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# The Little Balkans Review, Spring 1981

Gene DeGruson

Shelby Horn

Steve Robbins

Ted Watts

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# The Little Balkans Review

A Southeast Kansas Literary and Graphics Quarterly

Vol. 1, No. 3 Spring 1981

$3.50

Author

Edythe Squier Draper

Oswego, Kansas

# *Congratulations*

# *Shirley Christian*

At press time the editors were pleased to learn that Shirley Christian, a 1960 graduate of PSU, had been awarded the Pulitzer Prize for international affairs reporting. An examination of the **Collegio**, of which she was editor during her senior year, shows already insightful reporting which characterized the "human stories" about Central America for which she was honored. A forthcoming issue will explore Ms. Christian's career fully.

# The Little Balkans Review

A Southeast Kansas Literary and Graphics Quarterly

Vol. 1, No. 3

Gene DeGruson, Poetry Editor
Shelby Horn, Non-Fiction Editor
Steve Robbins, Fiction Editor
Ted Watts, Art and Graphics Editor

All glory comes from daring to begin.--Eugene F. Ware

The Little Balkans Press, Inc.
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Spring 1981

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Gordon Park's photograph of Kyle Johnson as Newt Winger is reproduced by courtesy of Warner Bros.-Seven Arts, **Learning Tree** photograph 907-71, copyright ©1968.

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# Preface

Youth and springtime are underlying themes in this issue of the **LBR**. Our cover article by Jeffrey Ann Goudie presents Edythe Squier Draper, a talented writer who received far less acclaim in her lifetime than was her due, but whose personality and outlook never allowed her to grow old or disillusioned.

Further proof that a springlike attitude can be carried into one's later years is James "Dad" Montee, dashing subject of a Kenneth L. Simons essay. Montee's enthusiasm and courage allowed him to begin a new and daring career at an age when most men desire retirement.

Retirement is likewise not for Zula Bennington Greene, one of the most active Topekans of any age. Due to the popularity of "Heritage," a chapter of her autobiography which appeared in the premiere **LBR**, Peggy (as she is known to her friends and loyal readers) appears again. "Home," a second installment of her memoirs, provides a timely look at her personal springtime in the hills of Hickory County, Missouri. With an economy of words, she paints on the canvas of our pages a pleasing pastoral vision. Subsequent installments will be printed, making Peggy's work the first we have serialized.

Two other non-fiction entries touch the youth in all of us. Marlin Perkins, well known for the television program, **Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom**, provides a glimpse of adolescence in Pittsburg, where his interest in animals was already evident. Juanita Laing and her Pittsburg State University students give an update on what one must know in order to converse with today's youth without being considered a "nerd"--or worse.

The tone is serious in Edythe Squier Draper's taut fictional piece, "Li'l Boy," wherein the life of a wayward husband is saved by his spontaneous--and singular--childlike act. Barbara Shirk Parish's "Gordie" is a quite different kind of "li'l boy," one who tries to be grown up and serious, but who succeeds primarily in charming us with his innocence. The reader may decide what theme best fits the action in Harold J. DuBois'short story, "She Just Don't Understand Business."

Our poetry is chosen on merit, but is also related to youth and springtime: Jimmy Aubert's "For Father: Across Some Ocean" deals with a son's ambivalence toward a barely-known and forever-callow father; Gene DeGruson's "Warning," not merely a poem about the tenacious trumpet vine, admonishes us to choose carefully before we plant; "Movie " by Michael L. Johnson, revives images of white-hatted cowboys whose bullets never caused mortal wounds; Gladys Mundt turns to the subject of romantic love; and Philip Boatright's center spread of poems addresses at length the latter springtime concern.

Patty Kuhel's contribution of Lebanese folklore appeals to us as refreshingly seasonal...as does "May Day Parade (vintage photograph). Gordon Parks' photograph, "Newt Winger," relates to Parks' youth in Fort Scott, location for Warner Bros.-Seven Arts' 1968 film, **The Learning Tree**, while Kirt Duffy's 1979 "Tavis Allen" has an almost timeless quality. Judy Barde photographed an old and neglected Hotel Stilwell--but this Pittsburg landmark, now on the **National Register**, is being restored to its youth by new owners, Dr. and Mrs. Wilson Rigler.

We present several "firsts" in this issue. Accompanying the poem "Warning" is a drawing by our first Missouri contributor, Charles W. Schwartz, artist for the Missouri Department of Conservation, and one of our photographs salutes our first musical subject, the Little Balkans Brass Quintet. Of historical importance is our publication of the previously unrecorded photograph of a Kiowa woman by the Fort Sill, Oklahoma, photographer, William S. Soule. There are two additional "firsts." Scattered throughout this issue are delightful quotations and comments from a few of the many colorful personages of our region. We hope that this feature becomes part of our magazine's evolving personality and image. Finally, we include the winners of the Tenth Annual Kansas Poetry Contest, sponsored by Ossie Tranbarger of Independence.

And the contest continues. Entry in both categories of the Eleventh Annual Poetry Contest is now open, the closing date for submission being October 15, 1981. In the first category, form and subject matter are optional. The only restriction is one of length: each poem must contain a minimum of eight lines and must not exceed twenty-four lines. In the second category, the haiku are to be traditional and, further, no haiku sequence will be considered. Two copies of each submission should be sent, the original bearing no identification of the author, the second having both the poet's name and address. These should be mailed with an entry fee of $1.00 per poem to the Kansas Poetry Contest, Ossie E. Tranbarger 619 West Main Street, Independence, KS, 67301.

A self-addressed, stamped envelope will guarantee the sender a list of prize winners in December 1981. Non-winning poems will be destroyed after judging. The independent decisions of the judges are final, states Mrs. Tranbarger, and no responsibility is taken for manuscripts lost in the mail. Cash prizes are the same as for the 1980 contest, and winning poems again will be published in the **LBR**.

We, the Editors, now look forward to our next issue, which will explore the Kansas career of novelist Harold Bell Wright.

**The Editors**

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# The Wrong Side of the Tapestry: Edythe Squier Draper

by Jeffrey Ann Goudie

On March 16, 1961, Edythe Squier Draper, seventy-nine years old and a doughty newspaper reporter, hurriedly typed in a letter to her daughter Lucy:

> Last night I went to hear a woman history prof of the 'Adult Ed class'...and tried this afternoon to write a report of her rapid reading of a lecture that was cute, learned, sophisticated but done so fast that I couldn't get much down for listening and enjoying. So I said it was about a woman, vigorous, turrible strong, beautiful, ubiquitous, one big strong creature striding over the prairies nursing Indians and settlers, teaching, hatcheting saloons, being beautiful and efficient—Betcha the good earnest souls hearing the lecture will complain of the fool old reporter—

When almost sixty, Edythe Squier Draper had become the Oswego correspondent for the small but reputable *Parsons Sun* newspaper in Southeast Kansas. This was in 1942, and, afraid that the editor, Clyde M. Reed, wouldn't hire a person her age, she sent her twenty-five-year-old daughter Peg to apply for the job. Reed was reportedly slightly baffled at the novel arrangement of daughter applying for mother, but Peg convinced him that her mother's writing talent was considerable. He agreed to give her a try and the relationship proved mutually amicable: for twenty-two years, until her death at age eighty-two, Edythe wrote the Oswego news column six days a week for *The Sun.*

Edythe was indeed a prodigiously talented writer. From the time she was forty-two until she was sixty, she was frequently published as a short story writer. Her stories appeared in the Topeka-based *Household Magazine,* a large circulation women's magazine which during its fifty-four-year existence carried such noteworthy con-

**Edythe Squier Draper poses with her daughter, Peg Varvel, ca. 1962.**

tributors as F. Scott Fitzgerald and Colette, and which printed the playwright William Gibson for the first time. In fact, readers voted Edythe's story "Counted Out" as the best short story *Household* ran in 1929; Theodore Dreiser's "Fine Furniture" placed second. Her "The Voice of the Turtle" was reprinted in Edward J. O'Brien's *The Best Short Stories of 1930,* a volume which included Dorothy Parker and Katherine Anne Porter. "As It Began to Dawn," "Poindexter," "As Grass," and "Fourteen" were listed with three asterisks and thus made the Roll of Honor, his highest rating for the O'Brien collections of 1927, 1930, and 1931. Nine other of her stories were listed in O'Brien indices for various years with one and two asterisks, marking distinction. Her short-short stories "Poindexter" and "In Washington Tonight" were placed in the highest ranking group by the O. Henry Memorial Volume selection committees in 1930 and 1932. Four more of her stories were given second and third rankings in those years. From 1924 to 1942, she published at least twenty-four stories in such publications as *Household,* the *Midland, Prairie Schooner, University Review, Double Dealer, Clay,* and *Kansas Magazine.* Numerous short story manuscripts never saw publication.

In addition, she wrote two novel-length manuscripts (one a children's novel) and published about sixty juveniles in such periodicals as *Portal, Target,* the *Classmate* and *Young People's Paper.* For a time, her fictional short-shorts appeared frequently in the *Chicago Daily News* and the *Kansas City Times.* She was published in the *Western Home Monthly,* the *Presbyterian Advance,* and the *Youth's Companion* as well.

And the slight Mrs. Draper, all the while living in the rural Kansas town of Oswego, was paid court by the literary community of her day. The collection of her papers on deposit in the Southeast Kansas Collection at the Pittsburg State University Library in Pittsburg, Kansas, contains an array of admiring correspondence. Clifton P. Fadiman, then head of the editorial department at Simon and Schuster, wrote Edythe a letter in 1928 which opened with the rather florid: "Your work interests us vividly." He promised "a special reception" for any manuscript of hers and wrote that Simon and Schuster would be "particularly anxious to examine the novel that every distinctive short writer inevitably has in mind." In another letter he told her he had long followed her "admirable work" in the *Prairie Schooner,* marking "with satisfaction" that she'd been reprinted in O'Brien. Another time he called a letter she had written him "a remarkably interesting one."

Letters from Dodd, Mead and Co., from Reynal and Hitchcock, and from Brewer and Warren indicate interest in book-length manuscripts. Roderick Lull, short story writer and novelist, wrote asking for a contribution to the first issue of his *Outlander.* Poet José García Villa solicited a story for *Clay.* Literary agent Jacques Chambrun, professing to have followed her work with interest, wrote offering his professional services.

Edythe was doubtless flattered by this attention, but did not take it entirely seriously. On a trip East she made in 1931 she wrote her son that a story about her was to appear in the *Philadelphia Daily News.* She suggested the headline might read: "The farmer-author, mother of 3 children, gains fame and fortune writing at odd hours." She wrote deprecatingly, "I am supposed to be something, I find." She also gibed: "They may take some ugly, skinny person's picture and stick it by the interview."

Her best work is explanation enough for why she attracted a following. She wrote truthfully and unselfconsciously in the vocabulary and tone of the character through whose consciousness the story develops. She frequently employed a modified stream of consciousness which would put her in the literary vanguard of the time in which she wrote.

Further, three of her published stories, appearing in *University Review,* are about Black women (she once taught in a mission school for Blacks in South Carolina), an unorthodox fictional subject for a white woman at that time. She wrote about Blacks so sensitively that Karlton Kelm, editor of the *Dubuque Dial,* was moved to ask in response to some of her manuscripts: "Are you Negro yourself?" Her best work shows keen sensitivity to the concerns and conflicts of the traditionally powerless—women, Blacks, and children—as well as societal outsiders and those with little money or education. Additionally, much of her fiction faithfully represents the character of rural Midwestern people.

The eldest of nine children, seven of whom survived to adulthood, Edythe was born on July 25, 1882, in Hakodate, Japan, of Methodist missionary parents. Llewellyn Squier recorded this entry in his diary: "Last night at 10 o'ck. the expected labor of our first born commenced. Madge had a pretty severe though natural time of it and while she was crying out with pains I found relief in walking the parlor floor and praying for her." The Rev. Squier was a talented musician, but had entered the ministry because of family pressure. Edythe was often the victim of his stormy temper. Edythe's daughter Peg Varvel recalls reading an account of Edythe's of how it felt to be thrown down after being choked: "You hated the fall, but you were so glad to get the air." Edythe felt her father disliked her at least in part because, with buck teeth, she was not conventionally attractive.

Edythe's mother, Elizabeth Armstrong Squier, relished her unique status as a college graduate. An avid reader, she would claim headaches and steal off to her room to read, leaving young Edythe with dishes and clothes to wash and children to care for. Edythe told Peg that she could never remember climbing a tree as a child without having to pass up a baby before her.

When Edythe was five, the Squiers moved from Japan to Ohio, stopping at Hong Kong, India, the Red Sea, Palestine, North Africa, Italy, Switzerland, France, and England on their route home. Back in his native Ohio, the Rev. Squier, who had viewed missionary work as a form of cultural chauvinism, made his opinions known and found himself transferred to a Minnesota town bordering South Dakota, which was, Peg says, "Siberia." Two towns later, in 1896, a frustrated Lee Squier announced from the pulpit that he was leaving the Methodist ministry and, in Peg's words, the family that had "nearly starved as children of the preacher came even closer as children of an insurance agent." In a biographical sketch which appeared in the *The Best Short Stories of 1928,* Edythe wrote: "When I

**Edythe Squier Draper [at right] with her sister Mabel in Hakodate, Japan, ca. 1886.**

was fourteen my father—in Sinclair Lewis' old town, Sauk Centre, Minnesota- -forsook the church and all her works. He wrote a book* and we lived on—dreams; my mother and we were seven. My father took to insurance and we had a little food and some shoes." By the time Edythe graduated from high school at nineteen in Greensburg, Pennsylvania, the family had made frequent moves: Browns Valley, Crookston, and Sauk Centre, Minnesota; Steubenville and Westerville, Ohio; and Asbury Park, New Jersey.

Edythe emerged from that growing-up period with something of an outsider's sensibility and with a sensitivity to the feelings of others which equipped her well to write. In 1937 a girlhood acquaintance from Asbury Park, Margaret Widdemer, who went on to become a novelist and poet, and who in 1919 shared the Poetry Society of America Prize with Carl Sandburg, wrote reassuring Edythe that despite the rather traumatic childhoods of each, "loneliness and change and emotional shock are apparently the foundation-stone of capacity to write, especially when they get you young."

Edythe carried out of her childhood an awareness of the special cares and concerns of children. She is almost never better than when writing from a child's perspective, as is illustrated in two of her most striking stories, the highly autobiographical "Fourteen" (*Midland,* May-June 1930) and "The Fruit at Singapore" (*Midland,* November-December 1928). In "Fourteen," the central character, Lillian, and her friend Ella arrive at a revival:

> As soon as they got in where people were Ella Martin began tossing her head and laughing, as if Lillian said funny things. They sat down and then Ella turned around and looked everywhere. Suddenly she jumped up, pulling Lillian.
>
> .....
>
> They went over people's knees into another bench...Ella turned half way around and slapped at a boy sitting behind her now. The boy caught her hand and she said, 'Qui-ut! Qui-ut!' Lillian thought maybe she would do that way with a boy some time.

Further, her close acquaintance with the hypocrisy of religion in the form of, if nothing else, a minister father whose behavior hardly embodied Christian principles, gave Edythe broader notions of good

*This reference is probably to a novel Lee Welling Squier (his *nom de plume)* wrote based on his experience as a missionary, *A Lamb to the Slaughter.* Edythe's contradictory father published two other books. One, a survey of the old age pension movement, was brought out by Macmillan in 1912.

and evil than were generally held during the time in which she came of age. And her exposure to the ersatz spiritualism whipped up at revivals and group prayer sessions made her aware of the finer spiritualism embodied in the conduct of one's personal life, as well as the emotional transcendence possible through involvement with music and nature, and through human intimacy.

For instance, in "Fourteen," the young Lillian is coaxed into an emotional high by a singing, shaking, swaying, cajoling preacher, and is "converted," sobbing and confessing sorrow for her sins. At the story's end, after a "call" by the preacher and his wife—done up in high comedy, with the preacher shouted down by Lillian's brothers, sister, and a friend playing in the cellar, and toppled over in an unstable base-rocker—the daughter Lillian and the usually emotionally distant mother share a rare moment of closeness with a good laugh over the tumultuous scene.

"Fourteen" closes with a recognition that emotional transcendence can be achieved in what are ultimately more genuine ways, ways that do not involve planting gratuitous feelings of guilt in young children:

> **And Lillian while she laughed thought of something. She thought of going into the front room, to the organ. She wanted to play the organ. She wanted to play that last piece in the Instruction Book. You pulled out all the stops in that piece, and you pushed the knee swells out and you pumped fast.**

This recognition is something Edythe did not arrive at easily. One of her first published pieces, if not the first, was an essay which tied for third prize in a 1921 contest seeking the best criticisms of *Outlook*. In it she reveals:

> **I climbed the arid way from Calvinism to Unitarianism a good many years ago, when I was very young and very ardent, and I think Lyman Abbott's wise hand often helped me over bitterly rough places to the wider, happier plain where reason and faith shine together. The Outlook has meant sanity, you see to an extremist, a pendulum-swinger.**

It is clear from Edythe's more autobiographical fiction as well as from her eventual choice of fiction writing as part of her career, that she early developed into a fancier, obviously at least in part to escape the sometimes banal cruelty of her childhood.

"The Fruit at Singapore," like "Fourteen," so telling about Edythe's early adolescence, has the same central character, Lillian, thinking to herself about her unpredictable father: "There was no tell-

ing about Papa. Sometimes he would choke you....Sometimes he would let you alone. You never at any time knew what Papa was going to be like."

Lillian's father sends her out to buy bananas he's seen offered for twenty cents a dozen at a local grocer's. The mention of bananas sparks an agreeable recollection in Lillian's mother of "the fruit at Singapore." She and her husband Burton share a clean, clear, still moment because of the jointly held memory. On the way to the grocer's, Lillian, happy at seeing her parents' pleasure, makes a connection between their reminiscence and one of her own: once, while hiding under a bush during a game of Hide and Seek, she experienced a moment of extraordinary happiness with the sun on her back and neck, a rooster crowing across the frozen river, the wet grass beneath her.

At the story's end, after her father has squeezed her neck and shoved her up the stairs for allowing herself to be bilked by the grocer, Lillian forgets her hurt and humiliation by losing herself in a fantasy while looking out her bedroom window. The April Minnesota sky becomes land, port, water, a boat rowed by sailors, and she conjures out of her subconscious the buried memory of the fruit at Singapore. She is brought out of her reverie by a call from her mother asking her to come look after the baby.

She attempts to use her recollection to initiate a brief communion with her Mama: "'I remember the fruit at Singapore,' she said. 'Yes, perhaps you do,' Mama answered. They were like two women speaking together then."

Evidently Edythe had mixed feelings about her mother, whose judgment she trusted enough to seek her editorial advice, sending a manuscript, "Coolie Coat," along with the note:

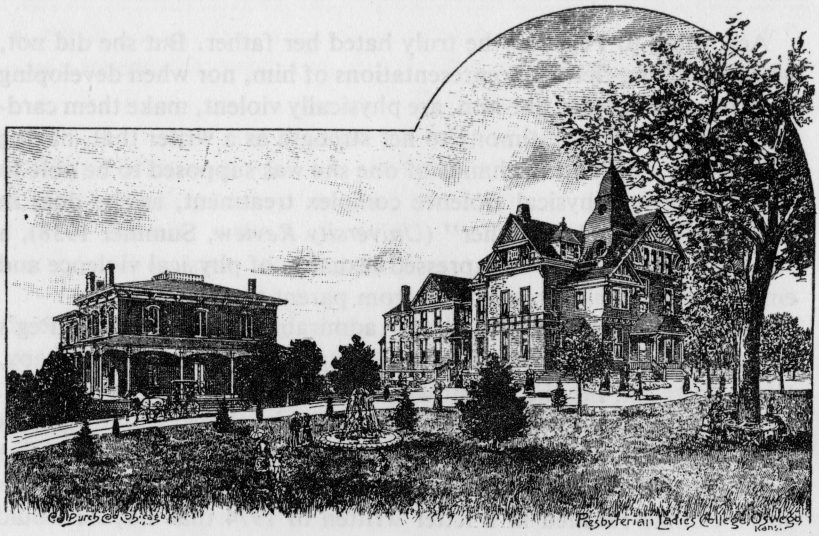
> Dear Mum:
>
> I am extremely anxious for your opinion of this. It's supposed to tell without saying. Does it?
>
> E.

And in the letter to Edward J. O'Brien granting him permission to reprint "The Voice of the Turtle," she expressed regard for her mother's feelings: "I wonder if I may ask you to use my full name, with the story? That will please the mother of the 'author'." Be that as it may, the image that emerges from the stories that follow the contours of her early life is of a mother aloof and preoccupied with her own troubles.

According to Peg, Edythe truly hated her father. But she did not, when rendering fictional representations of him, nor when developing male characters who, like him, are physically violent, make them cardboard figures. It is testimony to her strength as a writer that, having suffered as a child at the hands of one she was supposed to be able to trust, she gives physical violence complex treatment, as she does in "As Her Father Her Mother" (*University Review,* Summer 1938), a story in part about the ill-expressed sexuality of physical violence and emotional dynamics transmitted from parent to child.

Edythe survived her childhood admirably. Her daughter Peg's theory is that she used her fiction writing as her own psychotherapy. When forty-six, Edythe herself wrote: "I have not been 'happy,' very, I suppose, and so I write." She reportedly developed a fine sense of humor, evident in much of her fiction, particularly the story "Quinine and Honey." She struck others as a poised young woman. Edythe's sister Connie recalled in a letter written in 1974 that Edythe would always eat some before going out to a dinner party so she could spend her time talking. Her sister Margaret once wrote in a letter: "Socially she was radiant." Shortly after her graduation from high school Edythe held a teaching position for a couple of years at the Brainerd Institute in Chester, South Carolina, where, she wrote in that 1928 personal sketch, "I fervently taught blacks" and also where she "forsook—in my turn, missions." The Squiers moved from Greensburg to Philadelphia about 1904 when Edythe was twenty-two. She joined them there and found plenty of outlets for her cultural interests, spending hours especially at Philadelphia Orchestra concerts. Also there she began taking university classes: "I went to creep, now sadly, now ecstatically, about the bleak halls of the University of Pennsylvania, nibbling up crumbs of history, languages, English literature." From 1907 to 1908 she taught high school in Marietta, Ohio, but refused a reappointment and raise to take more classes at the University of Pennsylvania. In 1909, in a letter accepting a tentative offer of a teaching job in Greenfield, Ohio, for which she was ultimately turned down, she wrote of herself: " . . . I am accustomed to meeting people, and do not find it difficult to adapt myself to new surroundings."

With this assurance in her own ability to adapt, a year later, in 1910, twenty-eight-year-old Edythe traveled some 1,300 miles by train, from Philadelphia to Oswego, Kansas, population 2,228, to teach at the Oswego College for Young Ladies, a Presbyterian school. "A small decrepit college," Edythe wrote of it. When her father learned she was




to teach in Oswego, he exclaimed in disbelief, "Not *that* town!" Her father's amorous adventures, Edythe later was to discover, had once taken him to Oswego for a brief stay.

Edythe had taken "training in the commercial branches" at the Drexel Institute in Philadelphia and taught secretarial courses, literature, and German at the College. She even taught botany once when no one else would volunteer, barely staying ahead of her class the whole year. She was Miss Squier then, and in the parlance of the time, "an accomplished young lady" with a good singing voice and the ability to do piano improvisations, though she'd had few lessons.

After two years of college teaching, she married the son of a town doctor, James B. Draper, whom she called in a biographical note in the May 1929 *Household,* "the Man Who Lived Across the Street." In 1913 she had a daughter Lucy, in 1914 a son Jim, and in 1917, another daughter, Peg. Four years after her last child, her *Outlook* essay gives a glimpse of her life and concerns at that time:

> I suppose I smile always when I see the Outlook among the papers and letters one day in each week. I remember that I did to-day. For what could I be thinking about as I darn Sonny's knees or pick up all the things three children and one man can bestrew a house withal each hurrying morning if I could not have a minute or two at breakfast time to read just a little of The Outlook? The waffles are crisp and hot. I feel the ever-new excitement of sensing the dawn coming up out of the woods beyond the pasture. I prop The Outlook against the water-pitcher and read bits to Jim and we talk just a little—and my day has begun.

What is apparently her first printed short story appeared three years later in the October 1924 issue of *Double Dealer,* a little magazine which also gave Ernest Hemingway, Thornton Wilder, and Jean Toomer their literary debuts.

Edythe's dedication to her personal development and to her writing caused inevitable strains: Peg says that as a child she was jealous of her mother's typewriter and had the impression that she sat down at it as soon as she could after the children were off to school, and didn't get up from it until she absolutely had to. Upon arriving home, Peg would go in to say something to her mother, and Edythe would look up with a dazed expression. Occasionally Edythe would try to recruit her children as critics of her fiction, but Peg says they disliked being asked: in part because of the emotional quality of their mother's voice as she read those pieces which were more autobiographical. Edythe would occasionally jump this hurdle by camouflaging her fiction inside magazines.

As a result of having housework and child care inflicted on her to an oppressive degree as a child (in Northern Minnesota she would return from school and have to break up ice and heat it to do the previous day's dishes), Edythe did not ask her own children to help out. She was an efficient household manager, and in addition to her writing, she was involved in various church activities, including successfully conducting the junior choir for a time. In fact Edythe spent a lot of time in church. The Drapers went Sunday mornings and evenings and sometimes Wednesday nights and on a host of other occasions as well. Peg speculates that her mother must have been aghast at spending that much time in church after her traumatic childhood associations, although the choir work must have compensated some.

As Peg put it, Edythe "was always doing what she SHOULD do—as much as she could." The roots of her rather accommodating nature were surely in the relative emotional neglect of her childhood, and in having early become a mother substitute and protector of her brothers and sisters. That the family moved so frequently clearly played its part, as is illustrated in this closely autobiographical passage from "The Fruit at Singapore":

> If in this town she (Lillian) said hain't and darsn't in just the right places she might be chosen for Run Sheep Run, and the girls might put their arms around her and the boys make faces at her. No, it was no good knowing Japanese. You must not say things, know things, the others didn't. You must be like the girls in any town you were in, if you wanted not to be alone all the time.

Like Lillian, Edythe had spoken Japanese as a young child, but had mostly forgotten it as a result of being asked by her parents to perform

it for assorted callers. But having been bilingual as a child, she remained adept at languages all her life, with some ability in Greek, Latin, German, and French.

Duty and outside activities aside, Edythe's compulsion to write was strong and write she did, sitting in the small white house south of town where she and her husband lived most of their married life, in front of a typewriter set up in a corner of the dining room, the house orderly, the floors shining, area rugs scattered about, and Rembrandt prints and paintings on the walls. Many Blacks in Oswego, who felt a special understanding from Edythe, and some poor people, perhaps because they sensed she was something of an outsider too, would drop in to talk with her during the day. As a former college teacher she was somewhat isolated from the townspeople, and indeed she may have distanced herself—that is, until she became the Oswego correspondent for *The Sun,* at which time, in Peg's words, "she became very much the possession of the town."

Most of Edythe's stories are about outsiders, and two of her most successful—small masterpieces, in fact—are about dark, unnoticed people, grotesques in the fashion of some Faulkner and Flannery O'Connor characters. Each story, because of the integrity of the character development, forces us to sympathize with people very different from ourselves, thus performing one of the most important functions of fiction. About people whose sustenance, solace, and inspiration come from the earth, these two stories, like most of Edythe's, have rural and small town settings.

"As Grass" (*Prairie Schooner,* Summer 1930) is a powerful story about a woman, Pearl Wentz, crazy in the way one gets from living too long alone, who trusts only the neutral, nonjudgmental earth. The story's evocative beginning is representative of Edythe's style:

> It was only February, but the woman was in her garden. She was kneeling on the ground, her small body crouched low over it. To a casual eye she might have seemed to be working, but she was not pulling up the bent, black stalks of last year's vegetation; she was not planting anything; merely in contact with the ground were her hands. She peered closely at the earth beneath and about her, only raising her face a moment now and again to glance at the sky, at the leafless, conical pear trees beside the garden, or up into the maples embracing the steep roof of her small, brown house. But always her eyes came back to the ground, and her mouth moved in whispered question.
>
> "What's a-goin' on? What is it a-goin' on?"

"The Voice of the Turtle" (*Prairie Schooner,* Summer 1929) is Edythe's finest achievement. The story is told through the consciousness of the boy Forrest, getting to be a small man like his father.

**The former home of James B. and Edythe Squier Draper on College Road, Oswego, Kansas. Ted Watts, photographer.**

A circus comes to town with its burlesqued promises of excitement. Forrest leaves off his plowing and finds himself in town walking beside a girl, "his first time for walking with a girl," a girl who wants a balloon. A short distance away "a thousand red and blue and yellow balls were in the air above the dark people,"a luminous chimera of desire just out of reach. The girl, whose hand on Forrest's arm had been "hard and anxious," her eyes clouded, abandons him for a boy able to buy her a balloon. Forrest devises a plan: he will take the money Poppy has saved to buy a new cow, then be able to buy "a balloon, a sack of candy, everything." He runs home, the circus calliope beckoning him in the background. On the "town side of the barn" stands Forrest's Poppy, with "brown eyes—like a hungry dog's."

Forrest's lank Mommy stands in the doorway of the house, "one tooth hanging down from the purplish gum." Her eyes are filled with "the film of desire and of dream," her eyes "not unlike the eyes of the girl in the town wanting a balloon, something so beautiful." Mommy takes to one of her spells, but not so much that she does not foil Forrest's attempt to take the money from the coffee pot above the stove, and not so much that she is not cognizant of what is going on between her husband and Sister Kennard, one of those Poppy brings in to pray for her. In Edythe's most compelling depiction of a feverish group prayer session, the supplicants file in: "The eyes of all, like coals awaiting an enkindling draught, dully gleamed." And then:

> The room became full of sound: deep steady, bellowing from Brother Armes with his long moustache, the words unintelligible; shouts, 'Hallelujah!' 'Oh, Lord!' 'Glory!' Broken sighs, screams and sobs, long sentences with the words jumping over each other quickly, descending to a deep groan, climbing to a high shriek. Tears coursed down faces. Eyes were closed.
>
> An ebb came at length in the tide of implorings. Before the flood again Sister Kennard's voice: 'Co-o-o-mfert this dear man! Pour in the oil of gladness. Co-o-o-mfert an' sistain 'im! This pore, lonely man! Th' wife o' his buzzum layin' col' an' dead in th' deep an lonely grave...'
>
> High and low, shrill and resonant, cries and screams and groans and shrieks.
>
> Forrest added his voice, inaudible to himself. But—Mommy wasn't dead...You prayed like Sister Kennard just then at a funeral, not when some one had a spell, was not dead yet....
>
> No. Mommy was not going to be dead this night. Mommy's face seemed like Mommy's face now, more. Mommy opened one eye, the eye by Sister Kennard. Deep lines came in her forehead. Red like fire came to her face. Both Mommy's eyes opened. And suddenly Mommy was getting off the bed, pushing a way between Poppy and Sister Kennard. And Mommy was jumping on the floor, shouting mightily: 'Hallelujah! I'm reestored! Hallelujah! Praise the Lord! Praise the Lo-r-rd!! Let us reejoice!'

Finally, in the largest sense, the story is about disappointment and renewal, a common motif of Edythe's: Forrest's plan for attracting the girl is frustrated, and Poppy's illicit yearning for Sister Kennard is found out. As in many stories, nature is the renewing force. At the story's end, frogs croak, and Forrest's younger brother Silas laughs, "Frogses!" Poppy predicts no more frost, the children thrill at the prospect of going barefoot, Mommy makes plans to do some spring cleaning, Poppy and Forrest both offer to work for a neighbor to pay off the balance of whatever the new cow will cost.

The stories "Li'l Boy" (*University Review,* October 1939) and "Maybe So" (*Kansas Magazine,* 1942) evidence Edythe's sensitivity to the particular conflicts and concerns of women. "Li'l Boy" is about a Black woman doomed to a lifetime of servitude—because of her false notions of pride—to a "little boy" husband who beats her and to the whites she works for, who condescend to her.

"Maybe So," though slightly too direct in the relating of its theme, is nonetheless a convincing story. It suggests the ambivalence of motherhood and depicts the disappointment which simple, hard-working Sarah Robison feels on learning that her favorite and

youngest girl Mary is pregnant and that her favorite and youngest boy Frank has joined the Navy and is off to war. These two, so bright and attractive, for whom she held hopes of different, better things:

> So young, Mary, so young, not knowing. Her four sisters had been young, not so slim and pretty as Mary, but young; now they spread themselves and clucked and their eyes showed a knowingness that to bear and dig for young ones was what there was for females.

Edythe's vision for herself clearly included more than bearing and digging for young ones. She realized the vision of being published as a short story writer, but she was never able to make her fiction writing result in a significant addition to the family income. She cooked up various other money-making schemes, including raising chickens.

In the Depression years letters to Edythe as well as from her make reference to her anxiety over finances. The Drapers' income was modest. Edythe's husband Jim was always employed, working for years for an investment company of which he became an officer, although he was never paid particularly well. Actually, Edythe may have worried a bit compulsively about money because of childhood deprivations.

"Dire poverty has prevented me from reading your 'Dance of the Machines,' but I expect now to have it shortly," she wrote O'Brien in 1930. The following year, Thomas H. Uzzell, critic, anthologist (*Short Story Hits),* and teacher, wrote Edythe: "Nothing has happened this month yet that interests me more than the receipt of your letter—this, for the reason that you are a writer of promise, your difficulty is a real one, and you have no money!" In 1937, she sent seven dollars to a Hollywood agent to employ her to look over some material for screen possibilities, adding that an acceptance the day before allowed her "to make this—gamble!" The editor of *Kansas Magazine,* recommending Edythe for a Houghton Mifflin literary fellowship, wrote in 1938: "Edythe Squier Draper is an able writer with potential creative ability, but lacks leisure time to develop her talent."

Edythe sought advice on how to place her work in the lucrative popular magazines. Uzzell offered to examine some of her work for a fee, writing in a cocky manner: "Of one thing I am quite sure: I can tell you what the trouble is." When Edythe declined for lack of money, he responded rather cutely: "I understand only too well, for the well-known depression has not entirely spared me."

John T. Frederick, the editor of the *Midland* (which H.L. Mencken once called "probably the most important literary magazine ever

established in America"), cautioned Edythe in a letter written in December of 1929 that "a more or less definite choice" must be made by a writer either to write for particular markets or to do things for their own intrinsic worth. "I think you could do the first successfully but I imagine you would find it too unpleasant to be really worthwhile." In what appears to be a response to something Edythe has written him, he admonishes that "'doing what editors want' is something I should never urge upon you."

Frederick proposed that he examine selected manuscripts on a commission basis, but this apparently never worked out as planned, prompting him to write in 1931 that he considered himself "not a little responsible for the discouragement" Edythe was feeling about her writing. In another letter Frederick offered "cold comfort" that Edythe had not been able to work on her novel.

The well-paying markets, with the exception of *Household,* never opened up for Edythe. However, she usually merited compliments and tact along with rejections. In 1930 *Scribner's Magazine* conceded in sending back one manuscript that, like all Edythe's work, it was "done with distinction," and indicated interest in anything new she did. Alfred S. Dashiell,the managing editor at Scribner's, claimed in a 1932 letter: "We always read a manuscript of yours with anticipation. We have come so near to taking several of your things that we always hope we shall find something just right for us." Under Dashiell's editorship, the magazine was publishing the likes of Sherwood Anderson, D.H. Lawrence, and Tess Slesinger.

Edythe did employ the services of Jacques Chambrun, the agent who had written offering his assistance. She did this only to be told that a batch of her manuscripts had a credible atmosphere, were "done with a certain arresting artistry," but that the characters were "drab and commonplace—and therefore unsuitable to the general magazines." About the manuscript "Cordelia Kleindienst's Coat," Chambrun wrote that the writing was "vivid" and "perceptive," that her ability in creating atmosphere recalled some of Faulkner, but that there wasn't a market for the story: "It is too stark and tragic in theme and inspiration for the popular, high-paying publications. It would go with one of the new-type magazines who pay very little or nothing to contributors." In this same letter he lauded her talent, but recommended paternalistically that she "turn to more cheerful and normal subject matter."

Some of Edythe's work was held to be off limits in part at least because it was written about Blacks, and at least one piece was evidently considered too risque for the '30's reader. Chambrun wrote

giving as some of his objection to two of Edythe's stories written about Black women, that one, "Miz Briggs' Son," would be hard to follow for "one unacquainted with the various details of Negor [sic] life . . ." and of another, that "here again the subject matter would stand in its way."

The long-time editor of *Household,* Nelson Antrim Crawford, rejected the manuscript "Statesman's Wife" in a letter written in 1937 because he feared "the racial emphasis would be objectionable to a good many of our readers." Of the manuscript "Coolie Coat," Crawford wrote that it was "exceptionally well done," that he liked its style "immensely," but that he didn't think it was "the sort of story for a popular magazine." Its subject: a woman who long before has had a son by her half-sister's husband and has lived with the couple until the story's opening at the husband's death.

Certainly not all Edythe's rejections were brought on by her being out of the mainstream in her subject matter. Her style drew criticism as well. Her girlhood friend Margaret Widdemer assessed Edythe's writing with: " . . . your material is of good literary grade, but sometimes fails in technique. Which is easy; for work will always improve technique, while organic badness isn't a thing one can help." *Midland* Editor Frederick thought that Edythe was not always realizing all the possibilities inherent in her material.

In 1941 Margaret E. Dowst of the *Saturday Evening Post* wrote Edythe that in contrast to the work of most of the the writers the *Post* dealt with, which told "entirely too much," Edythe's ficiton was akin to "gettin pieces of a puzzle . . . rather than being shown a complete picture." Crawford complained that a lot of her work was "too elliptical for the average reader." He also found some to be tales "a trifle thin." Chambrun once called Edythe's talent "as yet untrained," and said she swung "from the hard-boiled to the sentimental and romantic."

In her weakest work, Edythe is hopelessly sentimental and romantic. She evidently tailored some things for her markets for an obvious if not altogether acceptable reason: she needed the money. The newspaper short-shorts (about which Peg says: "She got eight dollars a story and she needed it") are top among her potboilers.

The '30's dealt Edythe two disappointments. For several years Fadiman at Simon and Schuster had asked her for a book-length work. But in 1935 the publishing house rejected *The Fruit at Singapore* manuscript, Fadiman reporting that the overall opinion of the readers was that the book's tone was "too unrelieved, too monotonous," though it was held that the material had

"authenticity," and that "some of the moods of the little girl are very well handled indeed." Fadiman said he regretted extremely not being able to take the manuscript, asking her to "forgive the unvarnished candor of these criticisms. . . ." Simon and Schuster was still "very much interested" in her work, he wrote, and asked for "a chance to read any subsequent offerings."

Three years later, Edythe was turned down for a Houghton Mifflin literary fellowship on the basis of *The Fruit at Singapore* book project, although she was in "the top few given special consideration." Houghton Mifflin did ask for "the privilege of considering"the finished book as a regular manuscript, as it was thought the story would be "an unusually appealing one."

Edythe had reached the pinnacle of her success as a fiction writer, according to conventional measures, when she was reprinted in *The Best Short Stories of 1930.* She was, her daughter Peg says, ready for "a great change" when the *Parsons Sun* came up in 1942. Initially, Edythe wrote pretty much a straight news column. Later, Peg says, the *Sun* "turned her loose" and her column became chattier and even a little rambling at times.

Her inaugural column, appearing September 1, 1942, reflects her typical humility and is written with disarming openness:

> In this her first column your very new and very, very apprehensive reporter greets you. She used to sit out on the edge of town beside an alfalfa field, look out over the pleasant Kansas land and see men and women working. She heard from the town the sounds of work.
>
> Now she has work. It could be important, done right. She is not sure she can do it right. She'll try. You'll tell her her mistakes. Tell her, too, won't you, items about your neighbors and your family that will help all to a better understanding of each other's lives? We need each other.

Despite her reservations, Edythe handled the job well, not only the reporting, but also the additional responsibility of being the Oswego circulation manager for about fifteen years.

Remembering Edythe, *Parsons Sun* columnist Jim Davis wrote in a 1979 memo:

> Her column for The Sun was supposed to include news from the city hall, the county courthouse, and other hard news sources, but Mrs. Draper tended to pass them over lightly. She would rather write of a personality, the view from the bluff at Riverside Park, the

looks of Oswego's water tower when draped with Christmas lights.

She had a lavish vocabulary. By newspaper standards, her style was ornate. She seemed to have many readers. Not nearly all of them were Oswego residents. 'Now doesn't that sound like Mrs. Draper,' was a comment often heard about her work.

Friends of Mrs. Draper noted quicksilver in her makeup. Sometimes she spoke bitterly of her writing. She thought she hadn't accomplished as much as she should have. But the bitterness seemed to be fleeting. It would quickly disappear and she might giggle. Even in her later years, she sometimes giggled like a schoolgirl at herself.

As one of her sisters once observed, Edythe never had to grow old. When nearly sixty she landed a steady job which kept her in the hub-bub of the little town's daily life. Her son Jim taught her to swim after fifty, and to drive after sixty. And like the speaker she described in the letter to Lucy, in old age Edythe was a "vigorous, turrible strong"woman. At the age of seventy-five, she fell on some ice, badly fracturing both wrists. Discharged from the hospital, her forearms in casts, she would sit in a chair intoning: "I'm willing these bones to knit." To speed up the mending process, she bought hard rubber balls, which she squeezed even as she walked about town, writing to her daughter Lucy and her son-in-law-Tom in California: "I may be going to have the strongest hands in the U.S.!" She also wrote them: "Do you listen and read and feel the pulse of the world?"

The dutiful Edythe loosened up, if only a bit, in old age. In her seventies she went to church only to fall asleep as soon as the sermon began, telling her amused children, "I owe it to your father to go." She wrote to Lucy and Tom: "If we did not always want people to conform to our ideas of the good life! I feel it of course when I am disapproved of for missing church services."

During the last few years of her life, influenced by Arnold Bennett's *How to Live on 24 Hours a Day,* Edythe tackled after-hour projects. She didn't sleep much during those years, but napped while watching television, telling Peg: "The marvelous thing about T.V. is its soporific quality." At age seventy-nine, she closed a letter to Lucy with: "I think I will set and teevee a little. I am jangled."

At her life's end, she had returned to fiction, making revisions on her children's novel *Red Flannel Dreams* after work. In 1974 Peg wrote about her mother's last year:

It is sad to realize how interested Edythe was at age 82 in going back to creative writing, having proved that she could earn the living for

the family and save for old age, which she never had to endure, for twenty years. She was actively revising a novel when her body refused to keep going. When she found out she faced surgery, she said, 'I just feel like saying DAMN about a thousand times.' Her granddaughter said, 'Well, why don't you?' And Edythe said, 'I can't. I'm a NICE woman.'

**Edythe Squier Draper and husband, Jim, at home in Oswego during the height of her short story writing career.**

Edythe told Peg that only during those last two years had she felt she belonged anywhere. Until then, Peg said, "She thought that the town still considered her a foreigner, an outlander." Many people grieved openly when she was dying, coming into her hospital room to cry.

The headline of the September 3, 1964, column, written the day after Edythe had entered the hospital for removal of a fibroid tumor read: "Family Subs for 'Mrs. D'." The following day, her son-in-law wrote in the column: "Here's hoping that frail body and indomitable spirit emerge from the Oswego Hospital 'still achieving, still pursuing' —as in Longfellow's 'Psalm of Life'—a great soul ready for any fate." Three weeks later, on September 25, 1964, Edythe died. In about forty years she had not had a pelvic exam, and the tumor—nonmalignant—was the size of a person's head. She died from post-operative pneumonia.

Her Asbury Park acquaintance Margaret Widdemer had years before written Edythe one of her father's favored adages: " . . . we weave from the wrong side of the tapestry—we cannot see the pattern." Edythe Squier Draper discerned that pattern better than most.

# Li'l Boy

by Edythe Squier Draper

"She a white snake, Sam. Don' go! Don' go, Sam."

She had got down on the floor, lips against his feet, and had prayed to him.

Now he was gone. And she was lying in the dust, dust in her matted hair, ground into the cuts, caking the swollen bruises on every inch of her black body. He had chased her all around the cabin, would never have enough of beating her.

He had latched the door and beat and beat. And then he had got himself washed, scrubbed all over his straight body, put on the white shirt with the tall, stiff collar she had ironed, Doc Liddell's black trousers she had brought home and darned and washed and pressed, Postmaster Cadwallader's coat she had ironed curtains all one day for, the fine black shoes he had bought yesterday with the money she had put away for the insurance. From the corner where he had at last left her, she had heard him splash the water, swish the towel over him, fasten on crackling shirt and collar, snap the laces in and out of the holes of the new shoes. He had even sung a little of one of the ritual songs, feeling fine and cool after exercise and bath, and then he had unlatched the door and gone squeaking out.

She had done no good telling him not to go. She was crazy.

She was crazy. Crazy fool.

She bit the back of her hand, making pain to lessen her other pain. Her crying was all done. She was dry of tears. Grinning faces the dark brought and held there she had to stare and see—faces the like of which she had seen all day.

All day the women had come, on one errand and another, laughing, plaguing her. They told her about the lodge goings-on, about Miss Zodalene, Grand Exemplifier from Kansas City.

"Mummh! Dat Miss Zodalene crazy 'bout Sam! She sho cahy on wid dat man! She mos' plumb white, too, dat Miss Zodalene. Cain't tell huh

f'un white. Fine white laigs, silk dress—effen yuh kin call two mites o' quilt patches a dress—no sleeves a-tall, no back—smellin' rich—mmmh! Sam my man, I'd pizen him foh sho', pizen 'im, im-balm 'im, set 'im on de mantel foh a ohnamint! Dat Sam too good-look-in'. . ."

The women wanted to plague her. They didn't like her. She was one of the old-timers—not so old, but used to the ways of real white folks. She it was, and no other, Miz Doc Liddell and Miz Postmaster Cadwallader had for any parties they gave at their houses. But times had changed. Parties of *new* folks—new trash folks—were out at the Country Club, everybody taking a little something along to eat. Only a few white folks there were still having a dinner party or a "tea" in the old way like before the Great War, and she the one they asked to come and help out, washing windows, and scrubbing as many as three days before, cleaning chickens, parboiling ham. On the party day she helped set the tables, polished glasses, wiped off flowered china already clean. On the party day she had on a white cap and apron and "served"; and washed up afterward, sometimes with a young black girl to help, but she getting all the gizzards and necks and pieces of cake and bits of butter and broken rolls—all things Sam liked to eat. And they knew she would not pick up a grain of sugar they didn't mean her to have. They knew she was no sticky-finger! She still cleaned up half a day for Miz Doc Liddell, but with these vacuum cleaners and dry mops instead of good old soap and water, there wasn't so much to do in any house. And with electric wash-machines folks got along without anybody rubbing and rubbing out in a nice warm wash-house, like in the good old days.

No, she didn't have so much to bring home to Sam—not so much food or clothes or money, any more.

"He don't respec' me." Without blame for him she admitted it.

But she did get him some money, got him money like any black trash. Summers she went out to the Onion King's. She got Sam's breakfast, hoed her beans and gumbo, split the day's wood, and made it out to the patch by the time the whistle blew for seven. She did not walk with the other women, but apart, white-kerchiefed head up, singing as she walked. The ground in the fields was dry and hard, but she knew how to push her paddle in, pull with her wire-strong fingers, tear off dry tops, shake the onions in the sieve to get dirt off, pour them into the basket, heave her body up out of the red dust, carry the basket to the boss at the stack, hide a ticket away in her dress, hurry on back and squat down in the dirt again. She knew how! She could pick the most baskets of any, black or white. All day, every day, from middle of June to middle of August, as long as there was an onion in the ground, she picked up. Bad work, not quality work.

And the women said, "Tee hee! Look at Mahy Jane! Ain' no bettahn othah folks!"

Sam couldn't stand onion-picking. Bad for Sam's back. Sam had got bit by a snake once, got a bad back for life. Only thing saved him from hollering with the misery was whiskey. Sam could go fishing. He could march in the lodge half a night, preach when the preacher was gone. But if he would try to hoe, lift sacks of feed, dig for a sewer, plough, or sweep a store out, he got that bad hurt in his back. He couldn't pick up onions, not a bit pick up onions. Sam's back looked all right, but snake-bite is a bad thing for the juice inside your bones.

What Sam could do was lodge-work. He could blow a little whistle, and the women all dressed in red capes marched to him and away, made stars and letters of the lodge, and bowed to Sam, tall and fine in his red cape and high red hat.

She had never minded the bowing and marching of the women—Sam had carried on plenty with some of them, she knew that—but this high-up Grand Exemplifier, this near-white Miss Zodalene, was something different; Sam was up on a shelf in a cupboard she could not get to—she down with the iron pots and the rat-trap.

Last night—she bit her hand till she could taste blood—Sam did not come home till away after sun-up . . . said he'd been sitting up with Brother Gillis, bad sick.

But he smelled rich-silk clothes, perfumery.

She? The other women had goings-on, bad as men, but she didn't. Didn't she have a pepper bag always right in her pocket, where she could get it easy if anybody started to bother her? She made it of a small piece of cloth with good hot red-pepper Miz Postmaster Cadwallader gave her whenever she thought she needed fresh. If anybody followed her and bothered her coming home late from church or work wouldn't she just let him have that pepper-bag right in his eyes quick?

"All my chillen's Sam's." As she often said to Miz Postmaster Cadwallader, she said now, in the dark corner of the floor, hurting. "All my chillen's Sam's."

She thought about her children a little. They were all dead, all, babies dead; she didn't know how many. They got dead being born or in a few days after. One had got quite sizable, but it had the misery one night and cried, and Sam picked it off the bed and shook it and whipped it and it died. She had told no one about Sam's doing that.

Her children were all dead.

Children. When she went to the schoolhouse exercises what did she see? Mixed-upness she saw, a child with the name of one, the face of another man. But,

"All my chillen's Sam's," she said.

"All my chillen's Sam's." It was like a verse from The Book—she the preacher reading, the answer from the scowling black pews of the night.

"An' he kick yoh in de breas'."

"All my chillen's Sam's."

"An' he kick yoh in de breas'."

She sat up and leaned forward and started. The *night*—something was happening to it.

The black had red in it. Red.

The moon rising was red. In the red the cottonwood across the rocky path stretched up its arms, the night bent down about it. This she saw. White arms went up, blackness bent to them.

But there was redness. There was blood.

There was blood.

*Neah-white. No back to huh dress. Smellin' rich.*

Cackles of the women plaguing her.

"An' he kick yoh in de breas'."

Brown and tall, beautiful, Sam—thin nose, small mouth. Sam, eyes narrowed upon her, even as he looked at a dog tied to be beaten. Sam.

"He kick yoh in de breas'."

A flash. Against the red into the blackness and the white, the flash of a keen blade, of an iron blade.

She leaned and watched.

Again the flash of a keen blade, and again.

She leaned and watched. She laughed aloud.

She laughed and capped her hands. The pain in her breast was no pain. It was a burning which was becoming joy. She bowed; like a spring she uprose. She stood and walked on the floor. Well and whole she walked, came to the yard, to the woodpile, stooped and felt and got into her hands what she found.

Sweet in her hand, as she carried it back, the smooth handle of the axe. Sweet to her fingers the sharp blade. She stepped across the hollow of the door way, low even for her, a low, bent woman.

She would be there, just inside. When he bowed his head to come in, she would be there.

She waited, she, black, in the blackness of the house. She laughed with the red moon laughing.

She had no more pain.

Laughing joy was where pain had been.

She waited and she could wait anytime—short time, long time—from sun-up to sun-down to sun-up, from one time to snow to the next. When he came—whenever that should be—she would be there.

She waited. She waited for the ring of stiff new shoes on the stones of the way twisting down to Niggertown from White Folks' Town. The lodge-

room would be dark now, the women in their red capes, having marched and bowed and marched, would be gone. *She* would be there, and *he,* only. But he would come home. He would come.

She waited.

She waited, and the ring of hard new leather was in her ears.

Louder, the ring of hard new leather on stone.

She spat on her hands as when she split stove-wood. She knew all about an axe.

Tall along the bleached carcass of the canning-factory he passed.

Into the shadow of the cottonwood he was gone—came out, came on.

She saw him hat off, coat off, collar loose, come sauntering out of the path, through the leaning gate, along by the honeysuckle tangle. He yawned. He looked up at the moon, and the moon was on him, on his softly shining brown throat.

Now, he was nearly at the step.

Now, his foot was on the step.

She waited.

Now—

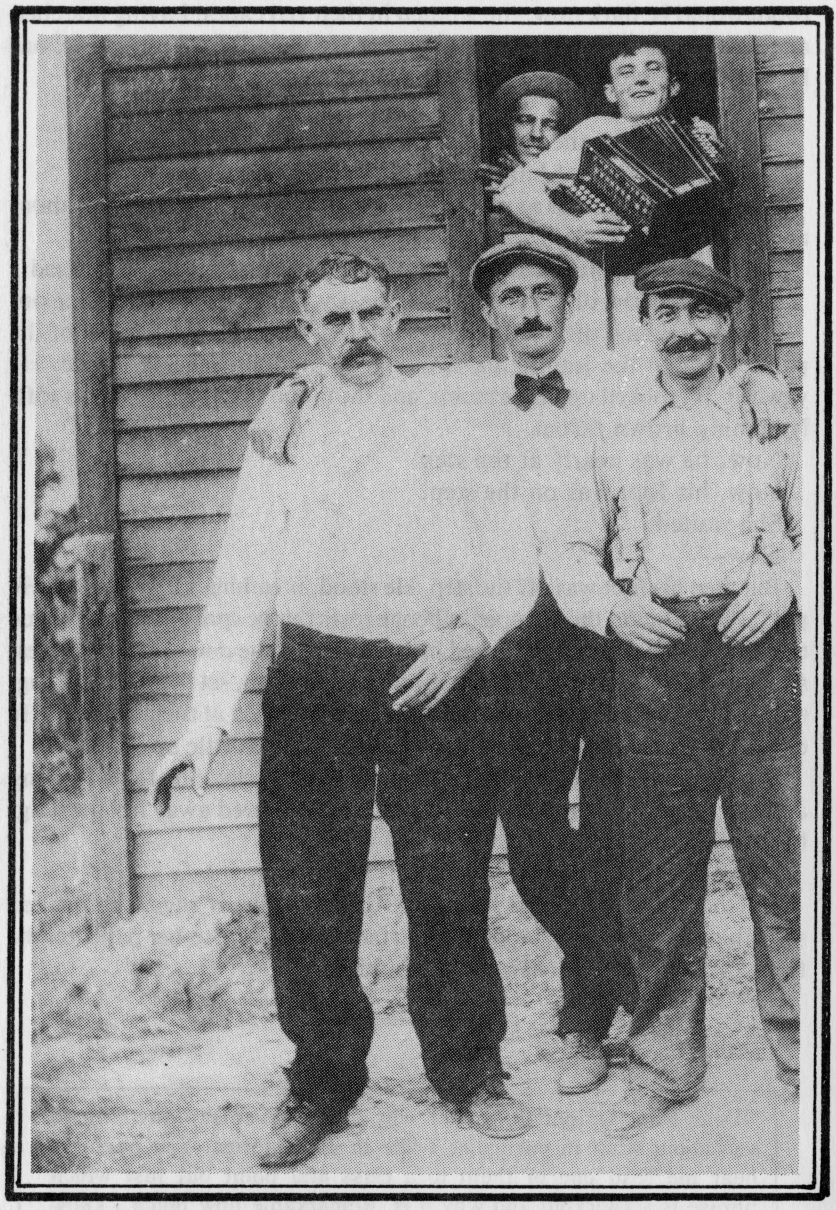
But then his foot was off the step. He stood, breathing softly, deeply. He put his hand out to the big open cabbage roses on the sprawling bush beside the warped boarding. He pressed his face against the dew-wet open roses, strange and pale under the moon, murmured to them, set them to nodding, to brushing his cheek and nose and lips. He chuckled at their tickling. He chuckled and talked to the roses—a little boy, a little sweet boy.

Where hot red had been to her eyes, there was gray. She felt a flowing and a dripping—her sweat rolling from her. So flowed away her burning, her strength, her desire.

Her hands came down.

Her bare flat feet made no noise. Under a pile of rags, she pushed something—covering up its shining surface—and crept to her pallet on the floor beside the bed where Sam would be.

"Dear Mrs. Draper--I wonder why I can never say anything to you about what in particular I like in your stories. You ought to hear me read one of them to a class and point out just which phrase is a knockout and why it is. Remarkable how much I know in front of a class but don't know in front of you. Another example of how I bow down to genius..."--Margaret E. Haughawout, Pittsburg, Kansas, March 7, 1937.



**Intermission at the Cock Fight.**
**Radley Miners, 1910.**

# For Father: Across Some Ocean

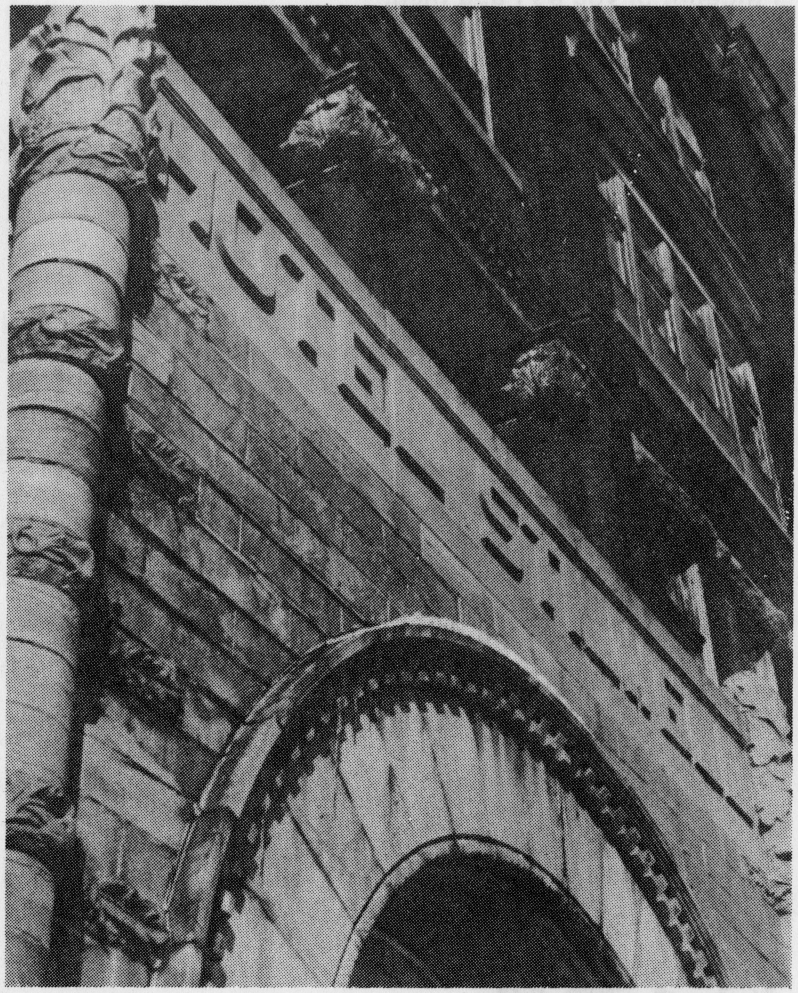
I've lost my Forties photograph of you again.
I thought of you as Papa then,
big macho man-god in hospital-white palace,
swilling *Pinot Noir* and Cognac like sea water
in Paris, France, certainly *not here;*
or breaking the soft brown hearts of French women,
and parading your syphilitic proof down *Champs Elysées.*

You were my F. Scott, fine-cheeked and blond
in a pinkish 3 by 5, Romantic to your core;
my Jack London, *over there,* driving your wolf fangs
into the bleak, smudged hearts of the enemy;
my transplanted Ishmael, you'd broken away--
I'd think I felt the sea-foam dance in my hand.

Big F. Macho Papa, I think I love you still
when I don't hate you. But how often anymore
I don't bother to forgive my lies
of what you were and are. How fragile
our dreams, how easy our graceless fall;
how easily now I lose your little paper replica,
and wonder if you lived at all.

Jimmy Aubert

# Judy Barde's

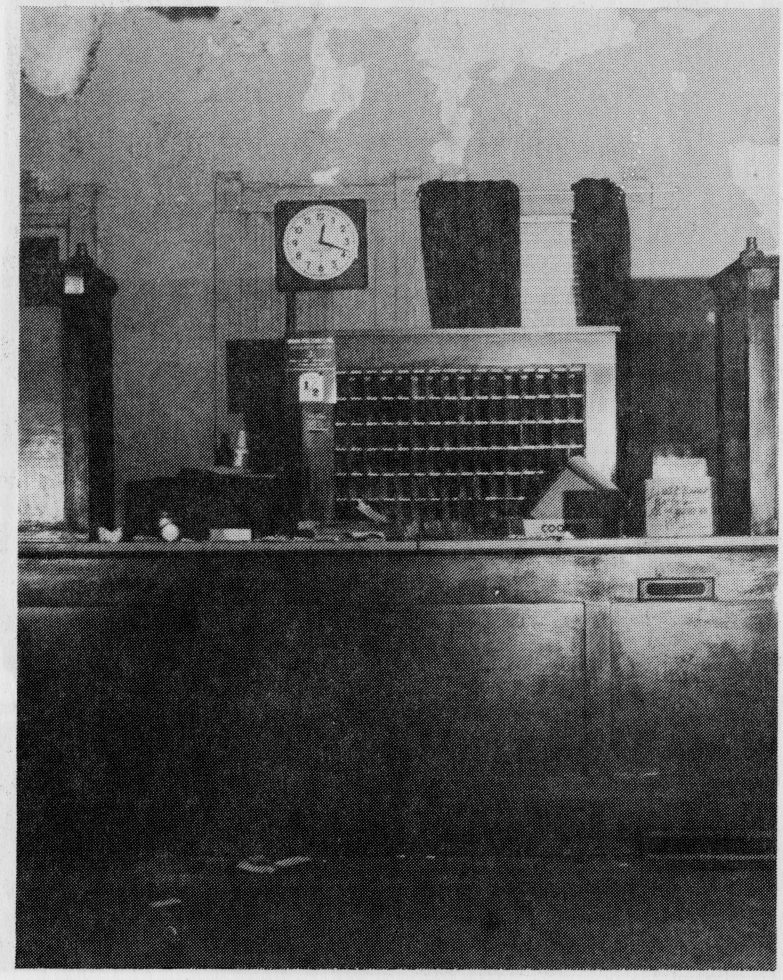


"For many years following its erection in 1889 the Hotel was one of the show places in this section of the country and rated as one of the best hotels in the Middlewest."--**Pittsburg Daily Headlight**, July 15, 1926, p. 1.

# Photo Study

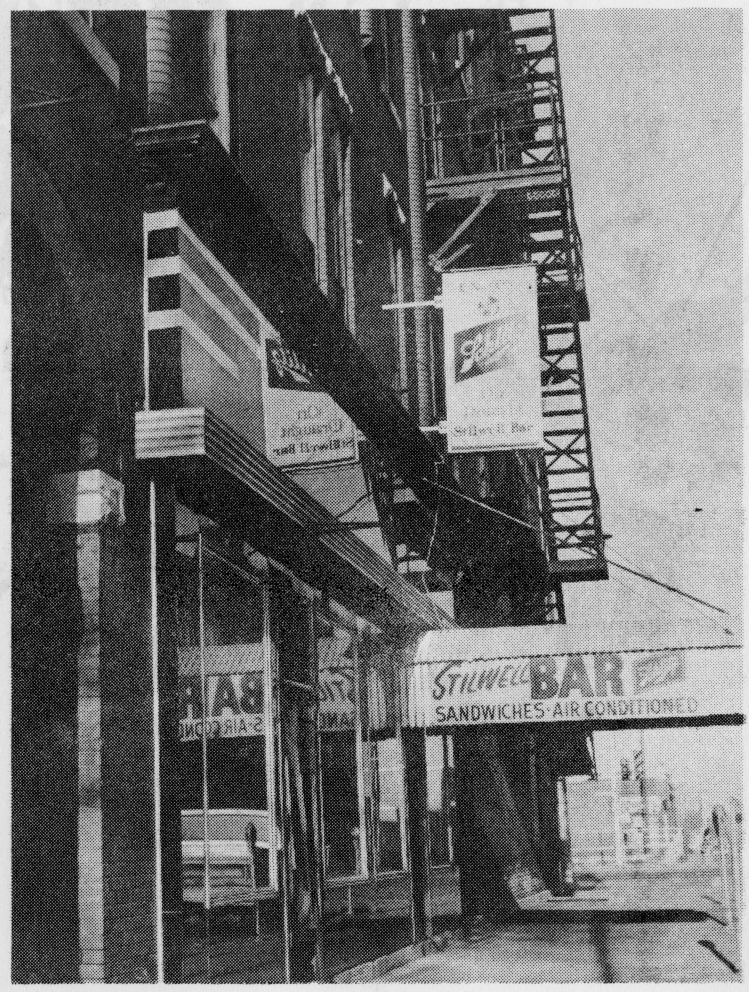
"The hotel has been conducted on the American plan, the rate being from $2.50 a day up. The building contains eighty rooms, thirty-five of which are equipped with bath."--**Pittsburg Daily Headlight**, September 13, 1917, p. 1.

# Hotel Stilwell



"The first floor contains five store rooms, two reading rooms, billiard room, dining room, office and kitchen. The office and rotunda is to be 40x50' covered with glass roof."--**Pittsburg Smelter**, November 1, 1889, p. 1.

# Pittsburg, Kansas




"The 90-year-old Hotel Stilwell, recently destined for demolition to make way for an eight-story highrise, has been purchased for the purpose of restoration by Dr. Wilson Rigler and his wife, Linda.--**Morning Sun**, March 15, 1979, p. 1.

**Hummingbird and Trumpet Vine.**
**Charles W. Schwartz.**

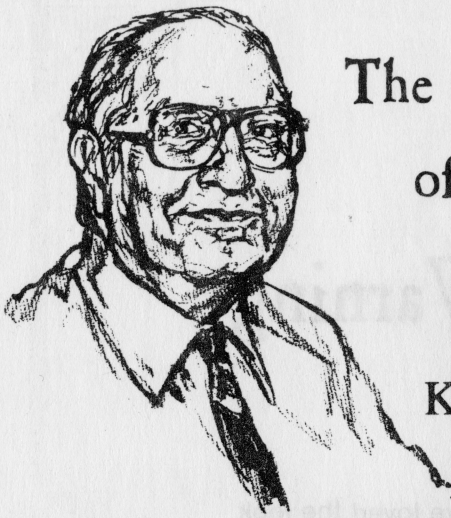
# Warning

Someone must have loved the look
of trumpet vine and planted it
beside the chimney wall in all
innocence--having seen it blare
from some catalog page, not knowing
that its scarlet horn in three mere
seasons not only would secure itself
along the chimney but grow a force of roots
beneath the house, drive cracking tendrils
through the walls, spin delicate coils
to lift the roof above its waxy leaves.

INDESTRUCTIBLE! the catalog should
have read. Withstanding first lye water,
then hatchet, it would thicken annually.

Pity the bride who must have planted it,
who, first blinded by its size and strength,
finally saw swarming among its blossoms
more ants than humming birds.

Gene DeGruson



# The Ascending Years of Dad Montee

by Kenneth L. Simons

It's hard to find a word to describe the story of James W. "Dad" Montee, pioneer of aviation. Incredible, maybe.

The former Pittsburger was a man of many talents and varied occupations, but the thing that really set him apart is that he flew airplanes when he was in his 90's. He was also noted for having been instrumental in the development of the first monoplanes.

When "Dad" Montee died in California in 1956 he was the oldest active licensed pilot in America. He was duly proud of "License No. 414," which he obtained in 1927 at the age of 65.

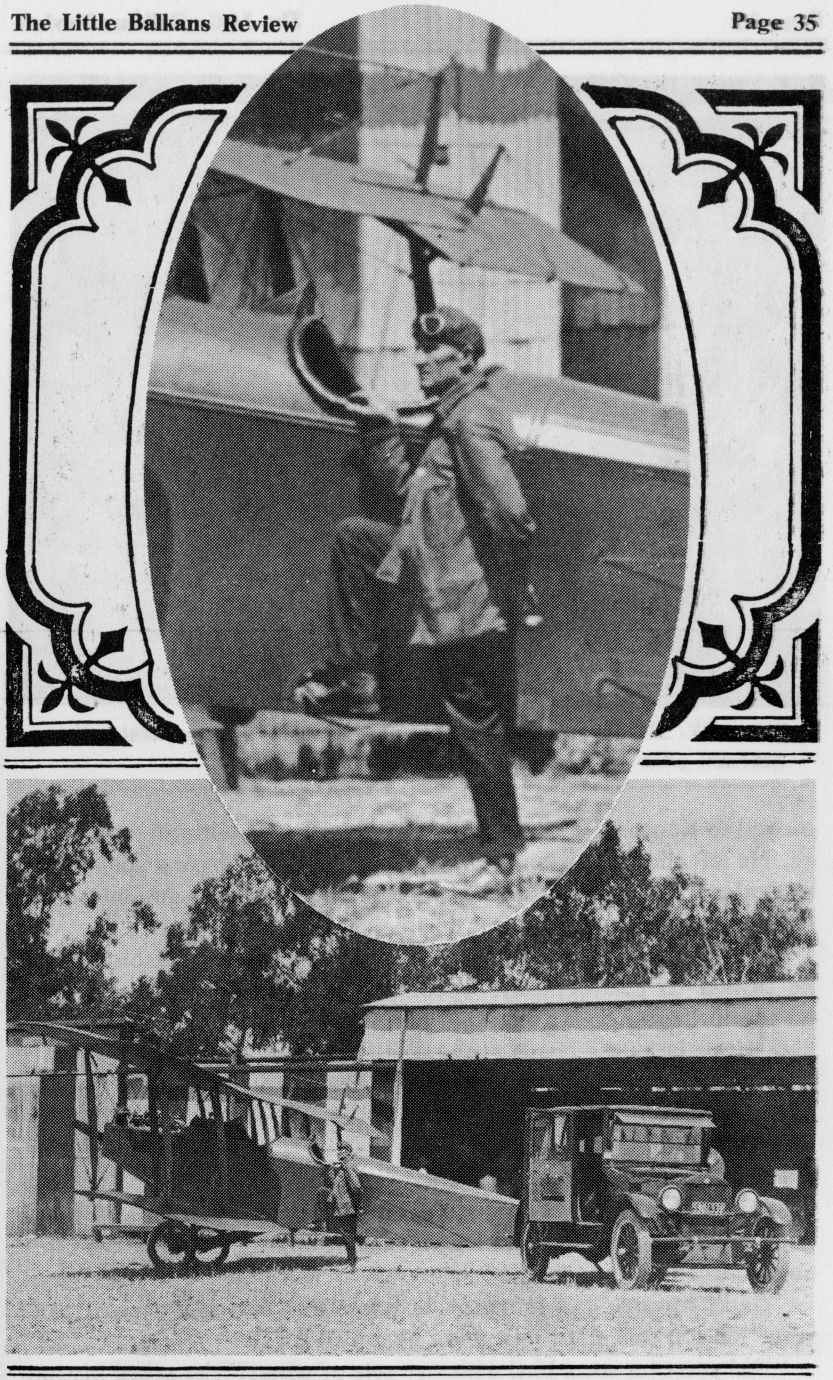
I talked to him once. It was quite a news story in Pittsburg, his former home, when he returned some years ago to visit his brother, C.C. Montee, and other relatives.

The headline in the *Pittsburg Headlight* shouted: "Montee Crosses U.S. in Air Mail Ship."

He was a smallish fellow with a fringe of grey hair around his bald pate and a twinkle in his eyes. He chuckled as he told of the only accident on the cross country trip. When he got off the plane in New York City, he was knocked down by a motorcycle.

He said he was going to stick to the air "as it is safer." We all laughed at that.

"Dad" Montee had an interesting and continually changing life before he found his niche in aviation. He was born on a farm, in a little log house, as he proudly liked to state, in Macomb, Illinois, October 22, 1862. This was his home until he was eleven when the family



**James W. Montee, Clover Field, 1923.**

**James W. Montee, December 28, 1948. At age 87, the oldest active licensed pilot in the U.S.A.**

moved to Kansas. He told of breaking prairie sod with three-yoke oxen. He left the farm when he was a young man to drive a stage coach in Dodge City. This was during the hey day of the two-gun men when the trigger was the law.

For some years he operated a roller skating rink in Pittsburg. Then he turned to photography, opening a studio in Fort Scott. Then wanderlust again seized him and he went to Oregon, then to California, where he was a citrus grower, later in construction.

With his sons he established Clover Field airport at Santa Monica after World War I. One son, Kenneth Montee, had returned from the war as an enthusiastic pilot.

It was at this time that the Montees built a monoplane wing for conversion of a Jenny. The Jenny biplane, with its speed of 70 miles per hour, was queen of the air, and the idea of making a biplane was new and unaccepted by many.

"Dad" Montee had to use all his persistent persuasiveness to convince his son that the single wing plane would fly.

"Did you ever see a bird with two sets of wings?" he asked his son.

In his flying career, which began at age 65 and lasted until he died at

94, Montee was at the controls of no less than thirty-six different types of flying machines.

After he was 90 he flew a helicopter once with mail pickup, making twelve landings, one on top of the Los Angeles downtown postoffice.

The Civil Aeronautics Administration listed some of the more notable flights Montee made after his 90th birthday.

On January 14, 1952, he flew a helicopter with the Los Angeles Airways mail.

On April 1, 1952, he took off from the El Toro Marine airport in a twin engine jet Douglas F-3-D with Colonel Scott, reaching a speed of more than 600 miles per hour during the flight.

On April 20, 1952, he made a flight from Death Valley, 229 feet below sea level, over the top of Mt. Whitney, 16,300 feet above sea level, in a twin engine Beechcraft plane.

On October 22, 1952, he copiloted a Seaboard and Western Douglas DC-4 with Captain Warner, pilot, in celebration of his birthday, taking his wife, son Harold, daughter Pauline, seven grandchildren, seven great grandchildren, and other relatives and friends, fifty in all, on a one-hour flight over the city of Los Angeles.

When "Dad" Montee got ready to go up for what turned out to be his last flight, someone suggested that at 94 he might let someone else take the controls. His reply to that: "I've flown everything from a Jenny to a DC-6 and haven't scratched the paint yet."

"I happen to be so joined together that I like staying put in one place--in a town right in the heart of America....I have interesting work...I have stimulating contacts--charming women, adventurous men, lawbreakers, bootleggers who really know their stuff. So here I am."--E. Haldeman-Julius, Girard, Kansas, 1934.

# Movies

Always when I was a child
the Lyric Theatre showed
double features on Saturday
afternoons:
my own long
heroic hours
with Captain Hornblower at sea,
Tarzan in the jungle, Randolph Scott in the Wild West.

Gaping in the dark,
all
eyes,
knees tucked up
against my chest, I let
the screen trap and stretch
my dreams till
I forgot the Big Daddy drying in my hand.

But there always came a time
when the screen went
blank
and gray,
and I would have to leave
the dark,
my heart wild
with the wonderful energy of escape, and march
with the jostling herd
back
into the still bright day,
those tentative
and delicate
afterimages
lost
in the blinding disappointment of the real.

Michael L. Johnson

**May Day Parade, Bronson, Kansas, May 27, 1914. Courtesy: C. W. Miles.**

# March

Wind, hyacinths, and tulips,
End-of-winter cold
Brushing slowly past,
Leaving an aftertaste, a promise
That winter does not last.

# Pursuit

Do clouds do that, too?
Pursue
one another in their youth? They move, coming
together slowly, embracing finally,
before they dis-
appear

Gladys M. Mundt

Kiowa Woman, ca. 1872. William S. Soule, Photographer.

## Nebraskapoem

Philip

such winters,
keen as shark's teeth,
my love can barely warm herself by hating.
still, there's good light here
in August
before a storm.

## Om Mani Padme Hum

entering the domaine.
touching.
slowly, deliberately,
I ring her wrist with my fingers
and smile helplessly.
more wine.

now, in April,
her shape is dusk,
smells of the goddess sun.
but we are lovers long before today.

what I remember is the smell of her hair,
her earring clenched in my teeth.

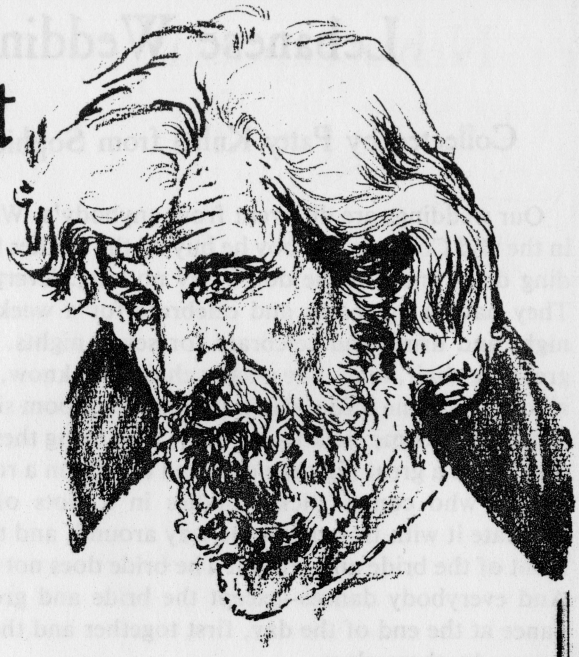
## Mendicant

Pray,
the hour of becoming

Though I am
in deepest night of tim
these silent trumpets

sound unbroken noon.

# Boatright



## The Word

This cur
my winding
sheet

Hunger
knots my fingers
cold as blood

The word
the glacier's teeth
inexorable

And I am afraid.

## Plainsong (Rime)

*in the new May grass and sun*
*we lie together now, as one.*

## For Ariadne on the Isle of Naxos

Or I might,
sitting here bonenaked
in the midst of these vast plains
at the very heart or gut of America
looking at snapshots,
stir the memory tonight
of, say, your breasts.
It would not be good for sleeping.

ng lengthens.

time
ts

on.

# Lebanese Weddings

## Collected by Patty Kuhel from Sophie Fersen Nogel

Our weddings are different from anybody's. When you get married in the Old Country, the boy he buy all the clothes for the girl: her wedding dress and all; she don't buy nothing. Everthing is on the boy. They have a big party and celebrate for a week. They dance every night and drink and celebrate for seven nights. The bride sits on a great big chair, high, like a baby chair, you know, and they decorate it all over. and the bride sits on it. And the groom sits there by her. And people who come, relatives mostly, they bring them a big bouquet and they make a great big cake of bread dough on a round table, and each person who comes sticks candles in it, lots of candles, and they decorate it with flowers all the way around, and they put that right in front of the bride and groom. The bride does not move; she sits there. And everybody dances--except the bride and groom. They let them dance at the end of the day, first together and then each one of them dances by themselves.

When the bride and groom come from the church, the groom stands on top of the house they will live in, and he has oranges in his hands, three oranges. When the bride comes through the door, he takes the oranges and he throws them at her. If she don't catch the first one, then he throws her another one, and if she don't catch the second, he throws the third one. She has to catch the last one because that means they will have good luck. Then she takes the orange and runs in the house, and everybody starts to clapping and dancing, and everybody sing and dance and have a good time. They have beer and whisky, you don't know how much. Food--they have food enough to last a whole week. Everybody who comes to the wedding brings something to eat.

The groom, as I said, pays for all the expenses. Woman don't do nothing, just be a bride, and he buys her everything. When I got married, my husband took me to the biggest store in Pittsburg, on 5th and Broadway. I got my wedding dress there, beautiful dress. I made my own veil. And he bought me four bracelets: two bracelets for each arm. And he bought me two rings: one wedding ring and one ruby. And he bought me a gold locket. That was the best wedding that ever was. My brother got married one week, and I got married the next.

In Lebanon, the girl dresses up in her wedding dress and she rides a beautiful white horse, and they decorate it all up and they lead the horse all over with all the wedding party on horses behind her. They

take her to the church on the white horse. After the wedding they come out of the church and they celebrate all over the town. We did that here, but we didn't have no horses. We rode in the carriage--the bride and groom and bridesmaids and the best man: they rode in one carriage. After the wedding they took us to the house; and they throw rice on us. I remember every bit of that, and I've been married 67 years April 5.

# The Tenth Annual Kansas Poetry Contest

**Sponsor: Ossie E. Tranbarger**
**Judges: Willene Nusbaum and Frederic A. Raborg, Jr.**

Kansas had no open, state-wide poetry competitions. So in 1967 Ossie E. Tranbarger of Independence established one, and, for ten of the past thirteen years, she has arranged for judges and cash prizes, while Jane Blades of Humboldt has managed the publication of the prize-winning poems. It was not long, however, before Mrs. Tranbarger--a former state president of Pen Women and the recipient of numerous literary honors and awards--decided to expand the contest to an international level, opening it to any English-speaking poet. This past year, as a result, poets from thirty-eight states, Washington D.C., and Canada submitted works. Also, in celebration of the contest's tenth anniversary, a new divison was created: that of the haiku, a Japanese three-line lyric form of five, seven, and five syllables respectively. (The word *haiku* in Japanese orginally meant "an amusing sentence.")

Judge for the first category of poems this year is Frederic A. Raborg, Jr., of Bakersfield, California, a poet and short story writer, dramatist, critic, journalist, and teacher of creative writing. In the second category, the judge was Willene Nusbaum of Bern, Kansas, the associate editor of *Modern Haiku.* Prizes in each category were $50.00 for first place, $25.00 for second, and $10.00 for third, each poem of honorable mention receiving $5.00.

**For details of the 1981 Contest, please see "Preface."**

First Prize

# Flim-Flam Man

"Mark Twain," by S. J. Wolfe, 1918.

Some come on angel wings and some by stork.
He came by Haley's comet, left the same,
Upset the status quo and pulled the cork
On merriment. A sleight of hand with name,
This pilot toward a mark twain river port,
The pen of Sixteen-One's ribaldous fraud,
A Yankee wizard in King Arthur's court
With tongue in cheek, an innocent abroad.

And still he pricks our pompous small balloons,
Explodes our human foibles with his wit.
Although he mirrors all of us buffoons
We never seem to get enough of it.
We crave his flim-flam words till we are fed
As easily as jumping frogs eat lead.

Alice Morrey Bailey

Second Prize

# To the Ghost of Robert Frost

Now get you back!
Bleached bones belong
where bleached bones rot,
not
cluttering my kitchen
injecting common things with splendorings.

I plan to pen sophisticated lines
that stare westward in sphinx-like silence.
Obscure. Stiff with nouns.

But you, Robert Frost,
rhythmical even in bones,
infect my mind
with regulated meter, rhyme
and promises to keep.
Sleep, Robert Frost,
your path was long.
Sleep, Robert Frost,
I too have mended walls. I too
shall choose the road less traveled by.
Something there is about untraveled roads.

Verna Lee Hinegardner

Third Prize

# Memorable Days

Remember when we stacked the wood
Behind the stove so neat
And we kids sat at the oven door
While we thawed our frozen feet

Remember how the dishes rattled
When the gas from the coal went boom
And Papa grabbed for the stovepipe
And Mama grabbed for the broom

Remember the coal-oil can
With a potato that covered the spout
And we used that potato many a time
To keep it from leaking out

Remember the doors were left unlocked
And we didn't bother with keys
And the rich kids wore fancy shorts
And the poor kids wore "beevy dees"

Remember when our ears were scrubbed
In that tub on the kitchen floor
When that Life Buoy soap got into our eyes
We didn't yell--we roared

Remember, friends, many years are passed
And the trials have been plenty
Now we just live from day to day
But, my friend, the question is, how many?

Henry G. Kremer

First Honorable Mention

# The Heart's Choice

That winter, I was part of it, the cold
a wave of joyless emptiness that cast
a numbness through my being like an old
tormenting love returning from the past . . .
and yet I longed to break the spell, defeat
the winds that knife across the storm's terrain.
I stood before the window watching sleet
attempt to claw my face behind the pane
as ghosts of foaming horses from the sea
appeared through fog to trample down all hope.
Alarmed, I struggled with despair to free
all doubts, and grasp in faith a dream tied rope.

The heart can never stay a dormant thing
but stir to April's kiss and then take wing.

## Guanetta Gordon

Second Honorable Mention

# Greeting Card Rack

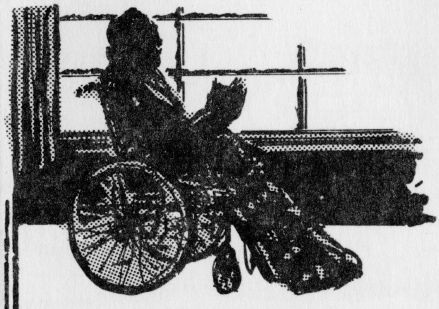
Flourescent tubes light
rows of packaged sentiments,
prefabbed feelings pressed to paper,
universal studs hoping to mate
with our emotions.

Here palsied fingers flutter over "sympathy."
Rough hands snag pink bows on "to my wife."
Shoulder nudges shoulder down the line,
cold as coats swaying on a closet rack.

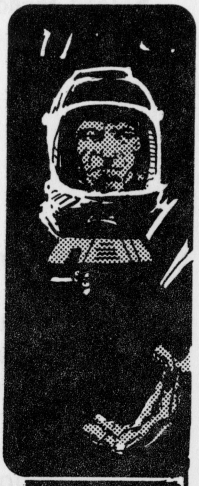
Arms reach out, mechanically select
words of gladness, grief and love.
Eyes suspiciously inspect the card
rejected by another.

Here under ultraviolet sky
I sense a stifled roar of cares
slipped into empty envelopes,
sealed and sent away.

Helen Pearson



Third Honorable Mention



# U.F.O. Sighting

(Du Drop Inn Tavern, 1:33 a.m.)

The chrome and
red vinyl stool
under the man
next to me
rose in the air
when he said,
"not for publication
and strictly
on the q.t.,"
that he'd been
for a ride in
a flying saucer.

But he looked at me
as though I were crazy
when I told him
I was in love.

Glen Turner

Fourth Honorable Mention

# Ali

Tell Ali I came to see him,
Tell him I climbed the stairs and pounded on his wall,
Ali--I saw those dark eyes staring out of empty spaces,
Ali, will you get the message, I saw your vision,
Tell Ali I came and turned in fear when no one answered,
Remembering the thin scars on his bony wrists,
"They hanged me by them," he said,
"I couldn't move them for three days after,"
He seemed not to care now, other pain had come,
"I felt freer then--in prison, I had a cause,"
"But now, Ali,"I said, "You are free, you are out,"
He smouldered in anger, lips trembling,
"It's not the same, my soul was free then,
Now I'm told everything to do,"
Through the midnight black eyes,
I saw his vision, Ali was right,
Even in prison, Ali's soul was free,
Now Ali I came to tell you,
I climbed four hundred stairs in torrid heat,
And now you've gone--
Someone, tell Ali I was there.

Nancy Edwards

Fifth Honorable Mention

# Old People at the Film Series at the Museum of Modern Art

Every Monday, the city herds, feeds,
and protects old people
like an endangered species.
The rest of the week it's open season.

When the bus unloads, each one
carries a parcel of air.
Some move toward the entrance
sniffing to see which way the wind blows.
Others inch along, full of
leanings and complainings.

All week they've been detaching days
wrapped around each other
like cabbages, and measuring time
by the coffee rings staining the table top.

Now each one holds
in a marinated hand, a ticket
to an afternoon of shadows.

All through the movie, they croon to themselves.
And when it ends, they climb back
on the bus, and settle into place
folding moments like clean wash.

Then they lick their lips,
tasting the sweet connection of their first ten years
together with the bitter flavor of the last.

Ruth Daigon

First Prize

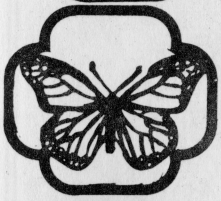
Autumn winds--
the left-behind teddy bear
rocks in the swing

Lorraine Ellis Harr

Second Prize

In a garden row
red on the tomato vine,
but the full green worm

Jessie Lee Green



Third Prize

Near the open grave
cupped hand of the stone angel
holds a butterfly

Gloria Buckner

First Honorable Mention

Silent old cricket
upside down in August heat . . .
straining and kicking

Verna Lee Hinegardner

Second Honorable Mention

In crisp autumn chill
On topmost leafless branches
ripe persimmons hang

Marjorie V. Forbes

Third Honorable Mention

After last night's storm
the white chrysanthemum
ragged and alone.

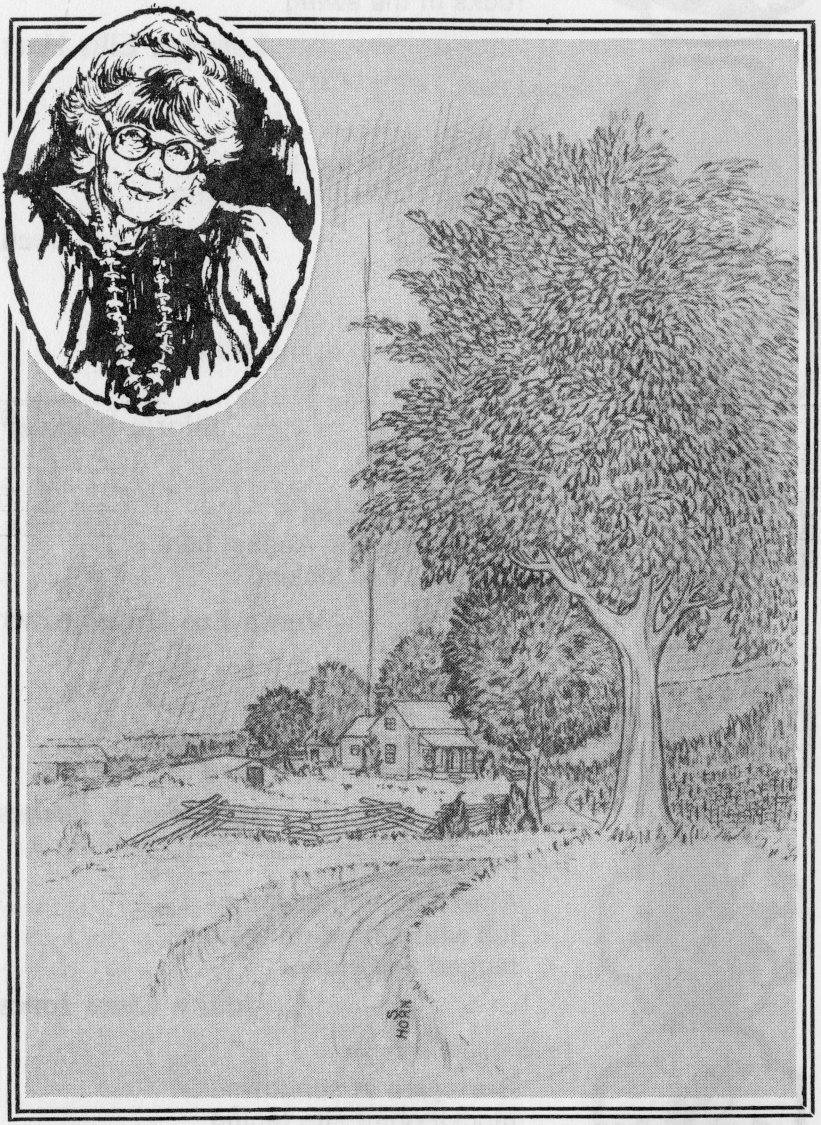
Judith Clare Jones

Fourth Honorable Mention

Graveyard at sundown--
mockingbird sits facing
the winter wind.

Katherine Russell Barnes

Looking back I see my childhood as a long chain of golden days and time as a commodity that would never run out. I see myself walking slowly about the yard on a quiet summer day, an ear of corn in my hand, shelling it and dropping the grains as I walk.



# Home

by Zula Bennington Greene

In my wake a flock of chickens, black, white, red, "dominicker," gobbling up the corn and singing the easy daytime song of happy hens, not the excited cackle that announces their daily duty done, but quiet little sing-songs that say the weather is fine, the corn is delicious, and life is good.

On our farm in Hickory County, Missouri, where the Ozark mountains begin to make peace with the prairies, my life was not projected ahead much farther than that of the hens. Parents, food, clothes, home were assumed as something that everybody had and we knew nothing of the great world outside our own magic circle. My sister Julia, four years older, and my brother George, two years younger, and I had our own world within that circle.

*"What can we do now?"*

That was a question we never asked. There was no end of things to do, in the yard and barnlot, the woods and fields, and pastures. There were wild flowers to be gathered, playhouses to be built, streams to be waded, nuts to be hunted.

We lived in a five-room house that, like all the houses in the neighborhood, had been built by home carpenters of native lumber and never painted. To the original story and a half, two rooms up and two down, had been added a room in which we cooked and ate. The table was called the "eating table"—nobody had a dining room— to distinguish it from the "stand table," which held lamp, books, and papers in the "big room," the adjective being merely comparative. In that room were the heating stove, sewing machine, rocking chair, and our parents' bed.

The house had weathered to the color of a summer day just before dawn and to the furrowed texture of a relief map. It stood in a crescent of four great mulberry trees, one at the front gate on the north, one outside the kitchen window on the west, one near the henhouse on the south and the other at the northwest near a walnut tree.

Apple and peach trees, "privy" bushes and other shrubs dotted the yard, which was surrounded by a zig-zag rail fence that included the chicken yard. It did not shut the chickens in, but was supposed to shut hogs, cattle, and horses out. We lived amicably with the chickens—except when mulberries were ripe. They liked mulberries too. Our knowledge of luxuries was scant, so we did little coveting, but we did wish for a huge clean sheet to spread under the trees, with the chickens banished for the duration.

North of the house was the narrow road and beyond it the woods, oak, hickory, and walnut, which sloped down to a small stream. East

of the yard was the barnlot, with its log barn and corn crib separated by what would now be called a breezeway. In it stood the buggy, and many pretend trips were taken in it. We snapped the side curtains on and off as we imagined sudden showers. We took the whip, standing in the socket like a radio aerial, swished it on an imaginary horse, slapped him with imaginary lines and urged him to greater imaginary speed.

Unlike Rome, the barn was built in practically one day by neighbors who came for a "barn-raising," a free exchange of labor and no books kept. Women and children came too and made the occasion a holiday.

My mother flew around for a week getting ready. She went over the house, washed and ironed tablecloths, baked bread and pies and cakes, killed and dressed chickens, and brought the biggest ham from the smokehouse to boil. My father brought the mowing machine into the yard and cut the grass and weeds.

At a barn-raising everybody is at his best, men doing something for a neighbor, men who owned their own farms and whose buildings had been put up with the help of neighbors. As each log went into place, they met and solved problems with ropes and pry poles and pulleys.

Women sauntered out to watch, admire, or squeal a warning. Their presence heightened an easy nonchalance that said, "Shucks, a barn-raisin' is nothin' much."

"Watch out here, Chris! Oh, I thought for a minute a log was goin' to roll down on you."

"Wasn't nowhere near it. That rope was holding it all the time."

The table had been moved from the kitchen to the porch and lengthened with boards and sawhorses. It was spread with ham, fried chicken, mashed potatoes, beans, cabbage slaw, pickled beets, sliced cucumbers, and pies—custard, apple, peach, and blackberry. The fruit pies were stacked three or four on a plate and everybody laughed when a man said, "Please pass the stack pies." Biscuits and light bread were made, cornbread being too ordinary for such an occasion. Dishes were kept filled from kettles on the stove.

I stood beside the table and fanned away the flies with a leafy peach limb. A sty on my eye brought good-natured remarks. I was pleased by the attention, but felt my face getting as red as my eye.

The affable mood of the morning expanded. Men who wouldn't let themselves be outdone at lifting refused to be outclassed in an exchange of wits. In that rich soil of comradeship the feeblest joke took root and flourished.

"There goes another piece of pie—how many's that make, Jess?"

"I was working this morning." Jess bore down heavy on the pronoun.

Dinner over, the men sat in the shade of the house, leaning against the wall and the well curb. They passed around plugs of tobacco. Few smoked, but almost everybody chewed. "Have a chaw" was the polite way to offer tobacco.

"Well," someone said, in the manner of the dean of newsmen concluding a press conference, " we better get back to work if Jake's goin' to get his barn."

In the afternoon the women made lemonade and took it to the men with the cake and pie left from dinner. It had been a long hard day. The logs were in place and the rafters up. My father could put on the clapboard roof and lay the hayloft floor. His thanks were brushed aside as the men gathered up their tools and left in the glow of a new barn and old friends.

After supper we played in the new barn. "Now you kids be careful," my father called, "and don't step on a nail."

Next to the barnlot was the pasture, across which flowed a little brook that wildly overran its banks after a heavy rain, but subsided into a few shallow pools during a dry spell. Minnows darted about in the largest one, the only one that never went dry.

Persimmons grew in the pasture, clustering clannily together like state delegates at a convention. Over the years we ate bushels of the fruit, and we did not always wait for the first frost to wrinkle the skins and take away the bitterness. Nothing is more entrancing than a persimmon tree filled with tawny rose fruit, seen against a deep bluing-blue sky.

A lone skraggly cedar grew far back in the pasture, as conspicuous as a woman who gets into the pool hall when she is looking for the rummage sale. Cedars grow in the Ozark hills, but not on the prairies; there it had to stand all its days and never know the companionship of its own kind.

South of the pasture was the meadow, a road cutting it diagonally to the "back forty," where corn was planted. The timothy hay in the meadow was harvested two or three times a year—cut with the mowing machine, raked into windrows, then gathered into small shocks. Later the shocks were dragged to a central place and stacked for winter feed.

Dragging hay was work for a child who could manage a horse. The child rode the horse and pulled the shock with a loop of grapevine attached to minimal harness. Skill was involved in placing the vine around the shock, which was done by a man who stayed in the field

for that purpose. If not placed just right, it could either slip under the shock or over it.

My ambition was to drag hay. Julia was a good hay-dragger. She was older and no reproach to me. But it vexed me that George, who was younger, was allowed to drag hay while I was assigned the job of bringing drinking water to the field.

One summer I had my chance. My father lifted me to the back of our faithful old Fred and told me to keep his head up. But Fred was aware of my incompetence even before my parent was. He began nibbling grass and paid no attention to my pull on the reins.

"Keep his head up, hon," my father instructed.

A stiffer pull brought no results. "I think he's hungry."

A smart whack on the rump started Fred out in the field, but after a few attempts it was obvious that I was no hay-dragger, so I was hauled off the horse and returned to carrying water. I sat on the rail fence and comforted myself with the sweet, tart, black wild cherries that grew along the edges of the meadow.

Beyond other fields and an old orchard was the back pasture, which curved around the west side of the farm and joined another pasture next to the house, which had a pond with red clay banks that provided water for the cows. We waded the small stream in the back pasture, but were not allowed to play at the pond. My father was afraid we might fall in and be drowned.

This was our farm of two hundred and forty acres.

Surrounding it were similar farms of neighbors, with small fields, hilly pastures, little brooks, and gray weathered houses of logs and clapboards. We had no feeling of being rich or being poor, only of being people in the small world we knew. In it were grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins who lived a little farther away than our neighbors.

*Lazy* was a word applied to me, particularly by George, and not without reason. When he and Julia were teaching calves to pull the little wagon, I would be reading or playing with dolls or lying in the hammock my father made of barrel staves laced together at the ends with two wires through bored holes in a neat double stitch.

Even more than the hammock I liked the wild grapevine swing on the mulberry tree. I went with my father into the woods to find a long grapevine and pull it down. Grapevines were good substitutes for rope. I would swing gently back and forth, sometimes reading, sometimes thinking about the world and how everything got started. I had heard the Biblical story, but it seemed to leave a good deal out.

Of the vast universe I had not the faintest knowledge and, as ancient man, supposed that sun and moon and stars were set in the sky to

serve and ornament the earth. I knew the world was round and visualized it as a huge round globe half-filled with earth and half with air. The sky, which clearly dropped down all around, was the upper half and the land where the people lived was the middle, above the filled-in earth. This theory met all the specifications I knew and all those that were visible.

Questions tumbled about in my mind. Where did people come from? How did they get started? How was the world made? When would it end? What was above the sky?

These questions charmed and puzzled me. I still have not found answers, but am waiting for my grandson David to shed light on the mysteries. When he asked similar questions and I had to keep telling him I did not know, he seemed to be thinking that for all the years I had lived I had not learned much.

But all he said was, "When I grow up I am going to find out."

Like an old melody is the memory of summer evenings when Julia, George and I played barefooted in the yard at early dusk, chasing "lightning bugs." The day's work was done, supper was eaten, and Papa sat on the edge of the porch, his back against the adjoining wall, playing the French harp. With one hand cupped over it he made "The Irish Washerwoman" and "Down on the Wabash" tinkle sweetly through the warm air.

After she washed the dishes and took care of the milk, Mamma came out and sat on the porch steps. She pushed a wisp of hair from her face and, taking out one of her hairpins, caught it in the shining brown coil on top of her head. She was as calm as the evening star, her full skirt around her feet.

There was no telephone to call anybody indoors, no television with a favorite program coming on, and we had never heard of clubs or committee meetings, motion pictures, or theaters. Parents sat in the summer dusk watching children catch fireflies. It was a small and wonderful world of glowing insects and music and slow-coming dark, so full of contentment it needed no praising.

Presently the stars would shine out and challenge the fireflies, and after a while it would be time to wash our feet and go to bed.

"According to Aunt Harriet, children's faces should be washed after each meal with the dishrag wrung from the dirtiest, greasiest water. It assured a good complexion, she said, but I have every reason to doubt it."--Eva Jessye, Coffeyville, Kansas, 1927.

**Tavis Allen, 1979.**

**Kirt Duffy, Photographer.**

# Gordie

## by Barbara Shirk Parish

Gordie Brogan liked two things best: licorice and root beer. Evenings after he got home from school I'd find him in his clubhouse with a long strand of red licorice and the thick glass handle of a mug stolen from the root beer stand. Gordie was about nine and he called me "Kid." This made me mad until he told me an illustrious ship's captain once went by that name. Gordie Brogan was chubby and freckled and his hair was shaved into whiskers. Inside his clubhouse he sat on a chair with the back broken off and leaned one elbow on an upright orange crate. On its single shelf were his tomahawk heads, ball bearings, colored pencils and a torn picture of Tex Ritter.

It wasn't summer but it was warm the day he told me about the broken chair. I came wandering into the clubhouse with my jacket unbuttoned, hesitant until he saw me and set his mug down on the crate to snip off a small piece of licorice.

"Do you remember my real name?" I asked, accepting the licorice.

A comic book lay open on his lap. He glanced at it.

"Would it be Flash?"

"It's Bill," I said and sat on the log bench, my teeth tearing at the licorice.

"Okay, okay. I'd give you some root beer, but you know how it is."

"How is it?"

"It's probably actual beer, Kid. They get the crates confused."

Gordie read his comic book for awhile, sipping foam from the top

of his mug. I wound what was left of my licorice around my thumb and waited for him to finish. Turning pages faster and faster, he finally slung the book toward me.

"Keep it. Do you know how this chair got ruined?"

"Nope."

"It happened during a fight with one of my club members. He said this place used to be a brooder house and just before I threw him out, he whacked me with the chair."

"Can I come to a meeting some day?" Even the meeting times were secret.

"That's how I got to be Sheriff of the School. Everyone heard about the fight. You know, Kid, you have to be scary and fair. The kids voted me in and Miss Hardy approved."

I stood up in excitement, rolling the comic book into a telescope and peering shyly at him. "Did they give you a star? What do you have to do?"

Gordie took the picture of Tex Ritter from the shelf. Their eyes met, then he replaced it. "Some needs stars, some don't. I keep the kids from throwing spit balls and tripping teachers. No running except maybe during fire drills. No shoving in lunch line. Things like that. Miss Hardy says it's real unusual for a country kid to get the job."

He talked some more about school; then it was time for me to go home. I lived five thousand steps down the dirt road west, and halfway there I blew into my telescope and it became a bugle.

The week after that, a cold wind dusted the road, but one afternoon I put on my heavy coat and ran to the Brogans'. A beer can rattled along ahead of me until it caught in a chuckhole. When I jumped the ditch, I was surprised to see Mrs. Brogan standing on the porch. She was pretty as a high school girl.

"Is Gordie here?" I called above the wind.

"He's out back, but before you find him I've got something to show you."

It was warm inside, and the floors were cleaner than the clubhouse. The couch had a quilt draped over it and the rocker held a big soft cushion that sank down in the center. I followed Mrs. Brogan into her kitchen where I could smell something baking, but I was too polite to look at the stove. On the table surrounded by its three unbroken chairs, I saw a cup of coffee and a sheet of yellow paper.

"This tells all about Friendship Day," she explained, handing the sheet to me. "The boys and girls in Gordon's room are to bring a little

brother or sister or a younger friend to school with them one morning. It's about two weeks away, but give this to your parents so you boys can go together."

I folded the important paper and put it in my coat pocket.

"Now why don't you find Gordon and come back here for something to eat."

And there on the tabletop I saw a big cake, already frosted white, but still fresh-smelling and keeping the kitchen warm.

I found Gordie in the doorway of the clubhouse, his thick plaid coat buttoned tight around him.

"Our Mom wants us to have some cake."

He nodded, stepping down beside me. The wind had let up and as we walked toward the house, I took the folded paper from my pocket so he could see.

"I'm sure glad I get to go with you."

Gordie's foot stopped on the bottom step of the back porch. He stared at his scuffed brown shoe and licked his big teeth, getting at the dust.

"It won't be much, Kid," he said quietly. "You'll have to do lessons--even story problems in arithmetic--and you'll have to eat whatever the cooks put on you plate."

"You can help me," I whispered.

His pudgy fingers gripped a corner of the screen. "Are you sure you really want to go?"

I nodded just as his mother opened the door.

The afternoon before Friendship Day I didn't have to ask if I could walk over to Gordie's. My mother said I should go and find out all the details, like did I pay for the lunch and what time would the bus be by. I was very eager about Friendship Day, but I was worried, too. As I sauntered along the road ditch, I forgot to look for things--I was thinking too hard. Gordie didn't say much anymore. He gave me licorice but even when I asked him to, he wouldn't tell about the night a spy from Nebraska came to the club meeting.

"You know what happened," he had insisted.

I did know. Gordie had gagged him with a red bandana and tied his hands with tough licorice.

When I got to Brogans' I remembered how Dad had found an ax head and a ball-peen hammer in the road ditch. I felt I'd lost something in about the same place.

The clubhouse door was closed and as I opened it slowly I could hear something inside. Then it was quiet and I saw Gordie sitting in his

broken chair. His watery eyes opened wide, then squinted. Finally he rubbed them fiercely with his wrists. His right pant leg looked like it had been wadded up, then smoothed out.

I was certain he'd had trouble as sheriff. "Did someone trip a teacher?"

He was looking at his pant leg as if he could see right through to his knee, but what I saw were tears. "It was me they tripped," he said in someone else's voice.

I started to sit down on the log, but I couldn't. I remembered I was to ask about riding the bus, but I couldn't do that either, so I said, "Did you put some Mercurochrome on it?"

Gordie reached for his picture of Tex, but he didn't even look at it. "Will you do something for me, Bill, if I give you this?"

I wanted the picture. Tex Ritter in color. "You don't have to give me anything."

He pulled up his pant leg very carefully and I saw the blood drying to his knee like cracks left from a puddle. It hurt him to look at it.

"Say you're sick tomorrow," he whispered. He stared at a vacant corner of the room and, easing his pant leg down; I think he added, "It's bad to be sheriff."

I looked closely at my feet as I climbed into the bus the next morning because I was afraid of finding Gordie's face. But when I started along the aisle, I accidentally saw him near the back. His eye lids shot out of sight and he didn't blink until I sat down beside him and the bus lunged forward.

We were alone at one end of the half-empty bus, but Gordie accused me quietly. "I thought you were going to be sick."

"I tried to be."

"What happened?"

"My mother gave me a big spoonful of pink medicine."

I opened my mouth and arched my tongue. Gordie nodded and pressed his forehead against the window as if he was tired out.

"She said I'd feel better after I got on the bus."

"Do you?"

"I guess," I said, keeping my voice down, "but I wasn't really sick except when I swallowed that stuff."

He didn't say anything so I looked straight ahead, glad that the kids had quit staring at me. The skinny bus driver wore crisp khakis and

rested his bony hand on the gear shift. Whenever the bus stopped, the door opened and waited to trap the new passengers inside. I felt bad that Gordie had asked me to play sick, and I felt worse that I'd let him down. Only the excitement of Friendship Day kept me going.

"Kid," Gordie murmured suddenly, "I gotta tell you a few things before we get to the school--and there isn't much time."

"Okay."

"I didn't want you to have to be bothered with the spy situation, but it's too late now. The school is full of spies and it'll be impossible for you to tell which fellows are on our side. It's going to be tricky--maybe even dangerous."

Gordie sounded worried, and I had a feeling people were staring at me again, that the bus driver watched us from the narrow mirror above his head.

"Here's the best advice I can give you, Kid. Don't talk to anybody unless they ask you a question or unless I signal it's okay. If they say something rude, you can bet they're the enemy. When you do give an answer, keep it short."

"Sure,"I said, trembling. "So that's why you don't wear a star!"

"It's safer that way," agreed Gordie, "but it's still a risky job."

When the bus stopped in front of the brick schoolhouse, I followed Gordie up the aisle, out the trap door, along the walk, into the building, and down a crowded hall to a room with rows of desks connected like train cars on a track. Beside some of the desks were smaller ones, not connected to anything, and all these faced the teacher's big desk, which Gordie told me later was full of secret drawers. Miss Hardy smiled at us when we came in, but she didn't ask any questions so I half hid behind Gordie until he edged into his desk and touched the top of the little one beside him.

It was a fast morning. Miss Hardy talked for a while, then we all stood up and gave our names. When my turn came, I glanced at Gordie to be sure it was all right. After that, the fourth grade read an airplane story and answered questions about electricity and Mexico. NOBODY said anything unless asked.

At recess we ran down the hall and out the back door, where we played Red Rover on the gravel. I stood between Gordie and a little girl, and when a tough-looking boy from the other side ran towards us, the girl let go of my hand. The guy grinned at me and said, "It would've been just as easy to break between you and Brogan. Who are you anyway? You're too skinny to be his brother." We joined hands and I didn't say a word--even when I could hear him crushing my knuckles.

When it was time for dinner, four of us put our trays on the same table. Gordie hadn't been talking much, but when I reached for my straw, he whispered, "Better let me check it for poison toothpicks." And he held it up to his eye.

After I finished my meat loaf and baked potato, gave Gordie my roll, and was cautiously sipping my milk, I saw how Miss Hardy moved from table to table talking pleasantly to everybody. When she got to us, she patted my shoulder and smiled into my face.

"Isn't this a good lunch?"

Her black hair was long and shivery, her blue eyes alive.

"Yes," I said, wanting to say more.

"It was nice your friend could come, Gordon."

Then before she could leave, I murmured quickly, "Aren't you glad you've got a good sheriff?"

The two boys across from us gave me a puzzled look, but Miss Hardy only nodded and turned away.

I was very proud of Gordie, but his voice sounded weak. "Kid, do you want your potato peelings?"

That afternoon I colored pictures of horses and dogs, and just before it was time to go home, another teacher brought in a tray of chocolate cup cakes and lemonade. As we headed for the bus, I crumpled my napkin and asked Gordie if the driver was a spy.

"Top notch," he chuckled, happy that school was out.

All the way home Gordie talked enthusiastically about the boss of the agents, answerable only to the sheriff, but when we jumped off the bus at Brogans', we didn't make the mistake of looking at him.

After the school year ended, I started ambling over to the clubhouse early in the hot afternoons since the club closed down summers to give Gordie some free time. But early in July when Dad said we were moving to town, I begged Gordie to call a special meeting of the club officers to see about making me a member.

It was strange not seeing Gordie so often, but one afternoon he and his mother drove into Garfield to bring us some ripe tomatoes. The four of sat around the kitchen table, smelling the tomatoes and drinking iced tea and root beer. When Mom said, "Why don't you boys run outside and play?" We walked through the back door and looked across the tiny, treeless yard.

"Gee, Kid, there's nothing much to do here."

"We've got softball team and there's swimming lessons and the people that moved left their basketball hoop nailed to the garage."

"Got a basketball?"

"Not yet."

Gordie sat down on the cement step and took a licorice strip from the pocket of his jeans. As he cut it in two with his scissors, I noticed the pieces were equal.

"Did the officers decide to let me join?"

Handing me the licorice, Gordie shook his head. "It was the majority opinion that since you live in town you might not be able to make the emergency meetings. I was backing you, but the club's really mostly for country kids."

Still, as he and and his mother drove away, Gordie turned, thrusting his head and shoulders out the car window because his neck was so short. "So long, Kid. Come see me next week!"

Walking back into the house, I felt awful disappointed about the club until I remembered Friendship Day and how I would soon be going to school by myself. I got a little scared just thinking about it. Then I relaxed. After all, I was surely a special friend of the sheriff.

**THE LITTLE BALKANS BRASS QUINTET. Left to right: Steve Harry [Pittsburg], trumpet; Marilyn Gardner [Cherryvale], trumpet; Christopher Starr [Parsons], tuba; Robert Kehle [Pittsburg], trombone; Wayne Harrell [Joplin], horn.**

# Pittsburg Days

## By Marlin Perkins

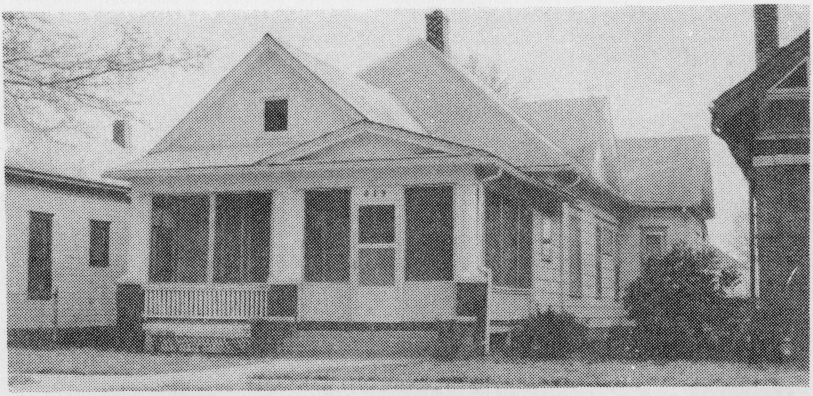
On March 28, 1905, I first saw the light of day in Carthage, Missouri. My father, Joseph D. Perkins, was a lawyer and Circuit Court Judge for Jasper County. My mother, born in Kansas at Osage Mission, was Mynta Mae Miller. Her brothers, Con and Mel Miller, were both former businessmen in Pittsburg. Her sister Laura was Mrs. Harvey W. Black of 419 West Kansas Avenue. My cousin,Norvel Miller, lived only a block away. Another cousin was Mrs. Merle Hill.

After my mother died, I came to live with Aunt Laura and grew up in that area, attending the Pittsburg Normal School. I started there in the third grade and went through the eighth. Bob and Arthur Schaeffer lived up the block, and so did the Ludlow boys and Jimmy Bowen and Morris King and Lockland McLean. Kerr's grocery store was just a block away, and their delivery wagon was pulled by two frisky little mules.

Some of the first animals I took care of were in Mr. Kerr's barn--only he didn't know it. I collected frogs, turtles, rabbits, snakes, and lots of other things which Aunt Laura wouldn't let me keep at home; so I found a place up behind the hay in Kerr's barn and kept them there. Old Professor Dellinger was the head of the Zoology Department at Pittsburg Normal and had a great big bull snake he used to show to the kids. This got me started, and I was collecting snakes all over that part of the country.

Besides the Y.M.C.A., we used to swim in the strip pit southwest of town and also in the old quarry lake where they took the clay out. It had been abandoned and was filled with water. That was southeast of

**The Con A. Miller Residence, 401 W. Jefferson, Pittsburg, Kansas.**
**[Currently the residence of Dr. and Mrs. Kent J. Cooper]**



**The Harvey W. Black Residence, 419 W. Kansas, Pittsburg, Kansas. [Currently owned by William Cussimanio, Lee's Summit, MO.] Shelby Horn, photographer.**

town. You could ride a bicycle into the country in a few minutes anywhere around Pittsburg in those days and collect such little goodies as black walnuts, hickory nuts, black haws, and pawpaws.

George Biles lived across the street from us. He had a bakery downtown, but his great love was possum hunting. He had a bunch of what he called "pot hounds," and some of the boys and I used to go with him on possum and raccoon hunts. They were always held at night and it was a tremendously interesting experience for a young boy.

I used to help George Allen awhile delivering the old **Pittsburg Headlight.** We folded the papers up into tight little squares and sailed them onto people's porches. It was real fun. We played one game up and down Kansas Avenue in those days that I've never heard of since. I've told a lot of people about it, but no one that I have ever met has heard of the game. We called it "Mudball Whacko." You know that wonderful red clay around Pittsburg wads up very conveniently after a rain; then all you need is a nice limber stick, like a willow branch, about three or four feet long and as big around as your little finger. Grab a handful of that red clay in your left hand, wad it around the small end of the stick, and bring it gently back over your shoulder behind you, then start a long, low, easy swing forward, and finally increase speed until you give it a hook of your wrist--and that mudball leaves the end of that stick travelling at a much greater velocity than you could ever get if you threw it by hand. It would carry for about a block. We used to choose up sides and have Mudball Whacko battles. I want to tell you that if one of those balls ever hit you on the forehead at about 150 feet, you were not going to stand up.

# Being Cosmic--or at Least Cool:

## A Glossary of Slang Collected at Pittsburg State University

with an introduction

by Juanita Laing

When your son says, "I wasn't doing doughnuts, Dad, I was just dragging the gut," do you a ) rush him to the doctor, b ) confiscate his car keys, or c ) heave a sigh of relief and say, "O.K., O.K., I didn't mean to bug you.I just wanted to check out the scene." If you're really bookin', you'll chose c ), because you'll know he hasn't been tearing up the turf with his wheels (car or motorcycle) by turning tight circles in some soft ground such as a green at the local golf course. Instead, he was merely driving up and down the main street of Pittsburg, Kansas.

There may be nothing new under the sun, but there is always a new way of describing the old things, and young people--and sometimes older ones--will do their best to find it. A college campus is always a fertile field for the slang collector, partly because students bring a variety of local expressions from their high schools, but mostly because college students are highly verbal. They are engaged in new, often exciting, activities, and they tend to generate new words or give new twists to the old words to express their feelings.

The vocabulary in this glossary reflects considerable diversity in origin. However, most of these words were known to the majority of the twenty-five students who participated in its collection. Those few which were known only to those who lived in a certain dormitory or went to a particular high school or majored in a specialized field have been indicated.

Predictably, the list contains many terms related to traditional interests of college students: school work, dating, alcohol, and food--especially food. It includes many deflating terms aimed at pretentiousness and stupidity, and it is seasoned with just a dash of obscenity and an even scantier portion of prejudice. But its most obvious characteristics are the somewhat disrespectful humor and underlying relish of life typical of college students. But now I think we'd better sit on it, and let the students speak for themselves.

Ace (v.t.) make an A on a test as in "I aced it."
Airhead (n.) someone burned out on drugs; more generally, one who doesn't think.
Alkie (n.) alcoholic.
"All blow and no go." More noise than action; used to refer to a braggart who accomplishes nothing.
Arm Pit State (n.) Pittsburg State University.
Baby Dolls (n.) girls in the industrial arts for elementary teachers class. Common in the industrial arts department.
Barf (v.i.) vomit.
Barb (n.) bad joke.
Bash (n.) party.
Basket case (n.) helpless person, sometimes even hopelesss.
Bear (n.) a difficult task.
Bear gut (n.) large abdomen.
Bip (v.t.) to hit. Common in Columbus, KS.
Bite (n.) an unfortunate situation or person as in "he's a bite" or "It's a bite." Sometimes meaning difficult but also satisfying in some peculiar way.
Bloody twit (n.) person who does dumb or mean things on purpose.
Blown away (adj.) completely shocked.
Blow your mind (v.t.) to be overwhelmed by something unbelievable.
Bomb (n.) anything dropped on you unexpectedly.
Bomb (v.t.) to fail, usually a test.
Boom Boom girls (n.) pom pom girls who march to the band; also strip tease girls with big breasts.
"Boo-hiss." an expression to indicate disagreement or dislike.
Bookin' (v.i.) doing well or going fast, used instead of "cooking with gas."
Bookin-brain (n.) smart person.
Breakout (n.) act of getting away from something you dislike.
Broad (n.) woman. (Majority do not consider this insulting.)

Brown nose (v.i.) Can also take an object; used in place of "butter up the brass" or "apple polish" and has more objectionable connotations.
Brush ape (n.) freshman. Common only to Columbus, KS.
Bumble (v.i.) make a mistake.
Bummed out (adj.) depressed, bored, or disappointed.
Bum Rap (n.) a bad deal.
Bushwhacking (n.) harassing parking couples.
Camel Jock (n.) anyone from the Middle East, usually an Iranian.
C.J. (n.) same as a Camel Jock.
Campus Hogs (n.) Campus Security police.
Cancer sticks (n.) cigarettes.
Catch a buzz. Get high or drunk.
Catch some ZZZ's. Get some sleep.
Cat tail (n.) a circle spun in turf with a car or motorcycle, same as doughnut.
Check out the scene. See what's happening.
Cholesterol-lips (n.) fat mouth, big mouth, braggart. Apparently originated in Oswego, KS.
Chow down (v.i.) eat.
Chump (n.) a loser.
Comp out (v.i.) to pass a course by examination.
Cosmic (adj.) same as "neat" or "far-out" only more so.
Cow College (n.) any agricultural college.
Crash (v.i.) go to sleep from total exhaustion or to come down from speed.
Cretin (n.) someone who pulls sneaky tricks.
Cream (v.t.) to inflict great bodily harm.
Cruising (n.) driving around, not necessarily with intent to pick anyone up.
3 D's (n.) dining, drinking, and dancing.
Dillweed (n.) someone who is not "with it."
Dirty pool. Unfairness.
Dipstick (n.) like dillweed only worse.
"Doesn't have both oars in the water." Not functioning with complete neurological faculties.
Dog (n.) girl who is a one on a scale of one to ten.
Doggin' it (v.) being tired and draggy.
"Don't bug me." Don't bother me.
Dr. Puker (n.) Dr. Pepper.
Drag the gut. Drive up and down.

Drag main. Drive up and down the main street. This expression is used all over southeast Kansas except in Pittsburg.
Doing Doughnuts. Driving in tight circles on soft dirt or in parking lots.
Dud (n.) unusually dressed up person.
Dork (n.) a real dummy.
"Far out." Expression of approval.
"A few straws short of a bale." Same as "doesn't have both oars in the water."
Fig newton (n.) weird person, generally. Also Nation Hall to those who live in it.
Fillet (v.t.) To beat to a pulp, usually figuratively.
Fired up (adj.) excited or has a lot of confidence.
Flipped out (adj.) out of control.
Fox (n.) good-looking girl, sexy girl.
Freak (n.) someone who doesn't fit in.
Freak out (v.i.) to act crazy.
Frat rat (n.) fraternity man.
Freewheeling (adj.) unconcerned about others; apt to do just about anything.
Funky (adj.) stylish, the "in" thing.
Gear head (n.) person who thinks about nothing but cars.
Get my act together. Get organized.
"Get off my case." Quit pestering me.
Go ape (v.i.) to become badly infatuated.
Going straight (v.i.) not using drink or drugs.
Go for it. To try really hard for something.
Greek gas.(n.) beer. (It used to refer to a fraternity dance.)
Gritch (v.i.) complain badly.
Goat roper (n.) would-be cowboy. (Goat roping is an easy contest. Our one student from the east coast said a goat roper is anyone from west of the Mississippi.)
Gorilla Holiday.(n.) skipping class.
Gross (adj.) this can be applied to anything you don't like.
Gunk (n.) make-up, also dirt of the worst kind.
Get bombed. Get drunk.
Gut bomb (n.) hamburger.
Hack (v.t.) do, as in "I can't hack it."
Head (n.) pot smoker, someone on drugs, freak.
Head gorilla (n.) leader.
"He lost his amp." He lost his energy or enthusiasm.
High Five (n.) clapping above your head.

"His oil doesn't reach his dipstick." He's not too smart.
Honcho (n.) leader, often used as a phrase: head honcho.
Hot dog (n.) an athletic show-off, also a hot-tempered person.
Humongus (adj.) larger than huge.
Hunk (n.) a good-looking guy.
"I hear where you're coming from." I understand.
"I've got the munchies." I'm hungry for junk food.
In a blue funk. In a depression.
Jazzy (adj.) classy or cool, but not quite cosmic.
Jock (n.) athletic man.
Jockette (n.) athletic woman.
Joe cool (n.) guy with a very good opinion of himself.
Kiddy Lit (n.) children's literature course.
Kyped (v.) stole.
Kyper (n.) thief.
Labbie (n.) graduate assistant in science.
Laid back (adj.) unconcerned, taking it easy.
"Lay it on me." Tell me about it.
Lead ballon (n.) failure, usually a joke.
"Let's get down." Let's dance free-style.
"Let's get it on." Let's get together.
"Let's hog." Let's eat.
"Let's go scarf." Let's eat.
Minute (n.) request for travel. (This came from the student secretaries.)
Move it. Command to hurry.
Mr. Perfection. Guy who thinks he's perfect, often applied to a professor.
Much macho (n.) "What an egotistical guy thinks he is!"
Munchies (n.) snacks, also the desire for snacks.
Mushroom people (n.) faculty members (people who are kept in the dark). This came from the secretaries.
Narc (n.) primarily a drug agent but also a tattletale.
Neat (adj.) nice, great, cool.
"No guts, no glory." No courage, no recognition.
Nooner (n.) sex at noon.
"No way, Jose." Strong expression of refusal.
OLB (n.) odd looking bird. (This originated in the Vo-Tech drafting department at PSU.)
"Out of it." Doesn't know what's going on.
Out to lunch (adj.) brainless.
Pig boat. (n.) sloppy girl. (This originated in the Vo-Tech department.)

Pig out (v.i.) eat too much.
Pitted out (adj.) in a deplorable condition; sick of school; sweaty and smelly from athletics.
"The pits" (n.) a bad event.
Plowed (adj.) drunk.
Pothead (n.) drug user.
Pud (adj.) easy, as in "a pud course."
Punk (n.) someone young and inexperienced.
Punt the class. Drop the class; also used for skipping.
"Put a lid on it." Stop talking; be quiet; shut up.
Raku (adj.) sloppy, but attractive. Common only to the art department.
Rap (n.) blame.
Rap (v.) talk.
Redneck (n.) tattletale; cowboy; straitlaced person; can be used for anything; you don't like.
Rich Bitch (n.) girl who flaunts money.
"Right on." Term of approbation.
"Roka, Roka." What you say when you hear the same old story, believed to have come from Colorado ski slopes.
3 S's. What a boy does before the 3 D's: shave, shower, and something else that starts with sh.
Sack out (v.i.) sleep.
Sandpipers (n.) Middle Easterners.
"Say What!" Same as "You've got to be kidding."
Scarfed on (v.t.) ate on something such as a chicken leg.
Schomorious (adj.) scholarly and meritorious (submitted by the student secretaries).
Scud (n.) anyone not in the "in" crowd.
Scumbo's (n.) Sambo's restaurant.
"Shake it off." Forget it.
"Shout it out." Get it off your chest; tell it.
"Sit on it." Stop talking.
Skate (v.i.) skip class.
Slimeboes (n.) cooks.
Slime Hall (n.) the cafeteria.
Smashed (adj.) drunk.
Snockered (adj.) very drunk.
Smoke by (v.i.) to go by fast or run or win easily.
Snake by (v.i.) barely get by, often to barely pass a course.
Snipe (n.) someone who is like the mythical bird; a birdbrain.
Snitch (n.) one who tells on someone else.

Space case (n.) person in another word.
Spaced out (adj.) on drugs.
Space cadet (n.) ROTC student.
Spike (n.) unfair preempting of an argument in debate.
Squirrel (n.) in debate, an odd case, off the subject.
Staff ass (n.) graduate assistant, usually listed as 'staff" in the schedule.
"Stick it in your ear." Shut up.
Stoned (adj.) drunk.
Stud (n.) macho man.
Superjock (n.) guy who thinks he's a great athlete.
"The Teacher hit on you." The teacher asked you a question.
10 (n.) topnotch guy.
"Tie one on." Get drunk.
T&P (n.) History: Theory and Practice course.
Turkey (n.) one you wish to insult, often because he insulted you.
Turkey run (n.) another name for the street in any town which is used by teen-agers for cruising.
Tweeb (n.) obnoxious person, immature person.
Up (adj.) high on drugs.
Veg.(v.i.) to calm down; to be by yourself; to come off drugs.
Veged out (adj.) too drunk to move.
Walking on water. Displaying a "holier than thou" attitude.
Weeb (n.) same as tweeb.
Weed (n.) usually Weede gymnasium.
Wheels (n.) car or motorcycle.
"Whoa babe." Something a guy would say to a good looking girl; equivalent to the wolf whistle.
Wimp (n.) mousy person, also sissy.
Wicked (adj.) excellent.
Wolf (v.t.) eat fast.
"You ig." What you say to an ignorant person.
Zilch (n.) zero.
Zits (n.) pimples.
Zip (n.) none.
Zippo (n.) also none.

"There is a time and place that only we can fill."--Loa Campbell, Mapleton, Kansas, 1980.

# She Just Don't Understand Business

## by Harold J. DuBois

*Dedicated to my dear wife, Gladys McCabe DuBois, without whose example the character Agnes Bowers could not have been created.*

Now I've been doin' the cookin' in this here nursin' home goin' on ten years, and I'll tell you right off, our new Administrator is awful peculiar. Her name's Agnes Bowers, and us old-timers around the place still call her the new Administrator, even though she's been with us these three years runnin'. You see, there's not much goes on around here I don't hear about. Don't everybody come to the kitchen for coffee sooner or later?

We started callin' Agnes the new Administrator because all her ideas are new and different, and we went along with 'em at first because we knew there was problems with them state inspectors.

Me and Jenkins, the maintenance man, and Flossie, the head housekeeper—we'd seen these times before when them nit-pickin' inspectors come around, and there's a little excitement for a while till everything settles back to normal. So, we had our own little meetin' in the kitchen one night and decided to go along with Agnes, just for the time bein', till those inspectors moved on to other places, though all of us seen right off she wasn't no business woman.

For one thing, there was the matter about the pay checks. Payday had always been on the first and the fifteenth. That's the days when the old Administrator always made out the checks and locked them in her desk drawer. Anybody wanted their check right away—well, they had to kick back ten dollars (cash, of course), but if you could hold out for say, ten days, you only had to pay five. That was because lettin' her hold back the checks gave her more operatin' capital. It was purely business and made good sense.

All of us was used to our old Administrator because she understood so much about business and we admired her brains. It was too bad when she got in trouble over that Trolinger thing and lost her job.

It really wasn't her fault, because who in the world would have believed that old coot Trolinger was smart enough to write a letter, much less get somebody to mail it? (We never could find out who mailed it—probably some visitor he waylaid in the hall. That's the trouble with lettin' visitors come to one of these places. You never can tell when one of 'em's goin' to make some kind of trouble.)

Well, anyhow, old man Trolinger was a patient the county brought in. He'd been ridin' in a freight car when some of the cars was derailed, includin' his, and when they found him he was banged up pretty bad. They kept him in the hospital a couple of days, where they patched him up and cleaned him up. Then they brought him in here.

Anybody could see right off that old Trolinger wasn't long for this world. He wheezed and coughed and spit up blood. But he had his pride, he did. Right after they brought him in, he told Flossie he wanted to talk to the boss and kept fussin' at her until she went and got the Administrator. Flossie said, when she got the Administrator into his room, the old geezer demanded for her to bring him his shoes.

Trolinger pulled up the inner sole of his left shoe and lifted out two five hundred dollar bills, and then durned if he didn't dig two more of 'em out of his right shoe. He gave all four of 'em to our old Administrator sayin' he wanted to pay his hospital bill, since he'd left there without any chance to do it himself. He wanted the Administrator to hold the rest of it for him and take out enough each week to pay for his keep till he could get on the road again.

Well now, it wouldn't have been very good business for the Administrator to tell him the county was payin' his hospital bill and would also be responsible for his keep in the nursin'home, so she just done what she always done in such cases—deposited them four bills in her own personal account. Old man Trolinger wasn't ever gonna go on the road again and the county would pay for his buryin', so it wasn't like she was stealin' from anybody.

The old man died less than a month later and everything would have been all right, if his sister hadn't showed up right after the funeral.

Who would have supposed that dirty old bum had a sister like that? A real lady, she was, and nice as could be. She explained that she had got this letter tellin' about the five hundred dollar bills, and what's more, she even had the letter in her purse.

The Administrator was real patient. She was always patient with visitors, especially relatives. She told her how lots of times old people

like Trolinger get delusions and hallucinations and suggested she tear the letter up. She even offered to let her throw it in her wastebasket, but instead of doin' that, Trolinger's sister took the letter to one of the county commissioners who was up for re-election, and durned if he didn't take it to the county attorney. Why, they even found a bank teller who remembered receivin' the four bills from the Adminstrator and puttin' them in her account.

Well, there was quite a stink. Why, they made our old Administrator resign to keep from goin' to jail! They even made her pay back the two thousand dollars, which didn't seem quite fair, seein' what a smart business woman she was.

But I'm gettin' clear off the subject. I started to tell you about the paychecks. We had a new maid, Ruby Grubbs. Ruby was a real good worker, but kinda dumb. So, when payday come, Ruby went into the office to get her pay check. We all lined up outside the door, because we wanted to hear Ruby sputter when she found out she had to kick back ten dollars. None of the rest of us had asked for our pay checks. Why pay ten dollars when we could wait a few days and get off for only five?

Well, we didn't hear no commotion, and pretty soon Ruby come out smilin', holdin' her check. This was too much for Flossie, who asked, "What'd you say, Ruby? What'd she say?" Ruby just shrugged, "She says to tell everybody to come in and get their checks. She'd like to close the office."

Well, we did. Jenkins, Flossie and I, the old hands, were glad to get our checks on time without givin' no kick-back, but we couldn't see it as far as the new help like Ruby was concerned. I'll tell you, we all knew right off that Agnes Bowers was no business woman.

When this new Administrator, Agnes Bowers, took over, we shook in our shoes till the end of the month. You never know what a new Administrator's goin' to do, and this Agnes was peculiar—real peculiar.

She and I near come to a show down the day I cooked macaroni for dinner. Now I am a real good cook. Some nursin' home cooks are sloppy and don't care how bad their stuff tastes, but I got a conscience. I really care whether my stuff tastes good or not.

Well, like I was sayin', I noticed we still had some macaroni on hand—just about enough to make a good batch—and I knew a fresh shipment was comin' any day, so bein' economical, it just made good sense to use up the old stuff.

I'd put the macaroni on to cook and started with the fixin's for the rest of the dinner, when I noticed the little white worms. There's little white

worms sometimes hatches out up inside the elbows of macaroni that's been settin' for a spell, and you got no idea they're in there. But you put it in water and turn the fire on and they come wrigglin' out and swimmin' to the top in a hurry. Well, I got me a big ladle and was patiently workin' away, when I heard somebody breathin' over my shoulder. I whirled around and durned if there didn't stand Agnes Bowers in my kitchen! She didn't look mad, just sort of curious.

"What are you doing?" she says.

"Why, I'm skimmin' off them little white worms," I says, and went on to explain about the worms.

"And what happens with the worms that are still hidden in the elbows of the macaroni?" she says.

"Why, there probably aren't any," I says. "See, they're all comin' out and wrigglin' up to the top. Just wait till I get 'em skimmed off, then mix in some tomatoes and herbs—this'll be a tasty batch of macaroni."

But before I knew what that woman was up to, she'd grabbed two pot holders and dumped that whole big kettle full of macaroni into the garbage disposal! I grabbed off my apron and was goin' to throw it at her, but she was already out the door and runnin' to her car.

"Put on a fresh kettle of water and have it boiling. I'll be right back," she hollered, and durned if she didn't chase to the supermarket and buy enough macaroni to make another batch.

We got the patients fed on time, but only because she pitched in and helped me. She took orders from me without a whimper, and a real good thing, too. If she'd of crossed me once, I'd thrown macaroni down her neck.

She never said nothin' more, and I didn't either, though I noticed her sometimes pokin' around in the pantry, checkin' the flour and cereal, and breakin' the macaroni elbows when she thought I wasn't lookin'. I tell you, that woman is peculiar! Instead, she hired two more girls—one for Flossie, the other to help me in the kitchen.

We talked about her a lot when we were sure she wasn't around. Jenkins was all for lookin' for another job. The place was bound to go broke. Start loadin' down the payroll, a place goes broke. Our place had fifty beds, with thirty of 'em occupied, and there was already ten people on the payroll.

What's more, she turned down a good chance to beat that payroll. An administrator in another nursin' home came up with a good idea. She says, "Look, we usually get wind of when those state inspectors are coming, don't we? So when we do, why don't you send three or four of your girls to work at my place? They usually hit your place

right after mine, so then I'll send some of my help over. That way, those inspectors find everything okay, and we both can cut our payrolls." But Agnes wouldn't hear of it. She just didn't understand business.

She'd of gone flat broke, if it wasn't for sheer luck—several pieces of luck. The first one happened when one of them brain doctors—what they call a shrink—come around to check on the patients. He come into the office, just when Flossie was tellin' Agnes about the carryin' on in old lady Hinkle's room. Old lady Hinkle was a patient who wouldn't talk to nobody, just sat on her bed all day and stared at the wall. Well, Flossie had caught old man Connors in Mrs. Hinkle's room and chased him back to his own room then come runnin' to the office to tell Agnes.

"And what was Mr. Connors doing when you first saw him?" she says.

"Doing?" Flossie says. "Why—why he was sittin' on the bed right beside her. He—he was rubbin' her leg with one hand and fumblin' with the front of her dress with the other!"

"And what was Mrs. Hinkle doing all this time?" asks Agnes. "Did she seem irritated?"

I don't know if she was irritated or not," says Flossie. "Her face was red as a beet and she was gigglin'!"

"Hmmm,"says Agnes. "I want you to go get Mr. Connors and ask him if he would mind staying with Mrs. Hinkle for a while. Then you close her door and see if you can't find work to do in another part of the building."

"Bravo!" says this brain doctor, who had come in at the side door without neither of 'em noticin'. Then he says to Agnes, "I would like you to tell me all you can about this Mrs. Hinkle. I want to follow her case closely. Your—ah—mode of therapy is excellent—excellent!"

Afterward, that doctor started sendin'us some of his patients, and he must of passed the word, because some other doctors started sendin' patients, too. Pretty soon we had thirty-five, then forty.

The second piece of luck happened one day when the state inspectors come. They walked into the recreation room just when Ruby Grubbs was handin Flossie a strip of wallpaper with wet paste all over the back of it. The patients, about a dozen of 'em, were standin' around givin' advice and tryin' to help, while Flossie stood on a rickety stepladder puttin' the paper on the wall.

Well, them inspectors went through the rooms like a streak, figgerin' they'd find all sorts of dirt and trash that Flossie and Ruby

hadn't cleaned up. Figgered they'd neglected the rooms while they hung wallpaper. Were they ever disappointed! There wasn't a speck of dust nowhere, and them wash basins and bathrooms was shiny enough to put yur eyes out.

Then they hunted up Agnes to find out what was goin' on. Seemed like it all started when old lady Hinkle complained about the wallpaper. Old lady Hinkle had suddenly started talkin' again, ever since old Connors spent that afternoon in her room, and once she started talkin', she seemed to have plenty to say about everything. She sure didn't like that drab-lookin' wallpaper.

Next day, Agnes got some samples of wallpaper from the paint store and called all the patients together to pick out what they liked. Mrs. Hinkle liked the blue, but there was several wanted pink. This started some awful arguments, and Agnes had to get 'em to agree to takin' a vote by secret ballot. Mrs. Hinkle claimed that all of the employees should vote too and the rest of them agreed.

Well, it wound up with a tie vote, so they called me in from the kitchen to break the tie. I made short work of that! Of course it should be blue. Pink's for a bedroom, not a recreation room!

Flossie and Ruby volunteered to do the paperin', if the other girls would work extra hard to keep up with the housekeepin'. Some of the patients even said they could clean their own rooms while the paperin' was goin' on, and durned if they wasn't good as their word. Those Inspectors just couldn't find nothin' to holler about and wuz about to leave when one of 'em notices Mr. Connor's garden.

I tell you that Inspector got suspicious right away. "Usin' free labor, eh? And sick people at that! Who gets the produce from the garden?"

"Why we cook it right here in our kitchen and serve it to the patients. When Mr. Connors has more than we can use right away, we freeze it."

The scowlin' inspector says, "Nice little racket you got goin'."

"Yes," she says, with that charmin' smile of hers, "Mr. Connors and his helpers think so. I have to watch he doesn't gouge me on the price."

"You say he *sells* the produce to you?"

"Yes," she says with a mysterious look on her face, "and he savès every penny I pay him. It seems Mr. Connors has a very special reason to accumulate money."

The inspector looked like he was goin' to say something more, but one of the other inspectors says, "Come on, Jim, let's get out of here. I know a well-run nursing home when I see one, and I've seen one today."

After the inspectors left, we figured we'd seen the end of it, but we hadn't. Those inspectors talked to the county commissioners and one of them must've talked to the newspaper. Anyhow, next day the place was swarmin' with photographers.

Those photographers took pictures of the new wallpaper. They took pictures of Flossie and Ruby. They even took pictures of me in my kitchen, which you can see is always spotless. Then they took pictures of old Conners' garden. They tried to take pictures of Connors, but he wouldn't have no part of it without old lady Hinkle standin' beside him. So they went and got the old gal and got their picture, old Conners standin' there with a hoe in one hand and Mrs. Hinkle's arm in the other. Both of 'em look'd as pleased as punch.

When them pictures hit the paper, I'll tell you our phone started ringin'. We had all fifty beds filled afore night.

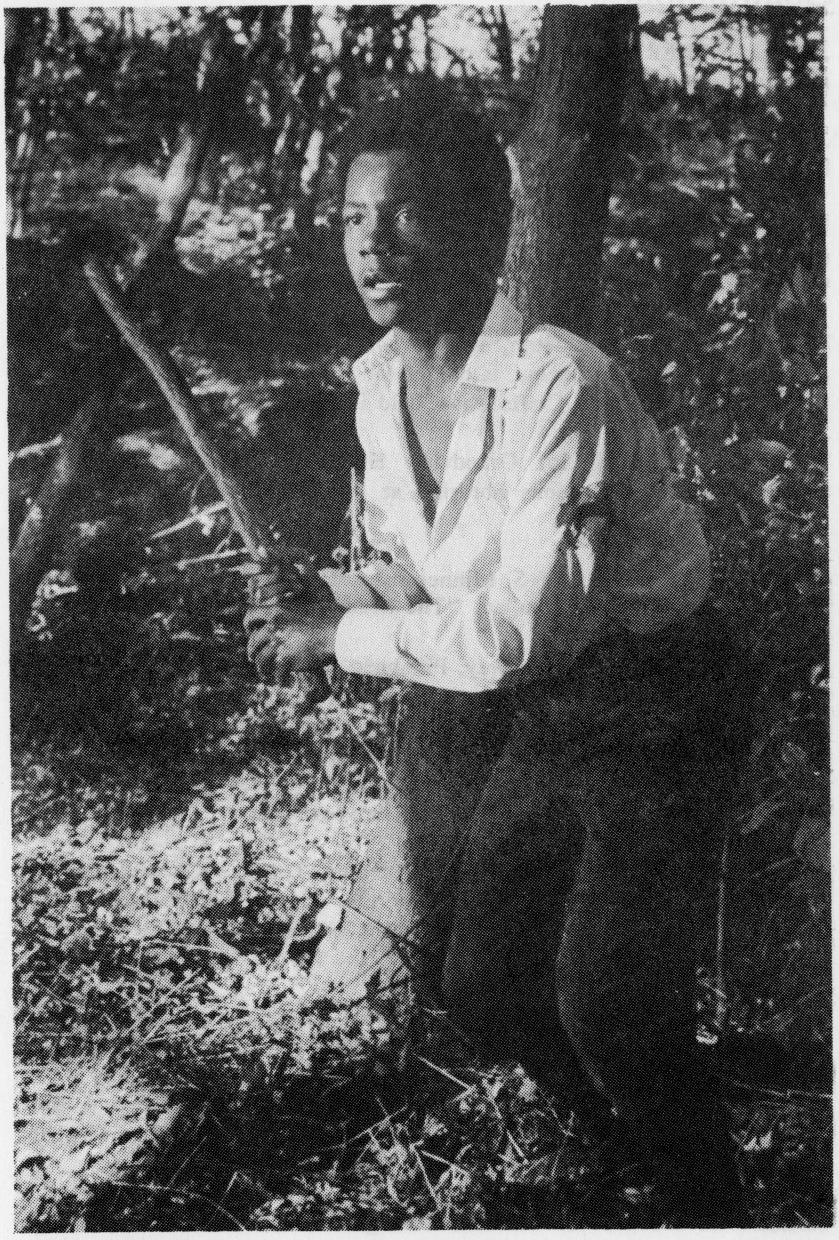
We got in the paper one more time. That was when the Connors-Hinkle weddin' took place. Their doctors had pronounced both of 'em fit and sound in body and mind and able to go home, but when their relatives come to fetch 'em, they said they wasn't goin' no place except together. That brought on such a storm you wouldn't believe, but they stood pat. Old lady Hinkle owned a little cottage and old man Connors had the money he'd made off his garden. So it all wound up with 'em gettin' married right here in our recreation hall.

Of course, not everything turns out that good. After all, this is a home for sick old people and not a month goes by without a funeral home sendin' their big black hearse out here, and that's to be expected.

But I tell you, that Agnes is natural-born lucky. Just one good piece of luck after another, and a good thing it is too! Because that woman just don't understand business!

From the dark prairie
Comes the eerie coyote howl:
Night--suddenly chilled.

**Marjorie V. Forbes**



**Kyle Johnson as Newt Winger in The Learning Tree, filmed by Warner Bros.-Seven Arts in Fort Scott, Kansas, 1968, Gordon Parks, Photographer.**

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**TED R. WATTS**, 807 W. 4th, Box 303, Oswego, KS 67356, arts editor of the **LBR**, drew the portraits of our contributors.

# Contributors

**KANSAS POETRY CONTEST: Ossie E. Tranbarger**, Sponsor, 619 W. Main, Independence, KS 67301; **Frederick A. Raborg, Jr.**, Judge, P.O. Box 93304, Bakersfield, CA 93304; **Willene Nusbaum**, Judge, Bern, KS 66408; **Alice Morrey Bailey**, 1456 Edison Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84115; **Katherine Russell Barnes**, 1708 Mayflower Drive, Wilson, NC 27893; **Gloria Buckner**, 1811 Brandywine Trail, Fort Wayne, IN 46825; **Ruth Daigon**, Chaplin, CT 06235; **Nancy Edwards**, 1400 Valhalla, Apt. 24, Bakersfield, CA. 93309; **Marjorie V. Forbes**, 600 S. Florida, Columbus, KS 66725; **Guanetta Gordon**, 11847 Hacienda Dr., Sun City, AZ 85351; **Jessie Lee Green**, 2424 Linda Jean Dr., Independence, KS 67301; **Lorraine Ellis Harr**, 4102 N.E. 130th Pl., Portland, OR 97230; **Verna Lee Hinegardner**, R. 6, Box 199, Hot Springs, AR 71901; **Henry G. Kremer**, 618 E. Forest, Wheaton, IL 60187; **Judith Clare Jones**, 6505 Tacoma Ave., Tacoma, WA 98408; **Helen Pearson**, 12916 S.E. 188th, Renton, WA 98055; **Glenn Turner**, Box 561, Conway, WA 98238.

**VINTAGE PHOTOGRAPHS:** The Con A. Miller residence photograph, p. 71, provided by Michael Heffernan, 510 W. Euclid, Pittsburg, KS 66762. Edythe Squier Draper photographs, pp. 2, 4 and 20, provided by Pittsburg State University Library.

**TEXT PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS:** Presbyterian Ladies College, Oswego, KS, engraving by C.S. Purch Co., Chicago, IL, ca. 1890, p. 10,courtesy of the Oswego Historical Society. The Tenth Annual Kansas Poetry Contest Illustrations, p. 46, pp. 48-55, by Ted Watts. Illustration for "Home," p. 56, by Shelby Horn.

**INSIDE FRONT COVER PHOTOGRAPH:** Photograph of Pulitzer Prize winner, Shirley Christian, is taken from the 1960 **Kanza**, Pittsburg State University.

"On the last night of April a girl may wet a handkerchief and hang it out in a cornfield. Next morning the May sun dries it, and the wrinkles are supposed to show the initial of the man she is to marry. Or she may hold a bottle of water up to the light on the morning of May 1, just at sunrise, and see a picture or outline of the boy who is to be her husband."--Vance Randolph, Galena, Missouri, 1946.

# Invitation To Submit

The LBR cordially solicits manuscripts, photographs, and art work for publication in forthcoming issues. Under our current editorial policy, each issue of the magazine will have approximately ten pages of poetry, ten of graphics, thirty of fiction, and thirty of non-fiction.

Prime consideration is given to works by Kansans and former Kansans, as well as work set in the Little Balkans. Current non-fiction contributions are restricted to subjects related to the Little Balkans. At least half of the poetry of each issue will be devoted to poets who have had limited previous publication. Manuscripts should not exceed thirty-five double-spaced typed pages. Works of local and regional artists are desired, as well as vintage photographs depicting the life and social customs of the Little Balkans; Black and White photos of sculpture and oversize art is preferred.

Contributions should be accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope and mailed to:

**ART, PHOTOS, AND SCULPTURE** Ted Watts, P.O. Box 303, 87 W. Fourth St., Oswego, KS 67356.

**FICTION** Stephen Robbins, 2001 Arapaho, Garden City, KS 67846.

**NON-FICTION** Shelby Horn, 615 Kansas, Oswego, KS 67356.

**POETRY** Gene DeGruson, 601 Grandview Heights Terrace, Pittsburg, KS 66762.

We promise to report our reactions to you within six weeks. Upon publication, we can pay only with copies of your issue.

# Subscription Information

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