



7-15-1984

When Mom Pumped The Rafters Rattled

Bernadine F. Wells

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview>

Recommended Citation

Wells, Bernadine F. (1984) "When Mom Pumped The Rafters Rattled," *Westview*: Vol. 3 : Iss. 4 , Article 3.
Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview/vol3/iss4/3>

This Fiction is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at SWOSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Westview by an authorized administrator of SWOSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact phillip.fitzsimmons@swosu.edu.



When Mom Pumped The Rafters Rattled

by Bernadine F. Wells



"Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition" was a popular song during World War II. It could have been my mother's theme song when she played the organ in our small country church. If you had known my mother and watched her during Sunday morning services, you would agree she praised the Lord in a most war-like manner.

When the sparrows scattered from the steeple, we didn't know if they were scared or if the rattling of the rafters shook them from their roosting places.

As Mom rambled towards the organ, clutching her cloth handbag, we held our breaths until she straddled the small, round stool. There wasn't a stool made to fit Mom's posterior.

She arrived early, as it took a long time to get all the stops pulled out to create just the right sounds. Then she made sure her feet were placed on the pedals in the proper position and her knees spread far enough to give sufficient pressure to the knee levers.

Mom was ready to begin the minute the Reverend Jackson walked to the podium,

adjusted his spectacles, and gave her his quick nod. Her feet started pumping, her knees pushed in and out, and her stubby fingers raced across the keys.

The louder the congregation sang, the faster Mom pumped, pushed, and rocked on her little round stool. The perspiration rolled from her brow, and when she gave a certain wiggle, we knew it was also trickling down her spine.

Sunday morning was the highlight of our week. It was social as well as spiritual—all because of Mom's pumping and pushing on that little organ. On those rare occasions when she slowed to a softer melody, we could hear Mr. Jones' collie harmonizing from across the street. I was in my teens before I realized it was Rover and not Miss Lena Wilson straining for those high notes.

There were also other special days, such as weddings and funerals. The church was overflowing on either occasion. Weddings were festive, with relatives and friends coming from throughout the county. When Mom began pumping and pushing, "Here Comes the Bride"

was never delivered with more sentiment. She pushed, pumped, and wiggled on her little stool until the bride and groom were on their way to a long and happy married life. At times, Mom got so carried away, the bridal party stood several minutes in front of the altar until the Reverend Jackson caught Mom's attention and signaled it was time to stop pumping.

Then there were the funerals. If it were possible for anyone to enjoy funerals, it would have been my mother. She had a special black dress and a small black hat which she perched atop her gray hair. One of her favorite hymns was "Nearer My God to Thee." She pumped and pushed in such a doleful fashion it caused the bereaved family to mourn and weep all the more.

Now that Mom has departed from this life, I'm sure she managed to sneak in a small organ somewhere up there. Often at night when I hear the rumble of thunder, I know she's shoved the harps to one side and is pumping while the heavenly choirs sing "Alleluia."