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## [Mary Jane Sherrill]

August 29, 1939

Mary Jane Sherrill, Spinster

Catawba, N. C.

Ethel Deal, Writer

Dudley W. Crawford, Reviser Original Names Changed Names

Jane Sherrill Julia Shehan

Topen Creek Tar Creek

East Mambo Eastover

Mrs. Horner Mrs. Haynes

Mrs Pope Mrs. Pores

Mr. Pope Mr. Pores

Statesville Stanton

Charlotte Riverton

Catfish Trout

Alley's Store Allen's Store

Mr. Frye Mr. Fisk

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Catawba County Canton County C9- N.C. Box 1-

"I was born in Canton County and I'm fifty five years old. My father owned a big farm over on Tar Creek. We worked on the farm, and that is different from going out and working by the day for other folks.

"I had plenty of chances to git married, but mama and papa was both old and I had to stay and take care of them. Now they are dead; I'm old myself and it's pretty hard to get anybody. I might get married yet, if I can find the right man; what I mean by right, he's got to support me.

"I got one brother, he ain't never married neither. He is two years younger than me. No, he don't have no job; goes out and works by the day, does anything he can lay his hands to.

"I'm a practical nurse. I goes out and waits on sick people when they need me. I nursed Mrs. Haynes at Eastover six years. She was so good to me, as long as she lived she sent me a dollar every Christmas.

"Seems like I ain't never had nothing. On the farm I could always do something to bring in a little money, but in town there just ain't nothing to do. If I didn't get commodities I reckon I'd starve to death.

"The way I made a little money on the farm was in making up a cure for itch and rheumatism. Do 2 you know what poke berries are? I'll tell you how to cure rheumatism with them. Take one pint of berries and dry them, then add three pints of whiskey, and drink a teaspoonful before each meal. It is a good medicine. Then, there's the root, you wouldn't think it is good for anything. Some people think it's a disgrace to have the itch. It's not, it's just another disease. It's a disgrace to keep it. Just take a half gallon of poke root, and boil it in an iron pot. When it gets good and strong wash all over in it.

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"I kept house for Mrs. Pore, and the soldiers brought the itch with them when they come home from the World War. Mr. Pore had it. He went to the doctor and he hummed and hawed, told him first one thing and then another. One day he had the eczema and the next day he had something else. Finally one day he just up and said, 'Man you got the itch'. That made bad matters worse. Mr. Pore come out of the office roaring like a lion.

"I knowed all the time he had it. I had seen the itch before, so I took matters in my own hands. I went out behind the garden and dug some poke root; biled it till it was good and strong, and when he come in that night the kitchen was turned over to 3 him for his bath. He got a big tub and put the stuff in it. In about ten minutes you'd thought a wild horse was turned loose in that kitchen. Such swearing and bad words you never heard the like. That man was fitten to be tied. His body rose up in whelps thick as your finger. I asked him if it hurt; he said, 'hurt the devil, I'm on fire'. It killed the itch though.

"I used to sell a lot of herbs to the Herb House in Stanton, a colored man that worked on papa's farm hauled it over there for me. I have sold some for as much as eight cents a pound. I saved up all the money I could get my hands on and at one time I had eight hundred dollars. I thought I would get rich quick so I put every dime of it in a creamery business in Riverton. That thing went busted and I ain't never got a penny out of it.

"I try not to worry about things though. I always try to look on the bright side of every thing. I walk along the street and I see people crippled and blind, and I am so thankful that I can walk and see, and I tell you I believe it's a sin for people to be always grumbling, they could be a sight worse off than they are.

"I worked in the sewing room in Trout, but it was so far, and I couldn't get there regular so I 4 had to quit. If I could get a couple of rooms in town for my brother to live in I'd go and cook for folks. I am not ashamed to do any kind of work that is honest.

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"I didn't get much of a education, mama's health wasn't good and I had to stay at home with her. The schools won't graded and I don't have no idea how far I went, but I had a big geography and two or three other books. I wouldn't take a pretty for what little I can read and write.

"Yes, I belong to the Baptist Church. I can't go to church much now because it's too far to walk. I miss going though , because I was raised up to be a good christian Christian girl. Mama was mighty strict with me she never would let me go ripping around the country with the boys.

"This is a locket one of my sweethearts give me a long time ago. I sometimes wonder where he is, the last time I heard anything about him he was still single.

"Next sunday we Shehans are going to have a re-union at Shehans Ford School. Do you think you can come? We are going to have music and speakings, and a big picnic dinner. I'll tell you how to find it. It's ten miles to Allen's store, stop there and ask the way, it's five miles further. I want 5 -5- you to have some of that good dinner.

"Me and my brother is going. I expect to wear the pretty dress Mrs. Haynes give me before she died. It's white crepe with a blue jacket. I have got a hat to match the jacket, and am going to wear white shoes.

"I'm a Democrat, brother is too. We like the President so good. I hope he don't go out, he is so good to the poor people. I ain't able to do much work but our President sees to it that people like me don't starve. That's what I call a good man.

"Mr. Fisk told me to come back in about two days and get my commodities, they ain't come in yet, but I reckon I can get this medicine they give the order for this morning.

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"I usually git flour, beans and rice. We ain't got no cow, but they give us powdered milk; you just add water to it and it makes the best bread. What President could do more? I'll always vote for him.

"I told you how nice every body is to me. This morning Mr. Allen brought me up here and wouldn't charge me a cent.

"Well I got to get going. I'd hate to keep him waiting. I am glad to give you the story, it helps to get it out of my system.