

# Youngsters to be Proud Of

The Changing Nature of Childhood

A Whole-House Exhibit at the Trail End State Historic Site, March 2008 - December 2008

Americans prefer to look at the past through rose-colored glasses. When we think about what childhood used to be like, we tend to think of our favorite fictional characters: Tom Sawyer running barefoot through the grass; Laura Ingalls playing outside her one-room school; Nancy Drew sitting in her room doing her homework; "The Beav" coming home to his mother's milk and cookies.



"I know Mr. K is the proudest man in Wyoming. It's so fortunate that you have one of each, and I am sure they will be youngsters to be proud of."

Laura Zook to Eula Kendrick, 1900

For many American children, however, the reality was much different. Did you know:

- In the 1850s, childrearing books were geared towards fathers and not mothers?
- In 1900, over 1.7 million children between the ages of 10 and 15 were considered "breadwinners" by the U. S. Census Bureau?
- In the 1900s, preventable disease killed over 60 percent of the children who died?
- Until the 1910s, most children's bedrooms were in attics or unheated corners where they wouldn't be in anyone's way?
- In the 1920s, too much "mother love" was considered bad for the family?
- In the late 1920s, parents in well-to-do families feared kidnappers?
- During the Depression, over 200,000 children a year roamed the country, homeless and alone?

By using the experiences of three generations of the Kendrick family, this exhibit shows the many ways that childhood has changed over the years, both for good and ill.

## A HOME BUILT FOR CHILDREN

Author Margaret Fleming noted in 1930 that up until the late 1800s and early 1900s, little attention was paid to accommodating the needs of children in the home:

*Many of the homes of our grandmothers' day seemed to have been planned solely for the comfort and happiness of elderly people; there was little in them to express the joy and exuberance of youth ... a general young-people-must-be-seen-and-not-heard atmosphere hung around them like a pall.*

Almost all furniture was adult-sized, with the exception of the cradle and the high chair. As for bedrooms they were generally unheated, makeshift affairs that usually housed all the children in the home, male and female alike. By the time Trail End was built, however, much more attention was being paid to the needs of the younger set.

*Better Homes & Gardens* magazine once declared, "A real home is a place where children feel at home." In that respect, Trail End – the home built by John and Eula Kendrick – was indeed a real home. It was built for a family with children – very active children (teenagers, actually). As such, it was designed to incorporate both welcoming comfort and sophisticated elegance. While Senator Kendrick could hold formal receptions in the Foyer, visitors were just as likely to find Mrs. Kendrick there, answering correspondence at her desk in the corner, or a gaggle of teenagers dancing to the latest tunes played on the Edison phonograph.

Rosa-Maye and Manville Kendrick were the first children to live in Trail End, but not the last. Manville and his wife Diana – who had moved into the house in 1929 – welcomed their first child in 1931 and their second in 1934. They were frequently joined here by Rosa-Maye's two children, also born in 1931 and 1934. Yet another generation spent time at Trail End, when Manville's grandchildren came to call in the 1950s.

To accommodate her grandchildren, Eula Kendrick had one of Trail End's three guest



bedrooms converted into a nursery in 1933. As she noted in her diary, “Spent morning supervising Mr. Edwards and Edgar in moving furniture out of ‘Blue Room,’ preparation to making nursery for new baby coming to MK and D in late January.”

### **Girls’ Bedrooms**

At the time Trail End was built, girls’ rooms were supposed to be deliciously fussy, with antique-looking furniture, plenty of pastel colors, and lots of ruffles, all aiming towards a “cluttered air of old-fashioned charm.” Rosa-Maye’s bedroom at Trail End is the quintessential “girly” room. But, while Eula Kendrick decorated it with lace, roses, and plenty of pink, that may have been just a mother’s wishful thinking: Rosa-Maye was the biggest tomboy on the block! She drove cars and flew in airplanes – things girls just didn’t do much of back in the 1910s and 1920s.

Nevertheless, it was her room, and Rosa-Maye cherished it as such. She could always go there whenever things got too crazy. As she told her mother once in 1912, “The boys make so much noise at night, that I have to go into my room all alone to study.” Such a space was important for the young girl, as journalist Martha Cutler pointed out in 1906:

*One of the high points of a girl’s life is acquiring a room of her own. Such a room is for a person who has reached that longed-for period in life when her needs are worthy of consideration, when a quiet, retired spot is deemed a necessity for study and work. ... Her sense of individual possession is coupled with delightful sense in importance and newfound dignity.*

### **Boys’ Bedrooms**

Manville’s is the smallest of the family bedrooms. This was not because his parents liked his sister better, but because it was felt that boys didn’t need large rooms; they should be spending most of their time out-of-doors:

*A small room isn’t necessarily a hardship for a boy. It is likely that he really doesn’t need so much room as a girl, since he isn’t around the house a great deal, and his dressing and toilet maneuvers are, at least up to a certain age, bound to be simple.*

Decorating magazines around 1910 said boys’ rooms were to be “spartan” and decorated with Native American patterns, simple red curtains and sail boats. Arts & Crafts style furnishings were popular, including large desks and bookshelves (to encourage study) and lighting fixtures. When putting together Manville’s bedroom, Eula Kendrick followed that advice to perfection, from the Native American border on the walls to the simple red curtains, and the many pictures of sail boats. The chandelier and wall sconces are Arts & Crafts-inspired.

Though his room was small, Manville gained extra space during the day by sleeping in a folding Murphy Bed at night. In this respect, Eula broke from the advice of the day which stated,

*Mothers could take a good tip from school dormitories ... single cot beds, which are well-made and very comfortable these days, are much more satisfactory than the ordinary style of bed. They use up less space, which is a desirable feature if the room is small.*

## TWO WILD & CRAZY KIDS

John Kendrick and Eula Wulfjen were both born in Texas – and there ends any similarity in their upbringing. Given the fifteen-year difference in their ages, one might expect a few other differences, but those between John and Eula were based on economics, education, culture, and family values, not just age:

- John was orphaned at an early age and shuttled back and forth between relatives who didn't really care what happened to him; Eula was born to a well-to-do ranching family and pampered almost from the start by her parents, aunts, uncles and grandparents.
- John was raised with only one sibling, a sister named Rosa (his half-siblings were much older and did not live at home); Eula was one of five children born to Charles and Ida Wulfjen, the others being Mattie, Edna, Hazel and Clarence.
- John attended school sporadically, finally quitting for good somewhere around the fourth or fifth grade; Eula attended finishing schools in Boulder, Colorado, and Austin, Texas, where she honed her skills in art, music, public speaking and other cultural refinements.
- Although they both came to Wyoming at the behest of Charles Wulfjen, John first arrived in 1879 as a low-wage trail rider on a Wulfjen cattle drive; Eula first traveled to Wyoming in 1872 to live on her father's Mule Shoe Ranch outside Cheyenne.
- When John left his family home as a teenager, it was to get a job and support himself; when eighteen-year-old Eula left, it was to marry John and begin a new life at his ranch in Montana.

### John's Bang-Up Adventure

We only have one picture of John Kendrick as a child, taken when he was a young teenager. In it, he looks at the camera with a quiet dignity. But, according to author J. R. Burroughs, the young boy in the photo could be a handful at times:

*At the age of thirteen he had yet to enter the saloon which was the principal gathering place for sociable males in the small Texas town where he was raised. One Christmas season the sounds of conviviality proved irresistible and, pushing through the swinging doors, the boy stepped inside. It was customary in the Texas of that day to set off firecrackers at Christmas time and, on this occasion, John Kendrick was well supplied. He lost no time in dropping a lighted cracker in the gaping overcoat pocket of a man warming his hands in front of the stove. The result exceeded his most sanguine expectations. The fellow just had come from the hardware store, and the aforementioned pocket contained a pound packet of black powder!*



### **Eula's Smashing Times**

As for Eula, we have several images of her as a child. The earliest, taken in about 1876, shows a very serious-minded little girl. She, too, had a bit of a wild streak, as evidenced by this story she told on herself:

*I remember getting furiously mad at my big sister but one time when we were little girls in Cheyenne, though I had playfully knocked her head through a pane of glass, being unable to resist the opportunity - when I came upon her unaware one morning leaning against the window pane with her nose pressed flat - I stole to the bed, clutched a pillow and banged her head with all my might. The following crash and scream accompanied with crashing glass frightened me near to death to say nothing of the flow of blood, though why she wasn't seriously cut I will never know.*



### **BRINGING UP BABIES**

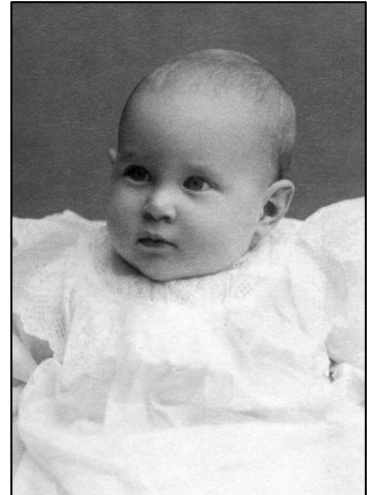
When John and Eula Kendrick married in 1891, they moved to Montana and immediately started trying to have a family. In 1897, after several false alarms and at least one miscarriage, Eula was more than ready to give birth to her first child. Since most children at that time were not born in hospitals, she relied on a private nurse to take care of the delivery:

*I went ... into town ... to await the arrival of the “stork” – long delayed in visiting us. Mr. Kendrick left me at the [Sheridan] Inn, where I spent a week or ten days, then went out to my nurse’s home. The little daughter arrived in due time.*

### **Rosa-Maye Kendrick**

That little daughter was Rosa-Maye Kendrick. She was named for her grandmother, Anna Maye Kendrick, and her aunt, Rosa Kendrick. Rosa had died several years earlier, so those who had known her, such as John Pritchett of Texas, were pleased that her name lived on in John’s daughter:

*I see you have named her for Miss Rosa. You could not have found a better name nor one with purer association. My best wishes are with and for the little girl, and when I say that I hope she will make as noble a woman as her aunt for whom she is named, I can say nothing further in that line.*



Shortly after her birth, Rosa-Maye was taken to the OW Ranch in southern Montana, where she lived until she was eleven years old. Ranch life suited her and, like her mother before her, Rosa-Maye loved to ride horses:

*She began riding in her parents’ arms when but three months old, progressing from this infantile method to first a pillow in front of the rider to sitting behind and holding tight round her mother or father’s waist. At three she was turned loose on her pony to ride as she pleased around the yard, or outside along with older people, and at four she was riding everywhere, going as far as 20 miles in three hours with her mother.*

### **Manville Kendrick**

Three years after Rosa-Maye was born, the Kendricks welcomed their second child, a son. They and their friends were delighted, as indicated by more than one congratulatory letter. John’s friend George Bissell summed it up nicely:

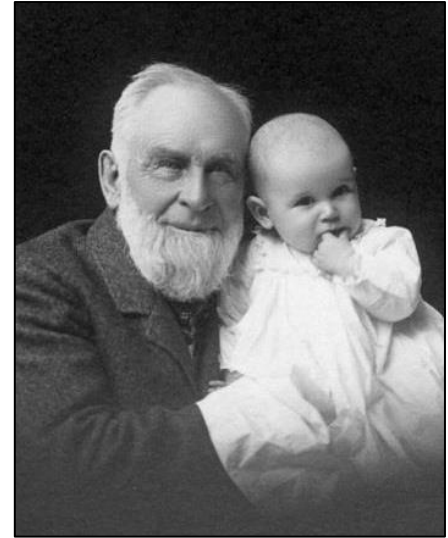
*I want to extend my congratulations to you upon the advent of a genuine cowpuncher into your home and my compliments to Mrs. Kendrick and Manvel, whom I trust will prove a “chip off the old block.” It seems almost useless to wish you good luck as the fair goddess always smiles on you! And now you have a son and heir! I hope you will wear your honors gracefully and train him up a credit to his good mother.*

“Manvel” quickly became “Manville.” According to Manville’s Baby Book, as completed by Eula Kendrick, the spelling of the name was changed at the insistence of Mister Hiram S. Manville:

*First spelled the name Manvel Kendrick, the original family name of Mr. Manville for whom he was named, but he protested so we changed it to Manville. Mr. Hiram S. Manville was 70 years older than Manville.*

John Kendrick respected Hiram Manville a great deal; in some ways, he looked upon the older man as a surrogate father. Even though he didn’t approve of the original spelling, Hiram Manville was very pleased - and more than a little surprised - that John and Eula named their son after him. As Mr. Manville noted to Eula in 1900:

*You did it! It was a complete surprise – “Manville Kendrick.” What a name as that to put onto a poor little Boy. Do you suppose he would, if he had been consulted in the matter, have been born if he had known he was to be afflicted with such a name? ... You know it a pretty heavy name to carry. Well it’s a Boy, Thank the Lord, for that I say. Don’t you say so too? You want – I want – everybody wants another John Kendrick, if not in name, one by nature.*



### **A Proud Papa**

Unlike many male parents of the day, John Kendrick took a great deal of interest in his children and was not shy about expressing his feelings about them. His ranching business forced him to travel a great deal, and in his letters home - such as the following written in 1904 - he nearly always stated how much he missed Eula and his “little chicks”:

*As our train literally flew along at the foot of the Rockies last night there came into my mental vision a picture not of the vast stretches of green valley and mountain side but of a Little Mother and Two Sweet Babes in a faraway home. The mother reading to the babes and ... I thought of what a happy house it was and how much the father and husband of this house gained in renewed courage from this house and how much clearer his vision became during the restful times spent there.*

## TRAIL END'S TEENAGERS

All teenagers feel that their problems are theirs alone – that No one in the World ever Suffers like They do! This was true in the early part of the Twentieth Century. Family psychologist and author Margaret Fleming said that the teen years could be very trying on the average family:

*The family problem ... whose solution probably needs the greatest readjustment in the arrangement of a house, is that of the young people in their teens. ... A boy or girl acquires the notion, during adolescence, that he or she is the focal point of the whole universe and is often as self-conscious as an actor at a first stage appearance.*

### The Trials of Rosa-Maye

The Kendrick kids were very much the same. By the time the family moved into Trail End in 1913 – on her sixteenth birthday – Rosa-Maye Kendrick had already been targeted by many of the “slings and arrows” of the teenage years: skin problems, braces on her teeth, unwanted weight gain, and at least one devastating crush on an older boy. She was also plagued by an annoying little brother, difficult teachers at school, and an overwhelming boredom with life in Sheridan:

*Brother and I are awfully anxious for the time to come when we may go away from Sheridan. You know how much we want a trip in the spring. We are both so sick and tired of the place and want to get away. ... a trip anywhere. I don't care where!*

Rosa-Maye's father didn't make life any easier. When their mother was out of town, John tended to lay down the law a bit more strictly than Eula, as evidenced in this 1912 letter from Rosa-Maye to her mother:

*Father insists upon getting up early, and don't want us to go out at night at all. He came home last Friday night and found me still up. It really wasn't late for Friday, but he scolded me until I felt miserable. I didn't know what to say so I said nothing. I couldn't tell him that you let us because he would say that it didn't make any difference.*

Like today's teens, Rosa-Maye liked music and movies – sometimes going to two shows in one night. She followed the careers and concerts of her favorite “pop” stars (in her case, Sarah Bernhardt and Maud Adams) and loved, Loved, LOVED clothes! In January 1913, her mother went shopping in Denver and





sent a parcel of new things home. When Rosa-Maye opened the packages, she was ecstatic. As she wrote her mother the next day,

*I am just wild over the suit!!! I tried it on and it fitted like a glove. All it needs is shortening; that is the skirt. The jacket was made for me! And the waists are dreams. The whole family admired them.*

The next month, while her mother was still away, Rosa-Maye had an adventure that could have been disastrous, if it hadn't been so funny:

*Miss Anna and I went down to hear the new organ at the Episcopal church. It was so dark when we started that I took Brother's little cap pistol. Bud told me that it wasn't loaded, but it had three shells in it which had all been shot. Well, when we got on the streetcar I took it out and was playing with it when BANG!! It went off. There were just a few people in the car and they all jumped and looked my way and began to laugh, and I just nearly died laughing.*

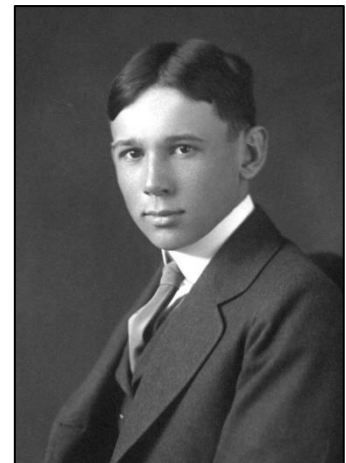
*Well, we met Mary on the corner of Loucks Street. We kept thinking that the powder smelled strong. We got in church and everybody began to sniff and several men got up and began to hunt for fire. Miss Anna just happened to reach over to her coat and it felt so warm and she drew out my muff and it was SMOKING! ... She only had one thought and that was to get the fire out. She tried to put it out with snow and ended with sticking it in a tub full of water. It has been drying ever since. I think that I was all to blame.*

*Do you think I'll need another muff, or shall I have this one fixed or what? ... If you decide that I need a new one, send me one of dark fur with tails on it. I don't want an expensive one at all, just one to last the winter out and even then I don't know whether I deserve it.*

## Being Manville

When Manville Kendrick was born in 1900, a business acquaintance of his father's wrote, "My compliments to Mrs. Kendrick and Manvel, whom I trust will prove a chip off the old block." Indeed, Manville was the answer to his father's dream: a son and heir to everything John Kendrick had worked for: land, money, prestige and influence.

John wanted Manville to have all the advantages he'd never had, starting with a first-rate education. Manville was only six years old and on a trip east with his mother when his father wrote to him: "While you are so close be sure and take a look at Harvard College;



Father is in hopes that you can finish your education there.” John assumed that Manville would be eager to take over the Kendrick ranching empire, but by the time the boy was ready for college, John was beginning to wonder if his son was even interested in the business; if, in fact, he might be a bit of a slacker:

*I was greatly disappointed in his lack of definite information in reference to the business; there was hardly a single feature of ranch conditions upon which he could speak with any degree of assurance. ... Maybe it is his age and maybe it is not to be his line of work.*

Later that same year, John was able to spend additional time with Manville. With the increased contact came an increased understanding of his son’s state of mind - an understanding that John found to be profoundly moving:

*The glimpses of the boy’s inner longings, his attitude of mind, revealed such a close parallel of my own similar experiences as a boy as to prove actually startling. So much so that I have had occasion to wonder whether it is not the old man’s conceit that compels the conviction that a son is simply great in whom the father sees a reflection of his own characteristics. Anyhow, my son is the dearest boy that I ever knew. And I never effect to know a time of such discouragement as to not be able to Thank God with deep and fervent reverence for our two children.*

Manville eventually fulfilled his father’s wishes. He graduated from Harvard in 1922 and went on to manage the Kendrick ranches for fifty years. Shortly before he died, Senator Kendrick praised Manville, saying: “I think it may interest you to know that as a businessman you suit me exactly and as a son you suit me ideally.”

## **GRANDPARENTS IN THE HOME**

Until the middle years of the 20th Century, most households included a grandparent or two. Not only did adult children feel obligated to care for their parents (as their parents had cared for them), their elders were often viewed as fonts of parental wisdom. As *The New York Times* noted in 1886,

*There is nobody like a comparatively young and lively grandsire or grandmother to fill in the family chinks. ... Childhood is infinitely more tender in [their] sight than it is to father or mother, and what are deliberate wanderings out of the way in their eyes are but involuntary slips of the untried feet to grandmother. ... Ah, how much grandmother knows!*

At times, Trail End was a multi-generational household: Eula's parents stayed at the mansion for weeks at a time and Manville and Diana Kendrick's children grew up in the home. In order to make all generations feel comfortable, certain accommodations had to be made, said psychologist Margaret Fleming:

*A typical family might consist of parents, one grandparent, an adolescent boy or girl, and one or more young children. What can be done to make each member of this group feel at home under his own roof? ... The wants of the grandparents are usually few. A simple but a quiet and a cheerful room - this is usually their chief concern.*

### Grand Parental Wisdom

Grandparents had experience raising children and sometimes related to their grandchildren better than the parents themselves – as John Kendrick noted in 1901, when Rosa-Maye stayed with her grandparents, Charles and Ida Wulfjen:

*Rosa-Maye is growing more tractable and easily managed all the time. The truth of the matter is that her grandparents can just beat the Sox off her parents in managing her. ... Your father says they have quite decided to take either Rosa-Maye or Manville for good when we return home!*



Following Rosa-Maye's birth, Ida wrote to Eula and John about her husband's reaction – and her own – at being unable to be with their daughter and granddaughter:

*Your father was so happy – and did not mind being called an old grandfather at all. He said he would have to get a cane as soon as he could ... Son, I shall watch very eagerly for your letters to learn how daughter is getting along. No one but a mother can ever know what a sacrifice it is to stay away from a daughter at such a time.*

Manville and Rosa-Maye Kendrick never knew their paternal grandparents. John Kendrick's father, John Harvey Kendrick, had drowned in 1860 and his mother, Anna Maye, died in 1863. In 1917, while on a sea voyage to France, John Kendrick told his son a little about young Anna:

*On the way over I have been reminded many times by the surrounding circumstances of my Irish mother's trip across this old, old ocean in a sail ship a little more than 60 years ago when she was about the age your sister is now. She had a sister with her and they were going among strangers in quest of home and fortune. Don't you think she was a brave girl that grandmother of yours and are you not glad she had the courage to go out to America? I surely am.*

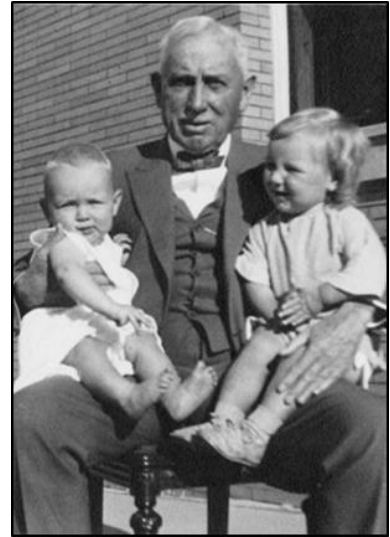
## Grandpa John

As far back as 1900, John Kendrick knew the value of grandparents and what made them so special. He wrote,

*It is my opinion that the better one understands and appreciates children the more patient and thoughtful they are of them. It is no doubt this principle that makes grandparents so much more indulgent than they were with their own.*

John and Eula Kendrick's four grandchildren were born between 1931 and 1934. While John did not live long enough to meet the youngest, Hugh and Kendrick, the two oldest, Eula and John, quickly enraptured him. Shortly after young John's birth, the elder Kendrick wrote to Manville, "I feel reasonably certain at this time that he is to be a boy after my own heart just as little Eula is a girl after the hearts of both her grandmother and grandfather."

Because his son had made the decision to stay out of politics and public life, John Kendrick hoped that his grandson might take up the mantle of public service. He stated his case in a 1932 letter to Manville:



*Here I am reminded to say that your reference to the sober attitude of John does not disturb me in the least. On the contrary, I am pleased that he is a sober minded boy. It is quite all right for girls to be laughing and giggling at every little thing, but boys have more serious things to think about. If this boy grows to maturity of body and mind it is easy for his Grandfather to conceive that perhaps his State, and maybe his Nation, will make demands of service upon him. In any event it is just as well for him to begin by taking life seriously, because it certainly will be a serious situation for him if he is ever called for public service.*

## THE CULTURED CHILD

Art, music and literature are integral components of America's cultural existence. As such, it has long been considered best for children to be well-versed as to the best books, the best art and the best music. As *The Delineator* told its readers in 1904:

*Very fortunate is the child who is born into a home where the ideals are high, and where the books, the music, and the conversation are of the best. But such culture is not universal ... the average parents have not had in their own childhood such an environment, and it is because there is such a spiritual awakening through the world concerning the child and its needs, that among the hundred and one questions their earnest mothers and fathers are asking is, 'What shall we give our children to read?'*

## **Books**

Before the 1850s, fairy tales and make-believe stories by such literary luminaries as Mother Goose and The Brothers Grimm were frowned upon – unless the message was that disobedience and deception were very wicked and very dangerous. After all, parents counted on books to help give moral instruction to their young.

Even into the 20th Century, parents were concerned about the impact of fairy story staples – ovens hidden inside candy cottages, poisoned apples, and birds baked in a pie – on their innocent children's young minds. As *McCall's Magazine* noted in 1912:

*Many grownups have serious doubts about the effect of fairy tales; that these old tales are full of horrors which fill the minds of children with images causing terror; that they often depict the mean and sordid, suggesting evil quite as much as good. ... if their children hear so much that is purely fanciful they will be dissatisfied with things of everyday life or fail to distinguish between the real and the unreal.*

Starting in the last half of the nineteenth century, literature that excited the imaginations of children began to appear. Books such as *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865), *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876), *The Wizard of Oz* (1900), and *Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens* (1906) were encouraged as harmless pleasures. As they grew older, adventure-loving boys were encouraged to read books by Robert Louis Stevenson, Alexander Dumas and Rudyard Kipling. Girls, considered to be overly influenced by "the mild literary gruel of sentimental girlhood," were steered towards the works of Charles Dickens, Jane Austen, Willa Cather and Louisa May Alcott.

Like other young Americans, Rosa-Maye and Manville Kendrick, as well as their own children, enjoyed all these books, plus poetry, history, travelogues and magazine short stories.

## **Music**

Like reading, music was an important part of life in the Kendrick household, as it was in many an upper and middle-class household. By the 1920s, it was considered by some to be an essential component in the creation of a well-rounded child. As Mrs. Herman M. Biggs of the

National Federation of Day Nurseries stated in 1927, “It is the duty of every mother to give her child the opportunity to become acquainted with at least one musical instrument.”

Eula Kendrick was ahead of the curve as far as music in the home was concerned. Like their mother, Rosa-Maye and Manville both played the piano and sang. They took music lessons after school, as well. In 1913, Rosa-Maye joined her school’s Glee Club in a performance that had - for the singers, at least - a shocking conclusion:

*Last night the Glee Club sang at the Orpheum. I decided to sing too, at the last moment, and wore my grey broadcloth. We sang two songs and then for encore we decided that instead of just singing the last verse of the first [song] as we had done before, we would sing the first song all the way through. Now since we didn’t tell Mr. Klindt of this, just as we reached the middle of the song full force – down went the curtain! Can you imagine our amazement? The girls stared at one another with blank faces, then all began to laugh. It was a good joke on us.*

Her father responded jokingly,

*I enjoyed the joke on your club of singers; the only inference to be drawn is that the curtain man concluded there was a limit to what the audience could stand and took the only available means at hand to relieve it of any further punishment!*

In addition to the piano, Manville played the mandolin and, according to his father, another instrument as well. Writing about a proposed trip in 1915, John told Eula: “Manville says he can get away with me and I am sure it will be agreeable with all the neighbors, owing to his devotion to that horn.” No word what kind of horn it was, but we know Manville owned a bugle at one time. When he was at boarding school, Manville belonged to a Mandolin Club that included over twenty players.

The piano was probably the most common instrument in the American home. Dozens of advertisements and magazine articles sponsored by the National Piano Manufacturers’ Association in the 1910s and 1920s touted the numerous benefits of the piano for both the children and their families:

*Poise, Magnetism, Charm, Culture – these qualities go hand in hand with the ability to play the piano. For a hundred years the American family has rallied around the piano. It is the heart-instrument of the home. In great mansions, in small homes, wherever there are children, the*



*country over, the piano is a vital force in broadening culture and strengthening the ties of the home life.*

With the opportunity to learn an instrument came the obligation to practice the instrument! Most children disliked practicing, something Mary Wilson Sherwood noted in her 1881 book, *Home Amusement*:

*The family circle which has learned three or four instruments, the brothers who can sing, are to be envied. They can never suffer from a dull evening. However, the only deep shadow to the musical picture is the necessity of practicing, which is not a home amusement; it is a home torture.*

## Art

When Eula Kendrick was a girl, she studied art as well as music. At finishing school in Texas, she learned to paint with oils and executed several large canvases prior to her marriage. Later, she did smaller paintings of ranch scenes and Sheridan area scenery.

We know little of the artistic talents of Manville and Rosa-Maye other than the fact that Rosa-Maye completed a couple of small watercolors and Manville doodled on everything! Two of their children - cousins Hugh Kendrick and Kendrick Harmon - were both born artists. Kendrick Harmon became very skilled at detailed pen and ink drawings while Hugh, who died in 1952, apparently showed some talent at an early age. In 1939, Manville sent his mother one of Hugh's drawings, made when the boy was five years old:

*I am enclosing one of Hugh's works of art. I never thought to have a painter in the family, but that seems to be the way of it. How he would be if the process were involved in that of schooling, I do not know; but when he does it for his own amusement, there seems to be no labor of composition. He dashes it off with a bold, free hand that is worth the beholding.*

## PLAYTIME

Since the beginning of the Twentieth Century, both writers and advertisers have emphasized that "The Family that Plays Together, Stays Together." Towards that end, most middle and upper class households attempted to create spaces within the home - or immediately adjacent to it - where both children and adults could amuse themselves. In *The New Century Home Book* (1900), Frank De Puy stated:

*In the best and happiest homes, games and pastimes have their place. There can be no doubt that men and women are helped to happier and better lives by home amusements. The children who are permitted and encouraged to enjoy healthful and innocent games at home cling closer to their homes.*

## **The Playroom**

Among working class families of the early 20th Century, children were often sent to play in the streets so as not to disturb their fathers' rest. In homes like Trail End, however, children were encouraged to play at home as much as possible. Towards that end, Trail End's third floor was originally designed as a playroom for Rosa-Maye and Manville. After recalling one of her own experiences as a child, Eula Kendrick was probably very much in favor of a special space for her children:

*I remember as children our fear of Uncle Dudley Snyder – the oldest half-brother of my father. When we many children became too noisy he would look over his glasses and say, "Tut-tut, children – that's enough," at which all of us would scamper to other parts of their big house to take up our arguments and noisy play.*

The idea to give children a specific place to play indoors was not a new idea in the 1900s, but instead of bare, empty spaces where youngsters could romp without fear of breaking anything, parents were suddenly encouraged to create stimulating environments full of activities in which children could explore and use their imagination. In 1899, the *Ladies' Home Journal* described the ideal playroom as being located on the top floor of the house with plenty of natural light and the following amenities:

- A sandbox
- A full-sized tent
- A small pond with water (on which to sail toy boats)
- A small dirt garden for growing real flowers and vegetables
- A swing
- An aquarium
- A croquet set
- A marble course which circled the room and ended in the sandbox
- Upholstered nooks in which to curl up and read
- Wall space to display children's artwork

A playroom containing all of the above might not have ever existed (especially with the large amounts of dirt, water, and sand being suggested for the top floor of a house!), but the point



was made: whether large or small, attic or basement – children needed a creative space all their own.

### Room For Romping

Physical health, of course, was (and is) paramount in the development of the child. As Wilma Sullivan stated in an article in *The Delineator* in 1904, it was easier to train a child to good physical form than it was an older person:

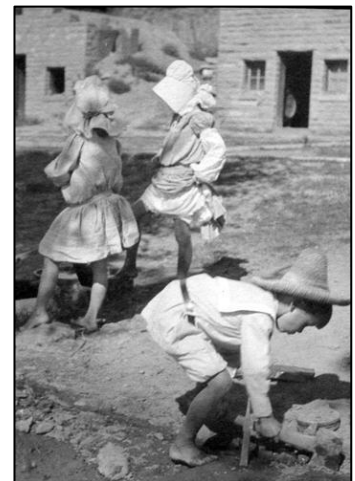
*The child is like wax, pliable and easily moulded into beautiful form. Later the body becomes like marble and must be chiseled into shape. With love and knowledge of what to do, the plastic form of the child can be made a thing of beauty and endowed with the most perfect health. The limbs can be made supple and strong, the lungs developed to their perfect capacity, the heart strengthened, the muscles rounded, the carriage made erect, and all the bodily functions improved with a corresponding effect upon the mental nature of the child.*

In the 1920s, when more and more people started moving to suburbia, the back yard became the place to romp and play whenever possible (while the indoor playroom was still important, it became more a place for projects and reading rather than physical play). As child psychologist Gladys Denny Shultz noted,

*The following things are absolutely essential and indispensable if your house is to be a home for children: At a very minimum, there must be a yard where they can play freely. They must be able to make noise ... they must have plenty of room for strenuous exercise; they must have a place to build and contrive. ... a great big yard with climbable trees, space for a children's garden and for pets, for swings, playhouse and such equipment as the parents can afford.*

During their years at the OW Ranch, both Manville and Rosa-Maye Kendrick had plenty of physical exercise. According to Eula Kendrick, they studied in the morning, then explored the outdoors after lunch:

*The afternoons were given over to long horseback rides ... If it was summer, they would go for a swim in a not-too-deep hole in Hanging Woman, the little creek that wiggled along circuitously from the divide. ... In the early evening, too, they often went shooting for prairie dogs ... or skating in the winter.*



When Manville and Diana Kendrick lived at Trail End with their children, they wanted both indoor and outdoor space for play. To accommodate rainy and snowy days, they enclosed the west balcony and turned it into a playroom for their boys. Outdoors, the young fellows kept what their father referred to as a “boars-nest of an Indian Camp” in the back yard.

## Toys & Games

In the 1800s, toys and games usually emphasized educational or spiritual values over simple enjoyment. Carpentry sets and wooden animals instructed boys in farm and manual skills, while dolls and tea sets taught girls grace and etiquette. While there were some gender-neutral toys such as alphabet blocks and teddy bears, most toys were geared toward either boys or girls: in the 1920s, for example, science and technology toys such as power tools and chemistry sets were designed to interest boys in those fields of endeavor, while dollhouses and miniature appliances were intended to introduce girls to their roles as housewives and mothers.

Speaking of teddy bears, incidentally, they were first introduced in 1903. Named for Theodore “Teddy” Roosevelt, the stuffed toy was immensely popular around 1906. Interest died off for awhile, but in 1926, the publication of A. A. Milne’s first Winnie the Pooh book made the stuffed bear popular once again.



In the mid-1800s, board games became popular for both sexes, with Milton Bradley and Parker Brothers among the leading manufacturers. These games tended to be quite structured and were frequently geared toward social advancement. Gradually, board games shifted their focus by introducing different strategies for winning. As one author noted, “The winners of these new games were no longer the most pious players who had accumulated the greatest joy in the next world, but they were more often the shrewdest players who had accumulated the most money.” Think 1904’s *The Landlord’s Game* as opposed to 1843’s *Mansions of Happiness*!

Rosa-Maye and Manville liked board games, particularly checkers. Though they played every night, Rosa-Maye had some concerns that her mother might not appreciate them playing such a game on the Sabbath. “We play checkers every night,” she wrote to Eula in 1911. “Do you disapprove of it on Sunday? If you don’t want us to, why, let us know.”

Playing cards had been around since the Tenth Century. Because each card had to be hand-painted (mass production didn’t occur until the 1400s), their use was restricted to the very wealthy. By the early 1800s, when American companies began manufacturing playing cards,

there were many card games to choose from, including some we've heard of today - whist, cribbage, piquet, patience (solitaire) and poker - plus a few that have gone by the wayside, such as Gleek, Noddy, Pope Joan and Losing Lodam.

While cards were a favorite among adults, their use by children was somewhat discouraged. Even though playing cards helped children learn to count, most card games were considered to be too much like gambling. A few games, however - Crazy Eights, Concentration and Old Maid - were allowed.

After the turn of the 20th Century, imagination and fantasy became accepted as harmless pleasures. According to author Frank De Puy in his book, *New Century Home Book of 1900*, parents were encouraged to play along with their offspring's imaginative games:

*Parents are better for joining in their children's games and pastimes. It lightens their cares; helps to keep their brains clear for the larger duties of life; aids in warding off physical and mental ills; tends to keep them young in their old age.*

More importantly, playing with their children allowed parents to keep a better eye on them. If "healthful and innocent games" were played at home, De Puy stated, children would not be "tempted to go elsewhere for the amusement for which Nature has given them the desire." Every family was encouraged to invest in a billiard table, for example, just to keep the son from heading out to the nearest pool hall, which would naturally lead the boy to drink and destruction.

As is the case today, some parents in the 1920s put a lot of thought – and placed a great deal of faith as well – into the toys played with by their children. They were so afraid of doing the wrong thing, such as giving the wrong toy to their baby. Should a boy play with dolls? Was jumping rope dangerous to girls? What's wrong with the child if he or she plays with the box instead of the gift that came inside? How many toys are too many? All these questions were asked of child psychologist Gladys Denny Schultz, who wrote on children's issues for *Better Homes & Gardens Magazine*. While a great deal of her printed word dealt with sibling rivalry issues, curing the "nervous" child, and teaching the best way to discipline a spoiled child, she did address the issue of play and its importance in the development of a "whole" child:



*Toys build character. The rattle you place in the tiny baby's fist contributes to his physical and mental development. And from then on his playthings are perhaps the greatest single factor – aside from health and parental care – in forming good or bad traits of character. You can spoil a child hopelessly or develop him in many desirable ways according to the toys you give him. Toys that are wisely chosen and used teach your children orderliness, thrift, the habit of keeping wholesomely busy, purposive thinking and concentration, cooperation with others, and will increase the imaginative and creative ability. The mechanical toy that does everything itself, the child's only function being that of audience, is bad because it encourages the tendency to demand outside entertainment rather than to make one's own pleasure.*

## **CHORES & REWARDS**

Katherine Carson, a mother of two boys, stated in 1930 that “Too often a child is in the position of a recipient: always having things done for him and given to him.” She and most other mothers agreed that children should contribute to the running of the home, if they were to reap the rewards:

*From the time they were 5, my boys had certain chores. Soon they learned to help put away the clothes as they came from the laundry, set the table, weed the garden. When they were a little older, I expected them to make their beds before they went to school, and if the beds were a bit lumpy and the covers not on straight, I did not interfere with their jobs by remaking the beds.*

Rare is the child who, before he or she is allowed to go out and play, doesn't have some sort of task to perform around the house. It might be taking out the trash, washing the dishes, or making the beds – the task that Eula Wulfjen and her sister Mattie did every day:

*The children were expected to be generally useful: the little girls took care of the treasured feather-beds which had been brought up from the south, stripping them to the tick every day, and smoothing them with a broom handle. They washed the dishes, and acquired the usual early hatred for this; they dusted; and they kept their own clothes in order. During the intervals between these tasks they went to the public schools, and played with the neighbors' children.*

### **Mealtime**

In addition to cleaning, most girls were encouraged to help cook and serve meals in order to teach them the right way of doing things. How to set a proper table, how to fold linens so they

last longer, how to serve an appealing meal – these were all valuable lessons that young ladies needed to learn, and where better to gain such education than in the family home. In the 1920s, Edna Sibley Tipton – the Martha Stewart of her day – wrote dozens of books and scores of magazine articles on entertaining in the “Modern Age.” In one, “To Help You When You Entertain,” she encouraged parents to have their children help prepare and serve the meal:

*And when I say children I mean the son as well as the daughter. ... Let it be the son’s task to start passing olives and celery around the table and let the daughter see to it that the nuts get handed around. When the first course has been consumed, allow the daughter to remove the plates of that course from one side of the table while the son performs the same duty at the other side.*

Tipton also requested that the hostess keep several things in mind when making purchases for her table and pantry, in order that the children might observe and remember:

*That colorful, good china helps make the foods it holds appear more appetizing; that crystalware or glassware is particularly appropriate for service of cooling concoctions; that soft lustrous damask covering the table makes service seem quiet, dignified and restful; that sterling silver adorning the table and holding tempting viands gives that air of elegance accredited to “Generations of gentle-folks.”*

## **Birthday Parties**

One of the rewards for being a good little boy or girl might be a birthday party. Parties specifically for children were becoming very popular in the early 1900s, as evidenced by the many instructional books and tips available to parents in popular magazines. In countless articles, clever ideas for table decorations were given along with suggested menus consisting of sandwiches, vegetables, and nuts followed by birthday cake and ice cream.

A child’s birthday could be a time of high excitement and drama, so parents were warned not to expect perfect behavior. As *Needlecraft Magazine* told its readers in 1922:



*Just because you are doing a little bit of extra work for the child, don’t expect her to turn into a little angel all at once. Remember, the idea of having a real party all their own is an exceedingly exciting event to a small person. Very few children really mean to be naughty on such a glorious occasion as this.*

Although parties could be seen as opportunities for teaching manners and social decorum, even *The New York Times* recognized in 1893 the significant impact a great party could have on a child:

*Children's parties may be regarded as social obligations, as educational advantages, or, casting all theory and formality aside, they may be made occasions of intense delight, red-letter days in the calendar of childhood and happy memories for years to come.*

Birthdays weren't the only time American children had their own parties – seasonal soirees were popular as well, such as those celebrating Christmas, Halloween, Independence Day and Easter.

Although we do not know much detail about the children's parties held at Trail End, we do know the family had a few of them. In a letter to his mother in 1939, Manville Kendrick tells of his oldest son's eighth birthday celebration, one in which "little angels" were not altogether in evidence:

*[John] had some of his friends for dinner, Billy Lucas, Billy Faiar, Jimmy Cheslar, and another whose name I forget. Outside minor differences of opinion, which nearly resulted in some of the guests going home before times, everything went off smoothly, and I think that all felt that the affair had been worthwhile.*

## WORKING CLASS CHILDREN

Historically, upper class children have been treated better than those of the lower classes, but that is most likely due to a lack of wherewithal (money) rather than a lack of tender parental feelings. In his work *Mothers and Fathers in America*, author Steven Mintz noted the link between economic security and working class family life:

*It is important not to romanticize working-class family life. Although ties to the immediate family and wider kin network tended to be strong, family cohesion stemmed in large measure from the marginal economic existence of many working-class families. The frequency of premature death, irregular employment, disabling accidents, and wages at or below the subsistence line ... required individuals to rely on the family and kinship network for assistance and support. The stresses produced by work and financial marginality clearly took a toll on ... working-class family life.*

## Families of the Working Poor

Until the mid-1800s, most American families were rural in nature. Most men worked their own farms or small businesses, with very few considering themselves an “employee” of someone else. The average woman - nearly always a stay-at-home wife - bore eight to ten children, allowing little time for individual attention. The father was considered the primary parent, and child-rearing books were aimed toward men, not women.



With the urbanization of America in the late 1800s came an accompanying increase in the working poor. Urban families seemed to have many more difficulties than rural ones. Men no longer worked for themselves; they became nameless cogs in giant factories. Their wages were seldom high enough to support a family, so everyone chipped in. Wives took in sewing and laundry or did piecework for local factories, while older children deferred marriage, remained at home, and contributed their wages to the family economy.

Family statistics from the early 20th Century paint a disturbing picture of American home life:

- Between ten and thirty percent of America’s children lived in a single-parent household.
- By the time they reached the age of twenty, between 35 and 40 percent of all American children had lost a parent or a sibling.
- The United States had the highest divorce rate in the western world.
- Hundreds of thousands of children spent part of their childhood in orphanages, not because their parents were dead, but because their parents could not support them.
- Prior to 1940, one in ten American children did not live with either parent.

It was not until the 1920s that the majority of American families consisted of a working father, a stay-at-home mother, and children who attended school instead of working. Unfortunately, the hardships of the Depression took a toll on these newly-defined nuclear families. Many were forced to open their homes to both relatives and strangers, while others delayed marriage until they could afford it.

## Making Money

In hopes of bettering their situation, many young people went out on their own. While some found success, others succumbed to the loneliness, vice and crime of the streets, eventually

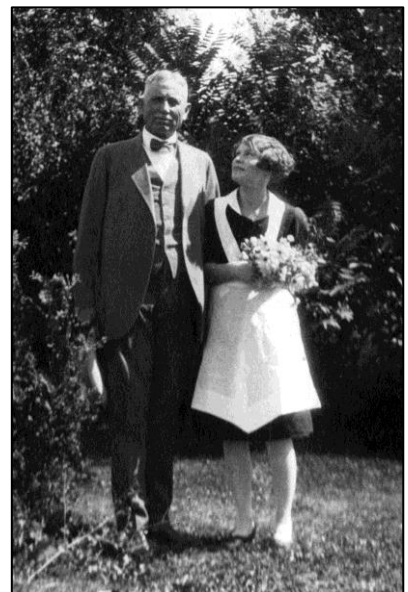
ending up in sweatshops, poorhouses, brothels, reform schools or jail. As Arvel Person noted when recalling his own experiences as a “boy hobo,” this could be a soul-crushing experience:

*You leave home with good intentions and tell your folks you’re going to come back a millionaire. You return with your head between your arms. You’re broke and dirty and they see right away that you didn’t make it. ... If I hadn’t had hope I would have starved to death by the time I was seventeen.*

Younger children could get involved in a variety of money-making schemes, including at least one thought up by the school district. In 1916, the “Fly Committee” of the Sheridan Schools launched an “anti-fly campaign” in which school children were paid a bounty of five cents per 100 dead flies brought in; prizes were also awarded to the child who killed the most flies in a month. At least 75,000 flies lost their lives in the first few weeks of the contest. The campaign was so successful, in fact, that the Fly Committee ran out of bounty money and had to end the contest.

If he didn’t want to catch flies, work on the family farm or in the underground mines north of town, a teenage boy looking for extra cash in Sheridan could sell papers, shine shoes or deliver groceries. Many a young man went to work in the sugar beet fields, while others signed on as trade apprentices in order to become plumbers, carpenters, electricians or plasterers. Few waited until they were out of their teens to make such career decisions.

As for young women, their options were a bit more limited – especially in the years prior to World War One when women were not encouraged to enter the business world. When they needed to make their own way, most girls turned to domestic service. In early 20th Century Sheridan, maids came from a variety of religious, ethnic and racial backgrounds. Most were daughters of miners who came to Sheridan from Eastern Europe, Ireland, Austria and Scandinavia. They went to work at an early age – some as young as fifteen – and quit at an early age as well, usually to marry and set up their own homes.



Despite the backbreaking drudgery involved, housekeeping was not considered a difficult task – at least not by those who didn’t have to do it! As one newspaper noted in 1914, “It is easy to train young girls to be housekeepers. It is the natural work of women, and many of them love it.” Few maids and housekeepers had formal training and depended upon techniques learned from their own mothers and grandmothers.



Girls and young women could also become child care providers. Eula Kendrick, Rosa-Maye Kendrick Harmon and Diana Cumming Kendrick all employed nurses at some point during their children's upbringing. Upon the advice of a close friend, Eula hired her first nurse after Manville's birth in 1900:

*And now my dear girl, take an old friend's advice and keep a good stout nurse girl so that you may give your best self to the babies and husband – when one is worked and worried to the verge of nervous prostration, one cannot turn their sweetest side to the loved ones.*

### **Child Labor**

Sanctioned as it was by parents across the country, child labor was a huge problem in rural and urban America throughout the first third of the 20th Century. Children as young as five were sent out of the home to labor as maids, miners, farmhands, factory workers and trade apprentices. In 1900, *The New York Times* reported that over 1.7 million children between the ages of ten and fifteen were classified by the U. S. Census as breadwinners, "those earning money regularly by labor, contributing to the family support, or appreciably assisting in mechanical or agricultural industry." The situation worsened in 1918 when World War One caused the nation's most severe labor shortage ever:

*The old temptation of manufacturers of a certain class to keep down production costs by the employment of children has been heightened by the extreme labor need, and at the same time the reluctance of parents to keep their children out of school has been overcome in many instances by unprecedented high wages.*

In 1922, the National Child Labor Committee reported that nearly 1,500,000 children - again between the ages of ten and fifteen - were employed in farm work, either at home or "working out." While there were child labor laws in effect throughout the land, only eleven states regulated the number of hours a farm child could work. In fact, farm work was specifically exempted in fourteen states while another twenty-three states didn't mention agricultural labor at all. Said one investigator,

*Because of the old conception that country life is idyllic it is difficult to make the average citizen appreciate the fact that rural child labor is fully as flagrant an evil as was ever factory child labor.*

In response, social reformers such as the National Child Welfare League pressed for compulsory school attendance laws, additional child labor restrictions, and widow's/mother's pensions designed to permit poor children to remain with their mothers – if they had them.

## THE DANGERS OF CHILDHOOD

In 1914, *The Country Gentleman* warned parents of the dangers of public transportation. They weren't concerned about accidents or getting lost or even falling off; they were worried about germs:

*The most carefully tended child will sooner or later be subjected to disease germs. He goes to school, he travels on the trains, and his little hands will rest on the car windowsill where perhaps not an hour before rested hands that had been rubbing diseased eyes. It will never be known how much contagion has been scattered by trains and trolleys.*

Between disease, accident and other ailments, parents always have something to worry about when raising a child, and the Kendricks were no different. Throw in kidnappings and mental health issues, and it is surprising that people had children at all!

### Disease

In the late 1800s and early 1900s - before the development of antibiotics and disease-specific vaccines - parents feared a wide variety of childhood diseases: measles, mumps, smallpox, chickenpox, diphtheria, whooping cough, scarlet fever, poliomyelitis and more. In 1900, sixty-one percent of the children who died in America perished from communicable diseases. These diseases would often strike with a speed and virulence that seems amazing to us today. In 1901, John wrote to Eula about a scarlet fever epidemic that was sweeping Sheridan during one of her trips east:

*The little boy that died with scarlet fever was in school Friday, became sick Saturday and was dead Sunday. Before it was given out that the sickness was scarlet fever, a number of the child's schoolmates were allowed to go and see him, so you can see the danger to the community.*

For a time, parents intentionally exposed their children to several "harmless" children's diseases such as measles and chickenpox in order to, as one health expert noted, "get the inevitable over with as soon as possible." By the 1920s and '30s, this practice had finally begun to go by the wayside; too many of these needlessly exposed children succumbed to the diseases. It was too easy to catch the diseases just by doing the things children did. In 1938, John and Hugh Kendrick contracted chickenpox. As Manville wrote to his mother, John caught the disease at school, and passed it along to his four-year-old brother:

*We have been running a sort of hospital here. First, John had chicken-pox which did not bother him much, though he had a good case. Then, poor little Hugh got it; and both Dr. Crane and Gen. Cumming said that they had never seen a worse case. One could not*

*have put one's finger down on the center section of his trunk without touching a pock. ... Naturally, the itching nearly drove him frantic. However, he hardly complained once save to say when it "hurt," and was time to put on some more lotion.*

Children living in cities and towns could expect care from a doctor or nurse. Because physicians were few and far between in rural areas, however, ranch parents had to do their own diagnosing and doctoring. In March 1902, when both her parents were out of town, Rosa-Maye Kendrick came down with a mystery illness. Her grandmother, Ida Wulfjen, was caring for the child at the time and despite her best efforts was unable to figure out what was wrong:

*Rosa-Maye has been quite unwell all week with sore throat inside and out. I have done every single thing to little avail. I thought at first it might be mumps or measles but it don't seem to develop into anything. She has no fever and is quite happy but has little appetite. I will take her to the Dr. if she don't be a better girl. She has no cold, but seems to be suffering with catarrh somewhat. Now don't be uneasy for she plays around all the time.*

## **Mortality**

In 1900, nearly 165 of every 1,000 children born in America died before their first birthday (in some cities this number was as high as 300). If they survived infancy, children still had to fight to survive: at the turn of the century, twenty percent of the nation's children died before the age of ten. Most were victims of contaminated water, unsanitary living conditions, unpasteurized milk and poor nutrition, as well as contagious diseases.

Today, America's infant mortality rate hovers around seven percent. This marked decrease in childhood death is due in part to a better understanding of nutrition and public health (1910s and '20s) and the introduction of antibiotics (1930s and '40s). In addition, many of the childhood diseases that killed children in the early 20th Century have been practically eradicated in the United States. Instead of sixty-one percent of childhood deaths being caused by disease, only two percent can now be attributed to infectious disease.

Many children used to die from diseases that were not always fatal in adults. Ida Wulfjen, for example, lost her two youngest children, Edna and Hazel, to typhoid fever. Usually caused by the consumption of contaminated water, typhoid frequently came in waves, striking a community without warning. Though some adults died, it was usually the children that suffered most. After Hazel died in December 1892, Ida and her husband Charles were nearly inconsolable, as Ida told Eula in May 1893 following a trip to the Greeley Cemetery to visit Hazel's grave:

*We were out to see the little mound yesterday. The lot had been sown and graded, so I suppose the grass will soon be up. Poor papa; he walked up and down crying like his heart would break. It almost kills him to give her up. The little darling was always at his heels. Oh! How are we to live without her.*

Like most women who had lost a child, Ida hid her grief and told few of her deep anguish. She was able to share some of her feelings with Eula, however, who had been like a second mother to little Hazel:

*There is a pang in my heart that nothing can take away and as the months wear on the dread thought of a year having come between me and my angel almost kills me at times. Very few nights that my head is laid upon my pillow that the heart does not ache to burst. I say nothing and no one knows my feelings. I stand and look at the children as they come and go to school and I find myself saying, "Oh God, why did you take my Baby." The outside world thinks perhaps my grief grows lighter but to me it has been unusually heavy the past few weeks. The only way I can bear it is to look at friends who have gone through the same and say it is natural we should die.*



## Home Remedies

No doubt, Ida Wulfjen attempted to cure her daughter's illness with some sort of home cure. From time immemorial, there have been advice columns, pamphlets and handbooks dedicated to the proper care and feeding of children. Some of the following snippets from the 1890s – when John and Eula were raising Rosa-Maye – still make sense today; others are better off forgotten!

- If born at the stroke of noon, a baby could be an idiot.
- Feather pillows are death to children.
- The rubber-tube bottle is a device of the Evil One for lazy mothers.
- If baby looks into a broken looking glass, it will have crooked teeth.
- A babe suckled by one breast only is apt to have the habit of squinting.
- The juvenile feat of standing on the head has injurious effects. Blood appears to gush out of their eyes and cheeks. It congests the brain and is injurious to the optic nerve and impairs the circulation.
- Jumping the rope is injurious and dangerous amusement, often resulting in disease of the spine or brain.

- The only fruit which is safe to allow a child whose diet is primarily milk, is blackberries. These may be given even where there is serious stomach or intestinal derangement.
- Taffy, stick candy, gumdrops, penny candies, all-day suckers, licorice whips, peppermint drops, ginger drops, lemon drops, bonbons, and sugar plums are all fatal poisons concealed in pretty confectionery.
- The unrestricted drinking of iced water is a most serious practice among our children. Every such indulgence weakens the stomach and affects the other organs.
- Homemade root beer is probably the most wholesome beverage that can be taken in the quantities demanded by the hot-blooded young romps who will indulge in the most extraordinary exercise, even when the thermometer is in the nineties.
- The 'second summer' is an old fashioned bogie of motherhood ... the first summer is far more serious.
- The wonder ... is not that so many children die every summer but that so many live, what with ignorant mothers, careless mothers, and experimenting mothers.
- If by accident or design, you have discovered a diet on which children thrive, be content.
- Whatever you do, beware of attempting to bring up your child on a theory. Use common sense. God gave it to you for the benefit of your children.

## Mental Health

When Manville and Diana Kendrick were raising their children in the 1930s, they had to worry about the mental health of their tiny progeny as well as their physical health. In magazine after magazine, child psychologists warned parents of a variety of preventable mental difficulties that could impact a child's overall development. One was the "nervous" child – the child that clung to its parents, didn't eat well, and refused to mix well with others. Another was the "spoiled" child – the child that was overly independent, demanded its own way, and made a grand fuss when that way was not made clear. That was the type of behavior with which Manville and Diana were most familiar, especially in their oldest child. As Manville reported to his mother in 1933:

*In some ways, the little feller is quite spoiled, and Diana is having her troubles getting along with him. He is bound to do what he wants, and she is just as bound to talk him out of it. ... He is really quite "sot in his ways" just like his old man, and disinclined to contemplate the idea that one will not let him do as he wishes.*

Even the hired help got in on the spoiling. After John was born in 1931, Trail End's cook, Anna Simmerman, sent Diana Kendrick a note stating that she would "rather hold him than cook."

When Hugh Kendrick came along in 1934, Manville and Diana found themselves with two energetic little boys instead of one. It was a relief when John started school full-time, leaving Hugh to fend for himself:

*John has started to school again after the holidays. ... With John out of the house most of the day, Hugh is put to it to keep himself amused. I must say that he has gotten in mighty little trouble in the process, so far. The latter usually starts when the two of them are together.*



## **Kidnapping**

In the early 1930s, America experienced a rash of kidnappings, many of them involving relatives of high-profile men. Following the Lindbergh kidnapping of 1932, in which the aviation hero's young son disappeared into the night, U. S. Senator John Kendrick wrote several letters to Manville and Diana regarding the safety of John B. Kendrick II, who was not only his grandson, but the grandson of U. S. Surgeon General Hugh Smith Cumming as well:

*As you would understand, we are all heartsick and greatly disturbed over the loss of the Lindberg baby. ... I am afraid for you and Diana to go very far from little John. The slimy trail of the serpent is in evidence all about us. Scarcely a morning paper arrives that does not furnish in big headlines, news as to another raid upon somebody's loved ones.*

*I have in the past felt great anxiety about the welfare of my grandboy, but because of the trend of the times and the more definite understanding as to the golden prize involved in this baby boy I am now more than ever concerned as to his safety.*

*Let us hope that at some time in the near future the country will come to a sane and rational attitude of mind, when the children of our families will be safeguarded.*

## **THE FASHIONABLE CHILD**

Today's boys and girls would be appalled if they had to wear what Manville and Rosa-Maye wore: white lace dresses and lace-up boots for the girls; sailor suits with short pants for boys. Even so, they would have worn them without complaint because that's what most children

wore. As Emily Post so aptly noted, “Children should be allowed to dress like their friends. Nothing makes a child, especially a boy, more self-conscious than to look ‘strange’ to the children he plays with.”

### Boys vs. Girls

For the past two hundred years or so, female fashions have changed more rapidly than male fashions. By 1913, if parents kept their boys in the right kind of trousers, they were pretty much good to go. As *The New York Times* noted:

*Nowadays the problem of dressing boys is made easy by the custom of putting them into tailor-made clothing at an age when they used to be dressed in kilts and petticoats. They have but a year or two of linens, and then the manly knickerbocker suits relieve the mother of further responsibility.*



Boys seemed to prefer a more uniform look than girls. Again, from *The New York Times*:

*While I believe that vanity is not monopolized by girls, I do know that they are more sensitive to attire than boys. It has been said that the male instinct revolts against anything which is conspicuous, while the feminine instinct rejoices over whatever suggests a superiority to commonplace attire; that a little girl will strut in garments of unique cut or color, while a little boy forced to wear a flamboyant necktie or a new-fangled jacket slinks out of sight.*

### Feminine Attire

For hundreds of years - right on up to the early 20th Century, in fact - little girls from wealthy families were dressed to look just like miniature women, complete with corsets, off-the-shoulder bodices, and high heeled shoes. Because it was not expected that these girls would be physically active, it didn't matter that they couldn't move freely, or that the clothing was hard to clean. Dresses for working class girls were made of rough, serviceable fabrics such as homespun wool and cheap linen.

Until pantaloons became popular in the 1840s, no respectable female - regardless of age or socio-economic class - wore pants, not even in the form of underwear. People were afraid that such clothing would “diminish maternal instincts” in girls and endanger the very future of the American family.

By the end of World War One, practicality had taken root in the realm of fashion. *Needlecraft Magazine*, a publication aimed toward lower-middle-class American homemakers with aspirations toward the solid middle-class, told its readers:

*The designers of children's clothes today study the types of the little wearers to good advantage, and practical, simple clothes which are suited to the child are the result. It is no longer considered good taste to dress a child up in yards of ruffles and large satin sashes. The "doll" dress with the long French waist and short skirt, literally covered with lace and worn over a colored silk slip is a thing of the past.*

### **The Ubiquitous Sailor Suit**

The popularity of sailor suits for children – particularly those in the upper and middle classes – can be traced back to 1846, when Queen Victoria of England had a sailor suit made for her son, Prince Albert Edward (later King Edward VII). The Queen commissioned Franz Xaver Winterhalter to create a painting of Bertie wearing the suit. Once the public saw it, a new children's fashion was born. The style was popular for both boys and girls from the mid-1800s to the 1930s, and is still popular for girls today.

As evidenced by the many early photographs of female sports teams and girls' gym classes, nautical-style middies were the unofficial uniform for schoolgirls. Rosa-Maye Kendrick donned one while at school in Connecticut, her future sister-in-law, Diana Cumming, wore one at her private school in Virginia, and the entire Sheridan High School girls' basketball team wore sailor-suit inspired uniforms during its inaugural season in 1905.

## **THE LITTLEST CONSUMERS**

In the 1880s, brand name products began to be advertised to American consumers on advertising cards and in newspapers. Some of the earliest were soaps. Soap was difficult and unpleasant for the housewife to make herself, so the manufacturers of Ivory, Pears and Packer's soap found a ready market across the country. A few years later, national food brands began to appear - Quaker Oats, Royal Baking Powder, and Hires Root Beer among them - and advertisers purchased space in national magazines in order to boost sales.

In 1900, print advertising was such a fixture that marketers spent \$100 million on it - twice the amount they'd spent in the 1880s. That money put advertisements in nearly every one of the 3,500 magazines that were distributed to over 65 million men and women across the country ... and their children.



## Kids Plus Advertising Equals Profits

Most early ads aimed at children were for books, toys and candy. By 1928, it is estimated that magazine advertisers were reaching an estimated 20 million children between the ages of 10 and 20, and it was during this time that manufacturers really began targeting children - especially in the areas of food and clothing. As child psychologist E. Evalyn Grumbine noted in *Reaching Juvenile Markets*,

*Merchants realized that treating children as individuals with identifiable desires and concerns of their own could increase business. Once the child's perspective was acknowledged, it was but a small step toward ... creating products ... to appeal to it.*

While early advertisements were geared toward parents (“Your kids will love this; buy it for them!”), marketers soon learned to aim ads at the children themselves (“You’ll love this; have your parents buy it for you!”). Grumbine observed that children were “natural and enthusiastic buyers.” Therefore,

*An understanding of children, of their physical and mental development, their likes and dislikes, and their reactions to the rapidly changing conditions of living today, will help manufacturers to plan better advertising campaigns.*

In their endless quest for consumers, advertisers traditionally used safety, style, prestige and convenience as reasons for why their products were better than others. The Kendricks were fairly typical consumers, especially when it came to their children, so Manville and Rosa-Maye - and their children as well - had the latest in buggies, high chairs, toys and more. Manville and Diana purchased many items for their first child, including a Trimble Kiddie-Koop. The latest in cribs, the Kiddie-Koop not only combined a crib with a bassinet and playpen, but had screened sides and top (to keep out insects), rubber-tire wheels, and could fold down to only eight inches deep!



## Advertising Icons

For as long as there have been products to advertise, there have been images of juveniles hawking those products. Many of the supermarket standbys we know today – from food and candy to wearing apparel and cleaning products – used illustrations of children as selling tools as early as the mid-1800s. The real heyday of the child pitchman came in the 1920s when labels

began picturing healthy children doing healthful things: eating fruit, playing outside, sleeping soundly.

One of the most famous child advertising icons from the 20th Century was the “Gerber Baby,” who began his/her career selling baby food in 1931. Others included:

- The Campbell Soup Kids
- The Uneeda Biscuit Boy
- The Jell-O Girl
- Buster Brown (shoes)
- The Cracker Jack Kid
- The Dutch Boy (paint)
- The Dutch Girl (cleanser)
- The Gold Dust Twins (cleanser)



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