lst-letter

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Milo and Lewin

My dear Boys:

While looking over some old papers of your father's,

I came across a manuscript of his boyhood days. I thought my

boys would know little of their mother, so I think instead of

writing you the news you can see in the daily papers, I'd tell

you about my girlhood days. Wouldn't you like to know? Well!

"Backward turn backward oh time in its flight, I shall be a girl

again just for tonight."

I will tell you about my grandfather. A strange old

man. David Elias Sadgwar. He owned tracts of country -- land

with valuable timbers on it -- farm lands and city properties.

He was neither free nor slave. Grandpa told me he did not know

his parents. All he remembered was water saying swish, swash and

a little sparkle hanging around his mother's neck, that her neck

was so soft and white. She held a baby in her lap and he could

not get in her lap. The next he remembered a black woman he

called mammy took care of him until he was about 13 or 14 years

old. She died, and when she was dying, she called him to her bed and said, Son, I am not your mother, i.e., I did not "born"

you. You belong to the "great house" and you come from over the

big pond. Your ma and baby brother went to New Orleans. They will

send you there when you are grown. The reason I am telling you this is because so many people have asked me where did I get my name Sadgwar? The last I remember him was when he would ride up to our gate with two horses hitched to his buggy, just snorting.

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My father and all grandpa's children were slaves

because their mother was a slave. When he was a boy, he told us children as we all sat around the fire on a winter's night, all about slavery. When the Civil War was going on, he could not go as he was cripple. One foot had been crushed and he always walked with a little limp. He learned to read when he was a slave boy. His young master as a boy would write on his board in the

carpenter's shop and when an overseer would come near, he would

take his plane and roll of shavings and there all his lessons

were curled up at his feet. That is how he learned to read and

write.

When slavery was over, the second year Lincoln University opened its doors to boys, my dad was one of the boys from North Carolina who entered. He had three friends that lasted through

the years Frank and Archie Crinke and Bob Fitzgerald.

Dad used to tell us about the good times the three

boys and himself - going to see the Wall girls of Oxford and how

pretty they were. When he came back to his Carolina home, he

taught school in Whiteville, N.C.

Wasn't it a strange coincidence that after all those

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years, Dr. Frank J. Grimpke was the minister that married your father and me? I was very proud of my boy friend. He was so

"goodly to look upon." Now they would say he was "easy on the

eyes." We were married in the parlor of the only Negro Congressman in the U.S.A., the Honorable George H. White and his daughter played my wedding march. By the way, Congressman George H. White was a cousin to our Theodore Spaulding who has just been made Judge of Phila. Municipal Courts. I think the law must run through the blood of the family. Mr. White was a fine lawyer. Dad was a fine carpenter and I was his first daughter.

After mother and dad had been married six years, I came on the

scene. I had two brothers before me. Dad was a strict-hard

Presbyterian and did not allow any of us to go to any other

church and if we were late to prayers, we got no breakfast. That

was law. I could tell you enough to write a book about that dear old

dad. He was hard as nails and he never spared the rod.

Mother said she had the ten commandments and the golden

rule and the new commandment. There were twelve of us children.

When I read the papers about the delinquent children and all this modern crime wave, I feel it is the parents fault. Parents indulge and give their children too much luxury. They are poor examples for their children to go by. You remember when Lewin was a boy, I heard him say to a playmate "Boy, you must be a <u>damn fool</u>." I did not wait long, I called him in quietly, took him to the bathroom and with a cake of ivory soap I washed his mouth out because it was filthy. I've never heard him say a dirty word since. If fathers treated mothers with the reverence they should and mothers treated fathers the same way, there would

be no crime wave.

. . . .

This is a long letter and I, will have to stop now

because I have so much to tell you the next time I write and I

am tired. Mother loves her boys and here is the same old good

· . .

night kiss.

Lovingly, Mother

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## Carrie Sadgwar Manly

PS. I forgot to tell you about grandpa Bender. I will try to tell you about him in my next letter.

Mother

