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The Little Balkans Review, Summer 1983

Janis DeChicchio

Gene DeGruson

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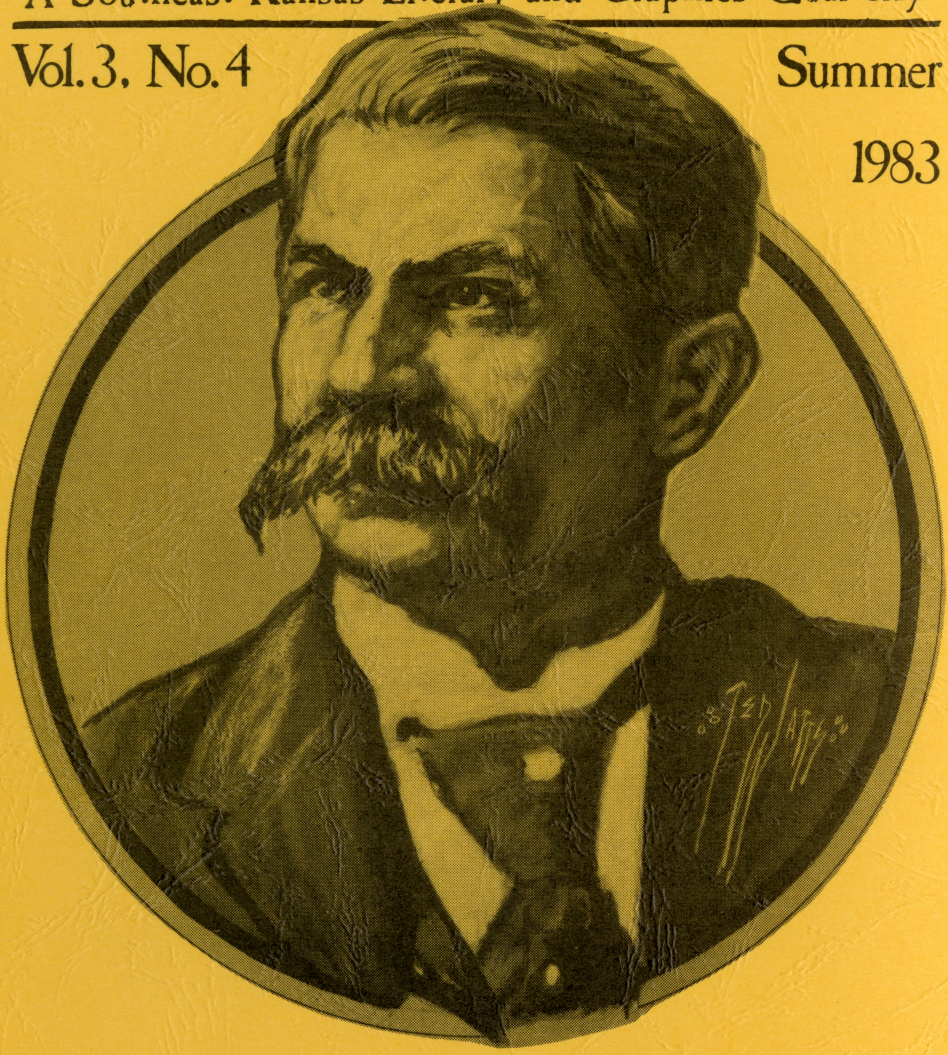
The Little Balkans Review

A Southeast Kansas Literary and Graphics Quarterly

Vol. 3, No. 4 Summer 1983



Eugene F. Ware
Poet Laureate
Cherokee, Fort Scott, Topeka, Kansas

The
Little Balkans Review

A Southeast Kansas Literary and Graphics Quarterly

Vol. 3, No. 4

Janis DeChicchio, Music Editor
Gene DeGruson, Poetry Editor
Shelby Horn, Nonfiction 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.

601 Grandview Heights Terrace

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Summer 1983

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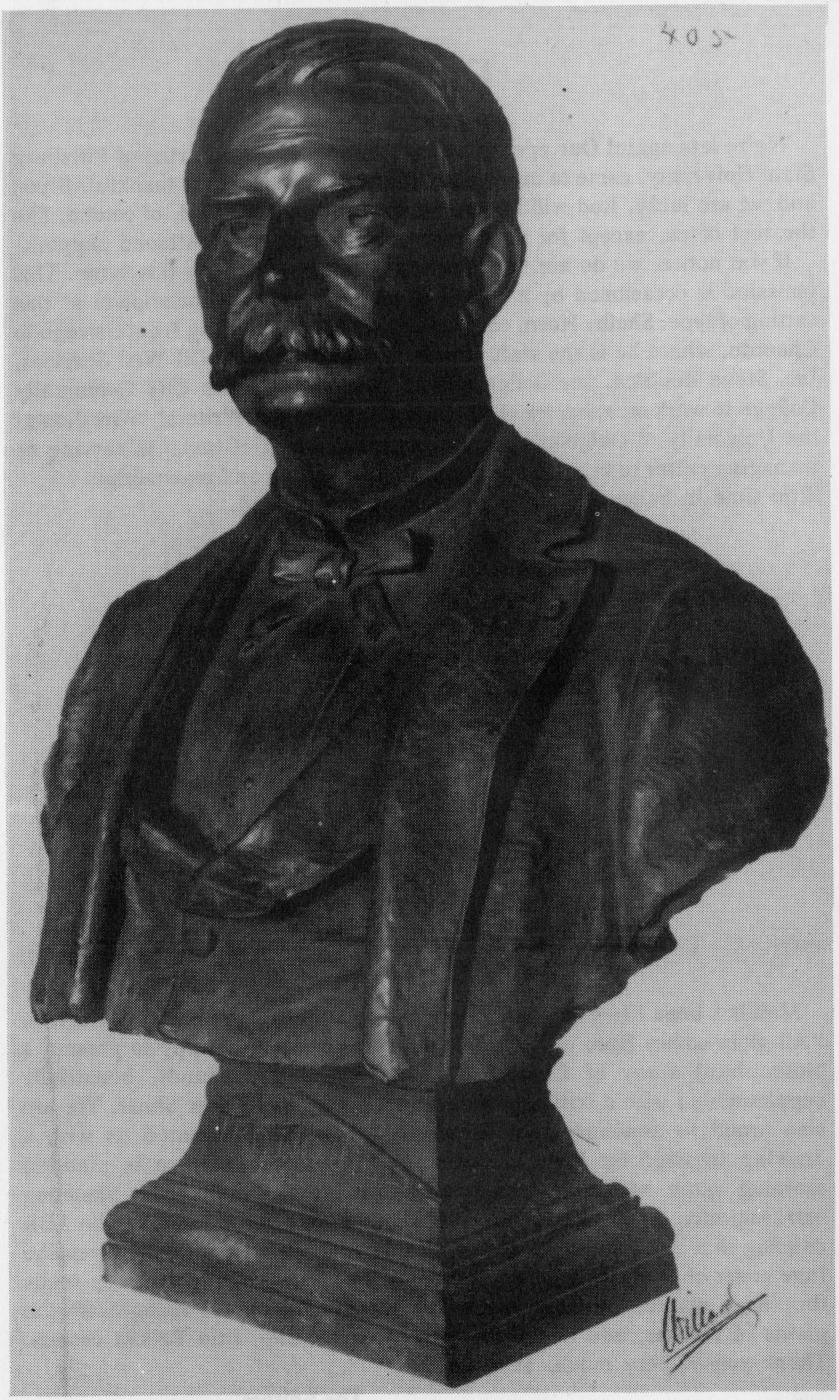
Elizabeth Layton "All glory comes from daring to begin," mixed media, 22"x15".

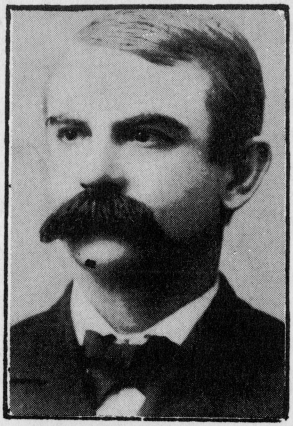


Bust of Eugene F. Ware by Robert P. Binghurst, 1914. Courtesy of the Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka.

Preface

We're late again! Our apologies. Rod Dutton, graphics artist of Pittsburg State University, came to our rescue, for which we are most thankful. If you and we are lucky, Rod will be joining the LBR staff—unpaid, of course, like the rest of us, except for your many kind words and continued support.

If you notice, we do not have the addresses of editors in this issue. This omission is occasioned by a couple of moves which are incomplete at this setting of type. Shelby Horn, our nonfiction editor, is moving from Oswego to Chanute, where he is the staff attorney for Consolidated Oil Well Services, Inc. Steve Robbins, our fiction editor, is leaving Garden City Community College to work on a master of fine arts degree at the Writers' Workshop at the University of Oklahoma. In the interim, Gene DeGruson is serving as managing editor to keep things going. If your letters and manuscripts take a little time in being acknowledged, please understand.



Eugene F. Ware, ca. 1880.

Mail has been heavy for some time asking about the author of our motto, "All glory comes from daring to begin." Thus, we are happy to present a biographical study of Eugene F. Ware by Gladys Mundt, beautifully supplemented with a critical article on his poetry by Walter Shear. We are also proud to announce that Elizabeth Layton has presented us with a drawing inspired by Ware's motto. In it, Grandma Layton is planting morning glory seeds. In her mind's eye, they are already blooming extravagantly. In the background, she has drawn the editors of the LBR dancing in a circle, with Janis DeChicchio running to join them. From the Inge cover on a planting stake, you know they are rejoicing over the seeds they have planted; already on the horizon mountains are rising from the plains of Kansas, and in the air—you guessed it!—Little Balkan castles. Thank you so very much, Mrs. Layton.

The Editors

Eugene F. Ware of the Sun-Gold Section

By Gladys M. Mundt

The nineteenth century saw the rise of many new sciences. One of these, long discredited, was phrenology, the study of the conformation of the skull to learn of an individual's mental faculties and character. Colonies of phrenologists had come to Southeast Kansas as early as 1855 to establish the Kansas Vegetarian and Octagon Farm Settlements, sponsored by the "Great Bump Analyzer," Professor Orson Squire Fowler [1809-1887]. Although the settlements died out within two years of their establishments, Prof. Fowler, as the leading lecturer and practitioner of phrenology, continued to visit the state until as late as 1874, when he may have journeyed to Dodge City at the invitation of Bat Masterson to analyze the heads of suspected cattle rustlers and horse thieves. Because that visit ended "ignominiously with the shooting out of lights and the professor taking a rear exit," verifying details seem to have been eradicated from all extant records. "It is tempting," states Madeline B. Stern, biographer of Fowler and his partner, S. R. Wells, "to identify Orson with this venturesome phrenologist on the frontier." It is known, however, that Orson Fowler was in Fort Scott, Kansas, in the fall of 1872, when he shaped the destiny of a young man who could not decide whether to become an attorney-at-law or a journalist. That young man was Eugene F. Ware, already known as "Ironquill"

Woodcut of Prof. O. S. Fowler by Johnson Dyer, 1872.

to the readers of Kansas poetry and as the junior partner of the McKeighan and Company law firm in Fort Scott. Feeling the cranial irregularities of the young poet, the professor advised him to follow law. Accordingly, in February 1873, Ware opened his private office and followed the profession for almost forty years. —The Editors.

I

Eugene Fitch Ware was born May 29, 1841, at Hartford, Connecticut. When he staked out a claim in the tall grass of the breezy Kansas prairie in 1868, he had served as a commissioned officer in the Union Army, had farmed in Iowa with his father, under whom he had served an apprenticeship as a harness maker, and had worked first as a reporter, then as an editor, for the Burlington Hawkeye.

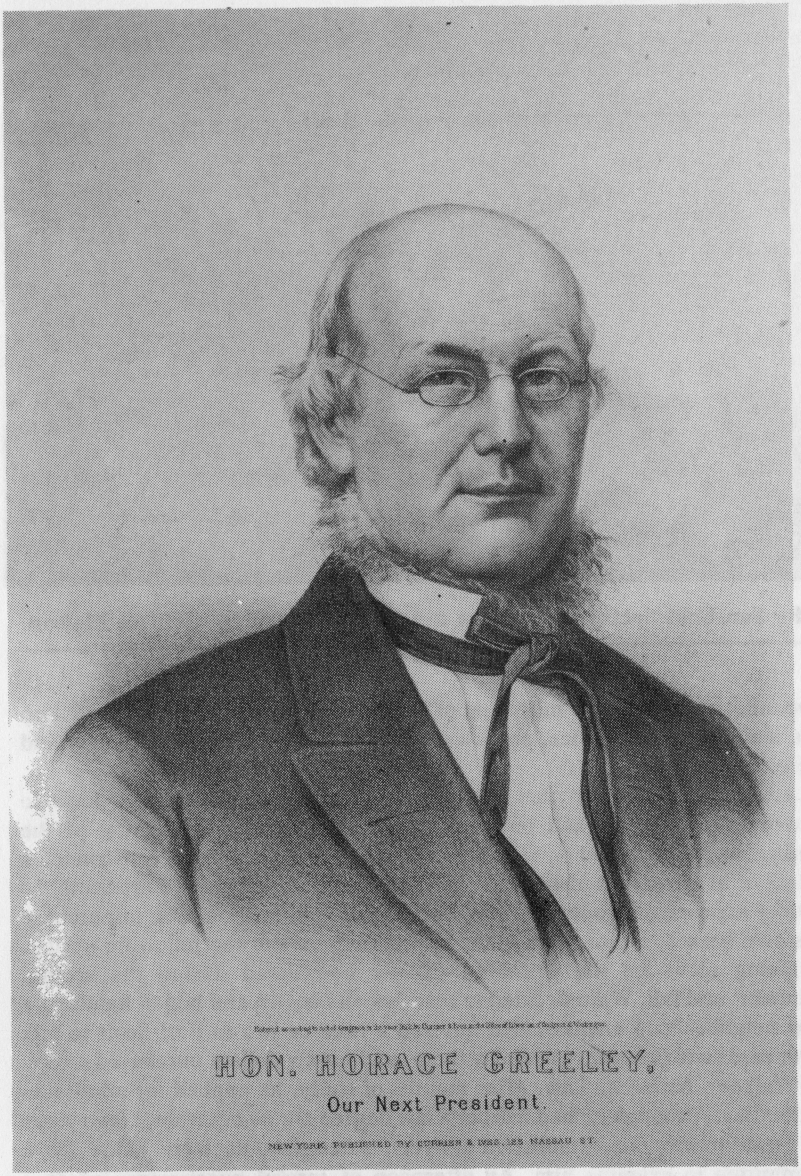
Land was free to homesteaders after the Civil War. "I found several places which I thought would do," Eugene Ware said of Cherokee County; "one down in the southern part of the county; one on the stream east of where Columbus now stands; but finally I picked out the hill on 'Sun-Gold Section' and concluded that I would take up a square mile; a one-quarter for myself, one quarter for father, and one for each of my two brothers. There were 100 square miles of vacant territory there and I had my choice." His section lay

The Sun-Gold Section as it looks today. Photograph by Quinton Matson.

two miles south and one mile west of Cherokee, Kansas, where he picked up his mail, bought supplies, and swapped war stories with new friends and neighbors.

After four months in the Sun-Gold Section, Ware returned to Iowa to convince his parents and brothers to move to Kansas. Returning in the spring, he sowed wheat on twenty acres he had had cleared and constructed a shack of black walnut planks. The following winter he lived in Fort Scott. To defray expenses, he opened a harness shop, which enabled him to purchase his own horses, a plow, and other farming equipment the following spring.

Living alone on the Cherokee County homestead during the spring, summer, and fall, Ware decided to read law on his own and began handling a few neighborhood disputes. He traveled a time or two to Fort Scott to talk over cases with attorneys he knew there, and for six dollars purchased a copy of Walker's American Law. After months of study, he applied for admission to the Bar. Although he had neither a law degree nor its equivalent (two years of reading with an established lawyer), arrangements were made for a committee to examine him. An afternoon of careful questioning led to a favorable report, and on June 19, 1871, he was admitted as a member to the Kansas Bar Association. He then moved to Fort Scott and entered the firm of McKeighan and Company. After his admission to the bar, he began submitting poetry to the newspapers under the name of "Ironquill." His first poem to attract attention was "Neutralia," a long, humorous, Civil War poem published in nineteen chapters.



1872 Campaign poster of Horace Greeley by Currier and Ives.

A frequent contributor to the Fort Scott Monitor, he became the newspaper's local editor for the duration of the Horace Greeley Presidential campaign. Greeley, a liberal Republican interested in social reform, had been nominated on May 1, 1872, at a convention of splinter-group Republicans, with B. Grantz Brown of Missouri as his Vice Presidential running mate. The Democratic National Convention, which met in Baltimore in July, adopted these candidates and their liberal platform. Editor Crawford, a staunch Republican, wished to support Greeley, but felt that this was a politically unwise move in Kansas. He therefore turned his columns over to Ware, also Republican, but as yet without political ambition. Greeley received 2,834,079 votes in the national election, as opposed to 3,597,070 for Ulysses S. Grant. Although he carried Missouri, he lost Kansas. William E. Connelley, a friend and later Secretary of the Kansas State Historical Society, was to recall, "Ware never did anything in a half-hearted way; he believed Greeley would win in the Presidential race of 1872, believed he ought to win. He bet his money on Greeley's success, and lost—lost almost everything he had."

II

Diversity of interest and occupation was typical in the Ware family, which had settled in Dedham, Massachusetts, in 1642. At the age of fourteen, Eugene's father, Hiram B. Ware, had left his New Portland, Maine, home to sail out of Nantucket on a whaling vessel. Five years later he returned to marry, in 1840, Amanda M. Holbrook of Columbia Green, Connecticut. To provide for himself and his bride (who claimed descent from John Alden and Priscilla Mullins), Hiram opened a saddlery and trunk business in Hartford.

The next year their son, Eugene Fitch, was born. ("Fitch" was chosen by his father in honor of a close friend, John Fitch, the inventor of a steamboat.) While yet a boy, Eugene moved with his parents to Iowa. After a long, difficult journey by stage and steamboat, the family arrived at Burlington, a river town in eastern Iowa. Here Hiram reopened his leather business. During the fifties he sponsored a supply depot to store food, clothing, and ammunition provided by Eastern abolitionists for shipment to antislavery groups in Kansas Territory.

Although his formal education seems to have been a hit-and-miss affair, Eugene Ware's early training was nearly perfect for the life which awaited him. A bloody nose or black eye from boyish scuffles was seldom cause for concern. Hunting, fishing, and camping took up much of the boy's time. River boats carrying gamblers and robbers sometimes stopped at Burlington. If the robbers were caught practicing their trade, they were soon hanging from the nearest tree. Justice, Eugene learned, was swift and irrevocable.

There was "culture," too: lectures at the church and school, numerous books, magazines, and newspapers. Families read aloud during the long evenings; occasionally a traveling troupe of actors came to town. There were debates, with slavery a favorite topic. The town was almost evenly divided on the question, and public discussions were lively at the log schoolhouse.

Finally, because of what they deemed too many fights and not enough learning, the senior Wares sent Eugene to a private school at Denmark in Lee County, Iowa. There several boys boarded at the home of a highly respected deacon. The Wares later learned that the minister's home served as a way station on an underground railroad shuttling slaves out of the South.

After leaving school with a good foundation in Latin and the classics, Ware served a six months' apprenticeship in this father's harness-making shop, an excellent experience for a future cavalry officer. It also taught him a trade that would serve him well in Kansas, carrying him over many a financial hump.

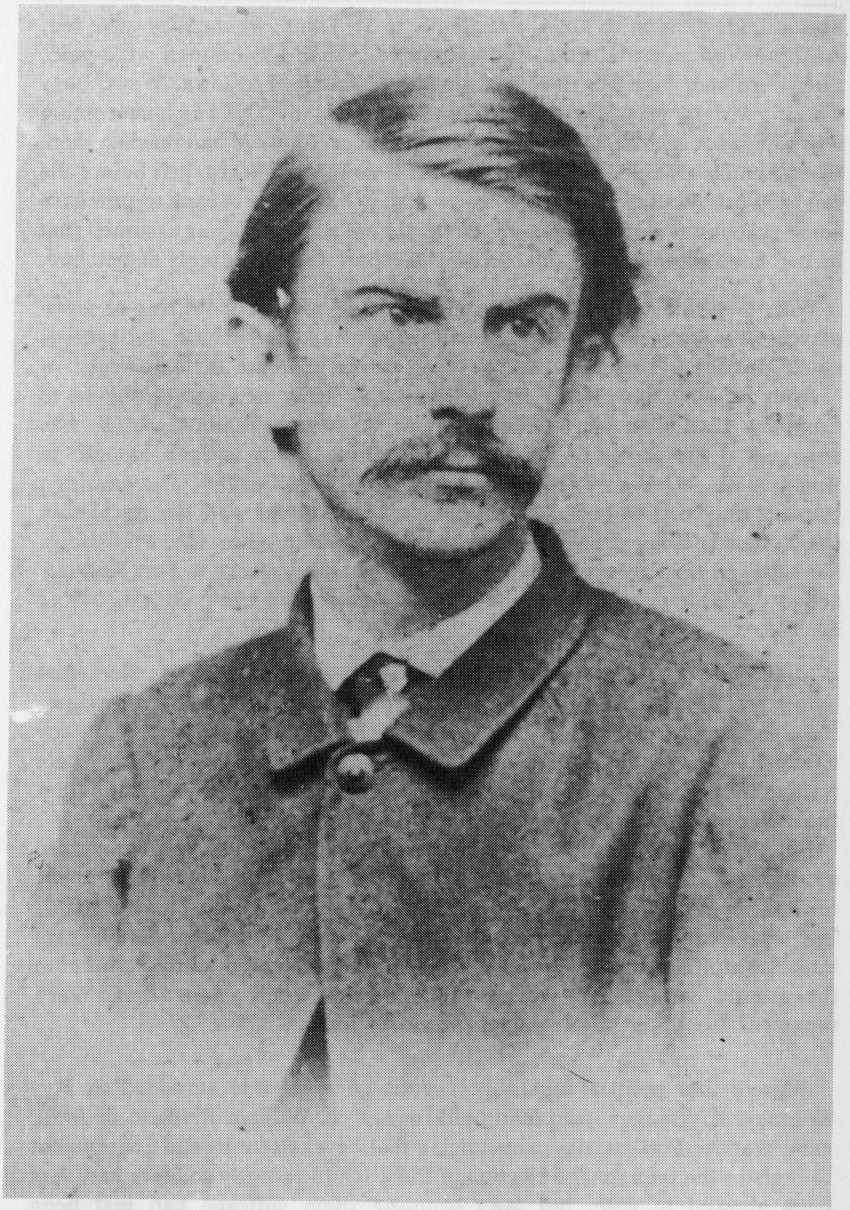
Even before war was declared in 1861, companies of locally organized men were learning the rudiments of war. Ware joined Comany E, First Iowa Infantry. War came, and with it the call for volunteers. At nineteen, Ware feared he would be left behind when his company was called up. He went looking for the captain of Company E to plead for a place when they were ordered to active duty. His search led him to a bar where he heard a Kentuckian bragging about how easy it was going to be to lick the Yankees. Ware challenged him and they fought. Ware won. Unknown to him, his captain witnessed the encounter. He stepped forward and told Ware that such men as he were necessary to the Northern cause, and so the the tune of "The Girl I Left Behind Me" Ware marched off with his company to war.

III

One of his soldier comrades described Ware as being "six feet high and six inches square." He was soon nicknamed "Link" after the tall, gangling President Lincoln. It was not long before he learned that the company's guns, manufactured in 1829, kicked badly; that good water was scarce; that meals were of poor quality. Vendors would come to the camp with victuals, and once Ware was sent to the hospital after eating one of their pies.

While stationed at Mason City, Iowa, Ware was sentenced to confinement in the guardhouse for firing his rifle without permission. (To the end of his days, Ware swore that he had obtained such from his captain.) The guardhouse was a small freight depot on stilts, filled with boxes and barrels. Ware climbed atop some baggage and fell asleep. When he awakened, he decided to make his bed at a lower level and proceeded to pull down boxes, several of them filled with lightning rods. Among the boxes he found a keg marked "Golden Grape Cognac." Satisfied of the barrel's contents, having used his bayonet as a brace and bit, he then effected an escape, reported his findings to his corporal, and returned to solitary confinement. That night Ware was not alone. Soldiers carrying canteens came in a steady stream to the guardhouse, which soon became crowded with unruly men filled with Golden Grape Cognac.

Company E engaged in battle only once—at Wilson's Creek, southwest of Springfield, Missouri. After a day of heavy fighting, the army marched to



Eugene Fitch Ware as a young man, ca. 1866. Courtesy of the Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka.

Springfield, then on to Rolla, and finally to St. Louis, where they were fed, outfitted with new uniforms, and dismissed. When all the men were paid, they were sent home by river boat up the Mississippi to Iowa. Ware, busy working with the payroll detail, was among the last to leave. His homecoming was somewhat of a shock to his parents, however, for word had reached them that he had been killed at Wilson's Creek. It seems that Ware, just before the final roll call was taken after the battle, had dropped out of rank to purchase some peaches at a farmhouse. When he did not answer, it was assumed that he had been killed in action and an official report was accordingly dispatched.

Ware nevertheless recalled his army days with affection: "A ring of seven players in a tent around a blanket, with seven candles burning on bayonets stuck into the ground, has always been to me a dream of happiness."

After a short time home, he rejoined the army and was assigned to Company L, Fourth Iowa Cavalry, which on March 7 and 8, 1862, was engaged at the Battle of Pea Ridge, Arkansas. He was then ordered to Omaha with certain companies of the Seventh Iowa Cavalry. The cavalry's primary duty was to hold the Indians between Omaha and the Rockies in check, thus keeping the way open for settlers traveling the wide, windswept, hard-packed road across Nebraska. A detachment was sent to Fort Kearney across the timberless terrain with Ware, now a second lieutenant, as officer in charge.

In addition to the road, communications across the prairie was facilitated by telegraph, which fascinated the Indians. They were curious to investigate the strange wires stretched between poles across the prairie. When they touched them, a mild electric shock encouraged them into believing some form of magic controlled by the white man traveled along the wire, and for a time this was enough to frighten them into leaving the lines alone.

But after a while the awe began to wear thin. Braves grew bold enough to cut the poles for firewood. One cloudy day several men on ponies headed toward their camp dragging poles with pieces of wire trailing behind. Lightning flashed, and a bolt struck a wire, the charge sending their horses into a frenzy. The animals reared, unseating the riders and tumbling them to the ground. All were shaken; some injured severely. After that, Ware reported, the Indians left the telegraph lines alone.

Ware's first political experience came while he was stationed at Fort Kearney. A stranger, who identified himself as William Redfield of Iowa, arrived at the Fort one day, announcing that he was sent by the Government to register the men for the election of 1864. (Until recently soldiers had not been allowed to vote, but laws granting them suffrage had just been enacted.) The men were duly registered, and in November Ware conducted the balloting.

While in Nebraska, Ware also came into his first contact with the practice of law. He was appointed post adjutant at Cottonwood Springs. It was his duty to find out the facts in any complaint and to present the case to the post commander. Most complaints concerned assault, theft, unrepaid

loans, and other relatively unimportant matters. However they were litigious and therefore good training for one who would enter the legal profession.

Ware was commissioned a captain shortly after the war ended and became aide-de-camp to Major General Grenville M. Dodge.

IV

Returning to Burlington after being mustered out of the army in June 1866, Ware began work as a reporter on the Hawkeye. Before long the editor was leaving him in charge for extended periods of time. But ill health overtook him. (While stationed at Fort Smith, Arkansas, in 1865, Ware had contracted a low-grade malaria which stayed with him for years.) A Burlington physician undertook to cure him with a concoction of quinine, arsenic, and strychnine. He improved, but with overwork the condition returned. The doctor then suggested that he try life in the open air.

Acquaintances of the Wares were about to depart for Southwest Missouri, where they planned to purchase and pasture a large herd of cattle. Ware was offered a split of the work and profits if he wanted to come along. He went, taking with him an old leather trunk of belongings and a large supply of his doctor's prescription.

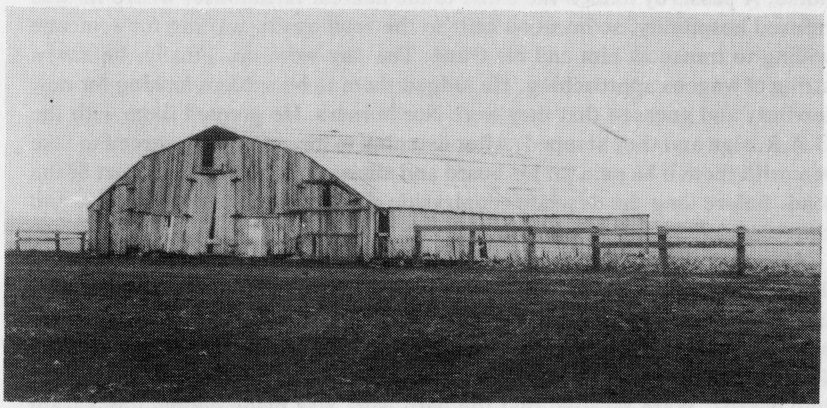
The war was over, but Confederate soldiers continued to roam across Missouri, especially where it bordered Union territory. On more than one occasion the travelers were stopped by armed men and threatened with remarks such as, "See how easy it would be to shoot a Yankee?" while a loaded gun was pointed at the heart of the intended victim. Heavy rains further dampened their spirits, and before long Ware's friends lost heart, decided they were unwilling to invest money in Missouri, and turned back to Iowa.

Ware chose not to return and was left by the roadside with his trunk and a horse. A passerby hauled the trunk to the nearest farmhouse, where he was refused hospitality, so he stood next to the road again, waiting for someone willing to transport him and his trunk. The day wore on. Finally, he saw a string of wagons approaching. He judged them to be settlers looking for new territory and guessed that they were Northerners. He greeted them with the G.A.R. sign and they stopped. After listening to his story, they agreed to take him with them if he paid for his board and allowed his horse to pull part of the load. Before long the desolate countryside discouraged the immigrants, and they decided to turn west into Kansas.

The neutral lands south of Fort Scott were soon to be opened to settlers. That night the group camped in what is now Cherokee County, and the next day Ware staked out a claim, paying a man eighty dollars to break out twenty acres of prairie. He obtained permission to haul timber out of the Neosho River bottoms. This was floated downstream to a sawmill where it was cut into boards. Ware recalled that the hard work was made doubly unpleasant by heat and mosquitoes.

Ware's hard work almost came to naught, however. On returning from his winter home in Fort Scott in 1870, he found a box shanty about ten feet square had been built on his brother Robert's quarter, the northwest section of the Sun-Gold Section, with about five acres of land broken on it. On the southwest quarter was another little house. "In the morning," he recalled, "I had my father and two brothers get into the wagon and we went over to the shanty on the southwest quarter and found a man in there with a trunk, Dutch bake oven, food supplies and a horse tied to a knothole in the shanty. A pile of straw was in front. Upon inquiry as to what he was doing there, he said he had taken the quarter section that he and his crowd, which he said consisted of ten men, had taken charge of the section. When I told him that it was our section, he said that our rights had lapsed; that we had not been on it long enough and had been away too long....Thereupon, I covered him with a revolver; ordered my brothers and father to untie the horse; push the house over and load it up into the wagon. This they did. The house came apart in a very convenient way. I turned the halter strap of his horse over to him and told him to pack his things...and move. He was very mad and declined to do anything and then I told him that I would march him off from the section and this I did and I turned his horse loose and off it started on the run down Cherry creek, and was soon out of sight and the fellow was on foot. I then let him go and told him that if I saw him on the claim again he would have a shooting match."

Ware fought squatters throughout the summer of 1870. Being offered a job on the Fort Scott Monitor by its editor, former Governor Samuel J. Crawford, he induced his parents and brothers to live on the homestead to prevent further invasions. There they lived on the Sun-Gold Section until 1885, when his mother's health demanded that the family move to Fort Scott. "I afterwards bought out my brother Robert's interest and mother's interest which in fact belonged to me," Ware recorded. "I afterwards bought out Charlie's interest and afterwards father's interest. I was making money all



The Ware barn on the Sun-Gold Section. Photograph by Quinton Matson.

the time in Fort Scott and father was constantly losing money in speculation. But afterwards, he having to move to Fort Scott in 1885, where mother could receive good care and treatment, and the title being finally adjusted, the renting of the farm began."

V

The young lawyer and journalist in the meantime had fallen in love with Jeanette S. Huntington, a Rochester, N.Y., graduate of Vassar, who was teaching in the Fort Scott public schools. On October 22, 1874, they were married and to this union were born three daughters (Jeanette, Abby, and Amelia) and one son (Eugene Huntington).

As a progessive Republican, Ware thought more and more of running for public office. He first, however, had to learn the rudiments of public speaking. One of Ware's first speeches, setting forth his views on the tariff, was delivered before a gathering at a country schoolhouse. It fell flat. He then delivered the same speech in the courthouse square in Fort Scott, making sure it was briefer and to the point. It garnered votes.

Ware was elected in 1879 to fill the unexpired term of W. R. Griffon as State Senator from the Twelfth District and re-elected for a full term in 1880. One of the bills he introduced provided for the establishment of a public library at Fort Scott. His constituents, however, saw no reason to build one, whereupon Ware opened the town's first library in a room at the Y.W.C.A. The city refused to accept it, however, feeling that it might be "mixed up with the churches," so the books were removed to a room at Ware's law office and opened to the public. The librarian and a janitor were paid by Ware.

The Fort Scott home of Eugene F. Ware, 202 S. Eddy, currently owned by Mr. and Mrs. Bill Hughes. Photograph by Quinton Matson.

Globe and chair from Ware's office, now in Fort Scott Public Library, which also houses his bookcase [detail of carving below]. Photographs by Quinton Matson.

Also while in the Senate, Ware fought for a good railroad bill and opposed an act for the relief of the destitute of Kansas, stating that "public charity never reaches the deserving poor...." Governor St. John appointmented him Major General of the Kansas State Militia during his second term of office.

Ware's political career was seldom smooth. Farmers and working men—the voters—did not seem to understand him. To them he was aloof. Although he had failed to secure a Congressional nomination in his own county conventions by two or three votes, yet all agreed that he would make his mark in Congress and be a unique and decided advertisement for his district. But to Ware, power of any kind—especially political power—was suspect. It should come slowly, he believed, lest overweening pride turn a man into a despot.

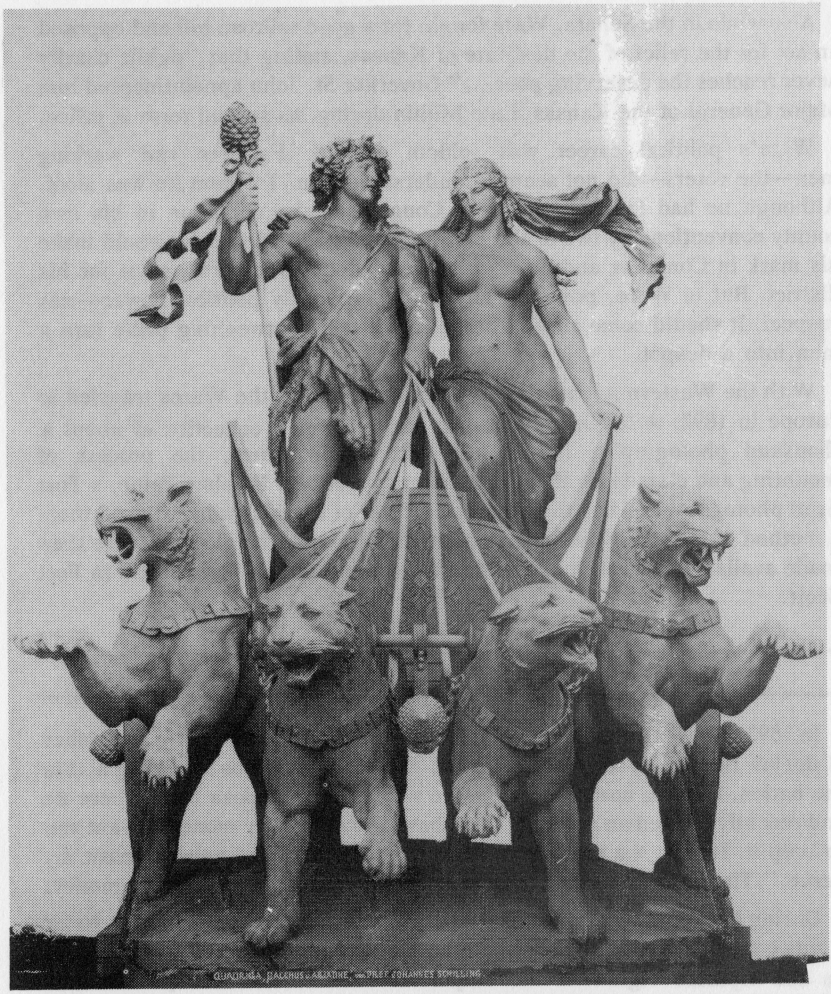
With the Western Artists and Authors Association, the Wares traveled to Europe in 1892. A feature of this trip was creating a collection of about a thousand photographs. For months after their return, the process of mounting and classifying them was underway. Albert Bigelow Paine, a Fort Scott photographer (later the literary executor of Mark Twain), showed them a method of mounting the collection on bristolboard. The pictures were then made available to local clubs and schools as long as the Wares lived in Fort Scott.

VI

In 1893 the Ware family moved to Topeka, where Ware became a member of the law firm of Gleed, Ware & Gleed. A money panic was sweeping across the nation, causing banks to fail. Ware wrote to the Topeka bank where he had recently opened an account. "You have $20,000 of my money. I want you to keep it. I make it a practice to deposit my money but I never deposit my nerve." The bank remained solvent, primarily because of Ware's money.

During his Topeka years, Kansas brought suit against Colorado over water rights on the Arkansas River. Appointed to prosecute the case, Ware read up on the riparian rights in the Napoleonic Codes and in Spanish law. Dissatisfied with his findings, he delved into the Roman water law. (The land in question had once been governed by France, then by Spain, and the law of both nations were based on laws established by the Romans.) Although the Pandex of Justian had been Englished, the translation would not do from a legal standpoint, Ware felt, so he brushed up on his Latin and rewrote the work in modern legal phraseology. Years later, in 1901, Ware would present a paper to the Kansas State Historical Society on his successful (and historic) prosecution of the case.

In 1897 Ware described seeing, between two and four o'clock in the morning, the lights of a flying machine. It was only by the dark of the moon, he observed, that airships seemed to be tried out. Interest in human flight was especially high in Kansas at this time because members of the Freedom Colony, a Socialist commune established by General Jacob Coxey's



Bacchus and Ariadne, **bronze sculpture by Johannes Schilling [1828-1910], Dresden, Germany. Photograph collected and mounted by the Wares after their European tour, 1892.**

son-in-law near Fort Scott, were attempting to develop aerial navigation. Ware thought it unfortunate that it would take a war to get the nation actively interested in the development of manned flight. To one of his daughters he wrote that this was not the crackpot scheme of a few eccentrics: "You may live to see the time when like the knight's sword, the railroads will be in rust. It (rail travel) is horribly expensive to what aerial navigation will be. My

Topeka home of Eugene F. Ware. Courtesy of the Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka.

grandchildren will go from Kansas to New York in ten hours for five dollars." Although the time for such a flight would prove much shorter, the fare has never yet reached the level of Ware's prediction.

VII

Ware caught the attention and charmed many notables during his career as a poet. When New York Governor Theodore Roosevelt attended a 1900 reunion of his Rough Riders in Oklahoma, he stopped in Topeka in order to meet "Ironquill." This marked the beginning of a long political and personal friendship. Upon being elected President, Roosevelt apppointed Ware Commissioner of the Pension Bureau on May 10, 1902, for a four-year term. Shortly after the news of Ware's appointment reached Topeka, however, there were rumors that charges were about to be filed in Washington by the ministerial union of Topeka opposing his confirmation on the grounds that he was an agnostic. Of religion Ware habitually talked little, and he shunned formal practices. In his defense, a former law partner in Fort Scott, W. R. Biddle, stated, "He was a fatalist, as opposed to agnostic. He took what came and made the best of it." Formal charges never materialized. Gleed, his Topeka law partner, said that Ware had bitter enemies, "most of whom were greatly to his credit."

More animosities arose when Ware turned the Pension Bureau from a sloppily-run office into an efficient operation based upon fiscal responsibility. Judge J.S. West of the Kansas Supreme Court said of this period of Ware's career, "There he showed more courage, made more enemies, and was more talked about than any predecessor or successor."

Ware himself was entitled to a pension, but did not apply for it immediately. When he did, he assigned it to a neighbor girl who expressed a desire to continue her education. At that time pensions were averaging ten to twelve dollars per month.

Ware resigned from office January 1, 1905. His resignation would have come sooner except for the fact that the President had asked him to remain in the post until after the 1904 election. After leaving the Pension Bureau, Ware returned to his home in Topeka, where he lived until going to Kansas City, Kansas, in 1907.

VIII

In Kansas City Ware opened the law office of Ware, Nelson and Ware with his son and Ralph Nelson, a son-in-law. He and his family would often drive down to the Sun-Gold Section homestead for weekends or brief vacations. On his farm Ware had built a library building which held his large collection of books. This included the many law books that he had used for years, but they had lost any value to him. Occasionally, especially when some friend happened in or in memory of some associate who had passed on, Ware would place one of these books on the fire and watch it disappear amid flames and smoke. In this way the disposal of his books took place.

The Sun-Gold Section home of Eugene F. Ware, currently owned by Mr. and Mrs. Dale Westervelt, R. 1, Cherokee, KS. Photograph by Quinton Matson.

Eugene F. Ware, **oil portrait by W. E. Turner, presented to the Eugene F. Ware Elementary School, Fort Scott, April 1949 by Abby Ware Nies, Jeanette Ware Nelson, and Amelia Ware Baird. Photograph by Quinton Matson.**

Ware remained in Kansas City until the spring of 1911, when he retired to his homestead, planning to spend his last days in writing and relaxation. Early that summer, however, to escape the season's heat, the Wares went to their vacation retreat, "Camp-Never-Mind" at Cascade, Colorado, a few miles from Colorado Springs. There, on July 1, 1911, Eugene Fitch Ware died of a heart attack.

Grave of Eugene F. Ware in the U.S. National Cemetery, Fort Scott, KS. Photograph by Quinton Matson.

Burial was in the National Cemetery at Fort Scott, the Secretary of War granting special premission for interment in a part of the cemetery where none until then had been allowed. At a division of the road near the entrance, a large reddish-brown boulder marks his grave.

On October 20, 1914, a bronze bust of Eugene Fitch Ware by Robert P. Binghurst was presented to the Kansas State Historical Society by the Ware family. From 1897 to 1903, and again from 1908 until his death, Ware had been a member of its board of directors, being elected president of the Society in 1899.

IX

Few men have ever fit the times in which they lived so well as Ware. It was a time of challenge and trial. The Civil War had sorely tested the mettle of the nation and tried the souls of those involved in it. But veterans returning from that conflict did have a place to go to begin their lives anew. The West had waited, and Ware became the quintessential Southeast Kansas pioneer.

Charles E. Cory, a friend and colleague, said of Ware: "At heart he was one of the tenderest men I ever knew, doing innumberable delicate favors.

Everyone was poor. Everyone was struggling for a start. His genius was born of the Kansas spirit. It was virile. It was fresh. It was strong. It had the perfume of the prairies upon it."

And Judge Judson S. West, a native of Cato in Crawford County, who knew him well, added: "He was erratic; he was different; but the only real description or definition possible to give is that he was Eugene Ware."

Vacant Places

For Tom Hemmens,
killed 15 August 1981

A blackbird
on an oak branch
pecks the bark
between its feet then
fluffs its feathers
against the wind
Prisms leap
from its blackness
It drops
off the branch
and leaves behind
a brightness
that fades into
the ordinary terror
of absence

Stephen Meats

Massacre at Marais Des Cygnes

Horsemen rode across the Missouri border,
carrying night in their saddle-bags.
Day found them knocking on farmhouse
doors—no angel passed over, but eleven
figures were summoned into one.
Only the swan flew above a zone
of silence imprinting the marsh.
Cygnets pooled into sound waves spiraling
from the rifle's barrel held at eye
level above a bloody ravine where
the trees turned their backs to spring.

Alice L. Price

Work

By Zula Bennington Greene

The opening curtain for the year's work was plowing for corn. Fred and Prince pulled the plow, Papa walking behind it, the lines tied together and looped over one shoulder and under the opposite arm. I walked behind the plow, the fresh furrow cool and damp to bare feet as I watched the strip of earth curve over the moldboard and crumble into the previous furrow.

I have thought that a better symbol for hope than the woman sitting with bandaged eyes playing an instrument with a broken string would be a farmer plowing his field in March. For no matter how many times nature may have slapped him down, he lifts a trusting face to her in the spring. His crops may have been devoured by pests, blackened by rust, beaten into the ground by hail, washed down the river, but this year will be different. Rain will fall gently. Sun will temper itself to tender plants. Insects will busy themselves elsewhere. The earth will loosen and give up its riches. Summer will be a benediction.

In several sessions during the winter the family had shelled the choice ears of corn saved for seed, all of us sitting around a tub in the kitchen, Papa sometimes excluding one he had chosen in the fall. After the ground was plowed and harrowed, the corn was planted in a checkrow planter that laid out the field in a checkerboard pattern that could be cultivated in both directions.

The planter operated on a wire strung across the field with knots along the wire that tripped an opening in the two grain boxes on the machine and spilled out a few grains at each click. I followed this Pied

Piper of the cornfield, listening for the click and trying to catch a glimpse of the corn in that brief moment before it was covered by the wheels.

As the corn grew it was cultivated several times with the "walking cultivator," but it was the operator who walked, with the lines across his shoulders, leaving his hands free to guide the two shovels, one on each side of a row of corn. The right sleeve of Papa's blue chambray shirts wore out sooner than the left, from the swish of sharp corn leaves under his arm as he reached across the row with his right hand. The right knee of his overalls also wore out sooner.

George and I tried to get lost in the tall corn, shutting our eyes and twirling about, but there were the woods on one side, the house and meadow on the others to supply directions. We listened to the wind rustling in the corn and wondered if that might be the way the ocean sounded.

In the fall the corn was cut by hand with a long corn knife and put into shocks, or it was "jerked," the ears pulled off and the stalks left standing for forage. Papa had a shucking peg that hung on a nail by the clock, a curved steel hook held to his hand by a leather strap. The shucked corn was stored in a crib for winter feeding.

I had failed as a hay dragger, but when the hay was mowed, made a small contribution in sickle sharpening, which was done at noon on the grindstone that stood under the mulberry tree west of the house. A neighbor helping with the haying turned it. Papa held the long sickle with its triangle blades and I poured water to keep the grindstone clean.

The distance up the sickle and back seemed endless as the first section was fitted across the wheel, but I was soon lost in the impact of steel against stone, neither yielding, but each forced to give something of itself, the sharpness tested against a calloused thumb.

"Now don't touch that, Hon," Papa would say as he leaned the sharpened sickle against the mulberry tree to go in and eat dinner.

The peak of the summer was wheat cutting. Wheat was sowed in the fall, "broadcast" by hand before people had drills. It grew and ripened the next summer and one day Papa would break off a few heads, hull out the grains, test them for starchiness, and ask Mamma if she didn't think they were ripe. Her assent was perfunctory, for balls of twine had been bought, the canvases carried down from the hay loft, the binder greased and ready.

The binder was a fascinating machine to follow. We watched the golden heads bend under the reel and go as proudly to their death as a queen to the guillotine. One moment a stalk was standing free, swaying in the wind. The next it was lying on the canvas, moving toward its

final dissolution. Wheat was not withered and cut down. It was cut down in its ripe maturity.

Men followed the binder, shocking the bundles of wheat thrown off by the machine. If the weather was fair and the threshing machine not delayed, the shocks stood in the field till threshing time and were hauled to the machine on hay racks. If rainy weather left the wheat soggy, the bundles had to be spread to dry, then hauled to a central place and stacked.

Then one day the thresher would appear in the neighborhood. First it would be at Willie Iiamses, then at the Tucks, then at Uncle George Bird's, and from there to our place. It would chug across the fields, the engine pulling the separator, a marvel of locomotion without horses. Nothing created so much stir and excitement.

Having the threshers meant cooking dinner for a dozen men and possibly keeping the crew overnight. Women would question their husbands about the machine's progress, hoping it would not finish at the neighbors in time to move over for the night. When it did come, they would hope the work would be finished in time to move on before dark. Sometimes two women would prepare supper for the crew, one husband having told his wife, "You better have supper ready. I don't think they'll finish before sundown." The other husband had told his wife, "You better have supper ready. They might finish in time to move over."

A man took pride in having his wife "set a good table" for the threshers, as she also did, once they were there. A threshing crew was said to talk about the kind of food they got. No woman wanted to have threshers bad-mouthing her cooking.

The threshing crew has never been properly eulogized. Like the old wandering minstrels filled with music, they went about, steam in their blood, with something of the minstrels' taste for adventure. They moved from farm to farm, their clothes stiff with sweat, itchy chaff down their necks and in eyes and noses, stoking the engine, mending the belt, keeping the steam up, and sleeping on the ground or floor or hayloft, with no chance for a bath unless a creek or pond was near. A crew we once had liked to spread a blanket and sleep in a crib of threshed wheat. All summer they went with the thresher, never sleeping in a real bed except the few times they went to their own homes.

When the machine arrived it "took a stand," the engine a short distance from the separator, the power conveyed by a wide belt which the children were warned not to go near. The engine was downwind from the separator, to prevent the likelihood of sparks setting fire to

the wheat. The crew ran the machine. Extra help was supplied by the owner of the wheat. A man hauled water from wherever it could be had—wells, springs, creeks, ponds—and it could be so muddy that the boiler had to be scrubbed afterwards. The engine had an awful thirst and if the water was from a distance, horses were kept at a trot.

Men tossed bundles of wheat into the separator and in its inwards the miracle of separating grain from straw was performed. Black smoke puffed from the engine, fueled with wood. Straw spewed from a pipe and the belt was an endless twisted ribbon. The man who owned the outfit leaned against a tree and watched—until something went wrong.

I liked to go to the field carrying a jug of water to Papa and stay until he "took out" at noon. He squinted at the sun and looked at the shadows to judge the time. His big silver watch was never carried to the field. He unhitched the horses, lifted me to the back of Fred, where I sat on the thick backband, holding on to the hames, feeling the sweaty, heaving sides of the horse against my bare legs. We stopped at the spring and it seemed that I would surely slide down his neck when Fred lowered his head to the trough to drink.

Meantime at the house Mamma kept an eye on the clock or the sun, depending on whether she was working indoors or out. Potatoes must be peeled and boiled, meat fried, and cornbread baked. A child must run to the garden to pull a few fresh onions and radishes, bring milk and butter from the cave.

We set the table with our heavy Royal Ironstone china, made by Alfred and J. and G. Meakin, inexpensive ware at the time, but now bringing good prices as antiques. A plate marked No. 36 was set for Papa the year he was that age, which was the year I was eight. Plates were laid upside down, the black wood-handled knife and fork at each side, spoons in the spoonholder, which matched the gilt-decorated butter dish, cream pitcher, and sugar bowl. Meat was put on a platter crackled from years of hot grease. A plain glass berry bowl with scalloped edge that had held in its years hundreds of gallons of fruit, was in the center of the table, filled with custard. If we dropped a fork while setting the table, we said a man was coming, if a knife, a woman.

When Papa came in for dinner, he washed in the tin washpan on the porch by the well curb, cupping the water in his hands. He hung his straw hat on the chair post where he sat and when he had eaten, picked it up and put it on again. He often wore a hat in the house. After giving the horses time to eat and rest, he went back to work.

One winter he split rails in the back woods to make a fence. I sat and watched the slow battle of wood against muscle and iron. An iron

wedge was driven into the trunk of a felled tree trimmed of branches, then a second wedge was driven in to release the first, which in turn was driven in to release the second. The heavy sledge hammer swung in slow rhythms and the ring of iron on iron was the only sound in the woods until the tree gave up and fell apart. Such hard tedious work to make rails for a fence! Remember, he didn't like barbed wire.

I liked to watch Mamma working and was sure I could do anything she could. Wringing off a chicken's head looked easy, and one day she let me try. I grasped its neck, swung it around several times, then put it on the ground, where it was supposed to flop about and die. Instead, it stood for a moment, then walked away, dazed and puzzled, a trifle unsteady on its feet, but unharmed.

I was eager to knead bread, mix biscuits, put the crimp around pies, the frosting on cakes, but I hated to wash dishes, sweep floors, make beds, and clean lettuce. Many times I played outdoors—when I knew I should be ironing. We heated irons on the cookstove, lifted them with a heavy pad, and ironed on an old quilt spread over a part of the dining table. I discovered that mixing biscuits in a nest of flour was not as easy as it looked. Mine were hard and crusted with flour, and I never attained Mamma's skill. (Now I buy them in a tube.) Mamma made "lightbread," six loaves in a big pan. They rose high and were delicious, brown and crusty. I wished that someday she would let me slice the top off of a loaf and eat it, hot and buttered, right out of the oven.

One of my favorite breakfast dishes had the unappetizing name of "soakey," warm biscuits soaked in hot coffee and sugared. Papa poured his coffee into his saucer, grazed the cup along the edge to stop the drip, set the cup on the table, and drank from the saucer. One year Mamma bought him a mustache cup that said "Remember Me." It is now in my own china closet. (There was quite a little talk when a spinster cousin was given a cup that said "Love the Giver." I thought "Giver" must mean God, but the women pinpointed it to a widower who was looking.)

Mamma made all the family's clothes except coats and Papa's suits. She rarely bought a pattern, but improvised on a basic pattern with tucks and ruffles, pleats and berthas. One winter she sent away and got a pattern from which she made Julia a suit of brown wool, much admired, and when somebody asked for the pattern Mamma cut one and sent it with the instructions. Requests were often made to "cut me off a pattern." Patterns, like seeds, were saved and exchanged.

I loved to sew and tried to duplicate for my dolls everything Mamma made for the family. As she sewed, I stood at the back of the machine and imagined that the flying needle was a woman sewing and

that the bar beside it was her little girl watching her. I was always slipping the scissors from Mamma's lap and hearing, "Zula, have you got the scissors?"

Filling the straw ticks, which was done soon after threshing, was an exciting family task. A straw tick was a muslin case filled with straw and laid on the slats to make a solid base for the featherbed. Papa hitched up the horses and we all went to the fresh new straw stack and stuffed the tick full of staw. As our parents worked, my sister and brother and I jumped on the straw stack, slid off it, threw straw on each other, and ourselves, and put handfuls into the tick. Any work Papa and Mamma shared was an occasion for fun. Mamma took a needle and thread to sew the tick shut. When we got home there was more fun. The new ticks made the beds twice as high.

In the heat of the summer Papa had the featherbed taken off and he and Mamma slept on the straw tick. He disliked a featherbed almost as much as he did barbed wire. Many people had geese and made their own featherbeds. Papa wouldn't have a goose on the place, said they ruined the water for the horses.

Julia and I liked to be sent on errands to Hugh Harper's carpenter and blacksmith shop half a mile away. Hugh mended small pieces of machinery and made furniture from the oak and hickory trees around his shop. Curls of wood lay all over the dirt floor that had a forge at one end. In our house is a round walnut table he made for my parents soon after they were married and a hickory rocker he made for my Grandfather Bennington. Nearly every family had furniture that he made, including small rockers for children.

Hugh was short and bald and gnome-like. He had never married. He and his two dogs lived in a house at his shop. Women sniffed at reports of his housekeeping—people said that a dog sat on each side of him at meals, eating the scraps he threw on the floor. But the men said he seemed to keep healthy.

One day when Julia and I went at noon we got to see his house. He was eating dinner and there *were* two dogs beside him, eating scraps. Everything in the house was the same color, a kind of neutral gray. He gave us a piece of nice-smelling fresh wood to take home.

I hope I have not given the impression that I was an energetic worker. I wasn't. Mamma would go out to milk, telling me to wash the dishes. After I had dawdled at the dishpan, reciting some dramatic poem, I was moved to action. I flew to the bedroom, draped a sheet around me and recited a poem, "Lord Ullen's Daughter," a ballad about a Scottish chieftain eloping with the daughter of a Lord, in a boat across a lake. Her father, watching from the shore, was frantic

when a storm arose and lashed the boat with high waves. He called to her, in iambics, to come back and he would forgive her Highland Chief. But the frightened girl said to row on. Anyway, they may have passed the point of no return. She said she would face the raging of the sea, but not an angry father. The boat overturned and the lovers were drowned. I wept for them. I drowned with them. Then I remembered the dishes, drowning in water on the stove.

I made beds with a book in one hand. The proper way to make a bed was to remove everything down to the featherbed, turn it over, pat it smooth, and replace the covers. It was a process that invited short cuts.

Papa disapproved of fiction—nothing but lies— and would question me about the stories I read. One of my favorites, published in a small daily paper we took, was "The Laurel Bush," about a governess and a schoolmaster in Ireland. The schoolmaster wrote the governess humbly seeking matrimony, and when he got no answer, went away, feeling she did not wish to pain him with a refusal.

The governess was hurt that he left so abruptly with no word of farewell. Her interpretation was that he did not wish to continue a friendship when he had no further intentions. I'm sure you have guessed that the letter got lost under the laurel bush and lay there mellowing while the governess did likewise. When she found it, still faintly legible, it was too late.

Or so she thought. But in time the man returned and called to see her. As he entered the room where she sat, his eyes fell on the thimble on her finger. That was the next to last installment—and the last one I read.

I helped Mamma paper the kitchen with newspapers. Before each sheet was pasted I liked to see both sides, to judge which should be exposed to reading. Somehow the last installment of "The Laurel Bush" got pasted against the wall and I had not read it. I stood wretchedly looking at it, as though the intensity of my desire might burn through the paper and make the words visible.

We had carpets woven from our own homemade materials. A long strip of carpet about a yard wide was woven, then cut into shorter strips and sewed together to fit a room. The carpet was laid over straw and tacked around the edges, a wall-to-wall carpet. At spring housecleaning time the carpets were taken up and the straw replaced with fresh straw, or hay or newspapers.

"Just look at that dust!" Mamma would exclaim as the carpet was carried out and spread on the grass. It made a fine place to play. We had never heard of the Magic Carpet, but we made some magic of our own. It was the Queen's palace, and the callers wore white slippers

with toes. Soon queen and callers were tumbling on the palace floor until the lady high chamberlain called out with authority, "Get off of that carpet!"

The misery of tacking it back down! The first side went down well enough, but the rest was pushing and pulling. Some places had to be stretched, some held in. Papa made a stretcher by driving nails into the end of a board. Everybody gave directions.

"It's got to come more this way."

"It can't, or it won't meet here."

"You're not tacking it close enough!"

"Don't push so hard. You'll tear it."

By the time the carpet was replaced muscles were tried, tempers short, fingers mashed, and fingernails broken, but we stood back and surveyed it with pleasure. It was brightened and renewed, was springy, made a squishy sound, and smelled of fresh hay. But this was one occasion when Papa and Mamma working together was not its usual fun.

No experience I know about so tests the *esprit de corps* of a family as putting down a rag carpet, unless it is taking down or putting up a heating stove. The pipe from our stove extended through a hole in the ceiling to warm the upstairs, then made a right-angled turn into a wall flue. To take it down was a two-story job that involved carrying sooty pipes down narrow stairs that took a sharp turn at the bottom. Children were told to stay out of the way.

An emergency provoked my father to the nearest he ever came to swearing. Early one morning, still in his red flannel underwear, he was stirring the night's fire to life when a leg came off the stove and spilled coals over the floor.

"God a'mighty, Mag, come quick!" he yelled. Not only my mother, but all the family, sprang out of bed like firemen. That epithet could mean nothing less than a four-alarm call. Mamma ran for a shovel and while Papa was scooping up the coals she doused water on the smouldering carpet which, though mended, bore faint scars till the end of its days. When the stove cooled it was put together again.

Afterwards Mamma would say, "I guess we will have to knock the stove down every morning to get Zula out of bed."

Getting the stove out of the house was a pleasure equalled only by getting it in again. After the first nippy days made us sure that fall was not fooling, the stove was eased from its summer obscurity on the back porch, dust and cobwebs wiped away, and its luster restored with polish.

Papa and a neighbor carried the stove low over two-by-fours. Women and children stood back, apologetic, sad for man's endless burden of lifting and carrying. A man has scant use for pity, but he values silence, and nothing annoys him more than being warned to watch out when he is carrying a heavy load. He will lift and carry pleasantly if allowed to do it his own way.

The metal base had been placed on the floor and the stove was set down on it. If a leg fell off, no matter. Time enough to replace it later. The men tugged on the curved joints of pipe, which responded with a raw grating rasp. Two trips were made outside to knock soot from the pipes. The damper was fitted in. Dust poured from the wall flue, over which a picture had been placed during the summer. The pipe leaned backward like a strutting comedian. The men shoved the stove an inch to the side, three inches back, a shade more to the southwest. The pipe straightened and bent obediently into the flue. Joints were pushed more firmly together, the missing leg replaced.

It was ready to go.

The men walked away with easy unconcern, talking about corn shucking, as though putting up a stove was not epic labor.

It was now time for the women and children to take over, sweep the floor and start a fire. None of us remembered the harsh words we said when the stove was banished to the porch in the spring. Neither did the stove. It blazed with a brave roar that sent the little chills scurrying outside. The old companionship returned. The room was cozy and warm. We remembered potato soup cooking on winter afternoons, remembered returning from overnight visits aching with cold and waiting for the first blaze, which somehow only emphasized the cold, then the blissful comfort as warmth radiated into the room. The spirit of all the hours that had been lived in the circle of its warmth hovered over us.

Work was fitted to the seasons and a man's farm was his own domain. A farmer's ambition was modest—to provide for his family, to save money for the taxes and something to pay on another piece of land to add to his farm, land to leave his children.

A farmer's wife hoped to "keep the table" with her garden and fruit and her butter and egg money. If a farmer wanted to brag a little on his wife, he would mention the fruit she had canned and, if he let himself go, he might say that her hand was so small she could get it inside a Mason jar.

Children did chores of all kinds—carried in wood and chips, brought cobs from the barn for a quick fire, stalked a turkey hen to locate her nest, helped with the chickens, worked in the garden and

house. Almost no work was done on a farm that the children did not either share or observe.

The government asked nothing of a farmer except the annual payment of his property tax and sometimes a poll tax, which could be paid by working a few days on the roads. Nobody told him what to plant or how much to reap. He planted as he pleased and reaped all he could. He belonged to no organizations and made no reports.

His bookkeeping was simple. When my father needed to do a little figuring, he took a pencil from the long narrow pocket in the bib of his overalls—sometimes it was so short he had to work it up from the bottom—sharpened it with his pocket knife, jotted down some figures on the barn wall, and paid a worker out of his pocket. He had no bank account. Cash was stored in the bottom of Mamma's trunk. No accounting was needed for the end of the year of either buying or selling. About all that was written down was the dates on which the colts were expected.

Home: Late Summer

"The man who independently plucked the fruits when he was hungry is become a farmer and he who stood under a tree for shelter, a housekeeper."—Thoreau.

In the kitchen the refrigerator hums.
Ice makes itself in the freezer.
An old air conditioner wheezes
In the back bedroom. I am alone
In a house I did not build. It
Is mid-morning. I am afraid

Of the afternoon. The woods
Do not claim me.
Outside, the humidity is climbing.

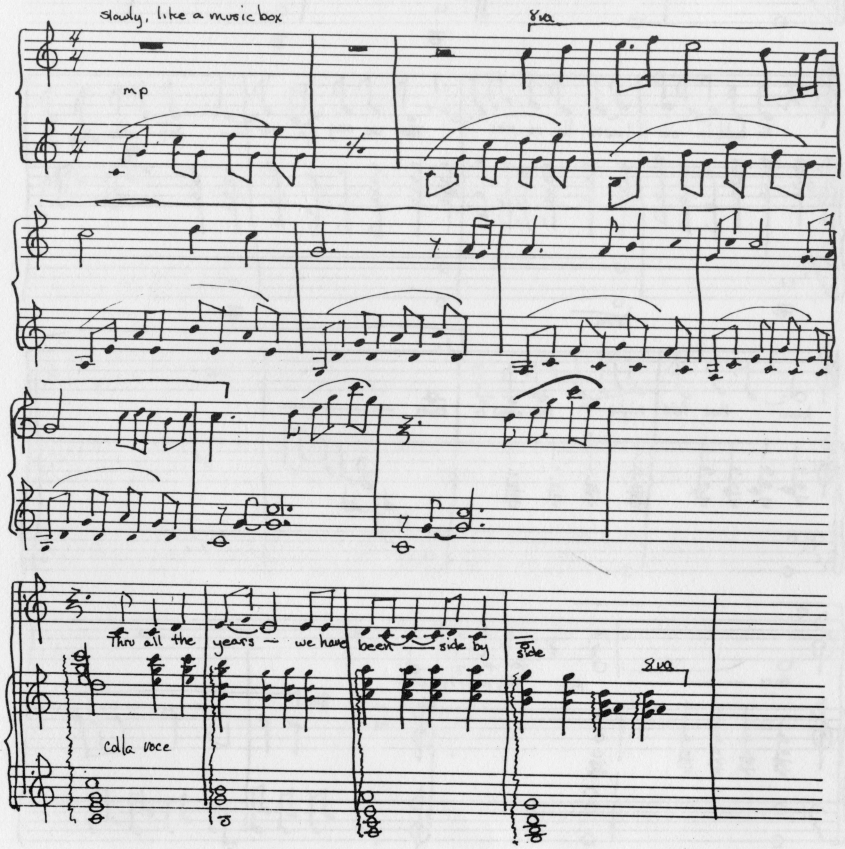
As if fiddling with words in a poem
I rearrange furniture.
A Piranesi print is out of place in the den.
The ghost of Conrad is in the book shelves, furious.

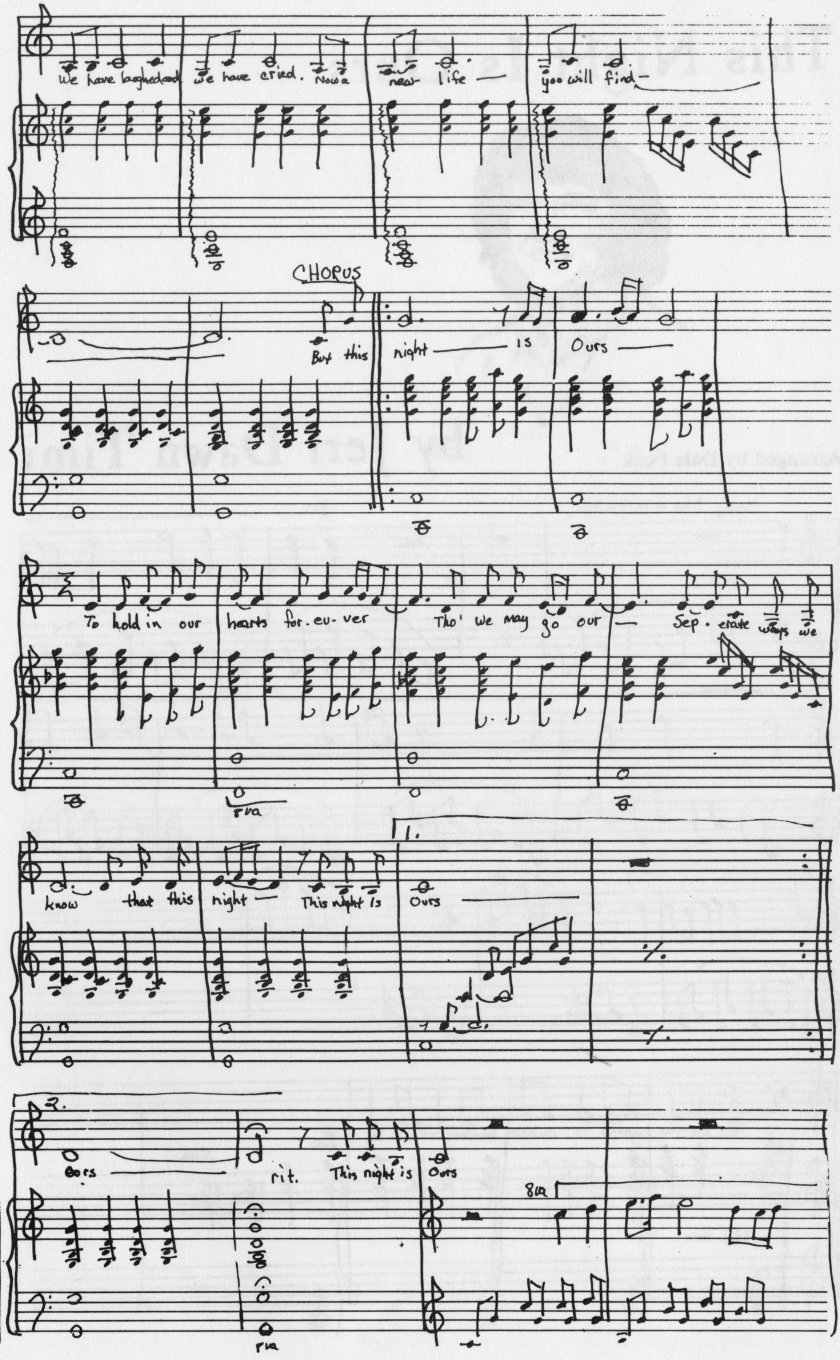
Robert Day

This Night Is Ours

Arranged by Dale Peak

by Jeri Dawn Timi




We have laughed and
We have cried. Now a
new life —
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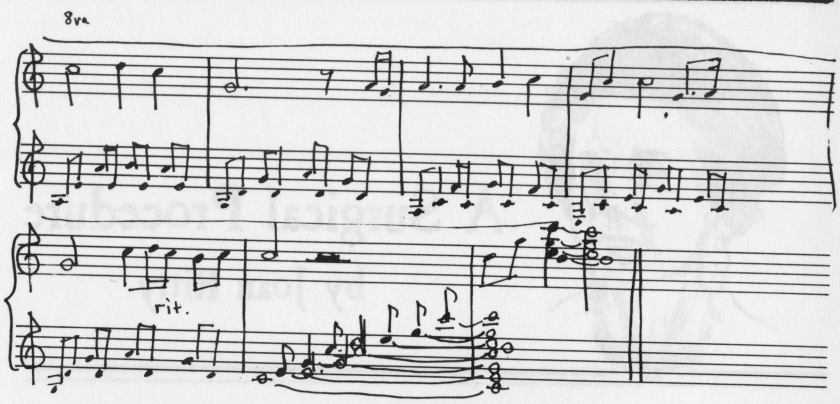


Verse 2:

I still remember all the sweet memories.
Together we've shared over lives.
Now it's time to say goodbye.

Fairlee Creek

Exploring, we have driven our open jeep
Along the bank, following Fairlee Creek to the Bay.
It is cold for April. Ahead,

A knot of fishermen are hunkering
Among their shacks, fixing lines.
Nets hang from trees like winter vines. Bateaux.
Like Caleb Bingham's boat, sit on still water.
It is deep here.

We stop. Like spooked cats the fishermen stare.
We could film them, paint them, catch
Silhouettes with quaint techniques, trap
Mood with lighting. They stare.

We hear our engine idling
We should have come by water.

Robert Day

A Surgical Procedure

by Joan Ritty

Emil unloaded his boxes of fresh fruit and vegetables at a front stall in City Market. He came early in order to grab the tables nearest the sidewalk where he could watch the girls walk by. He had only recently caught on that Saturday auditions for topless dancers were held at the theater around the corner. Rehearsals too. There were always a lot of girls walking past on Saturdays. He had come to recognize some of them; repeaters, he called them. Like the tall black one with breasts as big as his cabbages. Ernestine. The one who gave him the wicked eye and grin when she saw him eyeing her. Coming and going, he liked watching them bounce in their tight T-shirts and jeans.

Once he had gone down to take in the afternoon matinee on Tuesday. The theater was dark and musty inside. Not a large audience, just men like himself, mostly old, getting their kicks the only way they could probably. Emil refused to be embarrassed. He ignored the girls' legs; there was too much other activity going on. Dolores, his wife, would have been mad if she found out he went, but what did she know? How would she know what it felt like to be a man getting old? Now that he knew what he knew already. And what he suspected.

The only trouble with taking the tables nearest the sidewalk was that the sun hit the produce and wilted it early in the day. But it was worth it to watch the girls. Emil pulled his folding chair over in the shadow of the City Market sign to keep the sun off his head, and lit a cigar.

"Emil!"

Someone was yelling at him. He turned around.

"Yeah?" It was Joe, backing his truck to the stall behind him.

"You set up already?"

"Yop. Got here early."

"Why you always want to sit in the sun?"

"Good spot."

"You got lotsa potatoes?"

"Yeah, lots."

"I don't got so many. I send you some customers. You send me customers for beets. Okay?"

"Okay." Emil didn't grow beets. He turned his back to Joe and sat down, puffing at the fat cigar. The smoke drifted upward and he rose to wave away some flies from his produce. The girls would be starting soon. Sometimes they bought a peach or plum from him. That way he got a good look. Some of them were not girls any more. Women. Some of them were not good any more either. You could tell the ones life had slapped. Their mouths were turned down and their eyes had no life. You smiled at them and they gave you the fish-eye. He liked the young ones. The flirts. They gave him a chance to be young again. Where had gone the juices of life?

"Hey, cutie!" The girl didn't turn around or stop. Her legs fit the dark jeans exactly. He waited. There would be others.

"Hi, cutie!"

"Hi, Emil." This was a blonde he had seen before. Tall, serious. Too thin. She didn't seem cut out for the business she was in.

The black girl was coming. He raised his hand in greeting and she began to dance suggestively towards him, laughing.

They understood each other.

"Hiya Emil."

"Hi, Ernestine. Peach? Apple?"

"Corn," she said. "I take it home for supper."

He counted out six ears and she paid him. She had gold rings in her ears and her hair stood out like a bush. He watched her walk away, deliberately wiggling for his benefit. Big rear she had. Someone had told him the word for it, even showed him the word in the dictionary. Steatopygia. Funny, the information you gather in a lifetime. The thought sobered him.

Two girls came walking together. Nice shapes. Then a single. She avoided his glance. He got busy with customers and missed out on some of the girls. By noon his potatoes were gone—with Joe's help. The sun was straight up and hot. The lettuce wilted and the flies had to be fanned away. He opened his lunch box and poured some iced tea in the cup, gulping it down. Two salami sandwiches with mustard. Some of Dolores' chocolate cookies, big and fat. A good wife, Dolores. He wondered if she would get along all right without him. Good kids they had too. All college educated. They would see to their mother if necessary.

He was moody by the time the girls came around the corner again. They looked tired and warm. Perspiration spotted their underarms,

soaking their blouses and shirts. Two were carrying their shoes, walking barefoot on the hot cement. Now they stopped for fruit. They peeled oranges and threw the skins in Emil's trash barrel while they talked.

"I hate that Gorman," one said.
"Me too. He treats us like dirt."
"Yeah, he does."
"Just because we dance for a living."
"He thinks topless is cheap."
"Hell, we gotta eat. I got a kid to feed too."

Emil listened. Other weeks he had joked with the girls, trying to pull them out of the sulks, trying to cheer them up. This week he could think of nothing to say. He let them go, the short one with the red hair, his favorite kind, the kind that used to jucie him up. Several dyed blondes in a row. Even a pretty one. He began to pack to go home.

"You leaving already?" Joe hollered across the aisle.
"I guess."
"Something wrong?"
"I'm tired." Joe walked over. He hesitated before he spoke again.
"That's right, Emil, I forgot. Tomorrow you go to the hospital, right?"
Emile nodded, a clutch of fear tightening his throat.
"Operation Monday?" Joe asked.
"Yop." Emil knocked the dirt out of a box.
"Prostate, ain't it?"
"Yop." He threw some trash in a bin.
"Dolores all right, Emil?" Joe said in a bright voice.
"Yeah, okay."
"New grandbaby come yet?"
"Twin boys, Joe."

Joe nodded. His face had grown solemn again watching Emil stack boxes. Emil grabbed his broom. He began to sweep rapidly. Then he spun around and backed up against the table facing Joe, a tight grip on his broom.

"I ain't afraid of the operation, Joe," he said irritably. He couldn't tell an ignoramus like Joe what he was afraid of. He couldn't even tell Dolores. How would you tell a wife a thing like that?

Joe turned away. He went back to his counter to tend a customer. Emil finished sweeping. Then he sat down again on the chair, ignoring the sidewalk traffic. After the operation, when he came back, he would probably take a booth at the back.

Running a Trotline like a Thief in the Midwestern Night

We set the lines by the poorest light
offering the horrible smell of our dead alms
to great, flat heads deep in the swirl.

Near midnight, we stumbled back,
pulled the lines, laying them straight
along the bank. We had three,
good sized, broad black heads jeweled
by flashlight. We understood then,
how the gift is met. The water parts
to allow a glimpse of the mystery,
then muscular folds close the secret flow.

We were young. You would move away
the next year, California, I heard.
I don't know where I've been. I move
like silt, taking this. The river
stayed, always older, stronger.

Jimmy Aubert

Paintings

by Sebastian Shin-Pan Chou

Had the dreams of John B. Sargent materialized, one of the dominant subcultures of Southeast Kansas would have been Chinese, for it is they whom Sargent visualized as the builders of railroads and the miners of coal in this mineral-rich region. Accordingly, he went to California in 1876 to employ a labor force, but returned empty handed. As someone stated, "Kansas was just too far from the sea. A return to the homeland would have seemed impossible."

It is therefore not surprising that our featured artist, Sebastian Shin-Pan Chou, comes to us from Kaohsiung, Taiwan, where he was born on January 29, 1956. A man of many talents, Chou is a poet and musician, playing the flute (both bamboo and western), as well as the Hu-Chin (a two-stringed instrument resembling the violin). He studied painting under Wang, Nu of Taiwan, a master famous for painting animals in a very few strokes. "Few people can master this technique," Chou remarks, but his success may be seen in the drawings of horses on the following pages.

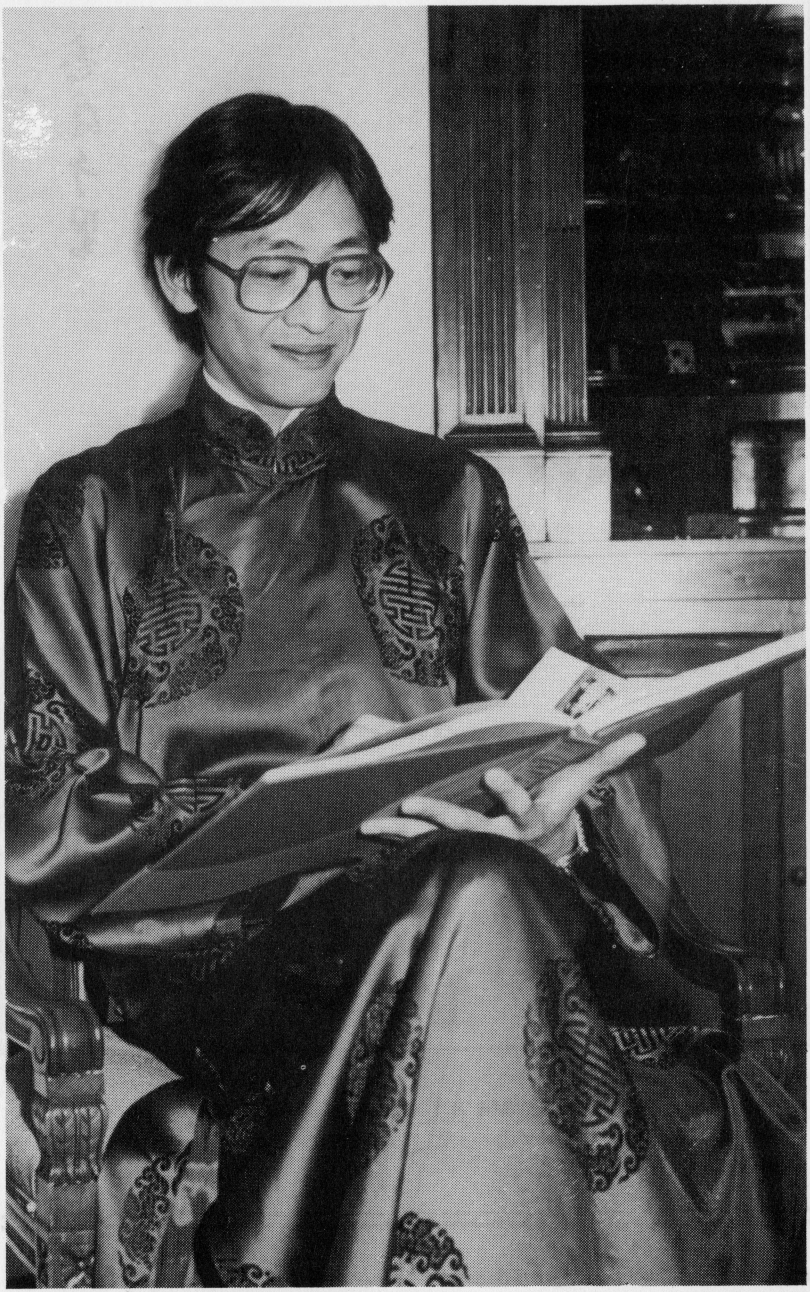
Accompanying each painting are two art forms which the viewer should note: poetry expressed in Chinese calligraphy and the artist's chop, or seal, sculptured from precious stones by the artist. "The Chinese believe that a real scholar should be grounded in four disciplines," Chou noted: music, chess, poetry, and painting. He acknowledges competency in all but chess. "I cannot see spending hours over fifty chessmen in this busy world," he says. Fortunately for us, his attitude is not the same toward the other arts.

Translations of the calligraphy accompany each drawing. The original paintings are in black ink, tempered with water, with the seals stamped in traditional red ink. Each is painstakingly mounted on the finest of papers on scrolls of beautiful silk—again evidence of the skill and art of Chou.

Chou came to the United States in 1982 after being graduated from Tamkang University in Taipei, Republic of China, with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Educational Media Science, and after serving two years in the army. He is currently working on a master's degree in higher education at Pittsburg State University. After completing that degree this summer, he plans to pursue doctoral work this fall.

Ambitions are a thousand miles away.

Editors' Note: The paintings of Sebastian Shin-Pan Chou were photographed by Ted Watts. English translations by Gene DeGruson are based upon discussion of the poems with the artist.



Sebastian Shin-Pan Chou **Photograph by Bruce Daniel**

A Morning Song in Prose of Dry Lotus Leaves

The cock crows!
Sounds his *co-co-ri-co*
And rends the curtain of the night!
He, atop the highest stone,
Breathes deeply to entone:
"All glories of the day wait for *me!*"
This: the first sound of a busy world.

Painted on my Pittsburg tour, 1983.

When the
General won
his victories,
it was *I* who
accompanied
him,
my friend.
I ran,
my hooves
a flutterer
of flowers,
as rapid as
the wind....
Please don't
think a good
horse would
let just
anyone
bridle him.
Oh no!
Though
pastured,
my ambition
is still of the
highest kind.

Happiness:
Going
together.

Discovery

An interpretation of an English poem by Gene DeGruson in painting and calligraphy to commemorate an exchange of art between friends.

Searching years for fame,
He found nothing as precious
As he desired it to be.
Too late, far more elusive,
His years discovered,
Was serenity.

Chung Kuei

In appreciation of Mrs. Daniel's very gracious appreciation of the arts.

Tin-Fong-Po

March 7: It began raining on the way to Sha Lake. Being left without unbrellas, those accompanying me became soaking wet, but I felt no inconvenience. Shortly after the shower, I wrote this poem:

Don't mind the sound of falling rain as it strikes the forest leaves.
Just walk slowly—why not?—reciting poems silently.
More delightful than riding, your bamboo cane and straw shoes.
Why despair?
Let yourself go in this rain, this misty air.

The spring winds awakened me from a slightly drunken sleep.
A bit cold!
The sunshine, from the top of the hill, seemed to welcome me.
I, now turning toward that shabby place from whence I came,
Go back:
No gust of wind, no rain, and no clear sky.

Su Tung-p'o

June 1983: I tried to draw the portrait of Su Tung-p'o, by way of the Chau Meng-fu discipline; at the same time I wrote Su Tung-p'o's poem to accompany the portrait.—Sebastian Shin-Pan Chou.

Words to a Pioneer Husband

After the Fact

I followed you here—
ich liebe, liebe—
on a boat we came.
You looked at me
and only a little
you looked at the sea.

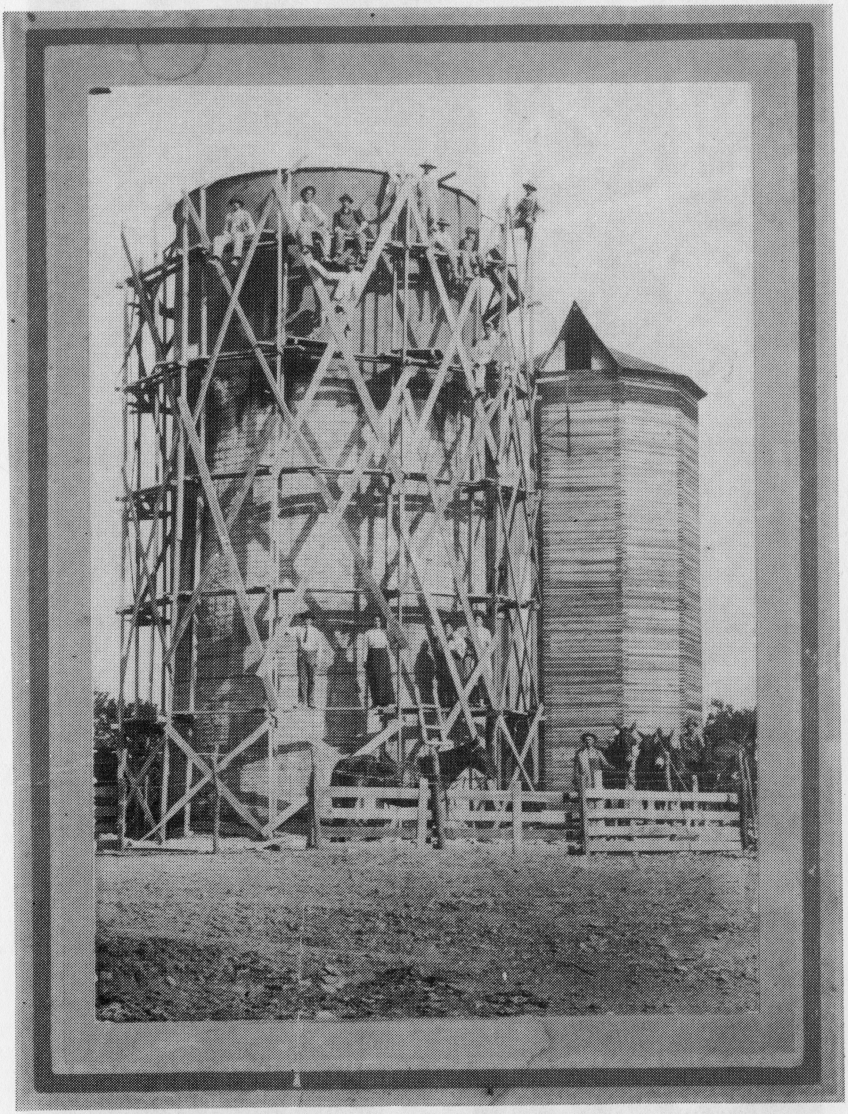
I had to be near—
ich liebe, liebe—
as the land pulled you on.
I gave a sigh
and watched you count
white curls in the sky.

I followed you here—
ich liebe, liebe—
to a house of sod.
You took root outside
tracing the wind.
I lost touch and cried.

I followed you here—
ich liebe, liebe.
Your dreaming eye
had seen a place
I could never find
in vacant space.

I followed you here—
ich liebe, liebe—
under two white stones.
Shut up with me
and the smell of earth
there's nothing to see.

Lois V. Walker



Building a Silo, June 3, 1913.

Lawrence Holstine [1897-1967] and Mary Holstine Gray in front of their Ritz Tavern, 206½ S. Broadway, Pittsburg, Kansas, 1941.

Paw Thought He Was a Goner —And So Did Lawrence

by Mary Holstine as told to her by her husband Lawrence

Back in their early days of homesteading in Western Canada, over sixty years ago, my husband, Lawrence Holstine, and his father, Elmo, supplemented their limited farm income by doing carpenter work on the side.

One time they were hired to repair a big grain elevator in Robsart, Saskatchewan. Every city and hamlet had some of those huge structures for storing grain. No doubt they're still there. They were like landmarks on the horizons. At a distance one could see them long before one could even glimpse the town. They looked like monuments.

The following little story is a dramatic episode of a blood-curdling experience—a true happening.

The two men climbed to the top on the outside stairway of the elevator carrying their tools, some boards, and pieces of tin. They were both puffing when they got to the top, around which was a narrow walkway with a railing.

"I'm goin' to slide on down this shute, son, and nail it as I go.—Sure is dark in here, but I guess I can see well enough," said Elmo, as he wriggled himself inside the huge elevator to make repairs.

"Paw, now you be careful. You're about ninety feet from the bottom. Don't fall," warned Lawrence. "When we came up here to Saskatchewan to homestead, I never thought we would be doin' work like this, but it does pay good, and we can sure use the money."

"You go ahead and nail those boards up there. It won't take me too long to do this," Elmo's voice trailed up from inside the dark hole.

As he moved on down the shute, the sharp sounds of his hammer against the nails, loud at first, became more subdued as he advanced farther from the opening. On top Lawrence was whistling a little tune as he followed his paw's instructions.

Suddenly Elmo yelled, "Oh, my God!"

"What's the matter, Paw?" called Lawrence, as he peered down into the dark void. "Paw, is there somethin' wrong?"

Muffled sounds came from below, then, "Son, I've slipped off the end of the shute. I've got my arms around it, hanging on. Go get a rope, quick!"

"Oh, Paw, can you hold on? I'll hurry as fast as I can. Hang on tight! Don't let go! I'll be right back!" cried Lawrence, as he ran over to the stairs and started down. As he did so, he caught his heel on the top step and stumbled, sliding down on his side over several treads, but caught himself by grabbing on to an upright board on the rail of the staircase. He winced with pain as he pulled himself up to a standing position. Making a new start, he had hastily descended several more steps when he saw the elevator man come into view on the ground below. "Hey, Mr. Wilson, get a rope quick! Paw slid off the end of the shute!" he yelled excitedly. "Please hurry!"

"Did he fall to the bottom?" asked the rotund little man with anxiety.

"No, he's hangin' on to the end. Is there a long rope around here anyplace? Try to find one!—I'll go back and see how he's doin'," answered Lawrence, as he turned and sped back up the steps, pleading to himself, "Oh, Paw, you must not let go. Hang on—hang on for dear life!"

He was almost afraid to call down to his father for fear he had weakened and fallen, but he forced himself to say, "Paw, are you still there? Are you all right?"

After an interminably long time, his father's voice answered, "Yes, son, I'm still here, but I'm afraid I can't hang on much longer. Did you get a rope?"

"Mr. Wilson has gone to look for one. He didn't know if there was any here or not. If there isn't, he will have to run over to the hardware store. That's a block away. He's hurryin', Paw—I told him what happened!"

"He better make it quick! I keep sliding down farther. I'm right on the end, now!"

"You mustn't let go, Paw! Hold on tight. I'm sure Mr. Wilson will be here soon."

The seconds seemed like hours to Lawrence, and he tried to picture in his mind his father's position on the end of the shute. He knew his father was suffering dreadfully from the mental and physical strain.

He called, "I wish there was something I could do. I feel so helpless. Maybe, if I slid down the shute I could pull you up."

"No—no, don't do that! It isn't strong enough to hold both of us," replied Elmo quickly.

Every few minutes Lawrence hastened to the top of the stairway to see if Mr. Wilson was coming, though he reasoned to himself, "I know Mr. Wilson hasn't had time yet, but—Oh, God, please don't let Paw fall! Please save him!"

Down below, Elmo was thinking, "I should have been more careful. In trying to hurry, I became careless. I didn't think I was that near to the end of the spout." Beads of perspiration were popping out on his face, and his arms were aching terribly from the strain. He had tried so many times to pull himself back up, his shoulder joints felt as though they were going to tear apart. He turned his head slightly and looked down, but he could see nothing

because of the darkness. He had a mental vision of himself lying down there at the bottom dead as a doornail with every bone in his body crushed.

Lawrence's voice broke the silence: "Paw, are you still there? Are you all right?—Mr. Wilson should be coming soon, Paw!"

"Yes, son, I've hung on so far, but—wait a minute, I'm slipping!"

"Paw, you can't let go!—I love you! Hold on for me, please, Paw! I think Mr. Wilson is coming now. Wait a minute!" called Lawrence nervously. As he rushed to the top of the steps and looked down, but there was still no sign of Mr. Wilson. "Damn, he's slow. Come on, Mr. Wilson! Hurry!" He returned to the gaping hole, and hollered, "Paw, he'll be here right away, I'm sure. He knows the danger you're in."

"Son, I'm just holdin' on with my fingers, now. There's a metal strip around the bottom of the spout. My fingers are getting awfully tired."

"I hear Mr. Wilson comin' now, Paw. He's on the steps. Hold on just a little longer!"

"I can't! My fingers are gettin' too tired—Goodbye, son! I'm goin' to drop. Remember, I love you too, son.—Goodbye, Lawrence, my boy."

After an interval of silence, Lawrence heard a thump below. He moaned and started to cry like a small child. "Paw! Paw! Oh, my poor paw!—He's killed!"

Just at that moment Mr. Wilson arrived on top, puffing furiously from the long climb. He had a length of rope.

Lawrence cried, "It's too late! He's gone! He's layin' dead down in the bottom of the elevator! Oh, my God, why did it have to happen to him? He was a good man!"

A voice ascended from below, saying with disgust, "Well, I'll be damned!"

"Paw, what's the matter? Are you hurt?" called Lawrence, his hopes revived.

"I'm all right, son, outside of being scared to death. No broken bones or nothin'—but guess how far I fell!"

"How far, Paw?"

"About a foot. There's a sub-floor here. Now, if you'll drop that rope down, I'll get out of here. Thank God for that sub-floor. I've lived an infernal eternity in this black hole."

With Lawrence and Mr. Wilson towing on the rope from above, Elmo's ascent was comparatively easy. He scaled the spout to the top. When he crawled through the opening onto the platform, his weathered face broke into a broad grin, which reflected his gratefulness for his escape from almost certain death. His hazel eyes twinkled, but with a little show of embarrassment.

"Oh, Paw, I thought you were a goner," cried Lawrence.

"I did too, son, but the Old Man must have had his arms around me that time. I guess I must be livin' right—or maybe somebody up there loves me. Anyway, I know one thing—right now, I love everybody!"

Ode to a Grave Digger

Joe Smith, who died August 5, was buried today in the Hillsdale cemetery. He leaves his wife and daughter, Bessy May, of the home in Hillsdale. For 50 of his 75 years Smith was official grave digger for Hillsdale. Before the advent of the backhoe Smith dug all the graves by hand.–*The Hillsdale News,* August 7, 1975.

Quiet
Quiet
Quiescent scene.
The graveyard is a still from a news clip
shown on a TV screen.
In this frame only the placards the protesters grip
can be seen in the motionless march up the hill.
Some posters tilt awry *Born—Died*
A few lie discards tossed to the earth
REST IN PEACE
All are ancient—whitened and silted by rain
Stone chipped and scarred by wind and frost
Scrip adust and charred by the sun

A man on a backhoe shatters the still life.
He needs that yellow helmet under the hot bright noon.
He starts to dig in the last row by the east fence.
He is cautious, tense, but quarters are close, dense.
Six feet down the blade scrapes cast iron across
to turn a second sun dazzling from the pit. "That's the Dad,"
the man on the backhoe says with a start. "These old
gravesites aren't quite far enough apart."

Inside the metal box the slight jar
disturbs the great shape and form of bone dust
A folded hand falls to pieces
Its fragments open wide to greet his son

****

"The glare hurts my eyes, Joe. I can't hardly look.
That casket's 20 gauge steel—it's made to seal.
You didn't want no water in so that's the one I took 'n' that
Vault's a *Wilbert,* you said was best.

'Member they drug one under the Mussouri River in a test 'n' it stayed dry—not one thin spurt.

I did just like we talked about
but I never thought you'd really die.
You didn't want no flowers. But you do like ours?
How many thousands a graves you dug.
That time the Spence boy drowned—poor soul—
They didn't have no money so you dug his after hours
Bessy May 'n' I held flashlights so's you could see

You witched his grave like you done all the rest.
I did just like you tole me to and hid your divinin' rod.
No one will ever have it—they best not try.
There you was a way down in that hole
stoopin' 'n' raisin' up 'n' throwin' out a shovel a clod 'n' then
you hollered up at me
'I'm almos' done
Soon's we get home you git the coffeepot agoin'
whilst I wash up
Any left a that pecan pie?
How about a couple a ham 'n' *cheese on rye?*
I'm so hungry I could eat a horse!'

****

A serene *Amen* disperses the crowd.
The sun flames a little drifting cloud
and a wilting petal stirs aloud
Far-off the man with the backhoe starts up his machine.
Down under, the open hand waits,
waits to welcome the one so soon to come.

Soon, soon now, soon the moment nears:
an hour, a day, or seventy years
are all the same, begun or done.
Back, backswept, back to abysmal bottom
when Father and Son will be One.

Elizabeth Layton

Hitchhiking in Southeast Kansas

J. Speer

The day is young
The distance short
Hopeful eager I raise my thumb

To hitch a ride in Southeast Kansas

is like putting on a dumb show for the blind
fishing for squid in a strip pit
starting a mower with no start rope
mowing a lawn three inches under water

People think a raised thumb is a form of greeting

"Howdy, I'm just standing by the roadside waving hello."

A lady in a Detroit make stops to say:
"It is a sin to pick up strangers."

I walk
past fescue
wheat on verge of golding
tortoise shells crushed on road
rabbits running at my approach
abandoned farms

Before sunset
I watch a farmer in overalls
hoe garden
smoke upside down pipe
head rigid unveering from rows

After sunset
my thumb comes down with American flag
I surrender my allegiance to hitchhiking code
dark clouds gather
I tire of road
hunger for apple pie and pay tv

Eleven miles shy of Oz
I click my heels
nothing happens

1939 was a good year for movies

next year
I'll fly to Barcelona.

P.S. John drove me to the interstate when I left.

Pittsburg Kansas Summer

early morning chill
up and at 'em
before sun oppressive boils
coffee
newspaper rumpled

pull start rope

walking behind machine shorts yellow head band

no relief from flying grass
sound of gas fed motor

till five o'clock dip in strip pit

why doesn't water stagnate
how do fish get in
fall from sky

miners follow vein
environmentalists complain

something good out of something bad

consult HBO schedule
catch baseball game

fire flies appear
one cold beer

red brick sidewalk turning green
catalpa trees dropping leaves
houses with many stories
to tell

no sheet needed at night

window open

breeze
please

dreams ripen into blueberries
leave purple stains on mouth and fingers

J. Speer

The Bender Hills Mystery

by Leroy Dick, as told to Jean McEwen

CHAPTER 4

About a month after the Osage township mass meeting—it was, precisely, April 14 of '78—Col. A.M. York and his younger brother, Ed, left Independence with a posse of sixty men in search of their brother, Dr. William York, who had been missing since the previous November.

Their first point of investigation was the Bradley claim. The finding of Jones's body in the Drum Creek water hole on his place had given Bradley a terrible black eye. Many members of the protective association still believed that he was either Jone's murderer, or possessed knowledge of the killers. Evidently Col. York was of the same opinion. He and his posse probed every water hole on the quarter section, they methodically examined every rod of land for the body of Dr. York, but they found not the slightest clue.

They continued their search to Chetopa, Baxter Springs, and Fort Scott, with like futile results. Returning by way of Hepler and Walnut they came to Osage Mission, where they camped for the night. At noon the next day they halted for lunch at Big Hill crossing, the entrance into the Mounds region. They were still thoroughly baffled, yet unwilling to give up the quest.

At little past noon five members of the party came riding into my yard. I had no idea who they were when I walked out to meet them. The youngest man in the group dismounted.

"Are you Mr. Leroy Dick?"

"I am."

He handed me a note which ran like this: "Dear Sir: This is to introduce my brother, Ed York. Any information you may possess which might lead to clues concerning the fate of Dr. William York will be greatly appreciated. (Signed) Col. A. M. York."

"Mr. Dick," Ed explained, "we've been scouring this whole region for traces of Brother Will. We mean to keep on till we find him. We've been told that if anyone around here can throw any light on this mystery, you are that man. I wish you would tell me frankly—are there any persons or families in your neighborhood who might be suspected of the crime?"

I hesitated. That seemed like a big order. I had but a slight acquaintance with Col. York. I didn't know his boy or his companions. He noticed my reluctance.

"Of course, your information will be strictly guarded until investigation has been made," he assured me as we walked beyond earshot of his friends. "What about Elder King? Isn't his reputation pretty questionable?"

I shook my head. "Not criminally so. I don't like a hair on his head, but he's just an unfortunate old humbug."

Ed was patently disappointed in the Elder. "Can't you think of anyone else?" he persisted.

"Well, there really is one very unpopular family in our midst," I confessed. "In fact, our constable had told me confidentially that there are two unproven charges of robbery against them."

"Robbery!" Ed's eyes sparkled. "Say, perhaps we're on the trail of something at last. Do you mind telling me about those charges?"

"It's the Bender family over in the Mounds," I said.

"Bender," he repeated thoughtfully. He drew a notebook from his pocket and thumbed its pages. "Ah—here it is. Listen to this: 'Miss Kate Bender, clairvoyant medium and spiritualist healer. Can unravel mysteries through communication with supernatural powers'." He eyed me hopefully. "I copied that off a poster in Chetopa yesterday. What do you make of it?"

"Kate is the daughter of this family," I told him. "Rather an attractive looking girl of nineteen. It is no secret that she lays claim to occult powers. In fact, her brother John openly boasts about her clairvoyant skill. Some of the young fellows scoffed at the idea one election day at my house and John flared up. Got quite excited in Kate's defense as a medium."

Ed seemed deeply impressed. Personally I didn't believe in Kate's spiritual pretensions. I decided it wasn't a good idea to let him become too credulous about them. "It's all humbug," I warned him, "as those two charges of robbery will prove. I'll tell you about them."

"Yes, do," he urged.

"The first happened in the summer of '71. A woman in the neighborhood had been suffering for some time with a severe ailment. The doctors didn't seem able to relieve her. She consulted Kate about her healing. Kate said her method would be slow, but guaranteed it to be effective....It was, as the affair turned out.

"They agreed on a price and Kate began treatments at once. Being short

of funds just then, the woman put up her sidesaddle as collateral. Time passed. The women's health didn't improve. The method seemed indeed slow. She lost faith, and told Kate that since she had received no benefit she would take back the saddle and suspend further treatments.

"Kate begged for more time. 'I can heal you if you'll just be patient,' she insisted. She invited the woman to stay overnight. 'We'll go into a seance and implore more spiritual aid over this disease," she said.

"The woman remained. After supper the whole family joined in the seance. I guess they staged a pretty wild show. Its most prominent features seemed to be a revolver, a bowie knife, and a stout club, which they passed from hand to hand around the table with alarming contortions, and a gibberish that sounded more threatening than imploring to their frightened visitor. She concealed her fear, but as soon as the seance broke up she made a hurried excuse to withdraw outside.

"She was terribly afraid of them, yet she feared that if she started home they would overtake her on the road. In a panic she ran out and hid in the tall prairie grass beyond the stable. Watching, she saw the two men come out the rear door. They stood for a moment, listening, then walked about the yard looking for her. They came on to the stable and went inside.

"Their movements increased her suspicions. She again fled in terror. She had covered about half a mile when exhaustion forced her to rest. The dim light of a thin new moon revealed her surroundings, though the house she had left was blotted out. Presently two horsemen, whom she recognized as the Bender men, came riding across the prairie, well apart, each searching carefully in the tall grass.

"She realized that her safety depended upon absolute silence. Her pursuers held a brief parley in their foreign tongue, then one of them galloped up the main road while the other rode southeast, thus barring her way homeward. She waited. Presently they came back. This time they canvassed her surroundings thoroughly. They knew she could not have covered any greater distance on foot. They circled the prairie several times, twice come so close to her that the horses' hoofs, crunching the grass, seemed about to trample her. She was almost crazed with suspense before they at last turned back toward the house.

"She couldn't be sure they'd given up the search, though she took quick action to lengthen her distance from the place. She walked rapidly eastward through the gap in the mounds to Big Hill Creek, still so frightened that she kept imagining that she heard their hoofbeats. She crossed the creek and concealed herself in the brush and timber on the bank. Satisfied at last that she was not pursued, she grew calmer and finally fell asleep in utter exhaustion.

"It was still dark when she awakened. Rested by her nap, she decided to push on to the home of some settler. After walking about a mile she saw a light in a farmhouse. I guess it was a welcome sight.

"It was Joe Newman's place. Joe said she was so excited that her story sounded fantastic to him. But Mrs. Newman gave her some breakfast, and she finally calmed down enought to make it sound pretty convincing.

"I reckon the dumb Dutchmen were just trying to have a little fun,' he told her. Yet he didn't know what to make of it. 'Maybe you and I better drive over to George Major's and get his slant on this thing.'

"Majors is justice of the peace and Newman's neighbor," I explained to Ed York. I could see he was deeply interested in the tale.

"'Yes. How did it come out?'

"Well, George and his wife listened to the woman's startling experience. 'Those men would have killed me.' I know they meant to kill me,' she kept saying.

"'I don't doubt it for a minute,' Majors said. "I've never liked the looks of those people.' She turned to George. 'Hadn't you and Joe better ride down there and make them hand over that saddle?'

"George and Joe eyed each other in some embarrassment. What could they do? It was evident the woman had agreed to Kate's bargain in good faith. Contrariwise, Kate could swear that her retarded cure was due entirely to her patient's lack of faith. The law couldn't demand payment refunded in a case like that.

"'They probably staged the seance just to scare you out of trying to reclaim the saddle,' George told the woman.

"'Perhaps—in the first place. But not when those two men were gibbering and hunting for me in the grass. I tell you, they'd have killed me!'

"'I'm not saying they wouldn't,' Joe Newman conceded. 'But how can you prove it? You are one against the four of them.'

"She began to cry, all excited again. 'They're mad at me—they'll do me some injury. You've got to help me—put the law on them somehow—make me safe—they mean to do me harm!'

"They'll probably be glad to let the case drop if you don't demand the saddle,' Majors said. "They would beat you in court, that's certain....Swear they were hunting you to relieve your fright after the seance and see that you got home safe. All you would get for your pains would be the court costs. Isn't that right, Joe?'

"'That's the way I figure it.'

"Mrs. Majors got mad. 'Are you two officers of the law going to back down and let those thieves keep that saddle?'

"'I've got no money to pay court costs,' the woman said. 'Maybe if I don't press the charges they won't—won't bother me.' She was still afraid of them....So the matter was hushed up.

"The fact is," I told Ed, "none of us trust that outfit. We let them alone and they let us alone."

What was the other charge against them?" he wanted to know.

"Well, that affair was colored by Kate's spiritual powers—alleged ones, too. It began when Brockman and Ern dissolved partnership. Brockman had married, and his wife and Ern had a severe falling out. So Brockman offered Ern a cash price for his share of the business. Ern took him up, as that would give him enough money to start a store of his own.

"Being a bachelor, he decided to try a more permanent kind of partnership—matrimony. He wrote to his foster mother in Prussia, who had

raised him from boyhood as her own son. He told her he was now financially able to give her a home and asked the hand of her daughter in marriage. The two women agreed to his proposal and sailed at once for America.

"Ern hadn't decided on his business location when they arrived. So he took them temporarily to the Bender hostlery while he looked around a little further, the Benders being the only Germans he knew since falling out with the Brockmans, for the women spoke no English.

"Among their luggage was a small metal box containing some valuable heirlooms of jewelry which they prized highly. Also two cashier's checks amounted to $3,200.00.

"It wasn't long before Kate broached the subject of her occult powers to them. She found them unsympathetic listeners. They had no belief in spiritualism. It had a strange, evil sound to them.

"On Sunday afternoon the four Benders took their guests for a little sight-seeing jaunt to the mounds. Mrs. Bender soon began to pant with the exertion, so the old man offered to take her back to the house. The rest of the party continued their explorations of the Heironnymus chain of mounds, searching for Indian relics and such like things, all of which was highly entertaining to the two strangers.

"During her preparations for bed that night, the foster mother had occasion to open her trunk. She made an alarming discovery.

"'My box,' she exclaimed. 'It is gone!'

"Kate seemed greatly concerned. 'What box do you mean?'

"The woman described the metal box and its contents. The Benders seemed as mystified as herself over its disappearance. Then Mrs. Bender offered a solution. 'Somebody must have stolen it while we were out walking.'

"That sounded unconvincing to the victims of the theft. 'Nobody knew it was here.'

"'Strangers are always passing this way. They had plenty of time to ransack the house while we were out of sight.'

"Kate was suddenly jubilant. 'This gives me a chance to prove my powers. I'll ask my spiritual advisor who got that box. We'll make the thief give it right back to you.'

"'But I didn't believe her,' the foster mother declared later. 'I lay awake all night and cried over my precious family jewels.'

"As soon as they were astir next morning Kate came bounding in from the kitchen. 'Didn't I tell you I could locate your box? Well, I did.' She hadn't even finished dressing, she was in such haste to break the glad news. 'I did, and it's here.'

"It was. The two women hurried into the rear room and saw it with their very own eyes—its lid slashed open, its interior thoroughly rifled. They were genuinely alarmed. They were not only convinced the Benders had robbed them, they feared for their lives among such unscrupulous thieves. They decided to seek safer quarters while awaiting Mr. Ern's return.

"They walked up the road to the Moneyhon cabin, and poured out their story in excited German, which was all Greek to those worthy Irish folks. But

Mrs. Moneyhan caught a familiar name.

"'Dienst? You mean our neighbors, the Diensts?'

"'Ja—Germans,' they said.

"Why, they live right over there,' Mrs. Moneyhon pointed out the house.

"They hurried over to the Diensts and again related their experience at the Benders. Father Diesnst rode right over to tell me about it. 'What shall we do?' he asked me.

"'They could go to Justice of the Peace Majors, get an affidavit, and have the Benders arrested,' I suggested.

"But the foreign women, entirely unacquainted with American law, and not knowing whom they could trust, were afraid to file a complaint. They preferred to wait till Ern returned. But they accepted Mrs. Dienst's invitation to remain there in the meantime.

"Ern came back late in the week. He was naturally quick tempered. And did he see red when he heard what had happened! He had treated the Benders well—had helped them to located on valuable land. It seemed the very depth of treachery that they should so betray the friends he had left in their care. Besides, the women still bewailed the loss of their heirlooms. He swore prompt vengeance. Cleaning and loading the heavy revolver he always wore, he hurried over to the Benders.

"He walked into the store, his gun drawn. 'Fork over those checks and that jewelry or I'll blow the damned lot of you into King-dom-come.'

"'You git outa here,' bellowed old John. 'What you mean, joolry?'

Kate stepped between John and that steel muzzle. 'I told that old woman I'd locate her precious old box, and I did. Is it our fault that it was rifled while we were out walking?'

"Ern didn't shoot. He realized too late that he had laid himself liable to the law by threatening the Benders. Had he been accompanied by officers with authority to search the premises he might have recovered the stolen goods and obtained evidence with which to convict the thieves. Now his rashness had bungled the whole thing. Though at my suggestion he notified the German consul at St. Louis of the theft and warned him against cashing the checks. But the Benders were too wary to present them for collection. Ern and the young women were married soon afterward and settled on one of the new Texas cattle trails farther west."

Ed York had listened eagerly to those two stories. "Your Benders sound more promising than anything we've run onto yet," he said when I finished. "We'll do a little investigating around there." He sprang into the saddle.

"Better go slow and take some officers along," I called after him as they cantered away.

He ridiculed the idea. "There are sixty of us, Mr. Dick. What we can't find, nobody else need undertake."

I was not so cocksure of that. I debated whether I ought not ride over to the Benders to see how the family reacted to Col. York's questioning. But Mrs. Dick dissauded me from what to her seemed needless rashness.

"Don't get mixed up in it," she urged. "That mean outfit will have it in for you forever afterward."

I had to acknowledge that possibility. Besides, whatever the findings of the York party, I had no legal authority to make any arrests.

(To be continued)

For the Thief
Who Stole My Hunting Dog

Late September and autumn's burnishing
Upstate New York, Utica and Cooperstown.
Early leaves drift in still canal water.

Manhattan's a full ship on a late cruise:
I've walked a lot these days,
Living in the Village, drinking
At McSorley's, the shadow of lean
Irish girls crossing my table,
The cheap ale and the saltless crackers.

Later, the day will rise out of the East River
I'll go walking again, hunting
The island down for dusty bookstores
Or another bar to call my own.

Once, near Abercrombies I found a mid-west friend
Days later, I met a man I knew from home.
With a lot of walking folks I'll know will rise
As easy as pheasants from stubble fields.

I'll cut your nuts out when I find you.

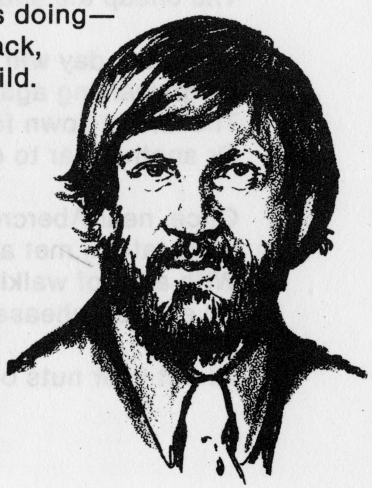
Robert Day

Shaved

It was this humid the summer my head
Was shaved, smeared with some black ointment
My mother bought from a woman above
The Circle Bar. Nothing else had worked
On the sores but the quackery choice.

Back there, running along Highland Avenue,
The heat bringing the ooze down my face,
I was the boy no one wrestled with
During that July of terrible things
I could say untested, that July when
I was "It' and could not even catch
Tony Murazzo, the fat sissy.

It was something like this weather
That keeps us reaching for ourselves,
Testing our foreheads the way we
Imagine will tell us we are whole,
Guessing at the meaning of these signals
We repeat: This heat is health,
This fever, this the weather's doing—
All of these palms pulling back,
Unrecognizable as a bald child.



Gary Fincke

Gordon Parks, a native of Fort Scott, is congratulated by Dr. Eva Jessye, a native of Coffeyville, upon his receiving the Sickle Cell Anemia Humanitarian Award, New York, 1970. Courtesy of the Eva Jessye Collection, Pittsburg.

The Lawyer Becomes a Writer:

Clarence Darrow in Southeast Kansas

By Curtis M. Penland

The famous Scopes-Monkey Trial at Dayton, Tennessee, in July 1925 ended in hollow victories for both sides that participated. The Modernists had succeeded in educating the masses on Darwinian theory and, in the process, had slowed the Fundamentalist movement to purge Darwin's theory from education when they humiliated the spokesman of the opposition, William Jennings Bryan. The Fundamentalists, on the other hand, had successfully defended the tenets of Christian faith as threatened by Charles Darwin, Clarence Darrow, and John Thomas Scopes, and had, with the death of Bryan, secured a martyr for their cause. Thus, despite Judge John T. Raulston's ruling in favor of the Fundamentalist position, no clear victory could be claimed by either side. Nevertheless, the trial had been the most fascinating confrontation of ideals in recent history.

The historic clash of ideologies at Dayton fatigued at least one of its notable particpants. At sixty-eight, Clarence Darrow was nearing the end of an impressive law career, a life's devotion which developed in two phases—labor law and criminal law. As a young Chicago attorney, Darrow gained notoriety as a friend of labor: he actively sought amnesty for the eight defendants in the Haymarket Riot case of 1887, he served as counsel for Eugene V. Debs in the Pullman Strike trial of 1895, and he answered the call of Pennsylvania miners in the anthracite coal strike of 1902. His defense of the McNamara

The Haldeman-Juliuses and the Darrows pose in front of a gate at Bridleways, **August 26, 1925. Photograph by "The Boys," Girard, Kansas, courtesty of the Haldeman-Julius Collection, Pittsburg State University. [Gift of Henry Haldeman]**

brothers, the alleged dynamiters of the Los Angeles *Times* building, prematurely ended his ties to labor when accusations arose that he attempted to bribe a juror. Darrow absolved himself and returned to Chicago to concentrate on criminal law. His capacities in this field were demonstrated in a trial that captured the attention of the nation—the Leopold-Loeb trial of 1924. Darrow entered the case fully aware of his clients' guilt

Nathan Leopold and Richard Loeb had confessed to the murder of Chicago teenager Bobbie Franks. Yet, because of extensive preparation and a brilliant presentation based primarily on the assertion that society had corrupted the young joykillers, the experienced Darrow saved his two defendants from execution.[1] The Dayton trial soon followed, attracting still more acclaim and offers of more cases, but

Darrow had wearied. He wished to ponder the course of his remaining years, and, most of all, he wanted to write. His wish came true.

The seeds for Darrow's literary career were planted in Los Angeles, Calfornia, in 1903 and blossomed in Girard, Kansas, in 1925. In the former instance, Darrow had been tried on the aforementioned charge of bribery, an event which sparked media interest. Darrow met and granted an interview to a young Philadelphian, Emanuel Julius. A friendship developed that later would lead Julius to become the publisher of Darrow's work.

Julius' rise in the publishing world was impressive. Born the son of immigrant Russian Jews, Emanuel received little formal education, preferring to read and absorb Socialist tracts. His employment at various newspapers nationwide provided a sound basis in journalism. Eventually, he settled in Girard, Kansas, where he married Anna Marcet Haldeman, added her name and income to his, and, in 1919, bought the brainchild of Julius A. Wayland, a Socialist weekly called the *Appeal to Reason.* With capital borrowed from his wife, Haldeman-Julius embarked upon a venture that made him wealthy and famous—the printing of the Little Blue Books. The reception of these five-cent, three-by-five-inch wonders proved enthusiastic

The "Henry Ford of publishing" opened American eyes to a veritable university of knowledge contained in thousands of titles which included the popular treatment of such subjects as classical literature, self-improvement, sex, humor, free thought, and iconoclasm.[2] By the time Haldeman-Julius and Darrow were reunited before the Scopes trial, the two men had collaborated on nine Little Blue Books. The literary talents of Darrow impressed Haldeman-Julius, and he wished to secure reprint rights of earlier works and the publishing rights to Darrow's future work. Darrow heartily agreed to meet in Girard to make the final arrangements. Details for a visit in August were arranged as the trial of young John Scopes closed and faded into history.

Invitations to visit Southeast Kansas had been accepted by Darrow twice before. In fact, each previous visit had had a historical significance that many historians and biographers have neglected to address. His first visit occurred in May 1909, when he defended Fred D. Warren, the managing editor of the *Appeal to Reason.* Warren, whose weekly newspaper served as a voice and barometer of American Socialism, had been angered at the unlawful, forced extradition of three men accused of killing the ex-Governor of Idaho, Frank R. Steunenburg. In protest, Warren printed an offer of a one thousand dollar reward for the capture and extradition of William Taylor, the

ex-Governor of Kentucky implicated in the death of a political opponent. The Federal Government expressed its impatience with the Socialist movement when it indicted Warren on a trumped-up charge—he allegedly violated a statute of the Postal Act of 1888. Darrow prepared a strong defense, but failed to win an acquittal. (President William Howard Taft eventually commuted the sentence.) However, Darrow's role in the trial helped slow negative Government response to Socialist activities.[3]

Darrow next journeyed to the area in October 1918 to participate in a miners' rally for labor leader Alexander Howat, who had just returned to the United States as the President's representative at the Brussels Labor Conference. Darrow addressed the large group in Pittsburg, not on labor or social issues, but on the war in Europe. His frank statements demonstrated his patriotism and foretold the coming of the Second World War. He argued that the current war was not a rich man's war, as many thought, claiming that the sons of nobility and the aristocracy had sacrificed their blood first. He insisted that America had entered the war because freedom of the seas and commerce had been attacked, denying that ideological contentions were the cause. He also questioned whether the war would be the last of its kind, emphasizing that the Allies could and must prevent any disruption of peace by Germany in the future. His observations about the war indicated his keen insights on mankind and his firm grasp on history.[4]

Darrow's subsequent visit to Girard and Pittsburg in August 1925 has been relatively undocumented. There are several newspaper accounts and a handful of personal recollections, but none seems to have stressed the importance of the comments he expressed, the queries he answered, or the agreements he made while visiting the area. My purpose is to introduce the reader to the importance of this visit and to discuss a facet of Darrow's life that both he and his biographers have failed to treat. Particularly, the Darrow visit consisted of the following: he granted an interview to reporters at the Haldeman-Julius home, he responded to an interrogatory from Judge Raulston which questioned the scientific and religious beliefs of the Scopes defense team, he joined Haldeman-Julius' newly established Freethinkers' League, and he concluded the publishing agreement he came to discuss. As the citizens of Girard and nearby Pittsburg prepared for the Darrow visit, the Pittsburg *Daily Headlight* of August 22, 1925, announced that the veteran lawyer returned a man with "a number of friends in Girard and neighboring areas." The visit met with a warm reception and it proved memorable indeed.

Mr. and Mrs. Darrow arrived in Girard on "the Frisco" during the afternoon of August 25, 1925, after spending several weeks with relatives in Greeley, Colorado. A welcoming party, headed by Mr. and Mrs. Haldeman-Julius, greeted the Darrows, who immediately inquired about the welfare of Southeastern Kansas. Having dispensed with the amenities, Darrow announced that his greatest effort would thenceforth be devoted to writing, chiefly books. He stated that writing had been his prime ambition for a number of years, but his hectic, demanding law practice had prevented him from pursuing this interest. From this time forward, he concluded, his practice of law would be relegated to a secondary place: "I have reached the time when I want to turn away from the active practice of law and give my literary ambition a chance for expression."[5] Darrow refused to commit himself on the duration of his stay in Girard, explaining that he needed to reacquaint his mind with cornfields, horses, and rural life in general. Likewise, Haldeman-Julius assured spectators that his guests would remain as long as necessary "to complete plans for the publication of the fruits of Mr. Darrow's pen."[6]

The two couples breakfasted together late on the morning of August 26, while they awaited word from Kansas editors and novelists, E. W. Howe and William Allen White, on the possibility of their coming to Girard. (Neither man came.) In the meantime, Haldeman-Julius invited reporters to interview Darrow at Bridleways, the Haldeman-Julius farm. The interview occurred in the comfortable, extensive library on the second floor of the Haldeman-Julius home. Darrow fielded and answered questions on many topics: he spoke of his Leopold-Loeb defense, the rainfall, the corn crop (humorously referring to a bottled product of Southeast Kansas), the origin of the earth, and the descent of man, expressing his doubts that an anti-evolution bill would be passed in Kansas. He then spoke of his foe at Dayton, the late William Jennings Bryan, showing no bitterness or love, but stating that Bryan was both a sincere and an ignorant man. Darrow next touched upon the express purpose of his trip. He reiterated his wish to write, a wish that Haldeman-Julius could help Darrow realize. Similarly, Haldeman-Julius commented that Darrow had outlined seventeen or more books in his mind. Ending the interview, the Girard publisher expressed a deep interest in having Darrow write a "psychological autobiography" in which the lawyer would trace his mental and philosophical development. With the interview concluded, the Haldeman-Juliuses and the Darrows planned a ride through the countryside with a short stop in Pittsburg along the way.[7]

Marcet Haldeman-Julius provided a brief account of the Darrows' visit in her *Famous and Interesting Guests of a Kansas Farm,* in which

Marcet Haldeman-Julius and Ruby Darrow on the front porch of the Haldeman-Julius home, August 26, 1925. Photograph by "The Boys," Girard, Kansas, courtesy of the Haldeman-Julius Collection, Pittsburg State University. [Gift of Sue Haldeman-Julius]

she elaborated on Darrow's nature, the automobile ride they all took through the countryside, and Darrow's wife, Ruby. She recalled:

In September (i.e., August) of the same year (1925) Darrow and his wife, Ruby, visited us at Bridleways. He was in a delightful loafing mood and easily adapted himself to our household. The children at once felt the lovable qualities in his nature and he turned, with evident relief, to the enjoyment of the little incidents and features of the daily routine. True, when we rode in the car, he and E.H.-J. in the front seat, Ruby and I in the back, the two men discussed ideas in a swift, rather casual way and chuckled over some of the things that had happened in Dayton. It was on this occasion that I became

acquainted with Ruby Darrow. She...has a quick, reaching mind. She is naturally reserved—a reserve which, I feel, comes not from aloofness but from a deep temperamental shyness—but her emotions are rich and true. She is far more important in Darrow's life than he ever frankly admits...My own belief is that Darrow knows very well what she means to him. He seldom goes anywhere without her....But even to those who admire him most he would seem finer were he to be a little more free with well-deserved acknowledgements to the gentle person who, herself, would be the last to ask for them.[8]

Both couples enjoyed the open-air jaunt that took them to Pittsburg. Ironically, as Haldeman-Julius and Darrow sped towards Pittsburg reminiscing about the Dayton trial, a reporter waited at the Hotel Stilwell armed with still more questions about the "Monkey trial," inquiries which originated from one of its participants.

The seven questions that the reporter posed to Darrow had been asked by John Raulston, the Fundamentalist judge of the Scopes trial. Speaking from his home in Winchester, Tennessee, during the evening of August 25, 1925, Raulston first questioned the scientific and religious beliefs of the defense team, and also accused them of trying to oust him from the bench. Specifically, he charged that they wanted revenge for their failure to dominate the court at Dayton, that they wanted to replace him with a judge who would be sympathetic towards the theory of evolution in the event of a retrial (a vain hope, added Raulston). He charged that they disparaged his fidelity to the Bible and wanted to cripple his opposition to a theory that was antagonistic to Christianity. Raulston concluded that he would "be glad" to have his accusations answered through the press.[9]

The unprecedented Raulston interrogatory did not surprise Darrow. Animosities between the bench and the defense table had run high at Dayton, culminating in a contempt-of-court citation against Darrow. (He escaped a fine and imprisonment by offering a tongue-in-cheek apology to the court.) Raulston's fanatical, Bible-toting Fundamentalism irritated Darrow, and he viewed the accusations and the interrogatory as a publicity stunt to help secure the Judge's re-election: "Personally, I have paid no attention to Judge Raulston since the trial. I am not interested in his campaign for judge. If the people of his district want, they should have him. It does not concern me in the slightest. If I cared, I would not help his campaign by noticing his questions, but I will."[10]

Darrow perused and answered each question calmly. He excluded his biting skepticism and rationalistic agnosticism from his replies, preferring to address each in a clear, concise manner. The exchange,

which has escaped the notice of Scopes trial historians, went via the wire services as follows:

Q: First, when you insist man descended from a lower order of animals have you the evidence to support this theory sufficiently definite to justify the expectation that intelligent people will accept and adopt this theory?

A: The evidence of evolution is so conclusive that in the short space of 50 years, nearly all scientists and students interested in the question the world over have accepted it.

Q: Second, have you any evidence that this theory can in any aspect of life be beneficial to man? Is not the contrary true--that it tends to degrade man?

A: The truth as to the scientific facts and theories always benefits the world. All modern civilization is based on science.

Q: Third, doesn't the theory of evolution seek to destroy the doctrine of inspiration of the Bible?

A: The theory of evolution does not seek to destroy any religious belief. It is simply concerned with the truth. When the scientists first announced that the world was round and revolved around the sun, they were accused and convicted of trying to destroy religion. And I am inclined to think that Judge Raulston believes the theories now, although I am not sure he does.

Q: Fourth, doesn't it propose to eliminate the divinity of Christ?

A: Evolution is not concerned in any way with the divinity of Christ. Millions of evolutionists believe it. It has no purpose to eliminate the divinity of Christ.

Q: Fifth, doesn't it deny the resurrection?

A: I know of no teaching of evolution that discusses the resurrection of Christ, or of any other of the large number whom it has been claimed were brought to life after they were dead.

Q: Sixth, if the theory of evolution does destroy man's faith in the integrity of the Bible, of the divinity of Christ, in the resurrection, doesn't it thereby undermine the Christian religion?

A: This question, in view of the other answers, means, if the theory of evolution is true, should it still be taught even though it may destroy the religious faith of some people, or would it be better to encourage people

to believe what is not true? The judge must settle this for himself. I noticed that the Christian church does not hesitate to send missionaries to help undermine every other religious faith in the world.

Q: Seventh, can civilization survive the destruction of the Christian?

A: Yes, civilization existed long before Christianity; it exists where there is no Christianity. The growth of civilization is only the growth of intelligence and knowledge.

When Darrow ended his response to the last question he received one more from the reporter: "Doesn't Judge Raulston take himself a little too seriously in thinking that the attorneys for the defense are interested in him or his campaign?" Darrow retorted: "I am sure none of them would notice him if he did not ask questions. I can't understand why he thinks any of us care about his religious views."[11] The remainder of the afternoon in Pittsburg was spent touring the plant of the *Daily Headlight*. When the veteran lawyer noticed employee Irving H. Cole wearing suspenders, Darrow, who captivated people with his lavender galluses, remarked that he was "glad to have found a man smart enough to wear something to keep his pants up."[12]

Darrow and Haldeman-Julius devoted a large part of the visit to casual, stimulating conversation on contemporary issues. One issue that drew Darrow's skepticism was Haldeman-Julius' concept of mass intelligence. Darrow expressed his friendliness to the informative purposes of the *Haldeman-Julius Weekly* (formerly the *Appeal to Reason)* and the Little Blue Books, but doubted whether the Haldeman-Julius enterprises would result in a culturally informed American mass. In addition, Darrow admitted to the widespread presence of "bunk" in American society, but also added that its absence left nothing. Haldeman-Julius disagreed. He reasoned that a "bunkless world" could be achieved through the pursuit of carefully reasoned ideas and through the destruction of pompous, illogical ideas. Haldeman-Julius was so convinced of the possibility of a "debunked world" that he asked the Darrows to join an organization of freethinkers which he had founded several months earlier.[13]

The American Freethinkers' League originated in a June 1925 essay which Haldeman-Julius wrote for his weekly column. His purpose in formulating the League came when he concluded: "Country yokels have come to the front, in their open attempt to save the world for fanaticism and religious hokem."[14] Taking the initiative, Haldeman-Julius asked, "What shall we who believe in science, art, culture, literature, free thought, honesty, sincerity—in short, a civilized life—what, I ask, shall we do about it?"[15] Haldeman-Julius proposed

the formation of an organization of freethinkers. Initially, the League gained hundreds of members, with Darrow among its most supportive and prominent constituents.[16] Unfortunately, although the League eventually gained 1,765 members, evidence of its existence was no longer printed in the Haldeman-Julius publications after January 1926.

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The most important aspect of the Darrow visit, the conclusion of the publishing agreement, is the least documented facet of the trip. Still more surprising is that neither man mentioned it in his autobiography. Clarence Darrow in *The Story of My Life* makes no mention of Haldeman-Julius as his publisher, while Haldeman-Julius in *My First 25 Years: Instead of a Footnote an Autobiography* alludes mostly to Darrow as a lawyer and friend, rather than as an intellectual and author. Obviously, the fruits of the agreement exist in printed form (twenty-three Little Blue Books and six Big Blue Books), but the details of the partnership lie in obscurity. There is, however, one part of the agreement which is known—Darrow refused to accept any payment for the stenographed debates and essays which he submitted for

publication. Haldeman-Julius touched very briefly upon this several years later.

"Darrow . . . went to great pains to explain that he had never argued money with me because he had always made it a point to give me his manuscripts free of charge. For a time he even insisted on paying for the bundles of copies he ordered for distribution among his friends, and grumbled when I insisted on forcing them on him without payment of any kind. I thought the least I could do was to let the great Clarence Darrow have all the free copies he could use."[17]

An attempt to conjecture about the agreement terms is, of course, futile. Yet if no monetary compensation was involved, then it is highly possible that both men verbally concluded the agreement, thereby demonstrating their mutual trust and respect for each other. Nonetheless, Darrow had realized his dream of writing, and Haldeman-Julius seemed more than happy to oblige him.

The Darrows' departure on August 27, 1925, ended a restful and productive two days with the Haldeman-Juliuses, a stay previously overlooked by Darrow scholars. The fact that the comments he made in Girard and Pittsburg have remained buried for many years has obscured facets of the Darrow character which awed and amazed many Americans of the 1920s; the Haldeman-Juliuses and the citizens of the region witnessed in Darrow a rational skeptic, a contemporary spokesman, and a warm human being. One reporter stated: "For Darrow at ease is hugely human, open and honest, generous of a great warmth of personality which is poorly disclosed in the press dispatches of his engagements in court. He displays a wholesome tolerance, acquired in long, close study of man's frailties."[18] The most important part of the Darrow visit is the fact that it resulted in a publisher-writer relationship that has been little treated before this time.[19] Moreover, although Darrow had written a novel *(Farmington,* 1904) and several magazine articles prior to 1925, his radical and liberal views denied him the wide audience he desired. Later, Darrow found the audience he sought through the cooperativeness of Haldeman-Julius and the popularity of the Big and Little Blue Books.The visit provided the two men an opportunity to solidify their friendship and their working partnership, a collaborative effort which ultimately provided thousands a chance to read the works of a "hidden intellectual" while simultaneously opening up a new line of expression for a brilliant Clarence Darrow under the imprint of Haldeman-Julius, the most inexpensive reading matter of quality which the American public would ever have the opportunity to buy.

Notes

[1]Ray Ginger, "Clarence Darrow," *Dictionary of National Biography,* Vol. 22, Supplement 2, pp. 141-144.

[2]William McCann, "Emanuel Haldeman-Julius," *Dictionary of National Biography,* Vol. 25, Supplement 5, pp. 264-265.

[3]John Bowes, "The Trial of Fred D. Warren, the Forgotten Socialist," unpublished typescript, Pittsburg State University, 1977, and Daniel E. Speir, "Fred D. Warren and the Socialist Challenge to Legal Inequality," unpublished typescript, University of Missouri—Kansas City, 1977.

[4]"Howat Is Given Hearty Welcome Home," Pittsburg [Kan.] *Daily Headlight,* 7 October 1918, p. 2, col. 2.

[5]"Darrow in Girard to Plan Literary Work," Pittsburg [Kan.] *Daily Headlight,* 26 August 1925, p. 1, col. 8.

[6]Ibid.

[7]"There Is a Contrast Between 2 Darrows," Pittsburg [Kan.] *Daily Headlight,* 26 August 1925, p. 5, cols. 5-6.

[8]Anna Marcet Haldeman-Julius, *Famous and Interesting Guests of a Kansas Farm,* Review's Library No. 8 (Girard, Kan.: Haldeman-Julius Publications, 1936), p. 17.

[9]"Judge Interrogates Scopes' Attorneys," Joplin [Mo.] *Globe,* 26 August 1925, p. 2, col. 1.

[10]"Darrow Replies to Raulston Queries," Pittsburg [Kan.] *Daily Headlight,* 26 August 1925, p. 1, col. 6; p. 2, col. 2.

[11]Raulston's queries may be found in the article cited in note 9. The replies made by Darrow are quoted verbatim from the article cited in note 10.

[12]"Darrow Replies to Raulston Queries," p. 2, col. 2.

[13]A clearer understanding of Haldeman-Julius' concept and definition of "bunk" may be found in his *Outline of Bunk* (Boston: The Stratford Co., 1929) and in his essay, "A Bunkless World?" *Haldeman-Julius Monthly,* 2 (October 1925): 432.

[14]"The American Freethinkers' League," *Haldeman-Julius Weekly,* 20 June 1925, p. 1, col. 1; reprinted in the *Haldeman-Julius Monthly,* 2 (August 1925): 276-279.

[15]Ibid.

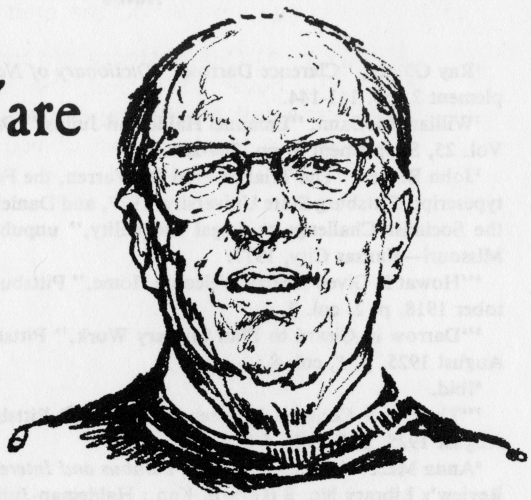
[16]"Clarence Darrow Joins American Freethinkers' League," *Haldeman-Julius Weekly,* 26 September 1925, p. 2, col. 4.

[17]E. Haldeman-Julius, *Questions and Answers,* 24th Series (Girard, Kan.: Haldeman-Julius Publications, 1941), p. 58.

[18]"There Is a Contrast Between 2 Darrows," p. 5, cols. 5-6.

[19]Two attempts have been made previously to document the writing career of Clarence Darrow. The first was by Albert Mordell in his *Clarence Darrow, Eugene V. Debs and Haldeman-Julius: Incidents in the Career of an Author, Editor, and Publisher,* Big Blue Book No. 907 (Girard, Kan.: Haldeman-Julius Publications, 1950). Mordell did a poor job of documenting the "chief connection" between Darrow and Haldeman-Julius. The appendix to his article poorly represents Darrow's literary efforts published in Girard. It should be ignored. Abe Ravitz made the second attempt in his *Clarence Darrow and the American Literary Tradition* (Cleveland: Press of Western Reserve University, 1962). He fails, however, to point out that Haldeman-Julius was one of Darrow's authorized publishers. Quite simply, he fails to bring to the readers' attention that Darrow and Haldeman-Julius had a working partnership in Big and Little Blue Book form.

Ironquill: Eugene Ware as Poet



By Walter Shear

Ironquill—it's difficult to think of a better pseudonym for a nineteenth century Kansas frontier poet. It's a name redolent of the iron will of the forerunning pioneer and, with its connotations of "spear," one which effectively associates the struggle of the red man with his white brother, both striving valiantly against a hostile wilderness.

Unfortunately, however, this colorfully suggestive epic meaning of Ironquill was not quite what Eugene Ware, the man who invented the pseudonym, had in mind. Ware wanted the frontier ended, not prolonged by a romanticizing of what was surely passing. The Ironquill he created was a civic, communal voice, one whose virile individualism could be identified with city-building and civilizing, with the establishment of law, order, and a prosperity based on ambition in the place of the self-satisfied and undependable egotism of a primitive culture.

Ware had had too many experiences on the Great Plains frontier in the 1860s and 1870s to want to glorify this life or any of its components. Even before his sister, brother-in-law, and nephew were killed by Apaches, he tended to dislike Indians, a feeling which extended as well to those Indians fighting on his side during the Civil War. (One thing that bothered him about Indians was what he regarded as a perverse reversal of sexual roles: the Indian men he saw as fifty-five percent feminine while the Indian women were fifty-five percent masculine.)[1] What Ware wanted was a new world, a more earnest and less messy world. Indeed, as he moved rapidly from soldier to farmer to small-town businessman to lawyer, he both absorbed and expressed an ethos of progress, and in his early poetry he sang affectionately of what he then saw as the dynamic force of his era:

Him that we call endearing "Old Biz."
He does the work, the credit is all his. [2]

Say, of Old Business did you never hear?
You never did? Well, I'm inclined to think
Pens full of pigs, and not pens full of ink,
Should be the object of your future skill.... [3]

Neptune Calming the Sea.

Ware's Ironquill pseudonym undoubtedly had its origins in a favorite early image of his, that of Neptune's trident turned into a plowshare. Just as in his poetry he imagined this device from an outdated classical age being made to serve modern needs, so Ware thought of himself as a poet who made a traditional role relevant by mixing literary vision and verse techniques with the rough raw energy of the world he daily encountered. The transmuted classical image was basic to his feeling of his own progress:

...Business now, with unremitting toil
Goes beating down his trident in the soil;
.....
And scarce the soil his trident meets,
Up springs a city with a hundred streets;
The streets are crowded, Business gives a smile,
And moves on, pounding in Neptunian style.
(*Rhymes*, p. 296)

When Ware appeared on the Kansas scene, he was already twenty-six, a man obviously endowed with more than his share of the gifts of youth—talent, energy, ideas—and looking for the chance to use as many of his abilities as possible. He had been a Union soldier on the Kansas-Nebraska frontier where the Army was expected to keep peace with the Indians and hold Confederate sympathizers in check. In the course of riding some ten thousand miles on horseback, he had met characters such as Jim Bridger, Artemus Ward, and Jules Beni, the latter a half-breed trader who carried on his person four ears from people he had killed. It had been an

exciting life but a wearing one. And when Ware moved from his home town of Burlington, Iowa, to the territory in Kansas called the "Neutral Lands," it was to settle down. As he put it, "I had lived one life and was now living an entirely different one....I had a different view of things, different aspirations, different taste for reading, society and work."[4] He soon discovered in the course of homesteading that the "Lands" were embroiled in a classic Western dispute, the farmers vs. the railroad interests, and Ware, the young old-soldier, was immediately in the thick of action again. One day he found a note on his door ordering him to leave the country or be hanged. In another instance he and his family were forced to the verge of a shoot-out in an effort to hang onto their land.

It seemed that the more Ware tried to settle down, the more his life kept unsettling him. In the 1870s Fort Scott was the major town in Southeast Kansas and Ware, after months of wrangling in what was a vigilante situation, finally set his parents up on his land claims (in what is now Cherokee County) and decided to dedicate himself to city life. It was in Fort Scott that he went into the harness business and there that he established himself as a lawyer. It was there that he married a school teacher (recent Vassar graduate Nettie Huntington) and raised a family. It was there that he matured as a poet. Living in Fort Scott from 1870 to 1893, he grew in social stature and intellectual maturity, grew in fact out of the small town life that had molded him. By the end of the 1870s he was on his way to acquiring his unique character, that of a free-thinking, staunchly Republican poet whose public roles ranged from folksy humorist to corporate lawyer to sporadic philosopher earnestly grappling toward a synthesis of the advanced scientific and theological ideas of the day.

II

In reading Ware's prose and poetry, those of this region will recognize many local landmarks but will respond to them as glimpsed from odd angles. Ware lived in our country, but at a time when there were more mosquitoes, more wild game and nuisance creatures, more timber and less cleared land, more flora and fauna generally (with the possible exceptions of dogs, cats, and cockroaches), fewer people and an absolute paucity of labor-saving devices. The task of making a living was for many a heavy chore and any form of wit which could lighten this load was regarded as having inherent positive value. One result of this was Ware's tendency to write public verse, frequently a humorous verse, a poetry which revealed a common world but which also interrogated and teased the world, aware of its inadequacies. He was a kind of realist who wanted to believe that people's attitudes were more important than their circumstances.

His formal preparation for becoming a poet was nil. Although the particular reasons for his pursuit of such an avocation may be forever buried

in the mystery of his being, as W.H. Auden once wrote, a poet is a man who likes to play around with words, and Eugene Ware was such a poet from the start, a man in a new country beginning somewhat naively but **con brio** to explore the resources of language. Throughout his career, he was fond of puns. In bidding a public farewell to Iowa, he wrote, "The trees are leaving out, and I'll leave too; and bid you, with no more ado, adieu."[5]

When he first arrived in Kansas, he attended a July 4 celebration at Oswego, where people had been reduced to living on corn because of the previous year's grasshoppers. He wrote to the editor of the Burlington Hawk-Eye:

> There was corn bread, pone, a la Missourienne, and jonny cake. There corn dodgers and flapjacks, mush and milk, fried mush, and mush and molasses, and also corn pie, made of corn and dough crusts and a thin seam of molasses between them. so that a horizontal view of a vertical section looked like a corn-elian. There was corn beef, and finally pop corn, and the whole bill of fare piled up as it was, in the corn-er, made it appear to the most casual observer that Ceres had fairly emptied her corn-u-copia to grace the occasion.[6]

One of his first advertisements in the Fort Scott Monitor announced:

> The following articles taken in exchange for goods:
> Oats, coats, or shoats.
> Potatoes, claims in the "Neutral;" land warrants, orders on the mill; smiles; bread tickets, or corn.
> Atmospheric air, yaller-leg'd chickens, or lip (in small quantities.)
> Side meat, sunbeams, cider or silence....
> .....
> ...Money...will only be received on satisfactory proof, taken as evidence of two responsible and disinterested parties, that the applicant is in a state of the most frightful and embarrassing poverty, and has nothing else to trade EXCEPT MONEY, which will then be taken under protest and held subject to further redemption....[7]

One source states that Ware also rhymed some advertisements:

> And if you've got a horse what breaks away
> Come with a greenback, but with no delay,
> We'll cure your horse of such a trifling fault,
> I've got a halter what can make him halt.[8]

(At one time Ware claimed it was rhyming advertisements in Fort Scott that started him as a poet, but in fact he had already written considerable poetry while in Iowa.)

Grace Lowry's master's thesis on Ware argues that one reason he became a lawyer was a desire, after feeling himself enmeshed in legal questions, to see "the law in print."[9] Since the age of ten, Ware had been educating himself in Greek and Latin and becoming more and more fascinated with words. What might be viewed as his apprenticeship was a series of lengthy letters, written mostly to his family, which detailed his experiences in the army, his travels, the people he met, and the country he marched through. Some of his first observations on the Kansas-Missouri area reveal his attentive concern with the world around him—in this case, with its water potential:

> Neither the Neosho, Lightning, or Cow Creek is available for water power but Spring river, which rises in the mountains in Western Missouri, and its branches, Shoal creek and others, are unfailing, rocky bottomed streams, and the mills are going up on them rapidly. A miller stated that every one hundred rods, on Spring river would give a mill site. That is what will make Carthage, Missouri, a large town.[10]

In the same spirit of simply designating what he saw and heard, he had earlier preserved for history a record of a frontier banquet: "broiled antelope heart, baked buffalo hump, fried beaver tails" with "champagne in tin cups all around."[11] The frontier experiences also led him to note the fact that the wind on the plains blew so much sand and alkali in men's eyes that "all of the ranches kept large spectacles or goggles to sell to the 'pilgrims'."[12]

It is unfortunate that the verse conventions with which he worked encouraged Ware to select a poetic vocabulary, one which dictated word selection at a rather high level of generality and which prized specific words for their inherent poetic value. Though there is an instance of an old Army Captain being fascinated by the evocative exactness of Ware's reference to rattling canteens in a battle charge, such responses to his poetry was rare.[13] One of his favorite poetic words was "zephyr." While it does seem appropriate that he should write about this natural phenomenon, the prairie wind seems a little too harsh, a little too persistent, for the poetic associations of "zephyr." Nevertheless, when it established a flavor of typicality, the type of language Ware used can build what might be termed representative moods or auras—as evidenced in the following diverse examples:

> It passed in beauty
> Like the clouds on high,
> That drape the ceilings
> Of the summer sky.
>
> (*Rhymes*, p. 74)

> He stepped to the curb of the street
> And stood where a weary lamp
> Was struggling with fog and damp....
>
> (*Rhymes*, p. 374)

Round the room the ladies floated, in their moire antique and satin,
While the men, behind large smiles, bowed to this'n and to that'n,
And the floor was full of watzers, and the air was laughter-laden....
(*Rhymes*, p. 341)

When one's attention is called specifically to the language of Ware's verse, it is apt to be because of his heavier effects. For example, one of his popular poems celebrated the country's enthusiastic response to Admiral Dewey's Manila triumph:

O Dewey was the morning
Upon the first of May,
And Dewey was the Admiral
Down in Manila Bay;
And Dewey were the Regent's eyes,
"Them" orbs of royal blue!
And Dewey feel discouraged?
I Dew not think we Dew.
(*Rhymes*, p. 66)

The last two lines may be the kind one wants to read only once in his life, but perhaps no one's life is quite complete without having read, just once, such lines as these. Ware's verse on the pompous politician is in the same vein but more successful because of a more defiant swagger in its mock learning:

Up was he stuck,
And in the very upness
Of his stucktitude
He Fell.
(*Rhymes*, p. 327)

In many respects Ware was a typical poet of the late nineteenth century. James Whitcomb Riley's poem, "The Rhymes of Ironquill," is, in addition to being a generous tribute to Ware's poetry, a recognition that here was a kindred spirit, one whose rhymes were both a response to life as it was lived by common people around the poet and a meditation on the hopes and faiths of those people. At times Ware's poetry insists on the triumph of sentiment, the glory of life as narrative, the value of poetic philosophizing—even the play of language itself—over the mundane, apparently meaningless, circumstances of life which seemed so removed from all fine culture. At other time the poetry doggedly unleashes the slang, the colloquialism, and the heavy wit of Ware's everyday world onto the aspiration for order and harmony which the poetic tradition seems to have represented to him.

Often, especially in the initial stages of his poetizing. Ware seems to be trying to conjure the rough hardiness of life in early Fort Scott with the stern mechanics of traditional poetic techniques. For him, as for most poets of his day, poetry was a matter of rhyme, artful vocabulary, heavily accented

metrics, and an occasional rhetorical comparison. Since it frequently appeared in newspapers, the poetry attempted with ideas and wit to reach an audience which looked to the written word as a major source of information and entertainment. Its successes were inevitably popular triumphs, the anxiety of which can be gauged by the tensions between literary pretension and the undercutting of these pretensions in such verse. Typically, the poet wanted to be at one with his audience, but often he was acutely aware that he wasn't. Though Ware was not a scholar, he could not, according to testimony from a contemporary, "make the farmers and workingmen understand him. He had what they called a toplofty air, and he could not impress them that he felt himself one of them"—this said of a man who devoted several of his most popular poems to workingpeople.[14] But Ware was also the poet-craftsman. Like Whitman, he published only one book of verse but spent his life tinkering with its language and content. According to James Malin, *The Rhymes of Ironquill* went through thirteen editions in Ware's lifetime, expanding from sixty-four poems and 157 pages to over 150 poems and 373 pages.[15] Eventually the book went through fifteen editions.

Nearly all Ware's verse is in simple stanzas and/or basic rhymed forms. Only later in life did he attempt publicly such forms as the sonnet and the triolet (and, according to Charles Cory, this was only done as a response to a challenge).[16] The triolet is a particularly rigid form consisting of eight lines with only two rhymes; lines one and two reappear as lines seven and eight and line one as line four. Ware's first and only triolet is more mockery of these formal requirements than an artistic rendering of them:

Each second a sucker is born
  In the world outside of Kansas;
We've got to acknowledge the corn,
Each second a sucker is born;
But we laugh the fact to scorn,
  And don't care where it lands us—
Each second a sucker is born,
  But he is not born in Kansas.

(*Rhymes*, p. 222)

The poem's content becomes a rebellious defiance of the form imitated. The acquiescing to such requirements would be the response of the unthinking sucker, and the variation in the last line is the final declaration that this Kansas poet has other aims than a mechanical formalism.

Ware, however, was not always, perhaps not often enough, the poetic rugged individualist. Specific influences on his verse vary from Thomas Hood and Bret Harte to Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and Edgar Allan Poe. Malin's conclusion that "Mono-line" is indebted structurally to Edmund Spenser's poem "One Day I Wrote Her Name" would be evidence of Ware's relationship to an older English tradition.[17] The Harte influence is undoubtedly the more general, consisting of the versified narrative with contemporary characters and milieu. The Poe influence is manifested so heavily in "Ioline"

that it comes to seem, in spite of Ware's subtitle claiming imitation, more parody than adaptation:

One black evening in October
All the world seemed sad and sober,
And a doom
Dark and dismal
Shrouded all life's colors prismal,
And before me yawned abysmal
Gulfs of gloom.

(*Rhymes*, p. 79)

In general Ware's poetry also exhibits the fondness for ideas and morals characteristic of most of his nineteenth century contemporaries. Typical of several of the poems is the advice in "To-day":

Work, work on—
Work brings its own relief;
He who most idle is
Has most of grief.

(*Rhymes*, p. 92)

One curiosity in Ware's relationship to the traditional: the first poem to appear with the Ironquill pseudonym, "The Fisher-Maiden," had the note: "From the German of Henry Heine."[18]

III

Ware was not only Ironquill; many of his poems bore the signature of the Philosopher of Paint Creek (sometimes Yellow Paint Creek). Malin concludes rather convincingly that, "roughly classified," the serious poetry was signed Ironquill and the humorous verse was the work of the Philosopher.[19] Throughout his life Ware was a humorist, although it was a role that sometimes discomforted even his friends. Once in Topeka when it rained after a long drought, Ware telegraphed a chemist friend of his: "Strange substance falling from the sky." The chemist, a literal-minded soul, telegraphed Ware that he would hop the first train to Topeka to witness the miracle. Ware tried to telegraph back to stop the man: "Investigation reveals the fact that the strange substance is water." Unfortunately, the chemist was already hurrying toward one of the large disappointments of his life. Ware reported that their friendship was never again the same.[20]

The Yellow Paint Creek Philosopher revealed most overtly the cynical side of Ware. Many of the rhymed "Fables" have morals in the manner of Aesop but a good deal wrier. For example:

Souls of fire may dare the fire,
May aspire
To rule the fire;

But the element consumes
Any SUCKER who presumes.

(*Rhymes*, p. 239)

The old Philosopher may put in his disclaimer—

Should you call these words ironic, you will make
a big mistake,
For ferruginous remarks are just the kind
I never make.

(*Rhymes*, p. 304)

but basically Paint Creek is a land where all refinement tends toward the bathetic:

On the shores of Yellow Paint, where the billows
loudly roar,
Where the blue-eyed zephyrs faint, and the blue-
eyed women snore,
On the bluff beside the billows—on a bold, projecting
bluff—
Stands a large and stately building, that is made of
native stuff....

(*Rhymes*, p. 304)

Even if one is not privy to the satire on contemporary state politics in "The Kansas Bandit," the parodic deployment of Jacobean poetic conventions achieves its own effects:

ALONZO: "Pause! Gold or gore."
STRANGER: "I defy thee."
ALONZO: "Defy me not. Dost thou upon that
Sand discern that object?"
STRANGER: "I do. It is a geode."
ALONZO: "It is not a geode."
STRANGER: "Then a feldspar boulder."
ALONZO: "No, no! It is a skull."
STRANGER: "Impossible!—It hath no cavity."
ALONZO: "Gaze on this burnished weapon:
Dost thou aught discover?"
STRANGER: "I do not."
ALONZO: "Gaze closer."
STRANGER: "I see a fly-speck."
ALONZO: "That is his brain, his editorial brain by
Ray of sunlight desiccated. Nay, do not shrink
With horror, but come down. My motto:
Coin or Carnage."
STRANGER: "I am a lawyer, and I stand undaunted.
Art thy name Alonzo?"
ALONZO: It art, but thine the duty not to stand a
Gassing, but aghast. Eliminate thy wealth."

(*Rhymes*, p. 320)

IV

Ware's poetic reputation, however, was that of Ironquill, the serious poet who could be sentimental or moralistic, the social commentator or the visionary philosopher. His most famous poem, "The Washerwoman's Song," was undoubtedly inspired by Hood's "Song of the Shirt," yet like his other notable social poem, "The Tobacco Stemmers," it renders a working environment effectively and asks its societal questions sympathetically but with detached skepticism. Although "The Tobacco Stemmers" specifically identifies its laborers as victims of "the laws of trade," the last stanza of the poem instead of calling for revolution, entones:

> Work on, sing on, O toilers. May the future
> Restore the world to him who works and sings.
> May justice come inflexibly decreeing
> The ample right of every human being
> To happiness and hope in present things.
> (*Rhymes*, p. 55)

Neither of these poems reveals Ware as an advocate of immediate social or intellectual change, but many readers found some lines in "The Washerwoman's Song" very controversial—in a theological sense. As the woman of the poem sings of her friend, her Savior, who "will keep me to the end," the narrator comments:

> Its song I do not sing,
> For I scarce believe a thing
> Of the stories that are told
> Of the miracles of old.
> (*Rhymes*, p. 2)

After having said that, however, that narrator does not seek to disillusion her, for he believes "Human hopes and human creeds/Have their root in human needs" (*Rhymes*, p.3), and thus have a kind of justification beyond the validity of truth.

The controversy over this poem that developed, somewhat sporadically, extended into politics and involved Ware's own beliefs. But though it certainly must have made life uncomfortable for him at times, it does not seem to have had any strong negative effects on his career. The few instances of public declarations of his beliefs make clear that he was as skeptical of arguments of philosophic materialists as he was of those of the Biblical literalists. While intellectually skeptical and at times satirical, Ware was ultimately sympathetic to sentiments as such, regarding them—perhaps with a democratic (or a Republican!) tolerance—as a necessary concomitant of the human situation.

Certainly the variety of ideas already in the air made Ware's views seem not all that unusual. The particular issue raised by the "Washerwoman" poem—that of religious belief—was, in the context of the late nineteenth century small town culture, not unexpected. A dominant intellectual conflict

in the latter half of the century was that between rising materialistic science and traditional religion, and for much of the Western world (including Fort Scott) the struggle was often a hard-fought battle. James Malin has pointed out that the key names in the conflict—Renan, Spencer, Huxley, and Darwin—"appeared repeatedly in the news articles printed in the Fort Scott *Daily Monitor* during the year 1871 and reappeared from time to time during the next five years.[21] The intellectual atmosphere of Fort Scott was in fact violently shaken by arguments from several directions. There were those impressed by the new science who insisted that henceforth religious ideas would have to be accommodated to a scientific understanding of the way the universe had to work and to the sense of progressive evolution which seemed the conclusion of Darwinian and Spencerian thought. There were proponents of a rising Spiritualism who argued that their demonstrations of the existence of immortal spirits meant that spiritual truths about the other world were now directly accessible through the senses. Finally, there were several vocal advocates of women's rights in the area. (Susan B. Anthony lectured for nearly two hours at the Fort Scott Methodist Church in July 1870.)[22]

Even though his individualism and inherent skepticism prevented Ware from identifying too closely with any of these movements, the fact that such ideas were actively circulating in the community served to stimulate his literary output. Ware's familiarity with the standard radical ideas of his day is indisputable. When the Fort Scott Institute, "a free religious society," incorporated March 1871 with the avowed purpose of "advancement of Science, the diffusion of knowledge and the maintenance of a library," the charter was notarized before Eugene Ware. Chances are, however, that he would have been directly affected by the ideas of Elisha Wesley McComas, whose brother, Judge H.C. McComas had married Ware's sister. McComas's ideas also had more intellectual pretensions than most. In 1880 McComas published an elaborately organized version of his ideas in *The Divine Problem,* a book which endeavored to explain the nature of the Divine in a scientific universe. In his essay McComas posited the atom as the basic unit of both matter and spirit in a universe that was progressively evolving. His universe was "an Infinite Being in intelligent motion—a self-evolving, intelligent Infinite,"[23] one which emphasized differentiation and individuality and in which continuous self-realization was the only good. Although there were a few arguments between the two families—some of which may have resulted from the fact that McComas was a Democrat and Ware a Republican—the ideas of McComas must have presented a serious intellectual challenge and stimulus to a mind like Ware's.

The major result of all this radical thought for poet Ware was a unique publication, a one hundred page prose essay titled *The Autobiography of Ithuriel* (1909), signed by Ironquill. The matter of this work is purported to be the dictation of the archangel Ithuriel; and it is an explanation of the universe in the manner of McComas. Save for a few concluding pages which with their picture of another world introduce a flavor of science fiction, the volume is in no sense an autobiography. Sporadically, the book has a hoaxy, bizarre

quality about it, in the manner of some of the work of Edgar Allan Poe; and in fact it may remind some readers of Poe's Eureka, another explanation of a material-spiritual universe. But just as Poe presented his more radical ideas in fantastic frameworks, so Ware seems to have chosen a poetic fictional frame for his serious speculations.

Like McComas and some others of his day, Ware seems to be trying here to bring together intellectual systems which, apart from the fact that they enjoyed a simultaneous existence as ideological forces, had little in common. What makes any attempt at synthesis, such as Ware's, appear so bizarre is the fact that in the guise of social competitors the ideas tended to reduce themselves to ludicrous claims to absolute truth. However understandable, to proceed toward mental reconciliation and assurance with such ideas is to court absurdity. The main positive feature of the ideological conflict for a poet was that it created a myriad of possibilities for marvelous fantasy.

However one chooses to regard it, Ware's book is strange. Here, as in McComas, the ultimate form of matter is the atom—but these atoms are also apparently evolving categories, capable of thought, of likes and dislikes—capable of becoming ego-atoms of men, chiefs and other atoms, good atoms and bad atoms, male atoms and female atoms. What Ware describes is a mechanical, evolutionary process, but, as the book insists, it is a process which incorporates aspiration and development for the individual unit because "it is all intellectual and it comes from the storing-up and use of experience."[24] The system generates an explanation for nearly all the intellectual problems of Ware's time: spirits exist because at death the soul-atom with its "entourage" leaves the body; thoughts are substantial and can be sent telepathically; the soul-atom is immortal; the sex of a particular human being is determined by the sex of the ego-atom but distributions of male and female atoms are mixed in most individuals; there is a small percentage of evil even in a progressive universe, but it is mainly the result of ignorance; there is no personal Satan, but there is a personal God, the Supreme Atom: "Given immortality, progress, and time, then some one atom must become supreme."[25]

As evidenced in his account of his Civil War experiences, Ware had early been wondering about strange ideas and psychic experiences. He repeatedly asked about the Mormon idea that the Indians were the lost tribes of Israel and questioned one man at length about the Mormon proof for immortality. While in the army, he had three times in one night had a nightmare in which an incubus figure threatened him by saying,"You will never see Omaha."[26] Thereafter he worried constantly about this spiritual premonition of his death. When he finally did return from the frontier war to Omaha, he vowed never again to believe in premonitions. However, he did go on to write poems with themes which anticipate the immortal atoms of *Ithuriel*. "The Violet Star," where the dying Sergeant proclaims the immortality of his spirit in terms of a solar destiny, and "The Kansas Atom," which is even more explicit about a basic pattern of progressive spiritual evolution, are both evidence of Ware's continuing fascination with an existence that went beyond a particular place and time.

V

The major themeatic struggle in Ware's poetry was not that between science and religion, but between his belief in the necessity for idealistic aspiration as a direction for life and his recognition that, despite the schemes worked out by the mind, man was always fated to deal with the actual circumstances of his existence. Most of his serious poems have something to say about this issue, but it is recurrently rather than systematically investigated.

In the last line of "The Bird Song," "Hope smiles derision at assaulting facts" *(Rhymes,* p. 59). His "Decoration Day" poem concludes:

'T is the duty of the poet,
'T is the duty of the statesman,
To inspire a nation's life with nobler aims.
(*Rhymes*, p. 96)

But "The Real" declares:

Hope's idle
Dreams the Real mainly follows,
Facts stay as fadeless as the Parthenon;
While fancies, like the smoky-tinted swallows,
Flit gaily mid its arches and are gone.
(*Rhymes*, p. 108)

And in "Whist" life is seen as a kind of fate, yet not a repellent one:

Life is a game of whist. From unseen sources
The cards are shuffled and the hands are dealt;
Blind are our efforts to control the forces
That, though unseen, are no less strongly felt.
.....
But yet I like the game and want to play.
(*Rhymes*, p. 119)

"Kriterion" puts some of the religious controversy into this tense relationship between the ideal and real, stating,

What hope reveals
Mind tries to clasp,
But soon it reels
With broken grasp

and wondering, "Is not immortality/The child of ideality?" The consideration of intution in the last stanza of this poem leads eventually to a hesitant affirmation: "Perhaps—this immorality/May be indeed reality" (*Rhymes*, p.12).

The conflict in the poetry between loyalties to the past and to the present reflects some of the same ambivalence. Basically, Ware comes down strongest on the side of the present—as, for example, in "The Short-Haired

Poet," where the long-haired poet who sings of the glories of past, of kings and gold, is bested by the modern short-haired poet who sings of the present, the iron of doing and an age of business. "The Now" poem declares more stridently, "There's Now—only Now, and no Past—there's never a past; it has ended./Away with its obsolete story, and all of its yesterday sorrow" *(Rhymes,* p.24). Even in his old age he wrote much in the same vein, though with more sense of a compromise:

> I'm giving no thought to troubles,
> Nor the past that flew away,
> But hoping the moonlit present
> May merge in the broad, bright day.
>
> (*Rhymes*, p. 89)

Yet "The Old Pioneer" in the poem of that title mourns "the faces of my childhood" "forever gone" *(Rhymes,* p.84). It is interesting to note that in the late 1890s Ware was very active in the Kansas State Historical Society and that in his last years he wrote two fine books of history based on his own experiences, *The Lyon Campaign* and *The Indian War of 1864.*

What Ware wanted perhaps was the sort of hope and dedication, wherever it might be found, that would actively move into the future, "through scars to the stars," just as the John Brown of his poem believed "Men are not great except they do and dare" in spite of "destinies that take them—/That bear them on, not knowing why or where" *(Rhymes,* p. 85). Ware saw a modern version of the historian, the Press, swindling "old Oblivion of his prey," but with a high moral sense of truth which would also, as recorder, reveal "The frightful havoc of some foeman's steal;/Like porcupines to fling a lively quill" *(Rhymes,* p. 297).

This was undoubtedly how Ware saw his poetic mission, part of the business of "building up the empire of the West" (*Rhymes*, p.300). He dreamed of a Kansas in which the prairies

> Feel the breath of summer,
> The trowels ring,
> And from the soil the burnished cities spring,
>
> (*Rhymes*, p. 172)

a Kansas that would "shine"

> In the stories and songs
> That are told and are sung
> Of undaunted reliance.
>
> (*Rhymes*, p. 12)

But behind all of his visionary faith was the sense of an eternal and an uncertain plodding toward a goal—a working at the world, even a mockery of it, that would come to be, from time to time, a working with the world. The degree of persistence that he was prepared to put into this kind of living was perhaps best embodied in his description of a Civil War prairie trek in the winter:

And so we went, running our horses and then running on foot, all day. Riding against the wind was unpleasant; all of us had our heads muffled up in the capes of our overcoats, and we kept our roadway by peering through openings in folds of our capes. As we were riding against the wind we would look out through our capes with one eye. In a little while the tears of that eye would be frozen up, and vision entirely obscured; then we would shift our capes to the other eye while we warmed up with our hands and thawed the ice out from the other eye. We thus alternated all day....[27]

Notes

[1]Eugene F. Ware, *The Indian War of 1864,* introd. Clyde C. Walton (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1960), p. 28

[2]"A Corn Poem," Fort Scott [Kan.] *Weekly Monitor,* 6 July 1876, p. 4.

[3]Eugene F. Ware, *The Rhymes of Ironquill,* Foreword, William Allen White, 15th ed. (New York: G.P. Putnam, 1939), p. 269.

[4]Eugene F. Ware, "History of the Sun-Gold Section," *Kansas Historical Quarterly,* 6 (August 1937): 310.

[5]James C. Malin, "Eugene F. Ware, Journeyman Poet—Acceptance by Fort Scott," *Kansas Historical Quarterly,* 31 (Winter 1965): 396. Referred to hereafter as Malin, "Journeyman Poet."

[6]Ibid., p. 400.

[7]Advertisement, Fort Scott *Weekly Monitor,* 20 Nov. 1867, p. 5.

[8]Malin, "Journeyman Poet," p. 406.

[9]"Life of Eugene Ware," unpublished master's thesis, Kansas State Teachers College (now Pittsburg State University), 1936, p. 40. Grace Lowry was a niece of Ware.

[10]Malin, "Journeyman Poet," p. 400.

[11]Ware, *Indian War,* p. 71.

[12]Ibid., p. 131.

[13]Charles E. Cory, "Eugene Fitch Ware as a Literary Man," *Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society,* 13 (1913-14): 56.

[14]Judson S. West, "Eugene Ware," *Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society,* 13 (1913-14): 65.

[15]James C. Malin, "Notes on the Several Editions of Eugene F. Ware's *Rhymes of Ironquill,*" *Kansas Historical Quarterly,* 33 (Winter 1967): 509-510.

[16]Cory, p. 59.

[17]James C. Malin, "Notes on the Poetic Debts of Eugene F. Ware—Ironquill," *Kansas Historical Quarterly,* 35 (Summer 1969): 172.

[18]James C. Malin, "Eugene F. Ware's Literary Chronology," *Kansas Historical Quarterly,* 37 (August 1971): 318.

[19]James C. Malin, *Ironquill-Paint Creek Essays* (Lawrence, Kan.: Coronado Press, 1971), p. 13.

[20]Lowry, pp. 44-45.

[21]James C. Malin, "Kansas Philosophers, 1871—T.B. Taylor, Joel Moody, and Edward Scheller," *Kansas Historical Quarterly, 24 (Summer 1958): 170.*

[22] *Ibid., p. 188.*

[23] *James C. Malin, "'Creative Evolution': The Philosophy of Elisha Wesley McComas, Fort Scott," Kansas Historical Quarterly,* 24 (Autumn 1958): 327.

[24]Ironquill, *The Autobiography of Ithuriel,* 2nd ed. [sic] (Topeka, Kan.: Crane & Co., 1909), p. 30.
[25]Ibid., p. 79.
[26]Ware, *Indian War,* p. 319.
[27]Ibid., p. 350.

Bibliographic Note: Anyone who writes on Eugene F. Ware as poet is greatly indebted to the work of James C. Malin, former Professor of History at the University of Kansas. A bibliographic list of Malin's extensive writing about Ware may be found in the back of his book, *Ironquill-Paint Creek Essays* (Lawrence, Kan.: Coronado Press, 1971).

Some Questions for a Boy
So Badly Burned in a Prairie Fire that He Had to Tell His Doctors Who He Was:
Otis, Kansas

Crisp, were you crisp as breaking bacon, or
Crisp like American fries will get after
Too long and not enough cooking grease?
Burned on the bottom, edges curled?

Did you bend up at both ends,
Doing a bad sit-up
Like a quick roasted hot-dog,
And did someone scrape and flake
The black crust off?

Were cock pheasants gliding toward shallow sandy creeks?
Were the cottonwoods yellow?
Doves in pairs on power lines?

Robert Day

Meadowlark **Mike Gullett**

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Compiled by Melissa DeChicchio, Dale Peak, and Gene DeGruson

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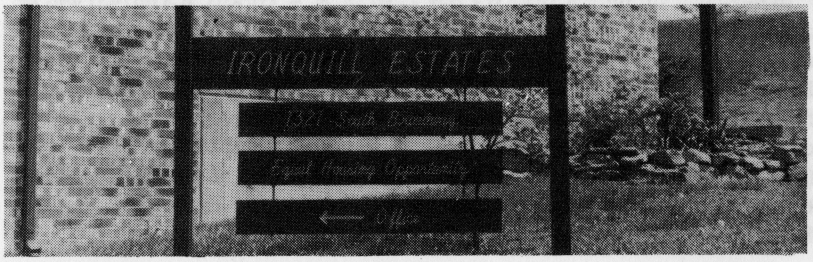

Contributors

JIMMY AUBERT (R. 1, LaHarpe, KS 66751) has a new collection of poems, **Baker's Dozen** (Richford, VT: Samisdat, 1983) • **SEBASTIAN SHIN-PAN CHOU** (c/o 601 Grandview Heights Terrace, Pittsburg, KS 66762) has offered to create paintings for interested customers, the proceeds of which will help finance his doctoral studies • **THOMAS BRUCE DANIEL** (1503 S. Olive, Pittsburg, KS 66762) is professor of physics at Pittsburg State University • **ROBERT DAY** is wending his way toward Kansas, where he will be shooting a film this fall • **GARY FINCKE** (401 N. 9th St., Selinsgrove, PA 17870) has had work published recently in **Poetry, Mid-American Review**, and **Southern Poetry Review** • **ZULA BENNINGTON GREENE** (1205 Mulvane, Topeka, KS 66604) can be seen on HBO in the television movie, **Mary White**, in which she has a cameo role • **MIKE GULLETT** (204 S. Central, Chanute, KS 66720) is now staff photographer for the Chanute **Tribune** • **MARY HOLSTINE** (109 N. Cherokee, Frontenac, KS 66762) is now Mary Holstine Gray, who appeared earlier in the LBR (1.4) with "A Fisherwoman's Tale" • **ELIZABETH LAYTON** (Wellsville, KS 66092) has had her first New York showing at the SoHo Gallery, and is currently exhibiting in Washington, D.C., where her drawings are exciting rave reviews • **QUINTON MATSON** (99 W. Washington, Pittsburg, KS 66762) is a native of Fort Scott, majoring in foreign languages at Pittsburg State University • **STEPHEN MEATS** (104 S. Olive, Pittsburg, KS 66762), chair of the Pittsburg State English Department, commemorates the death of Tom Hemmens, late member of the Kansas Arts Commission, beloved founder of the Pittsburg Community Theatre, and friend of many colleagues and former students • **GLADYS M. MUNDT** (1112 S. Broadway, Pittsburg, KS 66762) has contributed a cover story on Eva Jessye to the LBR, as well as poems • **CURTIS PENLAND** (115 W. 21st, Joplin, MO 64801) is a graduate student in history at Pittsburg State University • **ALICE L. PRICE** (2506 S. Cincinnati, Tulsa, OK 74114) previously appeared in the Louise Brooks issue of the LBR, as well as in numerous other publications • **JOAN RITTY** (10070 Mission Rd., Overland Park, KS 66206) is fast becoming familiar to LBR readers as both poet and fiction writer • **WALTER SHEAR** (1915 S. Taylor, Pittsburg, KS 66762), a professor in the PSU English Department, is currently writing a biographical study of "Slim" Andrews of KOAM-TV for the **LBR** • **JOE SPEER** (3007 Purdue Dr., Roswell, NM 88201) read his poems at the White Buffalo in Pittsburg last summer • **JERI DAWN TIMI** (R.R. 4, Girard, KS 66743) will be a senior at Girard High School this fall, when she will compete in the 4-H national talent contest. She is a member of the Reflections, directed by Janis DeChicchio • **LOIS V. WALKER** (P.O. Box 6, Old Bethpage, NY 11804) states that her poem was "imagined from an iron-fenced graveyard for a German couple seen in the Flint Hills of Kansas, graves dated 1886" • **TED WATTS** (Box 303, Oswego, KS 67356), art and graphics editor of the LBR, in doing this quarter's drawings of contributors and the cover, makes true the motto of Kansas: "To the stars through difficulties."

INVITATION TO SUBSCRIBE

This page is ordinarily entitled "Invitation to Submit." It has been so successful, we thought we might hold off on contributions for an issue or so (we have many beautiful and exciting poems, articles, and art "on hold" for forthcoming issues—and Betty Sybrant is exploring "The Kansas Roots of Elizabeth Taylor"). Use this page for a subscription blank, which you may either cut out or photocopy for yourself or friends and relatives.

With volume four, we are going to attempt to do without state and federal funding. This does not mean that we do not appreciate the generous support given us the past three volumes by the Kansas Arts Commission or the National Endowment of the Arts. Far from it. We can never be thankful enough to those agencies with heart. But "Little Balkans" means independence, so with the next issue it's either sink or swim. Subscriptions will tell whether the time and effort needed to write, edit, print, and distribute is worthwhile. Our critical acclaim has been surprisingly manganimous; our contributors include more and more of the most prestigious writers with each issue. (The winter issue will astound the most skeptical!) But what really counts is readership. We have foregone salaries and paid-help in order to keep a $10 subscription charge. With a thousand more subscribers, there might even be a reduction in rates. In any event, the decision is up to you. We would appreciate your support.

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