



"You will know them by their fruits." Mt. 7:16

MARY MCAFEE

The story of Mary McAfee's holy influence is remarkable, and has been told by different writers. This file is a compilation of various accounts about Mary McAfee found in the HDM Digital Library. I have included two separate accounts by H. C. Morrison. -- DVM

THE HOLY INFLUENCE OF MARY MCAFEE

Account #1 By H. C. Morrison

From hdm0387 -- "Striking Illustrations"

The first station I ever served as a minister of the Gospel was Stanford, Ky. It is the county seat of Lincoln County, in the edge of the Blue Grass. Stanford is a beautiful little city; a more delightful people cannot be found anywhere. It was my first love among all the county seats, towns and cities in which I've preached in almost fifty years of my ministry.

When I got to Stanford, I found a boarding house with a most delightful family. Rev. John Bruce, a lovely Christian gentleman and single man, was pastor of the Baptist Church and was boarding with the same family. When I inquired after the spiritual state of the community, Brother Bruce said, "The spiritual life here is none too good. We need a revival." He said, "There is a wonderful woman down here at the toll gate on the Crab Orchard Pike. Her name is Mary McAfee. She is a very remarkable Christian; a little peculiar in her views, but wonderfully filled with the Spirit. If we had more like her, the churches would be in much better condition. She is a member of your church."

Rev. Mr. McElroy was the pastor of the Presbyterian Church. He called to see me a few days after my arrival. He was a most delightful Christian gentleman. He talked very earnestly about the great need of a revival in the town. By and by, he said, "Have you met Mary McAfee? She is a member of your congregation. She keeps the toll gate down here on the Crab Orchard Pike, something more than half a mile out. You must call to see her. She is a remarkable saint, has some queer notions, but has a wonderful experience. She claims an experience of full salvation and she certainly lives very close to her Lord."

A few days after landing in Stanford, I found, from reading the town paper, that there were twenty-eight prisoners in the county jail. I got permission from the jailer to preach to them. Most all of them were colored men. They seemed to appreciate my visit and sermon very much. Several of them Amen-ed me very heartily. After preaching, I chatted with them awhile. Among other things, I asked, "What is the spiritual state of this community?" They all laughed and their spokesman, whom I afterward found was a steward in the colored Methodist Church in the town. He said, "This ain't no place for you to come, lookin' after the spiritual state of the town. If we had knowed more about that and less about some other things, we wouldn't be where we is. There ain't much religion in this here place. I will say there is a saint down at the toll gate. This here Miss McAfee, she sure lives with de Lord. That woman is got Bible religion."

You may be sure I was becoming deeply interested in Sister McAfee. I went down to see her. I found a very modest, little maiden woman. She must have been past forty years of age. She told me a wonderful story of how she had received the baptism with the Holy Spirit in sanctifying power, how that after being bedridden for seven years, she had been instantly healed, and how the Lord had been

graciously using her in the salvation of souls. I had never met in all my life with any one to whom Jesus Christ seemed a more real person and a more gracious and present Saviour. The tears trickled down my cheeks while she talked. I asked for an interest in her prayers and went away profoundly impressed.

There was a skeptic in the town (you will always find one in a County Seat or village). I went up to his office and had a talk with him. He was a bit sour; he criticized the religious life of some of the men in the churches. He was disposed to find fault. I was a bit embarrassed. By and by he said, "There is a little woman by the name of McAfee that keeps the toll gate down on the Crab Orchard Pike. If I could get the kind of religion she has, I would like to have it." I remembered that my Master had likened a consecrated, holy life to a "city set on a hill that could not be hid."

When ministers would visit me, I would take them down to the toll gate and ask Sister McAfee to tell her experience. Every one who heard her was profoundly impressed. She was never excited and never afraid. She was resting in the calm of full redemption and perfect love. Her education was very limited, but her comprehension of scriptural truth was very remarkable and her thinking wonderfully clear. She prayed very earnestly that I might be wholly consecrated, entirely saved from sin, and filled with the Holy Ghost. She was a power in our revivals. Everybody believed in her. Her testimonies were quiet and convincing. She walked with God. She breathed the spirit of prayer, forgiveness and love. The people who came in contact with her longed to know more about Jesus.

A newspaper reporter went down and had a talk with her, gave her testimony to the Courier Journal. Rev. W. W. Hopper, down in Mississippi, read her testimony and came to Stanford to ask her about her experience and ask for her prayers. While there, he received the baptism with the Holy Spirit in sanctifying power. He returned to Mississippi to preach a full salvation in Christ received now by faith. Dr. Carradine was brought into this gracious experience under the ministry of Brother Hopper. The fire spread. It would take a bookcase full of books to tell the wondrous story of how the fire spread, sinners were converted, preachers were sanctified, missionaries went out over the seas. The years passed; little Mary's health failed and she faded gradually and then her saintly spirit, on wings of love and faith, rose to meet and dwell with her blessed Saviour forevermore.

The good people of Stanford sent for me to say some words at her funeral service. As I stood by the plain coffin and looked at her quiet, saintly face that seemed to tell of a soul that had entered into eternal rest, I hadn't a doubt but directly and indirectly a hundred thousand souls had been touched for good through the holy life and the beautiful testimony of a little maiden woman who kept the toll gate on the Crab Orchard Turnpike in the outskirts of Stanford, Ky. There are no mathematics with which we can estimate the value of a wholly consecrated, beautifully sanctified, consistent life with a glad testimony to the saving and keeping power of our blessed Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

THE HOLY INFLUENCE OF MARY MCAFEE

Account #3 By Beverly Carradine

From hdm0047 -- "Remarkable Occurrences"

[This is perhaps the most remarkable part of Mary McAfee's story.]

If ever a woman had need to exercise faith it was Mary McAfee, after she begged God with strong cries and tears for the revival. For years there was not a sign that the petition had even been noticed by heaven.

True it was, that a long while after several preachers confessed that during those very years they were deeply moved to hold a meeting in the town where this woman supplicator lived, but they allowed the impression to pass away. The solitary pleader for the community however, did not know this, and so kept on in her praying under an obviously impenetrable sky, and to a God who did not seem to hear,

and certainly did not answer.

In the Bible we read that when the Lord could not find a prophet in Israel to carry a message of rebuke and warning to His idolatrous people, He reached His hand down in Judah and brought forth a man of God from that country to do His will.

In like manner there was a scarcity of human instruments in the land where Mary McAfee lived, and God looked around in vain to find a man who would bear a message to the town of Stanford, Kentucky, which would make that community to sigh and weep over its sins, and cause at the same time his daughter, who had mourned so long, to cease her crying and go to rejoicing over the fulfillment of her often uttered supplication.

So the divine eye was turned in the Judah direction, and the divine hand began to prepare other instruments outside of the town of Stanford, Kentucky and beyond its county boundaries, and far from the state itself, who were to bring salvation to the people and prove to that grieving servant of His that God was still, as He has always been, One who not only hears but also answers prayer.

In the State of Mississippi and removed from Stanford by fully six hundred miles, was a young preacher named W. W. Hopper who was hungry for full salvation, but did not entirely understand the nature of his own longing. He prayed much, and even agonized, but there was no Philip passing along this desert portion of his life to ask him as he read and supplicated if he understood his own reading and prayers. No Ananias came into those days of spiritual bewilderment and at times blindness and darkness, with the command to arise, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.

While W. W. Hopper was in this state of mind, a newspaper reporter in the city of Louisville wrote a brief sketch or religious item about a holy woman who lived, as he stated, in a small town in the hill country of Kentucky. He mentioned several things concerning her, making in all an ordinary sized paragraph. But little as it was, it held in its narrow limits, in a strange way, the sanctification of the Mississippi preacher, and the long prayed for revival at Stanford, Kentucky

Many thousand copies of that issue of the paper, the Courier-Journal, were scattered over the country and lost to view forever. But one sheet of the publication God determined should survive the general destruction. It fluttered South, and like a Messenger Bird as it proved, nestled in the hand and under the eye of W. W. Hopper. Carelessly glancing down its columns the preacher read the following words:

“There lives in Stanford, Kentucky, a woman named Mary McAfee She dwells in a small yellow cottage in the edge of the town and keeps the Toll Gate. She claims to have been sanctified, and---”

This was all he read, but it was all God wanted him to see, and was all indeed that he needed. Like Eleazar when he recognized the hand of the Lord in confirmatory providences which guided him on his way to secure Rebecca for Isaac, so W. W. Hopper stood thrilled, and worshipped God as he felt that in a bit of printed paper he had beheld the directing finger of heaven.

He said to himself, “That is just what I need. I want to be sanctified.”

In his case the instructing Philip was six hundred miles away, and if interview was to be had he would have to seek it, and be the traveler. Distance, however, was not the only drawback, but the lack of funds to meet railroad expenses stared him in the face.

This naturally brought forth the prayer, “Lord, if this thing is from you, and you desire me to see that woman and obtain instruction from her, grant that the means necessary for the trip will be provided.”

In a week’s time, a railroad pass and money necessary for incidental expenses were placed in his hands without any hint or solicitation on his part.

A few days later this seeker after truth alighted from the train at the place of destination and asked for

the “yellow cottage” at the Toll Gate. Knocking at the door he inquired if Mary McAfee lived there, and was answered in the affirmative. Invited in the house he told her what he had come for, and as it does not take Holiness people long to enter upon business, the faithful woman and her sister began to instruct him in the way of the Lord “more perfectly,” and in a few minutes were pleading mightily in prayer in his behalf, while he himself wept and prayed and groaned upon the floor.

On the second or third day the fire fell, the long-desired blessing of sanctification swept into the emptied and completely consecrated soul, and W. W. Hopper, full of joy and the Holy Ghost, was on his way back to Mississippi.

It was after this that the writer began to hear much of W. W. Hopper. Of course he was misunderstood by his congregation, and Conference, and so became acquainted very soon with the “Fiery Furnace,” obtained a great deal of positive light on the history and experience of Shadrack, Meshack and Abednego. He also received a kind of mental geographical chart of the Island of Patmos with a marvelous amount of insight into the life of the famous exile on that wave-washed and solitary shore, a man who had been sent there on account of the Word of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ! We heard that he was “clear off,” “a fanatic,” “usefulness ended,” etc., etc. But at the same time we were informed that he had constant revivals wherever he went. We do not know at this time of spiritual greenness and ignorance in our life, how we reconciled the two reports. Perhaps we did not try to harmonize them. The thing was high, and we had not then attained unto it.

One rumor reached us that he, W. W. Hopper, while preaching a great convicting sermon, had thrown a chair off the platform. Of course, to some who had never knocked the devil out of their church, nor kicked a sin out of their lives, nor hurled a sinner into the kingdom of heaven, all this was perfectly dreadful. In fact, it was the unpardonable sin. Preachers could smoke their cigars and pipes, church members could break the Sabbath and tell impure stories, and all that could be readily overlooked. But for a man to overturn a chair in the sacred pulpit, while illustrating some truth under the power of the Spirit; Oh, that was fearful! Terrible! Sacrilegious! And not to be forgiven in this world nor in the world to come!

At a session of an annual conference several members became exceedingly violent on the floor toward W. W. Hopper Two were especially bitter. One of them, turning towards the quiet-looking, peaceful-faced victim, shook his finger at him and vociferated to the chairman:

“Bishop, I would rather the devil from hell should preach on my circuit than that man!”

The editor of a Christian Advocate, who afterwards become a Bishop was present during this stormy and heart-sickening scene. His eyes, with the gaze of many others, rested upon the accused man; and in commenting upon the occurrence when all was over, he said: “The face of W. W. Hopper was the quietest and most peaceful in the entire Conference!”

Soon after the scene related, W. W. Hopper was fairly driven by ecclesiastical pressure to take refuge in a distant Western Conference. The Spirit, however, followed him, and so, wherever he went, revivals sprang up and salvation flowed. One or more years passed away in this manner, when opposition similar to that from which he had fled became so great in the West that he turned back homeward again.

At this time we heard again of him. It was the same old story of revivals and opposition, and opposition and revivals. The man seemed to be on the best terms with God, but somehow he could not please his brethren in the ministry.

Meanwhile the writer, as pastor of a large city church, was hungry for something in the spiritual life that he did not know the name of, nor its exact nature. He was conscious at this period of desiring two things very ardently; one was a satisfying blessing for his own soul, and second a great, gracious, old-

time, old-fashioned, Wesleyan, apostolic, Scriptural Revival in his Church.

While praying about the matter and mentally casting about for human help, the face of W. W. Hopper was quietly and steadily presented to his mind with an unmistakable impression, "Send for him."

The invitation was forwarded, the invited came, and the meeting opened. The power of God fell on the fourth day. In the eight days' meeting, one hundred souls were converted, twenty-five sanctified, and four young men entered the ministry.

While listening to the third sermon of W. W. Hopper the writer suddenly saw not only the possibility but the actuality of the Second Work of Grace. He promptly bowed at the altar, came six times, and, after a complete consecration, unquestioning faith in the Word of God, and three days of almost continuous prayer, one morning at 9 o'clock, on June 1, 1889, the Baptism with the Holy Ghost and Fire fell upon, filled and literally overwhelmed him!

All this may appear irrelevant to the subject of this sketch. It may seem that not only God had overlooked Mary McAfee, but we, her biographer, had also forgotten her. But so far from this being the case, the circumstances just related made the highway along which was to come the long-deferred blessings of heaven to Stanford, Kentucky God was preparing servants to bring the message of gladness to the heart of Mary McAfee, who had been praying faithfully and persistently for ten years for the community she loved and in which she lived.

Four years passed away after the writer received the Baptism with the Holy Ghost and Fire, which were spent by him in city pastorates. Meantime Mary McAfee prayed on for the town of Stanford, Kentucky

Finally we entered the evangelistic work, and began to circle about the nation. After almost a year had been thus spent, the pastor of Mary McAfee, a devout man, suddenly felt impressed to write to us to hold a meeting in his church. We accepted the call and came. Whereupon a gifted editor-evangelist said in his epigrammatic and culminating way: "When Carradine jumped off the train one morning with his valise in his hand, the revival had come!"

What need to speak of that revival, which has gone already into the history of the holiness movement? Suffice it to say that the power of God fell upon the people; that salvation rolled; that the meeting had to be moved twice to obtain larger quarters; that the brass band of a traveling troupe played in vain in front of the theater to secure an audience; not a dozen came; while at the largest church in town the people filled the seats, jammed the vestibule and aisles, crowded the chancel, lined the altar rail and sat on the floor in the pulpit to hear the Word of God, while scores and scores, with tears, laughter, shouts and clapping of hands, were swept into reclamation, regeneration and entire sanctification.

The revival had come!

The prayer of Mary McAfee, ascending for fifteen long years, had been heard at last!

[For more about the Holy Influence of Mary McAfee, see all of hdm0798, titled as is shown below.]

Source: "The Holy Influence of Mary McAfee" Compiled by Duane V. Maxey

[The Enter His Rest website](#)