

SISTER OF THE OLD WILD GOOSE

by

Mary P. Sherwood

Over  
~~ca~~ 130,000 words

Chapt.

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710 pp  
27 ll/p  
12 words/l,  
13 words/l  
(latter)

(To be written and mailed to you within the next two weeks).

There are several photographs to choose from, some from away back. I know they run up the cost of a publication, but maybe a montage could be assembled.



OUTLINE. SISTER OF THE OLD WILD GOOSE, by Mary F. Sherwood

Chapter I. "As It Was in the Beginning, So It Shall Ever Be."

A wildflower parade which influenced my later life; Keney Park, a childhood Eden. The first pink ladyslippers and forget-me-nots; a wildflower contest which set the direction of my footsteps; a gang of Robin Hoods in a cemetery; the second teacher influence.

Chapter II. "The Bungalow." (Publ. in YANKEE, Nov. 1970)

A cabin the woods by a brook, three miles from trolley; first trip there in a fringe-topped surrey; graduated to taxis; mostly hike in. The catawampus, eel in a tree, a pet frog, a black snake. I ran away to this cabin, via trolley, in winter snow-storm, at age 12, taking a 16-year-old with me; found by two fathers, two sheriffs, one constable, a policeman and taxi driver.

Chapter III. "With the Foresters, Summer Camp and Field Trips."

The only girl in forestry classes and on trips to Adirondacks and White Mts. in days when unheard of. Backlash to pre-college years, when father put me in a factory, where I sat for six years on an assembly line; rescued at age ~~20~~ 21 by YWCA, returned to high school, then on to college to become probably first woman forester in U.S. Balsam bough bed in Adirondacks, snowstorm all night when sleeping on ground in White Mts.. To forestry camp for surveying and forest mensuration classes; visited by college President at evening campfire, a disaster until saved by a toad; camp cook roasts corned beef and loses a lemon pie in the dust. Warblers, cowbird parasites, cecropia moth crippled in cage, Learn to pace ground measurements and to use forest instruments; an old island owner embraces us all; campfire singing, log chopping contest, beard contest, exchange visitors with Yale foresters.

Chapter IV. "Shade Swamp Sanctuary."

First woman State Nature Guide in U.S. Life on an old Indian campground above a river valley, with penned ducks, water birds, deer, raccoon and an eagle. Families, Scouts, and other groups come for guided tours; my first tent, umbrella style, set up near edge of woods behind an old shack. My first experience with women afraid to step off of paths from snake paranoia, their loss of childhood curiosity hidden under social veneers; Communication among ducks, - pintails, mallards, wood ducks, black ducks, a great blue heron, black-crowned night heron, a weird-voiced bittern; dog caught in swamp muck; chinook and black snake, error in food delivery has me living on potatoes and blueberries, a gun dilemma; joined for two weeks by Robbie, a 12 year old boy; we find buried Indian pottery on a river terrace; three-sinister-looking men; a moving light around shack one night, - caretaker's wife became first of long list of women to misinterpret my motives in living outdoors alone, implying I invited night prowlers. Baby turtles dessicated; live at nearby fish hatchery for while.



Chapter V. "The Fenton River."

To make an ecological study of trout streams for State Fish and Game Dept. I set up umbrella tent on bank of the Fenton River, 4 miles from Conn. State College; given a year-round fishing license to check on food<sup>ed</sup> trout eating every season; Forestry class set up study tent with work table and chest with lock for microscopes, barometer, books; build a picnic table with attached benches against big sugar maple tree above the stream, and a small outdoor fireplace; the hated gun with me again; have a unique wood-burning stove for tent; a safe spring in woods across the river; two other rivers downstream part of the study. Caddis and mayfly larvae, dragonfly nymphs, hellgrammites, and diatoms in Fenton. ~~Very~~ Visitors, one hides after eloping, one a gal doctor-to-be; super-chilled liquids and my first encounter with professional jealousy; stream improvements by college class; collecting biological data for statistics tables; stream and air temperatures, barometric pressure, the kind and quantity of fish food present, stream depth fluctuations, secchi disc testing for turbidity. Beanhole supper for foresters, faculty and wives. Robbie and cousin visit for crow-collecting information results in dead boy falling out of tree; my gun takes a trip to Boston, then lost in a blueberry field; my first "man in the bushes", he visits and threatens suicide; a band of dogs; snow on tent in November ends season's work.

Chapter VI. "The People's Forest"

Tent set up first in friend's woodsy yard; rescue baby red squirrels when mother killed by lightning. Move tent to State People's Forest to run small forest museum on West Branch of Farmington River; CCC camp and work crews; new friends-for-life at campsite; when alone three wise guys ~~a~~ from CCC camp invade my camp, I ward them off with stones. I row for a handsome fisherman with a beautiful wife; he tries to involve me in an auto accident as evidence for divorce; excessive rain much of the summer, as river rises I abandon tent and move up to the museum. Bald eagle lives along the river; shorter-day wildflowers in bloom; visitors dwindle as school opens; more rain; on Sept. 23 the river floods with roofs floating downstream, rangers rescue my tent; bridges out, wires down, so we don't hear of the famous hurricane for a week, though in it.

Chapter VII. "Developing a Wildflower Nursery."

Take job with Vermont nursery for a year to learn wildflower cultivation. From there to a forestry job in Wisconsin, which ends with return of W.W. II veterans. Buy 10 acres of wild land in northeastern Conn. for a nursery. Earn food first few months on insect research task and at nearby herb farm. Start nursery with minimum of tools; first customer bought a rare wildflower against our will; collecting, some landscaping, much working with garden beds, composting with earthworms, build a house with our own pines and cedars; go to Florida for winter



(Chapt VII cont.)

to earn costs of cutting down, hauling and planing of trees into boards; save house up road from fire; wildflowers carpeting the woods, crowding the beds; buy more tools with wildflower money; woman doctor from Fenton days nearly killed felling a tree; have well drilled through deep limestone ledge; the nursery a success, once beyond pioneer stage it ~~pallid~~. Back to college

Chapter VIII. "Camping in the Everglades." Publi. in THE FLORIDA NATURALIST, Jan. 1957.

On a boat pulled by a 12-ft. marlin from Miami to Ft. Lauderdale. Set up ~~new~~ new netting tent by a small pond in the Everglades National Park before Park developed for visitors; two resident eagles, a mature and an immature; the Anhinga Trail; Scouts deliver to me a skinned rattler; We Three crows, one with a whisper song; Eagle Tree perch; red-shouldered hawk announces sun time daily; Mr. Independence a resident spotted sandpiper; red bellied woodpeckers; tree swallows in ceremonial wheel over the pond; killdeer in moonlight revelry; hooded merganser record, also golden plover; Eagle Tree crashes in the night; woodstorks parade around fireplace; plume-flying snowy egrets in mating dance in "my" pond; forest fire moves in close; New Year's Eve spend night in sleeping bag at outer end of Anhinga Trail boardwalk; my first limpkin scream; camp for a week at uninhabited Flamingo; barn owl watches me undress at Snake Bight. To Biscayne Bay with "Shorebird" kayak for trip down coast; erroneous report by Weather Bureau has me almost blown out to sea; spend night in kayak high up on beach at Cutler's Point.

Chapter IX. "World With an End."

Return to Bungalow to "meet" the birds there. New farm owners, Mary D. and others gone; Harriet congenial; The Bungalow dismantled, on the ground as water-storage dam planned; a mother cat and three kittens with me; cardinal flowers in bloom; the eel pool where the big tree now split; a large black snake same place 40 years later; a bird "glob" proves where warblers take siesta; blue grosbeaks; a pond discovered, with many birds; a birdy forest convention; cat on leash brings new birds; lights in tree tops in middle of night, man's voice shouts "Come out or I will blow your head off"; I escape into the woods, work my way up to farm; learn it was police rescuing full-moon-scared Jamaican who worked in tobacco sheds; police visit me in a.m. to find out how I eluded them in the woods, in dark of night.

Chapter X. "Walden at Last."

First view of Walden as a boat enters from a ramp; Thoreau's cabin site; Erica in "Shorebird"; I watch County employees rake up the woods. Bulldozer and chain saw damage obvious; Walden looks mismanaged. To Sudbury River in kayak with Erica; rescue of two black fishermen; Hawthorne's hemlocks with Ruth; Old North Bridge and Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge via kayak; Brief discussion of Concord authors and Walden.



Chapter XI. "Thoreau Carry on the Penobscot"

Camping in Down East, Maine, in netting tent on Cranberry Lake, on paper company holdings; a wild loon cry fools me. Stay a week, go to West Branch of Penobscot River above Millinocket, set up tent on St. Francis Deadwater near Mt. Katahdin. Killdeer. Fireweed ubiquitous; river-running logs coming down rapids; surprise visit from Girl Scout "Indians" in fleet of canoes; visit their home camp at a restored CCC camp; return to Cranberry Lake; see my first juncos feeding their young in breeding territory; chickadees, a chat, a flycatcher, loons. Accept a job in library of U. of Maine; search for, find, buy a small cottage on bank of Penobscot on a bird migration flyway; road in yard the one Thoreau rode on, in carriage, his first trip to Maine woods; he had paddled downstream with his Indian guide below my new dining room windows; I have to compete with log drivers on snowy roads. Major enters my life. River rises after every rain and snow melt on Katahdin; eagle in residence on the river; freezing of river a gradual process; bird feeder under porch roof; green snow; northern lights; ice-out slowly, then all at once ducks, geese, gulls, etc. move upstream; water creeping up bank daily; height of flood stage Apr. 23, stopped just below river bank top; planted wildflowers and ferns out back; silent loons present; tree swallows back from Florida but with unstructured flights; many songbirds arrive first week in May; Wade names the place "Thoreau Carry", and donates a woodstove; injured goose deserted by migrating companions; this goose the one from which title of book comes. Sell T.C. - suspicious of river flooding, leave fall 1972, return to Florida.

Chapter XII. "Thoreau Carry in the Maine Woods."

Back from Florida, house-hunting. Camp out in car for two weeks in wet weather. Found cabin-cottage in Greenfield; remodel part of inside for winter living. Penobscot River flood worst in 50 years, rise into my first "Thoreau Carry" to window sills and stays there ten days. My new backyard begins 100 miles of wilderness of paper companies; carpet of wildflowers; my first rainbarrel; new vegetable garden; boreal forest wild plants and mostly spruce and balsam forest, - wood sorrel, pink ladyslippers, goldthread, bearberry; discover a pocket of hardwood-habitat wildflowers under maples and ash, - bloodroot, yellow violets, spring beauty; endless wildberry vines for jam, - wild strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, blackberries, cranberries. Return the next winter to Florida to earn fireplace; buy and have installed a cone fireplace; a favorite occupation, - gather, split or saw, carry firewood. Create new wildflower beds; scrape old red house paint trim, repaint gray-green; little black flies; build a screen patio, and a shed for wood storage and workshop; winter birds at feeder, red squirrels take over; nuthatches, chickadees, pine grosbeaks, white-throated sparrows, rose-breasted grosbeaks, purple finches; have a new well drilled; Cameron's trailer; he dies, Major buys his adjacent land; Passadumkeag hippies. Arab oil prices drive me out, as heating costs, and car gas quadruple.



Chapt. XIII. "To Florida in a Van, via Canada".

Worked a winter in Florida to earn price of a van. Buy a Chev van on way home; Fix it up for living in. Home to spring wildflowers. In July leave for Ontario, Canada, along southern route to and beyond Thunder Bay; camp in van two nights at Shebodowen with loons outside van windows; on to Kashabowie, then kayak camping at Lake Atikokan; poor camping sites on Laurentian Shield; sleep in kayak part of time; trapped in netting tent one night when tent slipped over rock ledge; much rain, very wet season; hoped to find, study, rails, water too high, none present; great blue herons, redwings, blue-winged teal; railroad track back of campsite lures bears, one tried to get into tent with me; move back into kayak to sleep at lake edge; beaver drops a tree a few feet back of my kayak in middle of night; endless thunder storms. Wet weather on the way back to landing; a bear cub unwraps my tarp with papers and books. To northern Minn. where longest series of thunder storms on record, but am dry and comfortable in my van; my first loon "penguin dance;" ducks, myrtle warblers moving through; on to Ft. Ridgely, where bloodroot, wild ginger, and other eastern wildflowers end abruptly at edge of prairie not to reappear for a thousand miles. On to camp at edge of Lake Superior to await friends; a very beautiful, mature hardwood forest; Superior looks like an ocean. Down to endless cornfields of Illinois; in Kentucky forest camp I eat one of two gift bass, save life of the other; ducks, robins, myrtle warblers, two more loons repeat "penguin dance"; a sentimental stop at Selma, Ala., where a "hippie adult" tries to detain me; at Appalachian National Forest in Florida in panhandle, set up camp in van for a few days; a dead tree lookout for pileated woodpecker, catbird, phoebe, scarlet tanager; a beautyberry bush a larder for catbirds, rose-breasted grosbeaks, olive-back thrushes, thrashers, countless warblers, all in migration; I save a Tennessee warbler from an large insect web high up in tree. Move on to Chiefland, stay in a friend's trailer across from limestone sinkhole where a snake-eating red-shouldered hawk, three flickers, and many smaller birds. My first bluebirds in three decades. One last campsite with van in a live oak stand, near field with bluebirds, and many songbirds in migration. Then on to Ft. Lauderdale and the Everglades.

Chapter XIV. "Camping in the Everglades as Naturalist Interpreter."

Flamingo Road no longer hazardous; the Park now developed for visitors; set up netting tent on a campground west of the Flamingo Motel; the moon with a star on its horn; accept a coffee-urn job above Flamingo gift shop to be allowed to stay in Park all winter; thousands of shorebirds out on the flats; saw my first gal forest ranger in uniform and with Smokey Bear hat- an emotional shock; stop at Eco Pond near my campsite, - skimmers, pintails, mallards, teal, scaup, grebes, all of the Florida egret and herons, also smooth-billed anis; take on job of Naturalist Interpreter at Long Pine Key Campground, which turns out to be where I camped alone with eagles and We Three crows years earlier (see Ch. VIII); George, the alligator; naturalist walks; the hardwood hammock, and an arm of the Everglades; some prairie wild plants; tree



(Chapt. XIV, cont.)

snails, Florida trees and shrubs- lysiloma, coffee, cocoplum, gumbo limbo, satin leaf, strangler fig; tree swallows wheeling, killdeer where once midnight revelry; 300 pink spoonbills along Flamingo Road; red-shouldered hawk nest; barred ows come to evening movie program; wildflower exhibit table,- wild petunia, jacquemondai, hat pin, sweet acacia, wild coreopsis, wild poinsettia; return home to Maine via Appalachaisn, where New England wildflowers "originated," Return to Florida the next fall; ducks in rafts on Odean Pond in Osecoloa State Park in north Florida; wheeling tree swallows at Rodman's Dam; a fish marvel in a canal at Pompano Beach; tiny snails jostle for position on a beach rock; "aturalist Interpreter again at ENP; water moccasin encounter on Lab. Rd.; my first Florida panther on this road; the worrisome invasion of foreign trees and shrubs in the Everglades,- Braziliam pepper, ~~meleleuca~~ meleleuca; hawk snatches steak off burning fireplace grill; airplants, palms, ospreys, anhingas on nests; to Corkscrew Swamp on board walk where I once waded to waist in the slough. Older campers head back to Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, New England in their almost too fancy RV's, so time once more for me to turn my back on the wild Everglades in my own sissy-life conveyance.

Typing: see pg. 2 of Letter to Editor, retype poorly done pages only to correct the first mistakes then make a whole new set of mistakes.



VITA- Mary Sherwood

Born. May 1, 1906, Mary Elizabeth Pasco.  
Where: Hartford, Connecticut  
Father: Arthur J. Pasco. Descendant of James Pasco, from Wales,  
a Connecticut settler family beginning in 1636. The family  
settled several towns in Connecticut along Connecticut River  
Mother: born in Hartford, Ct. Irish background.

Education:

1930. Hartford Public High School  
1934. B. S. degree in forestry, Univ. of Conn. (was then Conn State Coll)  
1937. M.S. wildlife management (conservation). Cornell Univ.

Further Graduate Studies:

Ornithology, Cornell  
Marine biology, Marine Laboratory, Coral Gables, Florida  
So and Central American Anthropology, Louisiana State  
Science teaching, University of Florida, Gainesville  
Museum techniques. Nature literature. Cornell

Experience:

1934. Summer. Conn. State Nature Guide, Shad Swamp Sanctuary,  
Farmington, Conn. for State Fish and Game and Conn. Forestry Assoc.  
1935. Full year study of Conn. trout streams for State Fish and Game.  
1936. Nature counselor. Aloha Camp, Fairlee, Vermont  
1937. Scientific Clerk, N.Y. State Biological Survey, Chautauque, N.Y.  
1938 ~~1938~~. Summer. Curator People's Forest State Museum, Barkhamsted Ct  
1939. " " " " " " " " "  
1939-43. With American Youth Hostels, Northfield, Mass.  
1943-44. With Aiken Nurseries, Putney, Vt., Learned wildflower cultivation  
; 1944-45. Junior Forest for State of Wisconsin. Return of veterans endeavor  
1945-50. Had own wildflower and fern nursery in Falls, Village, Ct.  
1951. Returned to college, Cornell, for Ornithology Ph.S. studies  
1952-57. University research jobs, on grants, Cornell  
Plant cancer research  
Animal nutrition studies  
Cold mountain study- ecology research for U.S. Army Watermaster  
At Univ. of Florida, Gainesville:  
Botany genetics, test-tube research  
Plant nutrition and analysis of lead in plants.  
Oceanographic research.





- 1954-55. Camped in Everglades National Park, bird research on behavior.
- 1957-58. Taught botany and zoology at Univ of Maine at Portland  
Then moved to Concord to get into Thoreau work.
- 1961-62. Had a writing grant to study Thoreau for a year.
- 1963- Started small willflower nursery, Concord, Mass.
1967. Founded the Thoreau Lyceum, was curator for awhile.
1968. Moved to Milford, Maine. Founded the Thoreau Fellowship.  
Edited THE THOREAU JOURNAL QUARTERLY. for 10 years.  
Taught Thoreau courses now and then at U. of Maine, Orono.
- 1978, 79, Winter. Naturalist Interpreter at Everglades National Park.
- 1977-78. Camped for a year in myvan, from Canada to Florida.
- 1980-84. Spring and fall. Forest restoration at Walden Pond for  
Mass. State Dept. Environ. Management
1980. Founded Walden Forever Wild, Inc. to rescue Walden.  
Ongoing, into present- 1994.
1980. Retired to Juniper Hill Vill., Storrs, Ct, but constantly  
active in Walden rescue and educational work.

Publications:

See accompanying sheet.

Honors and Awards

- EPA, (Boston) Bronze plaque for WFW work. .... About 1987).
1987. Apr. 26. One of 100 women chosen for 100' year's of work,  
by the Hartford, Ct. YWCA. (That "Y" had given me a scholarship  
to get to college back in 1930).
1991. A Woman of the Year award, 100th Anniversary, U of Conn.
1992. Plaque from E MAGAZINE, at their first Annual Award program.
1993. M. Sherwood Ecology Fund, created by Walden Forever Wild

M. Sherwood Founder of:

- THE THOREAU LYCEUM, Concord, Mass. 1966  
THE CONCORD SAUNTERER, Newsletter, 1967  
THE THOREAU FELLOWSHIP, Old Town, Maine 1963-78  
WALDEN FOREVER WILD, Inc. 1980- still ongoing  
THE THOREAU INSTITUTE OF ECOLOGY; will be a founder, - in the  
works now. 1994-95



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1947. N.Y. State BUS. AND PROF. WOMEN'S MAG. "Native Plant Cultivatio  
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1968. THE CONCORD SAUNTERER. Founder. Ongoing, by the Thoreau So  
1968, Fall THE THOREAU JOURNAL QUARTERLY. Founder. Published by the  
Thoreau Fellowship, for 10 years. Editor Newsletter.  
197 THOREAU'S PENOBSCOT INDIANS. Pamphlet. Under Thoreau Fellow.  
1970 YANKEE MAGAZINE. "The Bungalow."  
1971 YANKEE MAGAZINE. "We Voted to Keep the Nazis." Meredith, N.H.  
1981, May OUTDOOR AMERICA. "Making Walden Pond Forever Wild."  
1981 to THE VOICE OF WALDEN. Editor. The Walden Forever Wild, Inc.  
Now Newsletter. Ongoing.  
1991, Spr. WOMEN'S OUTDOOR JOURNAL. "Earthcare By Women"  
1986. V. 46  
Summer ARNOLDIA, "Renaissance at Walden."  
1994. Spr. CONN. BOTANICAL SOC. NEWSLETTER. "The Albert E. Moss  
Sanctuary: An Example of the Effects of Glacial and  
Human Invasions on Native Plants."

Unpublished book manuscripts:

1. WILD PETALS (Exclusively about wildflowers)
2. SISTER OF THE WOLD WILD GOOSE. Autobiograh
3. WALDEN POND, GOD'S DROP



PUBLICITY ABOUT ABOUT M. SHERWOOD

- 1975 . July. "Mary Sherwood Runs Wildflower Nursery in Greenfield (Maine) . PENOBSCOT TIMES. (By daughter of Dr. Marie Urbanski).
1984. Dec. "The Lady of the Pond." WORCESTER SUNDAY TELEGRAM,  
2 by Bernard A. DuPont.
- 1990, June "The First Lady of Wildflowers." CONNECTICUT ENVIRONMENT. by Carol Davidge.
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Sept. FORESTS. pg. 3
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- 1993, July 25. "Forever Wild." By Joel Lang. in NORTHEAST. Sunday Mag. section of HARTFORD COURANT.  
(The most comprehensive, several pages.

*I have copies of most of these if anyone wants to see them in...*

