



About THE HOUSE IN THE MEADOW

One day, I decided I needed a writing exercise to get me motivated.. So I took a copy of John Langstaff's version of *OVER IN THE MEADOW* to lunch with me. It is a picture book and based on the old Olive A. Wadsworth poem written in the 1800's.

I studied the rhythm and arrangement of the lines. Most book versions of this poem have animals in it and a counting scheme going from one to ten. Just for fun I flipped the counting scheme and I wondered if I count from ten to one instead, what one thing could I be counting toward? What could I build with this poem structure? As soon as I said *build* in my head, I knew my version would be about building a house. I could call my story THE HOUSE IN THE MEADOW.

I know a lot about building houses. It seems like most of my life I have been around houses being built, lived in houses being built, or I helped to build and remodel houses. My father built several homes for our family. And my husband and I live in an old farmhouse in a meadow that we have remodeled. Also my brothers and nephews are trained electricians, carpenters, and plumbers. It felt natural to be writing about home building. In fact, as the book was being written and edited, my family was in the midst of building a new home for my parents!

I really love the illustrations that Paige Billin-Frye did for the book. She made the trades-people, tools, and equipment look 3-dimensional. She also used some fabrics in the pictures. And since quilting is a hobby of mine and I love beautiful fabric, this is an especially fun thing that I like about THE HOUSE IN THE MEADOW.

I dedicated this book to my two brothers, John and Calvin Crum. Two of the workers in the story carry their names. John is the electrician, and Calvin is the roofer. The first two pictures below are of my brothers which were taken while working on my parents' new home. The last picture is my husband—working on our own “house in the meadow.”



Cal



John



Gerry

S. C., Aug. 2003