

Mabel

Written for Mabel Asay Lamoreaux - My Gram-ma

Mabel,

...never really liked her name
 wanted something more romantic,
 so she gave her girls the most exotic names she could find.

...never really got to know her dad
 he died when she was 10,
 and Mama married again.

...said she was spoiled as a child
 that's why she was raised by her grandmother,
 too many little ones around after her mother remarried.

...fell in love with a man who
 rode his horse through the town with his guns firing,
 walked her home from "polysophical".
 and loved to see her bare feet under her ankle length dress.

...threw her writing into the fire as a young bride
 it kept her away from her chores,
 she tried to reproduce it all her life.

...raised in buckboard days
 but later traveled on trains, and in cars and airplanes,
 remembers what her first child said when she saw her first car,
 was never real familiar with things like telephone etiquette.

...never moved very far from home for very long
 but visited her family all over the country,
 from Washington, DC, to Washington State, and even to Hawaii,
 she & Ray took the travel trailer back to Tennessee and farther to find her roots.

...traveled the trains across the country and back
 both with a slue of kids and lunch baskets spilling,
 and at 87 to visit her mom in Florida.

...started painting when she was 80
 she finally had the time,
 she left examples with most of her grandchildren ,
 and made it into the newspaper.

...collected salt & pepper shakers from all the exciting places she'd been
 and all the exciting places her children and grandchildren went, too,
 gram-pa had to make special cabinets to display them in.

...made the best tamales ever
 and made the best of where ever she was,
 adding her own brand of beauty to her world.

...could make doll furniture from small boxes
 and dolls from hollyhock flowers,
 and corn shuck dolls & she found the baby corn dolls for me.

Mabel

...always saving

saving her best dress for something special,
saving the best of anything for somebody else,
saving bits of lace and sparkles to decorate something.

...showed me how to find sweetness in honeysuckles

the patterns in knitting, crocheting and embroidering,
and beauty in most of God's creations.

..."Mrs. Lam-o-rax" to her husband

put up with a man who was always gone out "on the gang,"
made up for what she missed by "billin' & cooin'," even in front of the kids,
spent summers with him in a boxcar home, she and the kids, where ever he was.

...had favorites

a favorite color,
favorite flowers,
a favorite child.

...pleased with many things, but never really content

always looking for something else, something more,
always expecting her kids to be something more, something better.

...counted her posterity, she knew each one,

counted teachers in her family,
and counted her age by what she would be next birthday.

...never had enough going on in her later years

always ready to go, even when she had just returned,
didn't quite "fit in" in this newfangled world,
but she loved all the excitement.

...kept her "cough medicine" beside the bed

and her "honey pot" under it.

...shuffled down the sidewalk, till she was out of eyesight

then stood a little taller so her friends wouldn't think she was so old.

...could not find her home after Ray died

stayed a little while with everyone,
never really belonged,

I guess it's surprising that she stayed in one place so many years before that.

...showed you exactly what you had given her for each birthday and Christmas

said they were yours when she was gone,
said we'd find her body lyin' all alone & stinkin' days after she went.

...nearly died several times

but the times she did get really sick all her family gathered around,
it pleased her so much, she'd decide to stay,

I guess that's why it was such a surprise when she actually did die.

She was almost 97.

...outlived all her friends

But when she died the chapel was full to over flowing with her kids and theirs,
I bet she was there counting us,

I bet she had her ones on the other side with her there, too.

Mabel Asay Lamoreaux, My Gram-ma -1887 to 1984

by April