

BORN IN 1926 in Western North Carolina, her early years were spent in a little two-room log cabin a few miles from the Tennessee line. She was the third of eight children. Back in those days, there were no paved roads, electricity or radios where they lived. They walked to school, made up their own games and worked hard on the farm.

Early in life, she learned to read and appreciate the written word. She loved poetry and memorized much of what she read.

At the age of seventeen, she graduated from high school and went to Baltimore where she worked as a welder in the shipyard. This was in 1943 during the war effort. It was quite an experience for one who had led a sheltered life and had never been away from home and family.



Edris and her husband settled in Weaverville, North Carolina and reared five children. They were blessed with eight grandchildren and two great granddaughters.

When her children grew up and moved away, she enrolled in a creative writing class and also began to paint. It was a great remedy for the “empty nest” syndrome. She found that she could touch people with things she wrote! The fact that she sometimes laughed and cried as she wrote might have helped communicate her joys and sorrows. The encouragement she had from her husband and family inspired her.

She continued writing for the joy of sharing her writings and reading the writings of others. The writing and painting in her later years proves it is never too late to start something new, no matter what the age!

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Introduction

*“...A man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.”
- Luke 12:15*

“I wish I could have given you more when you were growing up, but I didn’t have much to give,” my eighty-six-year-old mother said to me, as we were reminiscing about the past.

“We had everything we needed,” I told her. “We had a place to live, plenty to eat, enough to wear and lots of love.”

When my children were small, I remember how they would ask about the ‘old days’. I thought it was cute and funny at the time, but now realize how different things were then. There were few cars, no telephones, no televisions, no electricity and no paved roads in the area where we lived. Today we have all kinds of time-saving devices we never ever dreamed about then.

Are our lives better for it? Would I go back if I could, and would I wish the hard times for my children and grandchildren? Probably not. However, I would like for them to know something of what life was like when I was a child. This is written for them and all the people today who would like a glimpse of the past. And yes, as I said to my mother, we truly had everything we needed.

- Edris Willis Cassida



The Olden Days

The young folk say when we grow old we are prone to exaggerate
and perhaps we sometimes do.

They say the miles get longer that we once walked to school.
And that the snow we tell about, gets deeper all the time.
And the bag gets bigger with the candy we got for just a dime.

Did we really shiver in the outhouse out in back,
And look at the "Sears and Roebuck" catalogue
while the wind blew snow that came in through the cracks?
Did we really play checkers on a homemade checker board,
And did our behinds get cold as our shins got red by an open fire that roared?

Did we sometimes say grace over beans and milk and bread?
And did people gather in a home and sit up with the dead?
Did we really work all day in the hot sun hoeing corn?
And then go home and feed the cows and milk them in the barn?
Did we have to sometimes sleep five children to just one straw-filled bed,
Two of us lying at the foot and three others at the head?

And did we laugh and giggle until our dad would shout,
"If you don't hush and settle down, I'm going to throw you out"?
I would love to take my children back to a time with which they cannot relate
And walk the hills and fields with them and see if they still think we exaggerate.