

DeWitt's 'Grandma Moses' 10/27/46 Paints Way to Quiet Fame

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DEWITT — Back in 1876, a Mt. Vernon, Ill., girl of 12 began painting in oils.

Mrs. Nellie Boyd, DeWitt's version of Grandma Moses, is still at it — all 96 pounds of her.

Her talents extend to sculpture, when she isn't busy with the housework, gardening and shopping, although she admits she's given up mowing her own lawn.

"I live pretty much as I always have," she says.

Actually, Mrs. Boyd, who resides at 302 N. Bridge St., began painting somewhat earlier than age 12. She started out with pastels.

If she has any particular painting technique it is that of being letter-perfect, both as to detail and authenticity. She'll spend hours on a leaf or flower, and she'll make certain that plants and animals in her work are native to the part of the country she's depicting.

Over the years, Mrs. Boyd has given away more than 100 paintings, both oils and pastels.

"My biggest problem is never having any of my recent work on hand. Someone's always talking me out of it," she twinkles. "Every time I do a new one, I tell myself I'm going to keep it, but it never turns out that way."

Mrs. Boyd's sculpturing efforts include a World War I soldier monument on the lawn of the American Legion hall at Effingham, Ill., and an angel monument marking the grave of her only son in DeWitt Cemetery.

She has a grandson, Durwood Boyd of East Lansing, and three great-grandchildren. After the wedding of one of the latter, recently, she came home and sketched the corsage she wore for the occasion. She painted it

and presented it to the newly-weds as a memento.

Her philosophy, she says, is quite simple: Plan ahead one day and trust in God. "I may not be here to carry out the plans, but I believe in being ready," she says.



Mrs. Nellie Boyd: She's DeWitt's 'Grandma Moses'

9/9/66



SMOKEHOUSE NOW A BATHHOUSE — A century ago, this cobblestone structure at pool-side of the Lee R. Rummell home, 111 S. Franklin St., DeWitt, was a smokehouse for curing hams and bacon. When the Rummells built their pool, they were loath to tear down the old building, converted it to a bathhouse instead. Rummell and son, Roger, 12, and a son-in-law, Robert Meyers, did all the work themselves.