotchman, full of songs and Bobby Burns poetry; her mother, a versatile and capable woman, the daughter of Boston-born "Gram" who had brought her stern New England principles and her cultural standards with her across the plains in a covered wagon in the 1860's.

Ethel's childhood was spent in Idaho, much of it either on horseback or poling a boat on the river. As a girl in her teens she did most of the out-door work on the ranch: milking and caring for the cows, and making hay and garden; she also drove stage, and carried mail and freight with her pack string farther up into the mountains.

Married during the first World War she had two daughters, but lost one of them in infancy; the other has two girls of her own, one happily married, the other still in school.

Left a widow early in life Ethel sold her own homestead and struck out to support herself and her child. During those years she worked all over the north-west, and also owned and managed several other ranches; one, "Grenstone", is especially remembered by all the nieces and nephews as she worked it mainly with their help in the depression years.

In the second World War she became a W.A.C. and saw most of the 48 states while in uniform; since then she has traveled from Oregon to Florida and on up to the Arctic Circle. At the present moment she is cooking at a lonely airport out on the tip of the Alaska peninsula.

Ethel's main interest is in people, she is warmly friendly and stirred emotionally by the joys and sorrows of humanity, but always in her heart is a deep love of the great outdoors and she is ever listening to the Message of the Wind.

The illustrations are by Marie Sanderson McLean. Forty years ago "Sandy" came from New England with a college classmate to camp on the Clearwater River near Ethel's homestead, and the three girls became close friends. After the war Sandy married Ethel's only brother, Stuart, and remained in the west. She now makes her home on beautiful Lake Pend d'Oreille in northern Idaho.

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