

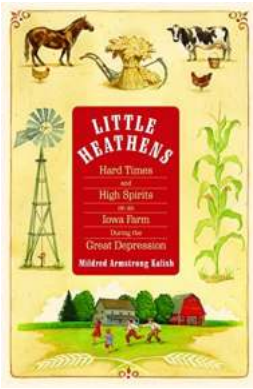
Hard Times And High Spirits On An Iowa Farm During The Great Depression



The Great Depression, a period of severe economic hardship in the United States during the 1930s, affected millions of families across the nation. One such family, the Johnsons, found solace and strength on their Iowa farm amidst the challenges of these hard times. This article delves into their story, highlighting the difficulties they faced and the resilience they displayed.

The Johnson Farm

The Johnson family, headed by James and Margaret Johnson, owned a modest farm in rural Iowa. They relied on the land to provide for their basic needs, including food, shelter, and clothing. When the Great Depression hit, their way of life was turned upside down.



Little Heathens: Hard Times and High Spirits on an Iowa Farm During the Great Depression

by Mildred Armstrong Kalish (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 2553 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
X-Ray : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 306 pages



Struggles and Hardships

The Johnsons faced numerous hardships during the Great Depression. With the economy in shambles and widespread unemployment, finding work became nearly impossible. James, a skilled carpenter, watched as construction projects dried up, leaving him without a means to support his family.

The farm suffered as well. Crop prices plummeted, making it difficult for the Johnsons to generate income from their land. The family had to make do with limited resources, rationing their meals and finding creative ways to make the most of what they had.



Rallying Together

Despite the challenges, the Johnson family exhibited remarkable resilience and a deep sense of community. They realized that they were not alone in their struggles and took comfort in the support of their neighbors and friends. Hard times brought people together, allowing them to share resources, labor, and emotional support.

On their farm, the Johnsons implemented innovative strategies to maximize their productivity. They experimented with different crops, introducing drought-resistant varieties and embracing sustainable farming practices that allowed them to adapt to the harsh conditions of the era.

High Spirits Amidst Adversity

Despite the hardships they endured, the Johnsons maintained a positive outlook and found joy even in the smallest of things. The family would gather around a radio in the evenings to escape their reality and listen to music or comedy shows, momentarily forgetting the challenges they faced.



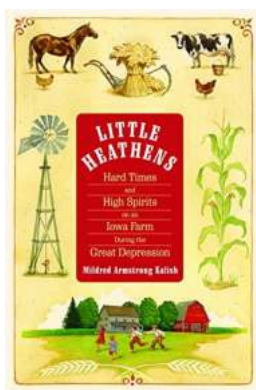
Celebrating Community

The Johnsons valued community and believed in supporting one another. They organized weekly gatherings in their barn, inviting neighbors for potluck dinners, storytelling sessions, and even impromptu dances. These events not only provided a break from the hardships of daily life but also fostered a sense of optimism and camaraderie.

The Great Depression was an incredibly challenging period in American history, affecting families and communities across the country. However, as the Johnsons'

story illustrates, it was also a time that brought out the best in people. Despite the hardships they faced on their Iowa farm, the Johnsons demonstrated resilience, resourcefulness, and a determination to find joy and community amidst adversity.

While the scars of this era remain etched in history, their story serves as a reminder of the strength of the human spirit and the power of unity in overcoming hardship. The Johnson family's example continues to inspire future generations to navigate challenging times with grace, perseverance, and high spirits.



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I tell of a time, a place, and a way of life long gone. For many years I have had the urge to describe that treasure trove, lest it vanish forever. So, partly in response to the basic human instinct to share feelings and experiences, and partly for the sheer joy and excitement of it all, I report on my early life. It was quite a romp.

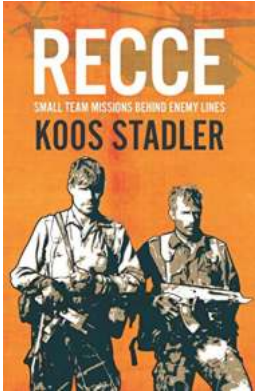
So begins Mildred Kalish's story of growing up on her grandparents' Iowa farm during the depths of the Great Depression. With her father banished from the

household for mysterious transgressions, five-year-old Mildred and her family could easily have been overwhelmed by the challenge of simply trying to survive. This, however, is not a tale of suffering.

Kalish counts herself among the lucky of that era. She had caring grandparents who possessed—and valiantly tried to impose—all the pioneer virtues of their forebears, teachers who inspired and befriended her, and a barnyard full of animals ready to be tamed and loved. She and her siblings and their cousins from the farm across the way played as hard as they worked, running barefoot through the fields, as free and wild as they dared.

Filled with recipes and how-tos for everything from catching and skinning a rabbit to preparing homemade skin and hair beautifiers, apple cream pie, and the world's best head cheese (start by scrubbing the head of the pig until it is pink and clean), *Little Heathens* portrays a world of hardship and hard work tempered by simple rewards. There was the unsurpassed flavor of tender new dandelion greens harvested as soon as the snow melted; the taste of crystal clear marble-sized balls of honey robbed from a bumblebee nest; the sweet smell from the body of a lamb sleeping on sun-warmed grass; and the magical quality of oat shocking under the light of a full harvest moon.

Little Heathens offers a loving but realistic portrait of a “hearty-handshake Methodist” family that gave its members a remarkable legacy of kinship, kindness, and remembered pleasures. Recounted in a luminous narrative filled with tenderness and humor, Kalish’s memoir of her childhood shows how the right stuff can make even the bleakest of times seem like “quite a romp.”



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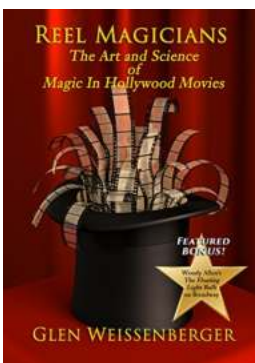
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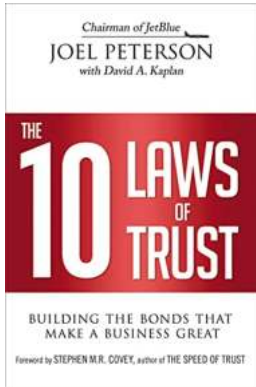
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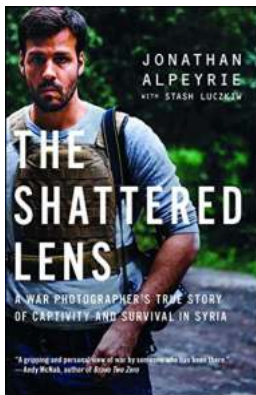
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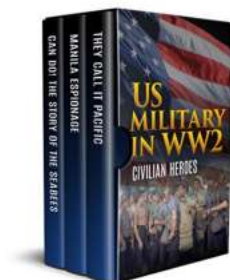
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