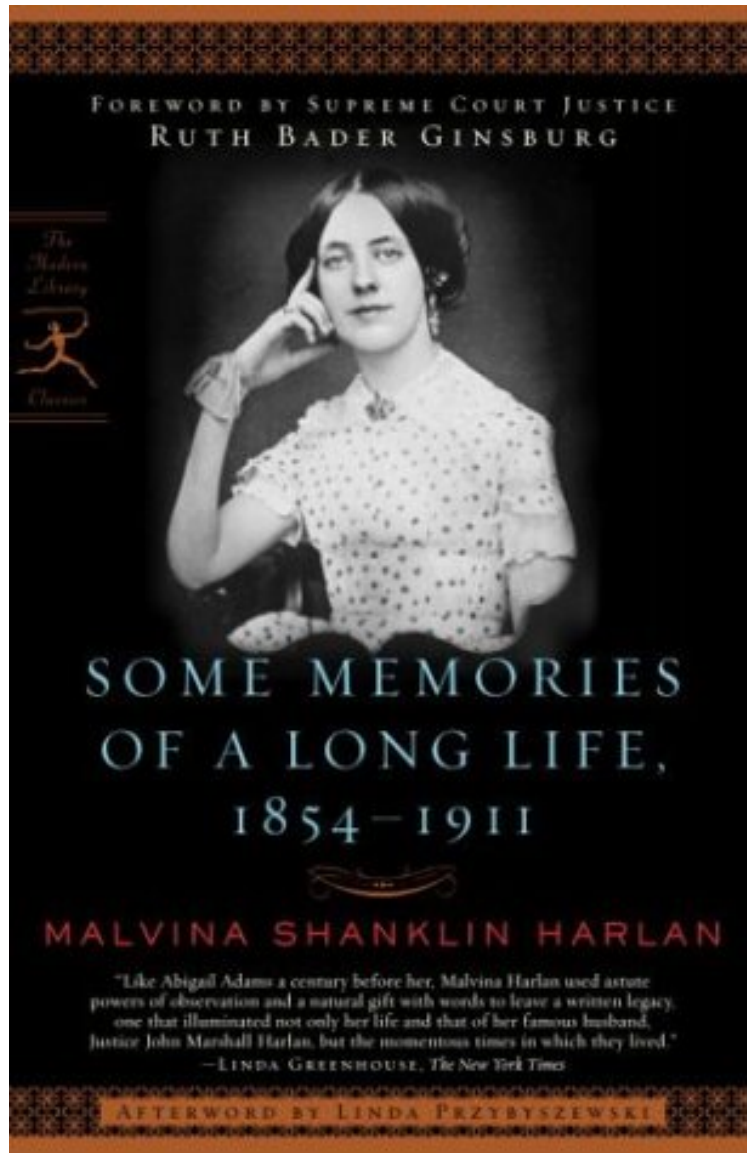


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Some Memories of a Long Life, 1854-1911 (Modern Library Classics)

Malvina Shanklin Harlan

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Malvina Shanklin Harlan : Some Memories of a Long Life, 1854-1911 (Modern Library Classics) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Some Memories of a Long Life, 1854-1911 (Modern Library Classics):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Barbara Bennergood story!0 of 0 people found the

following review helpful. Five StarsBy Kathryn HooverVery informational2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Reflections on Some Memories of a Long LifeBy SandslippersHarlan, Malvina Shanklin. Some Memories of a Long Life, 1854-1911. New York: Modern Day Library, 2001. This volume was unearthed by Ruth Bader Ginsberg in the Library of Congress among the papers concerning the life of Chief Justice Harlan. In this book Mrs. Harlan discusses the time that she lived with her husband. They married and took up house, initially with his family, in 1854 and she and her husband lived together until his death in 1911. She wrote this account of their life after the fact- looking back on their time together. There are some exceptions where she referenced early diary entries, letters and various reports made on events that affected them. To me this was a lovely book that gave an interesting account of the day to day life of the wife of a Supreme Court Justice. She addresses many things that you would simply have no way of knowing about the time period. She does not get very personal in her account, but I think that is true to form for the time period. You hear nothing of her children when they are young except to point out when they were present for certain events. Some of the details of daily life I assume were too intimate to discuss. She offers an interesting perspective of courtship for a woman of her time and also an interesting perspective of the expansion of women's rights. She views herself as an old fashioned woman with little ability of her own when honors are bestowed upon her. For instance in 1908 she was invited to represent Kentucky, her husband's home state, for the International Child's Welfare Convention. She accepts the appointment and replies this way: Ye'd scarce accept on of my age to speak in public on the stage; But while I think ye'd better wait And make a "New Woman" your diligate, I'll try to be there, my Governor dear,-- Though for Kentucky t'will not seem quite clear She'll be ripresented at all to her mind, The choice of your old friend is considered kind; And she'll do her best (of that ye'll be sure) And signs herself, "Yours till death." Mrs. Harlan lead an interesting life. In her time she witnessed the Civil War and the beginnings of World War I. She was an intimate witness to many historic cases heard by the Supreme Court. Mrs. Harlan had an extremely interesting perspective because of her husband's public life. This was a very interesting book to read; it offers a window through which to peer at this long life of Mrs. Malvina Shanklin Harlan, a very interesting woman indeed.

Like Abigail Adams, Malvina Shanklin Harlan witnessed and gently influenced national history from the unique perspective of a political leaders wife. Her husband, Supreme Court Justice John Marshall Harlan (1833-1911), played a central role in some of the most significant civil rights decisions of his era, including his lone dissenting opinion in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the infamous case that endorsed separate but equal segregation. And for fifty-seven years he was married to a woman who was busy making a mental record of their eventful lives. After Justice Harlan's death in 1911, Malvina wrote *Some Memories of a Long Life, 1854-1911*, as a testament to her husband's accomplishments and to her own. The memoir begins with Malvina, the daughter of passionate abolitionists, becoming the teenage bride of John Marshall Harlan, whose family owned more than a dozen slaves. Malvina depicts her life in antebellum Kentucky, and her courageous defense of the Harlan homestead during the Civil War. She writes of her husband's ascent in legal circles and his eventual appointment to the Supreme Court in 1877, where he was the author of opinions that continued to influence American race relations deep into the twentieth century. Yet *Some Memories* is more than a wife's account of a famous and powerful man. It chronicles the remarkable evolution of a young woman from Indiana who became a keen observer of both her family's life and that of her nation. When Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg began researching the history of the women associated with the Supreme Court, the Library of Congress sent her Malvina Harlan's unpublished manuscript. Recalling Abigail Adams's order to remember the ladies, Justice Ginsburg has guided its long journey from forgotten document to published book. *Some Memories of a Long Life* includes a Foreword by Justice Ginsburg, as well as an Afterword by historian Linda Przybyszewski and an Epilogue of the Harlan legacy by Amelia Newcomb. According to *Library Journal*, This is the sort of book you call a publishing event. From the Hardcover edition.

From Publishers Weekly These memoirs by the wife of a noted Supreme Court justice, John Marshall Harlan, first appeared last summer in the *Journal of Supreme Court History* and gained considerable attention thanks to Ruth Bader Ginsburg's enthusiastic support. Now they are being made available in a popular edition complete with foreword by Ginsburg (not seen by PW) and extensive notes by Przybyszewski. Justice Harlan, though a former slave-holder, is remembered for his lone and eloquent dissent in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the case that established the doctrine of "separate but equal." His wife's recollections of her married life shed considerable light on the complexities inherent in race relations in America and help explain such an apparent contradiction. Mrs. Harlan was a conventional woman; she shared the unreflecting assumptions of white superiority and wifely subordination common to her class. Indeed her decision, at 50, to visit Italy without her husband's express permission was so uncharacteristic that it went down in family annals as "Mother's Revolt," while her portraits of the slaves in her father-in-law's household, though well intentioned, will produce nothing but deep embarrassment in the contemporary reader. Nevertheless, she stood squarely behind her husband's dissent. No visionary, Malvina Harlan was a thoroughly nice woman who behaved as she knew she should. Her journals will most interest students of the period. Photos not seen by PW. (May) Forecast: Clearly, Modern Library is counting on the clout of Justice Ginsburg's name to help sell the book, as the announced

first printing of 75,000 copies attests. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal This is the sort of book you call a publishing event. It is a recently unearthed memoir by the wife of Supreme Court Justice John Marshall Harlan, graced with a foreword by Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. From Booklist This publisher has wisely brought to light a never-before-published memoir that languished for many years in the Library of Congress. Malvina Shanklin Harlan was the wife of John Marshall Harlan of Kentucky, a U.S. Supreme Court Justice of note who served on that preeminent bench from 1877 to 1911. Her penned recollections are the story of her married life, beginning with the year she met her husband and ending with the year he died. Remembered here are border-state politics and racial attitudes that existed before the Civil War and emancipation as well as the domestic side of life as led in high-society Washington, D.C., during the last decades of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth. From the dusty archives where it lay forgotten for so long, her memoir emerges as an important social document--an accurate reflection of the manners and mores of the writer's time, place, and milieu. Brad Hooper Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved