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Belles Lettres, 1943

Eastern Kentucky University, The Canterbury Club

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Belles Lettres



1943

Belles Lettres

An annual anthology of student writing sponsored and published by the
Canterbury Club of Eastern Kentucky State Teachers College
at Richmond, Kentucky

Editor ----- Mary Betty Strachan
Associate Editor ----- Mary Lou Lucy
Business Manager ----- Margaret Virginia Stevenson
Faculty Sponsor ----- Roy B. Clark, Ph. D.

VOLUME NINE

NINETEEN HUNDRED FORTY-THREE

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FOREWORD

Under circumstances greatly altered from any previous year we are publishing the 1943 volume of *Belles Lettres*. We have tried, nevertheless, to maintain the same high quality of student creative writing as always and to present material representative of different types of writing and of the students at Eastern. The editors, then, present the ninth annual volume to its readers for their enjoyment.

PRAYER FOR 1943

Jeanne Ruark

Lord, send us light,
That we may see
Across the troubled waters of our time;
That we may sight a goal
And set our course
And steer through storm and strife with
heads held high.

Lord, give us faith,
That we may trust
In Right to conquer evil word and deed;
That we may courage own
And fear dismay
And know that someday peace will reign
supreme.

Lord, teach us love,
That we may show
Compassion for all men in war-torn lands;
That we may justice mete
To gain our goal—
The Universal Brotherhood of Man.

MASK

Beverly Moseley

It always seems so strange to me
When bidding friends goodbye
I find myself without a tear
While others always cry.
I shrug my shoulders, "It is nothing."
And my eyes are dry;
No one knows that I am bluffing—
No one hears my sigh.
It looks as if I do not care;
I laugh in grand delight;
But after they have long forgot,
I cry alone at night.

HIS INHERITANCE

Roberta Booth Stevenson

There he is—his child,
Sitting on the floor gleefully playing.
He is oh so young, but quite a man.
There he sits with the toy plane he loves so much.

Already he looks like his father
With deep brown eyes and curly hair that'll require frequent cutting.
He has that same dimple in his chin and that half smile,
half grin.

His mother, watching him intently playing with his plane,
Remembers the stories another mother told of another
little boy and *his* plane.
That other little boy did not lose his interest;
And, when he grew up, he learned to fly.

First he flew for the love of it,
Then because there was a war to be won.
He had great skill and took every chance to use it,
But one day he flew, forever, out of sight.

It was quite a blow,
To lose her brave young loved one,
But she knew he had tried with all his heart and mind
and skill
To make the world right for his son and her.

She was suddenly aroused from her dreams
When she heard the child crying.
"What's the matter, my darling son?"
The toy airplane had hurt his hand.

POLKA DOTS

Evelyn Hunt

A monotonous ribbon of concrete stretched itself lazily along the terrain. It spiraled upward until the road sign displayed its livid yellow warning of a sharp curve ahead. It was just another curve following the rim of the precipice that steeped down to a tangled struggle of nature. The travelers on that humid summer afternoon rounded

the curve and froze at the sight of deep-stained rubber tracks that screamed their terror in fancy even now. There was, at the end of the tire stains, a gapping guard rail, and balancing itself there, a bumper, and a wheel spent with its insistent whirling. Slowly the gloom lengthened, and the place reeked with a stifling sense of death.

The crowd stopped soon after that and went down in prying curiosity to see. They came up again hushed in the presence of death. Questions were endless as necks craned out of windows as the cars passed on down the road. The badges of authority, arriving on the scene of the accident, barked at the milling crowd that fell back of its own accord as the bodies were borne up. Below in the twisted mass of steel was found only an identification bracelet, United States Navy, and a wide-brimmed, polka dot summer hat.

People, hardened people of an age of speed, passed by with their sneering opinions. There was the lady with her pekinese in her copious lap, who tossed out by the way of comment to her chauffeur, "That's just what comes of this younger generation." And there was the overly pious little deacon who swore it was just another evidence of the liquor evil. Little they knew, these people of the road. They would never know.

On ahead of that curve was a little town, a little town with its Main Street, drug store cowboys, and back fence, wash day gossips. There it was that Sandy had spent her years in pigtailed as the town's tomboy. A bridge of freckles across her nose was supported with eyes that smiled deeply at you.

Sandy and Pop were all there was left in the ramshackled farm on the outskirts of town. Pop ran a rather weather-worn garage and tinkered there with his inventions. Somehow, though, Pop's ingenious schemes didn't turn out; and when the war broke at last, finances at the Todds' dropped mighty low.

When Sandy's graduation came around, she went with Ken, the fellow next door. Ken stood strong with youth, not very handsome, but his deep-set eyes well matched the smile of Sandy's with a laugh. Somehow she didn't mind going with him in her rather old polka dotted formal to the graduation dance. Why, he even complimented the old polka dotted thing; he'd said that he loved her that way, all natural, all Sandy herself. "I love you in polka dots, Sandy," he'd barely whispered as they drove home.

Then, around the bend in the road they saw a light in

the garage. The light grew; it wasn't a light now; it was a fire!

Pop had been trapped in that fire and figured out his last "sure thing" invention. Sandy was left without anything sure, except Ken, maybe. It is funny, though, the cruel twists time can keep taking. War boomed forth in the world, and Ken went off in blue to the United States Navy.

Somehow she steeled herself to Ken's leaving, but still another blow struck. It was a stark fact, nevertheless. Her eyes smiled dimly through a rim of tears. Yes, Dr. Harris had whispered, "Incurable heart disease; at best three months to live!"

One month passed, and Ken's letters came less frequently, and they were even more deeply tainted with a hardened spirit responding to war. Sandy read through it all a fear of death. What was changing him? Her Ken hadn't been like that before.

The second month came, and Sandy had taken on a delirious abandonment. Borrowed money gave her clothes and fineries she had only dreamed of before. Then she decided to take a trip to the coast, and her three months would nearly be up.

Uncanny, but Sandy, strolling down a quaint side street, there in a window, saw a wide-brimmed, polka dotted hat. The material was very much like that old formal of hers years ago. From under the brim of the hat was it possible that there up ahead was Ken? How? Why is he back? Will he be able to tell that I'm to die soon? Why didn't he let me know he was coming? It it really Ken? The questions raced through her mind.

"Sandy," came as the answer to her thoughts. The epochs of time apart faded while above the noise of the street she heard something whispered about polka dots.

It was true! A weekend on shore! In the car speeding home with a comforting silence between them, Sandy studied him from her corner.

Slowly in an almost monotone he began, "At first, Sandy, I was terribly afraid. It was a livid hell of death, and I wanted to hide my face and run. Run! Do you hear, Sandy? I was a coward!"

"Ken, you were never a coward."

"I fought it with all my soul. I screamed to God and asked Him why He didn't see what I saw—blood-mangled bodies—whining destruction—then lightning death!"

"I prayed every night, Ken, that—" and her voice broke with tears that needed to be held back.

"Sandy, that was it. Somehow, I heard prayers, and dreamed dreams of polka dots, steeling myself to the stink about me."

"I doesn't matter now. Nothing matters except that you are here, Ken."

"But I must go back to it all. Yet, death holds no meaning now, just rest perhaps. Sandy, are you—do you fear it? You didn't tell me, but I heard—heard about the three months and I knew I must come back."

"Ken," she cried in a broken voice, rambling on. "I didn't want you to know. The doctors don't know for sure. They're often wrong and—and—oh, yes, Ken, I'm afraid, terribly afraid! You won't be there. Dying—one does it alone—and the thought of it frightens me."

"Yes, alone, Sandy. Maybe I'm crazy, but then isn't our whole world, your world and mine? It's all crazy! See that hill? Remember the picnics and hikes we took up there, and the rides on lazy Sunday afternoons. Yes, and those things we planned haven't come true, have they, Sandy?"

"We have each other yet, Ken."

"For how long? For how long? Look, we're almost there now. Listen to me, let's view it for the last time together. The world couldn't take our dreams from us then."

"Ken, you couldn't mean—" and the words faded on her lips.

"Sandy, it wouldn't be hard this way, because we'd be together, just you and I—in death."

The curve came up ahead and the precipice was yawning far below. Hands grasped! A splintering crash—then—

"I love you in polka dots, Sandy!"

"Ken!"

INEVITABLE

Anita Beatrice Goins

They come; they go;

Below a crimson pattern.

A tangled mass of humanity;

Flames, shrapnel, death;

Fleeing formations against a purple horizon,

Gloating chuckles from bloodless lips;

They too will be a pattern.

Other formations have stolen over the west.

JUST A YEAR AGO TODAY

Sarah Sexton

A year ago
I stood upon that distant hill, alone,
At that sweet time, 'twixt night and day,
Surrounded by the quiet cool of dawn,
And watched you as you swiftly rode away,
Until my eyes were blinded by hot tears
And I could see no more, then slowly turned
To grope my weary way back down the street again.
'Twas just a year ago today.

A year ago
I stood just where you stood to say goodbye,
And for a moment's space of time, I knew
Just how it felt to swiftly, briefly die.

'Twas just a year ago today
You said goodbye and that you'd come again;
Yet since that time a century has passed,
A century which seemed to have no end,
A century filled with grief and lonely tears,
With prayers for justice, freedom, peace, and right,
With faith and hope and aching, hoping fears,
Turmoil, chaos, and many a sleepless night.

'Twas just a year ago today
I humbly knelt beside my bed to pray;
And, as I knelt in yielding silence there,
To God I offered up this pleading prayer:
"Dear God, you know I love him so;
'Twas worse than death for me to let him go,
But he is gone—so now, my prayer will be
That You will bring him safely back to me."

TWO UNKNOWNNS

Clyde E. Greenwood

In a purple lighted chapel
Shrouded by moonlight rays,
At an altar silently kneeling,
The unknown mother prays.
Her prayer is simple and holy
As every prayer should be,
And among things she asks

Is that the world again be free.
Clasping her hands firmly,
She looks to the great expanse,
Then with flowing tears she asks,
"O God, why is my sorrow immense?
Why have I given the all I had
To offer to the future dear
While those who have only money
Just grab for more and sneer?
There is something in me, Dear Lord
That has somehow made me know
That whatever I may do or say
My son must surely know.
If he may be there with you, O Lord,
Please let him listen in
While his mother tells him
Of the world where he has been."

"Jonny, this is mother
From the chapel across the way—
You remember, Jonny, the place
Where we all would go to pray.
Things have changed, Jonny,
Since you went away—
Your father died a short time back,
And your sister went astray.
She was terribly young, Jonny,
But we had to let her go;
The fellow she married wasn't much—
I'm sorry, my boy, we loved her so.
Jonny, the neighbors ask of you;
And when we heard the last,
They felt a lingering loss
From the friendly circle of the past.
I tried to be brave, Jonny;
That was too much for me;
I became the midnight wanderer
Along the Crystal Sea.

Tears have burned my eyes
Until I can shed no more;
Minutes are ageing years
That had left me young before.
While in my deepest sorrow
I found my way to fight;
It was a mesage from God
Who came to me by night.

I'm sure you know, Jonny,
What God must have said
And I can see you now—
Garbed in pure white—not as the dead.”

“Mother, I am the unknown soldier
From the drill field
On Heaven's plain
Where never a sin has touched,
Neither a patriot slain;
Human blood stained not this ground;
No hatred has triumphed here—
This the dedicated honor
To the men under God's care.
I gave my life on earth
In combat quite serene,
At the hands of a fellow soldier
That I had never seen.
The fight I fought
Was my part to make all free,
And others will free the land
Where my marker will always be.
I met God in the morning, Mother,
Just before the day
That ended my life on earth
And He gave me a place to stay.”

THE BUGLE CALL

Billie Talmadge Layman

(Day is done.... gone the sun....

The sky was tinted dark and gray;
The caskets on the ground were laid;
The American flag was flying high,
Waving where the soldiers lay.
A woman's sobs were faintly heard,
Crying soft a mumbled word,
“He's gone from me; he seems so near.”
She wiped from off her cheek a tear.
Far o'er the hill came soft and long
The soldiers' call, a bugle song.

....from the sky....say goodbye....
Day is done.)

A POET'S LAST WISH

Juanita Markham

The last he saw of the town was the glimpse he got of the valley as the bus crept slowly up the mountain road. There the town slept, surrounded by the hills, covered with the early morning mist, through which the half-awakened sun was sending its first beams.

In his peculiar way, he had been happy in the valley. In his own way, he had made his particular friendships and had denied those friendships which didn't appeal to his nature.

He loved the valley; it had given him his first start in poetry. The tall, silent mountains, the leaf-covered hills, the lake—all inspired him. The mountains pointed the way to wisdom, to patience, and to understanding. The hills taught him kindness and a friendliness unknown to many. The lake brought to him a sense of mystery, a sense of not quite being able to see clearly what he was meant to do.

Many times he had tried to join his classmates in their gatherings. He had tried to be one of them. But, somehow, the harder he tried to fit in, the more ill-at-ease he felt. It was only when he was alone in his room that he felt free, felt himself able to do the thing he enjoyed doing—writing poems.

One thing that he was never able to understand was that no one seemed to understand his poetry. He only wrote what he felt, but other people failed to interpret his poems as he meant them to be interpreted.

He knew his schoolmates thought he was queer. He had heard whispered remarks and had felt actions which spoke more clearly and more distinctly than uttered words could have spoken. He was not particularly interested in those subjects which distracted his energy from his writings. That was one reason why he had fallen behind his class—a very disgraceful thing in that town. That was the reason he had transferred from the city school to the county school during his last year.

That was the year he sold his first poem—he was paid ten dollars for it, the first money he had ever really earned. The town failed to notice his triumph. After a while he found that it didn't hurt him to think of the town's ignoring him. Perhaps it had always ignored him. The town was tough. It could take rough treatment and could hurt those who loved it. The town was overflowing with pettiness,

shoddiness, little deeds which all added up to giving a lover of the town sorrow and unhappiness.

He couldn't help believing that the town's treatment of him had carried him through the roughness of army life, the hardships of fighting above a strange desert in a plane put together with gadgets taken from other planes that were too worn-out to fight any longer. Yes, the town had helped him to endure the suffering brought about by having a plane shot from under him.

He had done a great deal of thinking while he had been lying there on his hospital cot. He had decided that poetry and the inventions of science were strange companions. If other towns had not resembled his own so much, if all peoples were not so selfish and small in their wishes, perhaps he now would not be here dying. Perhaps others like him might now be happily living in the place they loved best.

Oh! if only he might see the town once more.

There it slept, surrounded by the hills, covered with a mist through which the half-awakened sun was sending its first beams.

RAIN IS FULL OF MEMORIES

Nina Mayfield

The rain is full of memories,
Of people, days, events.
My mind turns backward through the years
To blessings and laments.

Each drop is a kaleidoscope,
Of hate, and grief, and pain,
Of sweetness, ecstasy, and love;
I see them all in rain.

A day in March comes back to mind,
A walk through rain and storm;
Back home again before the fire,
We talked secure and warm.

The soft, warm rains of spring recall
The hyacinth's perfume;
Each drop brings with it from the sky
God's love to make them bloom.

A steady, soaking rain brings back
Those blessed August drops.
The very heavens seem to want
To save the parched crops.

Yes, rain is full of memories;
That's why I love it so.
These precious treasures from the past,
I'll have where'er I go.

LONELY MEDITATION

Betty Strachan

Some mountains boom a song
Of war and hate;
Some witness weary labor,
Futile toil;
Some challenge men to climb
Their sides
To make their feet the stars of lower,
Common worlds.
But there are hills whose solemn grace
Is fitted
Only to hum of peace and God.
We are escapists
Who seek your meditative chapels,
Half-hermits, poets,
Queer people. Thank God that everyone
Knows not
The lonely comfort of your tranquil
Silence.

WALTZ DREAM

Mary Richards

Rachel swept her long, slender fingers over the keys of the little ivory spinnet piano. Life was Rachel's this morning. She had now everything she had always wanted. She sighed and arose from the piano. Sunlight flooded the music room enclosed in the three sides by glass windows. Rachel walked to the ivory phonograph and put on Strauss' "Tales from the Vienna Woods." She threw open the windows to let the morning air in.

Below, to the north and east of the house lay a garden.

Rachel stood in rapt silence by the window and watched the garden awaken to her as the Vienna woods had awakened to Strauss. Honeysuckle, dewladen, sent up a priceless perfume to her expectant nostrils. The roses shook themselves, rubbed their sleepy eyes and started to unfold. The clematis vine over the white love seat of the garden awakened slowly. The birds, up long before Rachel, were coloring the garden; their flight was a waltz to the rhythm of Strauss.

Rachel, her heart bursting with happiness, began to waltz around the bright little music room. How much better was this Kentucky June morning in a lovely suite of rooms than life in a dingy New York apartment! Waltzing around, she touched each lovely thing in the room with feathery lightness. She stopped before the picture of Dan in the ivory frame. Her sparkling white teeth flashed in a smile and her brown eyes showed their approval of him in his uniform topped by a silver bar on his shoulder.

Rachel started "Vienna Woods" over again. She waltzed into the bedroom adjoining the music room. Here, the bright curtains blowing in the morning breeze and the new maple bedroom suite sent a thrill of joy to Rachel's heart. Unable to contain herself Rachel waltzed around, tenderly carressing all the precious objects in the room. She loved it all; the array of cologne and perfume on the dressing table especially thrilled Rachel—some for every time and occasion. Her eyes she raised to the safe in the wall beside the maple dressing table. Rachel's heart thrilled as she thought of the rings, necklaces, and bracelets it contained. As she thought of the jewels, her black eyes gave the diamonds competition by their brilliance.

She sighed and waltzed gracefully to the door at one end of the bedroom. She opened the door and stopped, wide-eyed at the spectacle which had never ceased to awe her. Rows of fresh, cool-looking summer dresses of all kinds and colors stood before her. Shorts, slacks, swing skirts, and frilly blouses helped to fill the closet. Dinner dresses and evening gowns and wraps helped make the picture complete. Rachel threw open the cedar chest in the closet and gazed at the summer sweaters stored there. Gently, almost tenderly, she put the lid down on the chest, backed out of the closet and shut the door.

Her eager feet, unwilling to stand still one minute, led her to a door in another part of the bedroom. This led to the black and white tile bathroom of the suite. She kick-

ed off her shoes and let her toes sink into the bear-skin bath mat as she prepared to let the bath water run.

From below Rachel could hear a noise breaking in on her pleasant thought. Louder it came until it became distinct. "Rachel, Rachel! What you doin', chile, in Miss Sue's suite? Get yo'self down here and dust the libbing room. Miss Sue'll be back with that lieutenant man any minute, and dis house won't be clean. Sometimes I wish I'd left you in Noo York with your good-fer-nuthin' pappy."

"Ise comin', Mammy. Yes'm, I'se comin'," called Rachel.

THE ARMISTICE, A SACRED PACT?

Jeanne Ruark

Attention! Hark! The bugle sounds!
Its notes are ringing clear;
And on the crisp November air
They rise and echo everywhere
From South Sea isle to Scottish mere.

"Rejoice! Rejoice!" the people shout,
"For war is o'er today ;
Let's cast out thoughts of gloomy days,
And lift our songs of joyous praise
And pray that peace will reign for aye!"

About face! Halt! Who cometh here?
Who dares to break the trust?
Beware, you traitors to the pact!
You conquer now; your greatest act
Shall sink at last to crumbling dust!

EPHEMERAL

Betty Strachan

My image cannot be retained
In this dark water
After I am gone, I thought,
Looking into the forest pool.
The now, this moment,
Is my image in the dark water.
I move away from the forest pool
And the now, this moment,
Becomes my shadow on the grass.

WHEN LEAVES FALL

Anita Beatrice Goins

When leaves fall,
A world, a year, or a century for someone
May be whispered softly in rustling autumn leaves,
Strewn in puppet-like gestures upon a frost-bitten earth.

In autumn leaves one seems to see recorded
Memories of a silent past:

Smiles and laughter of gala joys;
New friends; or, perchance,
A gay party under umbrella-like leaves of green
Accentuated by brightly colored lanterns—
Lanterns whose mellow glow
Seems to whisk one far away to lands oriental;
To Cathay, to spice-jeweled India,
To Japan, to Egypt;
And then, inevitably comes—
Within the caverns of our minds—
Echoed beat of remembered poetic lines:
"On the road to Mandalay
Where the flying fishes play,
And the dawn comes up like thunder
Out of China 'cross the bay."

There is mystic pathos in piles of autumn leaves:
The memory of a walk in June;
The poignant remorse of a dear one's ingratitude;
Or the hollow, tremulous echo of a friend's farewell.

Drums of war and marching feet;
Din of battle, cursed yells of devils loosed from hell
To crush a wayward humanity.
Fear and death; tears and agony
On fields of blue and white;
And stars and stripes and prayers.
And then, there is purple mist of faded dreams
Against a wall of dark reality,
As harsh as blackest, glistening satin.

(Ah, thou gracious, inspiring evergreen,
Symbolic of that which is stable, divine and desirable!)

Jagged the leafless trees point heavenward to winter stars.

The moon in an unfailling circuit

Creeps upward, onward, earthward,
Pausing not, nor respecting a simple season.
Yet on the yellowed parchment of leaves
Is scrawled by destiny's eternal finger
One moment's message of centuries—
One atom in the boundless enmity of a universe of
eternity.

Ah, endless, infinite age,
Life that is, and life that is not;
As leaves to gently rustle in their earthward journey
To be absorbed in thy great bosom—
Take me at my season's end—
And old and withered parchments of my recorded
time—
And may I rest a diffused atom of thy greatness.

STARS ON THE RIVER

Betty Williams

The river is calm by twilight,
The stars rise one by one
As softly approaches the night-time
After the glow of the sun.

The stars shine into the river;
Reflected in beauty, they glow;
With each ripple a tiny shiver
Of light is reflected below.

Mystery, beauty, reflection
Below in water of black,
And silver in every direction
Following, track after track.

DEAR SUZANNE

Christine Chestnut

Fletcher University
Franklin, Kentucky
July 23, 1942

Dear Suzanne,

We haven't been keeping up our correspondence very well, have we? I have just been turning through my diary to see what has happened since I wrote you last. I couldn't resist the temptation of turning back a few months and reminiscing. That is the only way I can get away from the thoughts of war.

It seems a long time since you and Chris quit school and went to Tennessee to get married.

Haven't we had fun? I was just reading—

July 18, 1940

We have had a wonderful time here in the beach in Florida, but we will be returning home to morrow. Suzanne and I have been trying to select the right shades of cosmetics for our suntans. We hope to furnish some keen competition for the other kids back home.

I can hardly believe we were once so silly and light-hearted, but everything was different before the war. Suzanne, remember—it was that summer immediately after we returned from Florida that I met Terry McDowell. He was so utterly different from anyone that I had ever known. He was exciting to be with; maybe, it was because Mother disapproved. She had heard the idle gossip that no good would ever come of him. He was a spendthrift, with words and money, too. I would try to get provoked with his drinking, loose talk, and fast driving, but, you know, it's most difficult to be provoked at a spendthrift if he is throwing his money away on you. Likewise, it's hard to condemn loose talk if it is used to flatter you.

July 22, 1940

Swimming date with Mac. Who said swims were cooling?

July 25, 1940

Bluegrass Palace with Mac. A wonderful moon, a wonderful orchestra, a wonderful date and a SWELL time.

July 26, 1940

Luncheon bridge at Ann's. I had "wonderful hands;" maybe that's the reason Mac held them.

July 31, 1940

Boatride tonight with Mac.

Aug. 1, 1940

Jayne and Harry gave a scavenger hunt. Mac and I came in second.

Aug. 3, 1940

Mac and I attended Nancy's sunrise breakfast. He looks good in the morning sun too!

Aug. 6, 1940

Mac and I went to a dance. Mary and Jack went with us. A swell time.

I must have been pretty crazy, but I had never had so

much fun. You know how I always was, Suzanne. I always tried to be sensible and thought such a life rather empty. I had never done those things before. I wasn't surprised when Phil blew up about my dating Mac. Good old Phil—always the same. He never ran around with the gang. He said he never had time; he was so set in getting that degree! But I knew, I knew he had no patience with their kind. He didn't have any ancestors to brag about; he told me, but he would build a name as he systematically lay back each month for that stone home with blue shutters.

As I started to say, Suzanne, it was after a show one bargain night that Phil turned his broad shoulders in front of me and said, "Look here, Judy, we've dated since high school days. It is generally known and accepted that you are my girl. We are alike, and I don't intend for you to be out with Mac." It was then about eleven, his conventional hour to leave. "Goodnight, my dear," he said. He left so quickly that when I turned, I could see only his shadow pass under the street light.

As I said, I was not surprised at that; I had expected it. But I hadn't expected what followed.

Aug. 24, 1940

Phil came down this morning with a notice from the draft board. He leaves Aug. 29. I can't imagine his crying as he did. I told him that we would make the next five days count; we would do everything he liked.

Aug. 25, 1940

Played golf with Phil all afternoon—completely exhausted.

Aug. 26, 1940

A terrible storm came up tonight. Phil and I made chili after we packed some of his old books in the attic for the duration. We left out Shakespeare and a physics book for him to take with him.

Aug. 27, 1940

Phil and I played Bingo at the stand and at the livestock show at the county fair tonight. Phil said that didn't take much money, and we won a lovely ice tea set. One of the glasses is chipped. The gentleman offered to replace it with an odd glass, but Phil refused since the odd glass had a picture of a bubble dancer on it.

Aug. 28, 1940

Phil and I drove across the river to Caseville for

the band concert, and stopped in the hill just above the bridge at a little stand and ate watermelon.

Aug. 29, 1940

Since Phil asked me not to be at the city hall when the boys left, I waited on our steps and waved goodbye as his bus pulled by. A drizzling rain.

And then we came back to school. We had lots of fun. Do you remember how keen our football team was? And now here I am, still at school. The last letter I got from Phil was so cut up by the censors, I could not get one complete statement out of it. That was over a month ago—before he joined McArthur. No one has heard since. . . .

Suzanne, I had the strangest dream the other night. Do you believe in predictions through dreams? Oh, how silly of me.

It was one night last week right after Mac had received his call to report to Fort Richards, and I was staring at the grounds in my coffee cup (I've learned to drink coffee straight now—without sugar.) wondering what the future held. The first thing I knew, I was going around, around, and around. Mac never stopped spinning you when he danced. We danced and laughed to the tune of the orchestra of every "honkytonk" in town. I had forgotten about my troubles and the troubles of the whole world. Mac always had a way of lifting your load with a tune and tossing it behind with his individualistic laugh. He believed in lifting your load, but not carrying it himself. Tomorrow he would take his place under the load of the army, and he was happy about it. He was glad to have part in re-establishing laughter in the world, and when he returned—"why of course, I'll return," he said. "Oh, I may not be in this same suit of featural clothes but there will be thousands of soldiers returning and thousands of new born soldiers growing up with this same American spirit. Where some "jive" is being slung from a "juke box," where there is a cry from a fast turning automobile tire, where some soft waltz floats from a ritzy night club, where a moon shines down on a lake, where squirrels and birds play in a dense woodland, where smoke is thick from factories, where the sun ripens the fields of grain, where organ melodies drift from cathedrals—don't worry, I'll be there. Yes, where there is laughter, happiness, and peace—where there is REAL Life, you can say, 'Hi, Soldier.' "

The next morning came so vividly for a dream. As I glanced over the ads in the paper, I noticed the section of

deaths. "Mr. Terry McDowell, age 25, 124 Rosland Drive, Middletown, Ky. Automobile wreck."

Years passed in the span of a few seconds. It seemed as though I went through my first year as a teacher rather mechanically. Day in and day out the typewriters sounded the same, and day in and day out Joey reported to the detention hall. I was playing the piano and teaching in the Intermediate Department at Sunday School when Mr. Timberlake, Chairman of the Board of Deacons, presented Clifford Coffman—Rev. Clifford Coffman—to me. The Board has sent him to our community to serve as our pastor.

He was a good pastor, earnest and sincere. He preached sin and condemned it; he offered new happiness in faith. New happiness, that's what I needed and that's what everyone needed—especially now. All the members caught the inspiration and the vision, and through the help of Rev. Coffman, we developed a fine speech in keeping with the present crisis. I knew it from any starting point, upside down, and backwards. It started out by saying, "Uncle Sam needs soldiers—soldiers that are true, fearless, and intelligent. He needs soldiers that can bring a new happiness back to a sad burdened world after the armistice is signed, soldiers that can rebuild the world on peace, love and gentleness. Are you that sort of a soldier now?"

We worked like fighting mad—revivals, conventions, Bible schools, retreats, youth meetings, parties and picnics for the young people, and farewells for soldiers.

It's all rather hazy—, but there were simply showers of rice, compliments, and wedding gifts, and Rev. Clifford Coffman and I moved into the parsonage.

We moved from town to town wherever and whenever the Board said. I taught school a few months if we were in the town long enough, and had a few private students taking lessons on the piano. This brought in a little extra money, and we were able to buy some bonds to be "cashed in" at some future date.

That future date was one July 4, when I heard the nurse say, "It's a boy." As I moved back the blanket and peered rather cautiously into squinted eyes, I saw happiness and peace, yes, there was REAL life. I drew the bundle closer and fumbled with the draw-string on his gown; he was so utterly different from any other baby. The veil of my dream seemed for a moment to be lifted. Bending over I whispered, "Hi, Soldier."

Love,

Judy McDowell.

Twenty-one

RHAPSODY IN BLUE

Nina Mayfield

A summer sky in June,
A baby's eyes so true,
The gleam of ocean waves,
Form a rhapsody in blue.

The blue the bride must carry,
George Gershwin's symphony,
A frosty evening dress,
Round out that rhapsody.

My father's faded shirt,
The blue of a July night,
The inkstains on my fingers,
Are all hues of delight.

All interwoven in a dream,
Harmonious fabrics, too,
They make up in my mind
My rhapsody in blue.

TO AN AMERICAN BOY IN UNIFORM

Charles Huddleston

Do you know what you mean to me?
What you mean to millions of Americans?
You represent our fathers, brothers, sons;
You are our cousins and our friends.
You mean more to us than any one else in the world.
You are our defender,
The last protector of freedom.
You stand for our beloved country;
You represent me.
What you really mean to me, to all of us,
No words could ever express.
Yes, we are with you, Soldier.
We'll be with you wherever you go;
And may our God be with you.
God bless you. God save you.
And bring you safely home.

THE GREAT NAPOLEON

Charles Huddleston

His name was Napoleon, Napoleon Clare Davis. He was private secretary to the president of the New York Chemical Company. He was in all appearances a normal, efficient secretary, except for his stature. He was slightly over five feet, and he had long, black hair that he combed down in his face exactly as his namesake had done. He was the joke of the office; everyone enjoyed annoying him. He was referred to as "The Great Napoleon." He never seemed to notice what people would say to him, but several times it was noticed that a dangerous gleam would come to his eyes. Nevertheless, he held his temper and never in any way tried to defend himself against his abusers.

Then the day arrived when the New York Chemical Company was to give the United States government a secret explosive formula. The military officers were to receive the formula officially at noon. However, in some way foreign agents had gotten word of this meeting, and they arrived before the officials. Everyone was bound except Napoleon. Suddenly he broke for the door, and a shot rang out. They saw him hesitate momentarily, but then he stumbled onward. A few minutes later the police arrived at the door. They told the others that the little man had come down the three flights of stairs by will-power alone to inform them of the foreign agents.

Then the story was told. Napoleon was not the timid nervous little man that everyone thought. He had been sent to the United States as an agent of our enemies. It seems that he had come to love our country so much that he had died for it. Yes, we shall remember him; but more-so will the Axis remember him, because, before he died from that bullet wound, he gave the location of all the spy-rings in America. You can remember last fall when the spies were captured by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Yes, this is why we remember him. At one time he was a fool, but he died a hero's death. So maybe today you and I owe our presence and freedom to Napoleon Clare Davis, "The Great Napoleon." How do I know all this? I should, I guess. I am L'Aiglon—his only son.

MOONLIT GARDENS

Harriett Rupard

(student at Model High School)
I walk through moonlit gardens
Where white gardenias grow;
The stately lilies nod their heads
To roses white as snow.

Everything is ghostly
And filled with silence white;
I live in gardens mostly
When it is moonlit night.

The memories come riding
On moonbeams slim and white;
I think of other gardens
When it was moonlit night;

I walk through moonlit gardens
And say I do not care—
Yet everytime there's moonlight,
I find I'm walking there.

“UNTO THE LEAST OF THESE”

Mary Lou Lucy

When the clock desolately bonged four studied times, the sober gray sky seemed to hover just a little closer to the top of the massive courthouse in the small southern town. The few remaining people on the streets stood about in small groups seeming to await the oncoming storm. Some loitered in the doorways of the department stores whose windows were crowded with badly arranged merchandise. Other crowded into the several drug stores and ten cent stores to loaf.

Only one person seemed to be in the least animated. He stood on the courthouse steps, waving a testament in his hand, proclaiming, “If ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” He shouted these words several times in a vain endeavor to impress his hearers.

Near him were the usual courthouse bums leaning against the pillars or sitting on the steps, passively watching him. The booming voice, sometimes assuming a plead-

ing tone, fell on deaf ears. The loiterers calmly chewed their tobacco and gazed at the lowering sky. Only the blind man, sitting on the sidewalk, clutching some pencils in a withered hand, paid any heed. He listened intently and drank in every word.

“If ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”

Suddenly as if a dam had burst, the rain came down in torrents drenching everything in its range. All the loafers and the man with the testament rushed madly into the shelter of the courthouse. Once inside, the man resumed his sermon with more gusto than ever and kept waving his testament.

Outside, the pleadings of the blind man, groping his way to shelter in his darkness, were heard. Somebody please help me inside. Will somebody take my hand and help me inside?”

IN THE SERVICE
BRIDE SONG

Pvt. Barnette DeJarnette
Fort Riley, Kansas

The bride of Rose Hill
Is lovely in white,
I know, I attended
Her wedding last night.

I whispered the vows;
They stuck in my heart.
We whispered together
Though standing apart.

Beautiful cousin,
Summer has gone,
Autumn is laughing
To find me alone.

Long is the evening,
After the day
That carried the flower
Of Rose Hill away.

A. D. 1943

a light local colour fantasy

Charles Havens

"A. D. 1943, eh? Now, thet sounds quare,—sounds like part of an inskripshuns on a toombstone, Hmm. Why, no wonder thet sounded quare—thet is this yere! I told Clarie we needed one of the almanacks. I swar if this time ain'a goin' so dern fast I can't even git to town to vote on time anymore.

"Why, hit don't seem no time ago sense them bells were a-ringing for New Yere's. Let's see, they is about four months gone out of this hyar yere. And if the last part is like thet first part, hit's goin' to be a hell of a yere.

"I swar, I couldn't even git enough sugar to keep my corn from a-wastin'. Clarie used a lettle of hit for corn-bred, and I jest fed the rest of hit to them hawgs. And hits a shame to see good corn like thet wasted on them hawgs.

"Then one o' them tax fellers cum up the hollar t'other day. He walked rite on this porch and sez to me,

'Mister, I'm Brown from the offise of eternal renenyou.'

"And I sez, 'Well, Brown, I'm McGraw from Clay County. What kin I do fer ye?'

"He axed me a few questshuns about my womin and them kids. Well, I didn't know how many of them kids they wuz. So I called Clarie and axed her. She said she thot thet they wuz betwixt 15 and 19 of 'em.

"So she rang the dinner bell and they all cum in. Mister Brown said there weren't but 16.' And I'd been a-buy-in beans for 19! Rite then and thar I learnt the valyou of a good educashun.

"Then he axed me if I had one o' them radios.

"I sez 'No, but I've got an organ;' and I tuk him in an showed hit to him.

"One of my kids—the one that kin read—told me they were a-takin' womin to the army. And I've been a-thinkin' about thet—hit's a-worrin' me too. Why, what in this world wud we do if the givernment takes all the womin fer the army? Who cud we git to do the feedin' and the heavy work? Why hit's been pert' nigh on to 50 yere sense I milked a cow! Well pert' nigh, but not plumb.

"Another thing about this A. D. 1943—everyone a-fight-in' them furriners in a war has upset Clarie and me some-thin' purely awful. We've been a-sittin' around hyar a-

waitin' fer the mail order catylog, and hit's three weeks past due. Clarie's always so anxious to see them pretty pitures in the harness section.

"And do you know—? Well, dern if it ain't sunup and this is Tuesday—I've got to git to feudin'."

A SAILOR

Anita Beatrice Goins

A wind, a sail,
And an ocean sweep
Is the pride and joy of a sailor.

A tide, a gale,
Ship wrecked ashore
Is dull routine with a sailor.

A love, a woman,
In every port
Is the will and yen of a sailor.

A life, a death
Among the waves
Is the end and all of a sailor.

A RIVER

Janet Knox

As far down the stream as eye can reach
The spray, like a rainbow, fills the air,
With diamonds dancing in the beach
As fairies do, without a care.

Beneath a bridge, which spans the stream,
The water ripples o'er the rocks;
The sun pours forth its yellow gleam
And paves the bridge with golden blocks.

On past the bridge it rushes still,
On past the shores and stretching lea,
And murmurs onward past the hill;
Then, silence, as it joins the sea.

AUTUMN INTERLUDE

Jeanne Ruark

They met in Central Park. The tall, serious young man and the slender, bright-eyed girl. They met in Central Park, and the tree limbs were bare and the wind was keen and cold, and Tony was selling peanuts in the park.

Tony can tell you all about it. He was there the day they met. He saw the girl come wandering aimlessly into the park. He saw the bewildered, hurt look in her eyes—those bright eyes. He knew she was troubled. Tony had seen much suffering in the park. He had even seen a murder once, but he didn't talk about that for it didn't pay an honest man to get himself mixed-up in a murder scandal, and no one ever knew he saw it. Sometimes Tony wondered about the man who had committed that murder; wondered where he was and if the police ever caught him. But Tony wasn't one to get too intimate with the police. Anyhow, as I said, Tony had seen much suffering, so he knew the girl was really troubled.

Tony saw the tall, serious young man come into the park, too. He noticed the preoccupied frown on the young man's forehead, and he knew the man was worried, too.

Tony was a pretty good judge of character. Just by looking at the young man, he could tell he was more intelligent than the usual type of park hobo. The young man wore good clothes. They were a little frayed but they were good. Tony knew the cut of a well tailored coat. Hadn't the famous old stage veteran, Vic Romoso, given Tony one of his Paris-made coats once? To be sure he had. Tony still wore the coat. So Tony knew the young man's clothes were good. And he could tell he had strength of character, too. Just by looking into his face as he passed by and seeing the purpose and determination outlined there, Tony could tell he had strength of character.

They both came to the park on this cold, windy autumn day, and they sat on the same bench—opposite ends, to be sure, but the same bench, and they both bought peanuts from Tony and fed the squirrels. And pretty soon they got to talking—not in a flirty, fresh way, but just natural-like, as if they'd known each other a long time. But Tony could tell they really hadn't. And pretty soon the bewildered, hurt look went out of the girl's eyes and the preoccupied frown went off the young man's forehead, and they were laughing. And they used up all their peanuts

and the young man bought another bag from Tony and they fed the squirrels together.

After that, Tony would see them come every day, and sit on the same bench and feed his peanuts to the squirrels. He heard them talk of "misunderstandings" and "intolerance" and "courage" and "determination." And then one day, he saw the tall, serious young man kiss the slender, bright-eyed girl.

So Tony wasn't surprised when he saw the headlines in the papers: "Mayor's Daughter Elopes with Promising Research Scientist Mayo Clinic." Tony didn't let on to a soul, but he already knew about the mayor's daughter's jilting the elderly senator to whom she was engaged, and he already knew about the promising young scientist's discovery of the new vaccine and his struggle to convince the older doctors it was the answer to their search. Yes, Tony already knew about the slender, bright-eyed girl's eloping with the tall, serious young man.

Tony knew because they met in Central Park. They met in Central Park and the tree limbs were bare and the wind was keen and cold, and Tony was selling peanuts in the park.

MARCH ON

Emma Kennedy

March on, brave soldiers of Eastern,
March on till the peace is won;
March on under the Red, White and Blue
March on till your task is done.

March on, Marines of Eastern,
And help bring peace to all;
March on, brave comrades and loved ones,
And answer your country's call.

March on, you sailors of Eastern,
Keep our ships on every sea;
March on, with faith and with courage,
And bring home the victory.

JUST TO REMEMBER

Pauline B. Amburgey

Just to remember
Evening twilight mellowing
In the sunset,
And mountains blending
Into a purple shadow silhouette
Against a sky curtaining dark
With the veil of sunset vapor
Lingering on the hills,
And childish school-day laughter
Along a dusty, gravel road. . . .