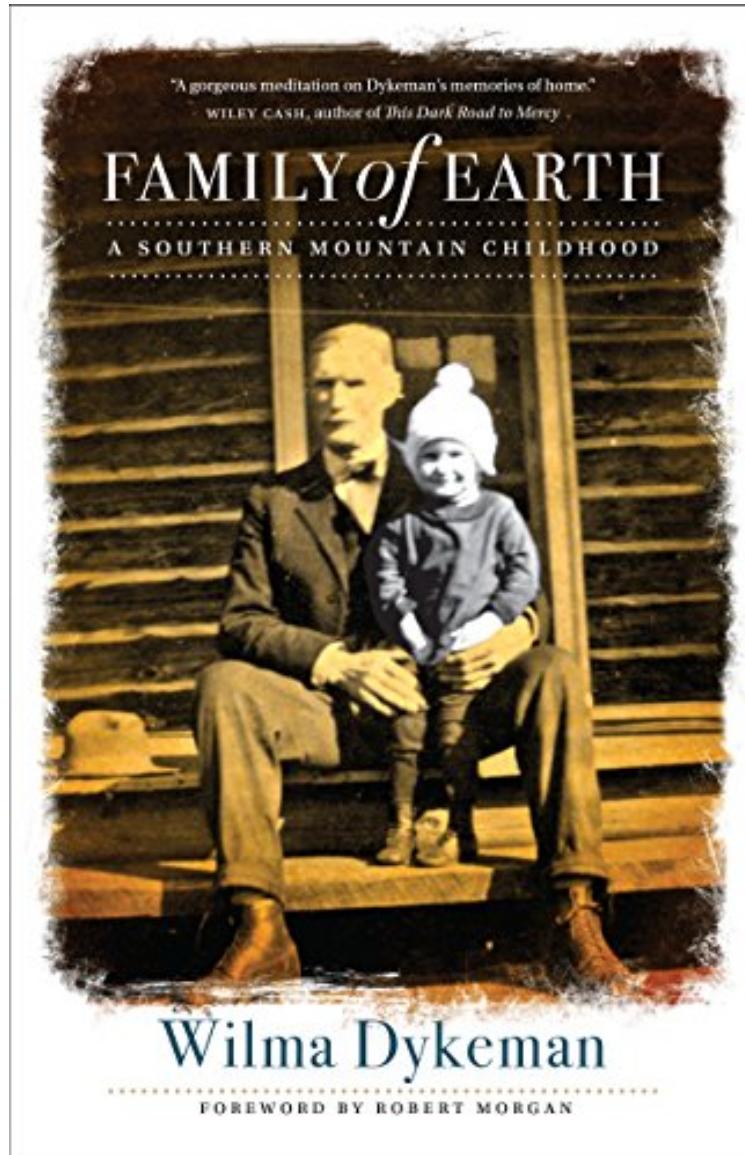


[Ebook free] Family of Earth: A Southern Mountain Childhood

## Family of Earth: A Southern Mountain Childhood

Wilma Dykeman

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**Wilma Dykeman : Family of Earth: A Southern Mountain Childhood** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Family of Earth: A Southern Mountain Childhood:

0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. LOVELY YET LIMITED SCOPEBy Josephine EnsignWhile I enjoyed reading this memoir, I found it to be very limited in scope. Dykeman focuses on her early childhood and her relationship with the land on which she was raised. I loved her dream-like and child-eye reveries on nature, but I wanted more about the people of the mountains where she grew up. The few times she delves into these descriptions

were the strongest points of the book. I was highly skeptical of her alleged memories from when she was an infant. 0 of 4 people found the following review helpful. One Star By AP Not my style. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The Dykemans truly were a Family of Earth By HR Duby In the academic world, there are scores of found manuscripts; everything from newly-discovered poems of Emily Dickinson to letters written between star-crossed literary lovers to mathematical formulae scribbled on the margins of a cocktail napkin. However, the academic world would not exist without such serendipitous discoveries that add to the length and breadth of the knowledge of a particular subject. The literary world is certainly much richer for the discovery of Wilma Dykeman's long-forgotten manuscript for *Family of Earth: A Southern Mountain Childhood*. *Family of Earth* was discovered after Dykeman's death in 2006 by her son, James Stokely III, who edited the manuscript, choosing to keep it as intact as possible. This modest volume contains within its pages the beautiful juxtaposition of romance and realism wherein Wilma Dykeman (1920-2006) describes the world of her childhood from birth until the sudden death of her father just after she turned fourteen. It is difficult to believe in the age of Snapchat and text messaging that a young woman in her early twenties had such an innate sense of self and of her place in the natural world. And, while I had some difficulty believing that Dykeman could actually remember her infancy with the level of detail with which she writes, her writing is, at turns, poignant and poetic and she leaves her reader with a deeper understanding of what it was like to grow up in the mountains of North Carolina during the Depression era. And, so, my disbelief was easily suspended. Wilma Dykeman has contributed greatly to the tapestry of Southern literature, both fiction and non-fiction. As Robert Morgan states in the foreword to *Family of Earth*, Dykeman served as an ambassador of history and literature to countless communities, and she was an enthusiastic champion of contemporary writers (p. xvii). Her love of the natural world is obvious throughout *Family of Earth* and the memoir gives the reader fascinating insight into Dykeman, herself. In many ways, the book is a fine example of American Transcendentalism because Dykeman truly believes in the inherent goodness of people and nature and many of her previously-published works are greatly informed by that belief. It was, honestly, difficult to write a review that does justice to this book. I feel that any writing that I might do about it pales in comparison to the words that Dykeman has bled out onto the page. Anyone who has interest in the history of North Carolina, of the southern mountains, of how families who knew how to live off the land survived the Depression, or in Wilma Dykeman's life will appreciate this book and it would make a worthy addition to the local history collection in any public library in the Appalachian region.

Discovered as a typewritten manuscript only after her death in 2006, *Family of Earth* allows us to see into the young mind of author and Appalachian native Wilma Dykeman (1920-2006), who would become one of the American South's most prolific and storied writers. Focusing on her childhood in Buncombe County, Dykeman reveals a perceptive and sophisticated understanding of human nature, the environment, and social justice. And yet, for her words' remarkable polish, her voice still resonates as raw and vital. Against the backdrop of early twentieth-century life in Asheville, she chronicles the touching, at times harrowing, story of her family's fortunes, plotting their rise and fall in uncertain economic times and ending with her father's sudden death in 1934 when she was fourteen years old. Featuring a new foreword by fellow North Carolinian Robert Morgan, *Family of Earth* stands as a new major literary work by a groundbreaking author.

A fortunate find. . . . This memoir from a North Carolina treasure will keep you busy. There is much to think about and ponder in these pages.--The Herald-Sun A haunting and exquisite book, not to mention a rare exception to the rule that no one so young should write a memoir. Even without much life experience, Dykeman has a great deal to say about life.--New York Times Book Explores the bonds of family, and a child's place in this great big world. . . . An ode to the captivating rhythms of nature.--Our State A gift to lovers of Appalachian lore.--Ben Steelman, Wilmington Star-News A wonderful introduction to Dykeman's works (e.g., *The French Broad*) for first-time readers and a welcome addition for fans.--Library Journal A captivating, poetic, difficult-to-categorize book that abundantly showcases the author's talent for making words dance. Anyone who has lived in the countryside, or wished they had, will enjoy Dykeman's celebration of nature.--Kirkus s, starred review [The] writing is pungent, earthy and raw yet at the same time elegant. . . . A quick read that will leave you wishing Dykeman had written more.--Carolina Mountain Life It's a gift that UNC Press has put the story that showcases the mind of a young author and Appalachian native into print.--Mountain Times We are fortunate to have this remarkable beginning to a distinguished literary career, and an endearing addition to an ever-growing array of richly revealing Appalachian life stories.--Appalachian Journal As is true of so many writers from western North Carolina, Wilma Dykeman's fiction played an important role in my development, and the publication of a work we did not even know existed is cause for celebration. This precocious memoir shows a young author finding her voice as she describes a childhood whose seismic event was the death of a beloved father. *Family of Earth* is a valuable addition to understanding Dykeman and her later work, but it is also a fascinating, deeply moving account of a writer's developing sensibility.--Ron Rash, author of *Above the Waterfall* A gorgeous meditation on Dykeman's memories of home.--Wiley Cash, author of *This Dark Road to Mercy* Wilma Dykeman is indeed a 'tall woman' who has cast her long shadow over many other Appalachian women writers,

especially me, inspired early on by both her beautiful writing and her social conscience. *Family of Earth* is a revelation; here is a little poet, an only child raised in relative isolation who knew her parents as friends, who lived and breathed the mountains and the whole natural world around her--this extraordinary childhood clearly informed the woman she would become, what she would do and write. I will place this book next to Eudora Welty's *One Writer's Beginnings* on my shortest and most important bookshelf.-- Lee Smith, author of *Dimestore: A Writer's Life*

About the Author  
Wilma Dykeman (1920-2006) was a novelist, historian, journalist, educator, speaker, and environmentalist who pioneered in the areas of water pollution, civil rights, oral history, Appalachian Studies, and the empowerment of women.