



All My Days Are Saturdays

Sam Pickering

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A *New York Times* article once stated that “the art of the essay as delivered by [Sam] Pickering is the art of the front porch ramble.” As Pickering himself puts it, “Well, I have gotten considerably older, and humor has come to mean more and more to me. And if I’m on the front porch, I am in a rocking chair.” *All My Days Are Saturdays* offers fifteen new pieces in which he ponders a world that has changed and, in new ways, still delights him. This collection features Pickering writing about teaching and his recent retirement, visits to various locales, and, as he tell us, “the many people I meet...who tell me their stories, small tales that make one laugh and sigh.”

Distinctive and unmistakable, Pickering’s style deftly mixes the colloquial language of everyday life with references to a lifetime of extensive reading. The seamless blend of these two worlds in his writing is indicative of how they fuse together in his daily life. As Pickering puts it, “All my life I have roamed libraries, almost as much as I have roamed the natural world. I try to get at many truths, but when I tell the truth, I ‘tell it slant.’ I do so to describe life as it is and indeed celebrate that ‘as it is.’”

“Pickering is a master of his craft, one of the finest of personal essayists around, and these essays bear many of the characteristics of his other volumes—reflections on his everyday activities and on individuals around him, humorous exchanges with his wife, and so forth. But this volume seems to have something else as well. We find here a thoughtful meditation on time and self and relative old age demonstrating a close attention to the natural world—a tone not unlike Thoreau’s at times.” -- Fred C. Hobson, Professor of English, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and author or editor of fourteen books, most recently *A Southern Enigma: Essays on the U.S. South*

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