

## Preface

Growing up in the rural South years ago involved a unique way of life. There was “private time” when, chores finished and responsibilities discharged, one could embark on one’s own adventures.

All elements of life in the country contributed to the molding of the individual, but it was the private time that one remembered. It offered adventure in the midst of responsibility and hard work. This wonderful private time could be spent in any way. It could be squandered doing absolutely nothing or used for some good purpose. Often it was time to get into more trouble than one could get out of in a month of Sundays. But no matter, it was one’s own.

In *Papa’s Old Trunk*, Mary Kimbro Butler depicts in her vigorous style some of the incidents in which Pod and Meg spent their private time. Their creative larceny practiced at times bespeaks a state of poignant innocence rather than any real evil. To capture Meg and Pod’s character, Mrs. Butler reveals their ups and downs, their triumphs, and their ignominious failures. She does so with warmth and humor and provides a link with our immediate past. For those who were there, *Papa’s Old Trunk* evokes the loving memory of a world that has slipped away. Yet it is carried in hearts and memories, so it will never really be lost.

This book’s most important contribution is to convey to young people that world in the only way they will ever know it—not firsthand, for it is gone, but through the eyes and heart of the author.

*Martha G. Hall*