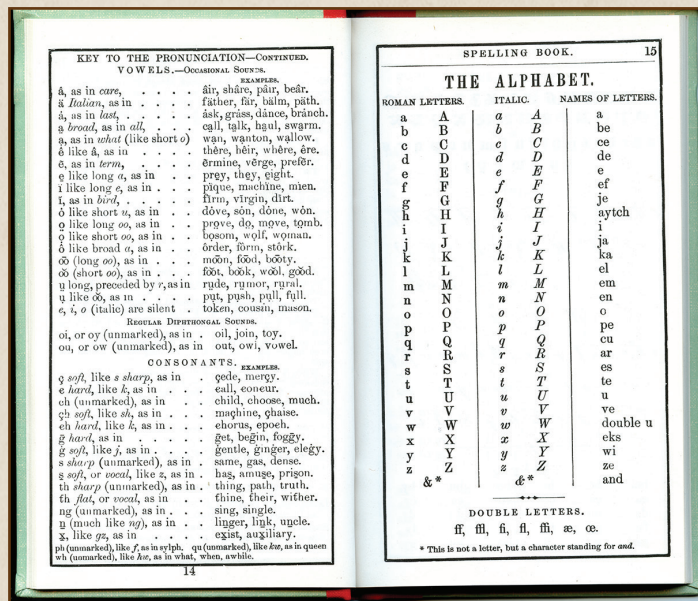




SUSAN CARVER



Webster's Elementary Spelling Book

"Day after day I spent in the woods alone in order to collect my floral beauties and put them in my little garden I had hidden in brush not far from the house as it was considered foolishness in that neighborhood to waste time with flowers"

— George Washington Carver

Susan Blue married Moses Carver in Springfield, Illinois, in 1834. A few years later, they moved to Missouri. She helped her husband as he built up his farm. They raised crops such as Indian corn, Irish potatoes, oats, and flax. They also raised livestock such as cows and sheep. They planted an orchard and kept beehives. Mrs. Carver spun wool into yarn and created clothing. She preserved food, washed laundry, planted gardens, and many other tasks common to a farm wife. She and Moses had no children of their own.

In 1855 Moses purchased an enslaved teenage girl named Mary. Within a few years Mary had her first son, James, and a few years later she had her second son, George. While George was still a baby, he and his mother were kidnapped. Moses hired a man to find Mary and baby George. But Mary was never seen again. George was brought back to the Carvers, very sick with whooping cough.

Because George was a sickly child, he worked in the house with Susan. He learned how to cook. He learned how to do laundry. He could mend clothes and embroider.

George helped take care of Susan's garden. When he had free time, he would go into the woods. There, he learned all he could about flowers and plants. He even planted his own secret garden.



SUSAN CARVER



George Washington Carver's Sketch of the Log Cabin

George liked to collect special things from nature, but Susan did not appreciate it when milkweed pods opened inside the house! She also did not allow him to keep his large collection of rocks indoors.

Susan Carver was the motherly **caregiver** for George during his years in Diamond. She helped him read. His only book was a Webster's Elementary Spelling Book. She knew he wanted to go to school. But the schools close to the farm would not allow African American students. He had to move eight miles away, to Neosho, where there was a school for him.

Susan Carver died in 1892 and is buried in the Carver Family Cemetery at George Washington Carver National Monument.

GLOSSARY

Caregiver - someone who regularly looks after a child or a sick, elderly, or disabled person.

TIME LINE • THE EARLY YEARS: 1834 – 1876

