

5-1-1948

## Belles Lettres, 1948

Eastern Kentucky University, The Canterbury Club

Follow this and additional works at: [http://encompass.eku.edu/upubs\\_belleslettres](http://encompass.eku.edu/upubs_belleslettres)

---

### Recommended Citation

Eastern Kentucky University, The Canterbury Club, "Belles Lettres, 1948" (1948). *Belles Lettres*. Paper 14.  
[http://encompass.eku.edu/upubs\\_belleslettres/14](http://encompass.eku.edu/upubs_belleslettres/14)

This Newsletter is brought to you for free and open access by the Literary Magazines at Encompass. It has been accepted for inclusion in Belles Lettres by an authorized administrator of Encompass. For more information, please contact [Linda.Sizemore@eku.edu](mailto:Linda.Sizemore@eku.edu).

# Belles Lettres



1943

# Belles Lettres

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

## STAFF:

Editor -----Elizabeth Pennington  
Associate Editor -----Anna Frances Parker  
Business Manager -----Edward Casebolt  
Faculty Sponsor -----Roy B. Clark, Ph. D.

---

VOLUME FOURTEEN

NINETEEN FORTY-EIGHT

---

## Contents

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SONG.....	Laura Virginia Roberts..	3
DANDELIONS .....	Edwin Carter .....	3
THE PIPE .....	Aldene Porter Lovitt .....	4
UNCERTAINTY .....	Gerald S. May .....	5
GATHERING OF THE LEAVES .....	Joyce Broyles .....	6
IF I WERE KING .....	William C. Kearney .....	7
A DAY OF SOLITUDE .....	Kermit Potter .....	8
AND STILL OTHERS .....	Laura Virginia Roberts..	8
RENDEZVOUS .....	George Cecil .....	9
PUT DOWN THAT SPADE, SAM .....	Edwin Carter .....	11
A HOME .....	William C. Kearney .....	14
LINES WRITTEN AFTER BATTLE .....	Laura Virginia Roberts ..	14
CRY TO THE WILD WIND! .....	Harold E. Richardson ..	15
A SOUTHERN GENTLEMAN .....	Elizabeth Pennington ..	16
MAN .....	William C. Kearney .....	18
THE COUNTRY TEACHER .....	Golda Pensol .....	19
ORAN .....	John Vukovcan .....	20
UMPIRE McGUIRE .....	Elizabeth A. Murphy ..	21
BY THE WAYSIDE .....	John T. Blackburn .....	22
MY CREED .....	Gerald S. May .....	23
BOTH BARRELS BLAZING .....	Edwin Carter .....	24
STRANGE BEDFELLOW .....	Leonor B. Adams .....	26
LASSITUDES .....	William C. Kearney .....	27
JUST THINKING .....	Gerald S. May .....	28
MY WALK TO HELL .....	George W. Campbell .....	28

## FOREWORD

We, the Editors of the fourteenth annual volume of *Belles Lettres*, present this to our fellow students and readers. We have sought to please and to inspire others by endeavoring to include the best of all types of creative writing and by using the work of as many students as possible. Foremost, we have tried to uphold the standards of those before us.

## THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SONG

Laura Virginia Roberts

The most beautiful song that I know  
Is the song of the river gliding by  
When the night is old,  
And only I  
Am there to hear.

The most beautiful poem that I have heard  
Is that whispering wind in the lilac tree,  
When the night is calm  
And none but me  
Is there to hear.

The loveliest song that I know  
Is the voice of you when you spoke to me  
When our love was new  
And only we  
Were there to hear.

The most beautiful song will ever sing  
In the melody of the lilac tree  
And the river, too,  
But just for me;  
You will not hear.

---

## DANDELIONS

Edwin Carter

We looked at the dandelions  
on the grass  
gold coins scattered  
by a prodigal hand

Then I thought  
what is time  
what will become of this little moment

Who will look at the dandelions  
who will see  
the yellow circles  
on the green of our graves

## The PIPE

Aldene Porter Lovitt

After he had retrieved his suitcase from the baggage agent, Henry Barrows walked slowly away from the railroad depot. The suitcase was a new one and very shiny, with none of the scuffs and scars of a suitcase that knows its way around. Henry smiled wryly, remembering the doctor's words: "Now here's the prescription, my boy. A complete change—new clothes, new surroundings, and a completely new outlook on life. Those headaches of yours are just a manifestation of your confused state of mind. If you'll go away from this town and all its memories, it won't be too long until you'll be able to look at this whole tragic incident objectively. New friends and new interests, that's what you need."

Walking along, Henry remembered how the sun had shone through the windows of the comfortable, friendly office. Now the rays of the sun striking the strange pavement seemed to leer at him, alone in this strange, big, overpowering city. But the comfortable small town was no longer friendly to him, for all the people knew, and although they pitied him, they looked at him with an uneasy look in their eyes. When Henry met their uncomfortable gaze, he knew he had to leave.

So Henry found a fairly good position with a publishing company, and settled himself in a tiny apartment in one of the many large apartment houses. In order to meet the new friends the doctor had prescribed, he enrolled for some night classes at the university.

The headaches became less frequent, and everything went well for a time. Henry began to hope that things would be all right. Then one night he had the dream again. He saw it all just as it had been—his father's body, with the ugly bullet wound in his head, lying on the living-room floor. And he saw the people watching him, as he walked along the street, and heard their whispers: "That's Judge Barrow's son. Wasn't it a shame about the judge killing himself. But you know they always said . . . . . ." But most terrifying of all was the look he saw in their eyes. In the dream the look became more intense, until the people's bodies faded away, and there was nothing left but the eyes, staring at him, and the look getting worse and worse and he was running and running and getting nowhere . . . .

Henry knew something had awakened him from the dream. Trembling, he snapped on the light and reached for a cigarette. Then he heard it—the noise of the pipes which conducted the heat through the building. Since it had gotten much colder, the sudden heat coming through the pipes

was causing them to bang and crack. He hadn't noticed it before, but there was a large heat pipe directly over his bed.

After he had turned the light off, Henry lay in the dark, thinking. The banging of the pipe began to take on a rhythmical quality. Three beats—it sounded like a drum. After listening for a while, Henry wasn't sure whether it was the pipe or a drum. Bang—bang—bang; bang—bang—bang; suicide—suicide—suicide; kill yourself—kill yourself—kill yourself—on and on, and the room became peopled with eyes that all had the look—staring, staring, and he was running and running and getting nowhere . . . . .

When the police came later, they found his body on the floor, with a bullet in his brain. The shiny new suitcase stood open, just as he had left it when he had taken the gun from it. The policemen didn't stay long; it was just a routine suicide. As they left one turned to the other and said, "My God, Joe, listen to that pipe banging. It's enough to drive a guy nuts."

---

## UNCERTAINTY

Gerald S. May

Approaching the campus with coming darkness,  
Conscious of the shadows  
Stealing stealthily across the verdant grasses  
As if stalking some predetermined foes,  
My thoughts turned to reality.  
Was not I myself likened to a shadow?  
Stalking a hidden foe—uncertainty,  
Knowing not whence or where to start.

Secure in our thoughts of grandeur,  
Sure someone will give us the world—  
Give it to us to exploit  
Without the thought that:—To the world  
We should give something in exchange.  
To live just for today itself,  
Knowing not what tomorrow might inaugurate,  
Glad for the chance only to endure.

And still uncertainty clings to us.  
Will it pursue us to our grave,  
And there at last free  
Return to fasten itself to youth again  
Smirking as youth stumbles on?  
Will it thus always be?  
Or may it soon fade with the shadows  
With the dawn of a new day?



## GATHERING OF THE LEAVES

Joyce Broyles

Our family was never particularly interested in the science of geneology, but our records were pretty well kept. Our family tree, was rooted in a grey-haired old lady whom we called Grandma.

We kids remember Grandma from the collecting of the leaves of our family tree each Thanksgiving. Grandma had seven children of her own and the limbs up to us kids covered a lot of territory. I never seemed to remember just how many people were present, yet I'm certain I could never remember them all. But Grandma always knew each of us and everything about us, whether our sick dog had recovered or whether I had received that doll I wanted last Christmas.

I never will forget one of the "Gathering of the Leaves," as Mama always called them, because I was almost left behind. We all loaded on the wagon to leave. I was sitting on the tailgate of the wagon watching the mud squash under the wheels when the horses suddenly bolted. I was thrown in the middle of the muddy road. I yelled to Mama but because of the noise of the wheels on the bumpy road and the running of the horses, she didn't hear me. I jumped up and started running after the wagon; it stopped two hundred yards up the road. When I ran up to it Mama was very scared, but as I approached the wagon, she, seeing my new dress splattered with mud, suddenly became angry. She debated whether to send me back to change my clothes or to leave me. But my pleading soon caused her anger to subside and I was allowed to go. We arrived at Grandma's just in time for dinner. Grandma got quite a kick out of my mishap and always teased me about it by calling me "mud pie."

At the "Gathering of the Leaves," dinner was always served outside under the trees. It reminded me of the pilgrim story in our primer. The food: turkey, cranberry sauce, pumpkin pie, preserves and all that naturally goes with Thanksgiving was always delicious.

Grandma had a peculiar habit or superstition. When we were finished with the dinner and the older people were sitting around talking, she would interrupt our games and call everyone into the living room. We always knew what was coming. Grandma would bring in a big white pitcher with only one cup, Grandpa's mustache cup. Then she would fill the cup with the boiling contents of the pitcher, and pass it from one to another of us, refilling it each time as it was emptied. Much to our dislike we could not con-



tinue our games until even the smallest child had been served. Grandma had no idea how many young mouths were scorched because of this. It was Grandma's belief that hot sassafras tea on Thanksgiving would ward off colds through the coming winter. Although it never worked, the ritual was solemnly observed at each "Gathering of the Leaves."

Grandma always had to pay everyone at least one visit during the year, to return the things we left at her house at the "Gathering of the Leaves." She knew that it was bad luck to return for any forgotten article after we had left the house to go home. Grandma never seemed to realize that the hats, gloves, scarfs, pocketbooks, and many other articles were purposely left. Mama always searched us for unnecessary items before we left home. We always managed to hide an extra hair ribbon, handkerchief, or something else in our clothing, that was dropped casually in a corner of Grandma's house. Grandma unerringly knew just which article belonged to what child.

Even now, as I sit back after Thanksgiving dinner, I smile and look toward the door expecting Grandma to enter with the old white pitcher and Grandpa's mustache cup, as she used to do at the "Gathering of the Leaves."

---

## IF I WERE KING

William C. Kearney

If I were king,  
I'd make decree  
That each man would  
His money give  
To State.  
Each man would  
A pauper be,  
Until a boon  
He had done  
For me.  
The boon I'd ask  
Would have to be  
A deed—  
Unselfish, honest, true,  
To fellow man.  
Then, myself  
To test I'd put ;  
But, ah—alas!  
A pauper I,  
A pauper I'd have to be.

## A DAY OF SOLITUDE

A Freshman Theme

Kermit Potter

Sometimes when everything is going wrong and the people seem to annoy me, I like to get away from everyone and everything pertaining to civilization to spend a day in the blissful company of Mother Nature.

This I like best in the spring, when the sun has climbed far enough over head to have warmed the earth and the grass has sprung up covering the ground with its soothing green blanket. At this time of year I am in a vacuum formed by the constant urge for adventure and the ever-enduring captivity of spring fever.

In this season of new birth I like to walk through the forest of pines with their evergreen branches hanging overhead and their needles of past years carpeting the ground beneath my feet with a perfectness that no rug could ever accomplish. It is pleasant to have the spring breeze spray my nose with the stinging scent of rising sap from the young twigs. Just to sit and listen to the many birds as they pour forth their love songs with all the vigor and splendor that this season of mating can produce gives rise to a happiness which is unsurpassed in any other environment.

I like to walk among the trees when their leaves are dense enough to prevent the sun from shining through, and the semi-twilight transfers the wildness of the vast surroundings into my inner-being, so for a short time I become a part of the great forest and its inhabitants of animals and birds.

At these times I feel the nearness of something pure and good. Then I begin to have a feeling of sympathy toward the people of our civilized world who have never experienced this sentiment of heavenly solitude.

---

## AND STILL OTHERS

Laura Virginia Roberts

Give me but a place to stay  
Where I may  
Watch him climb  
High to the stars.  
And I will know  
(Nor have to say)  
His victories are mine—  
Hang up the stars!

## RENDEZVOUS

George Cecil

Chuck Cooke left the spacious square facing the Grande Poste and became absorbed into the crowded streams of traffic along Rue d'Isly. He noticed the steady processions of vehicles creeping along in the dark. But he soon became aware of the push and pull of pedestrians in his hurry along the tree-lined street. With an occasional sweep of his elbow, he brushed aside the supplications of begging and sweating Arabs. The smell of wine and stale smoke nauseated him. Delicate aromas of perfumed women standing in dark doorways would have ensnared him had he not been determined to keep his appointment. He ignored the rhythmic chirping of the French women as he turned off into a dark narrow alley lined with shops and restaurants.

Away from the pulsating artery of Algiers, he soon found himself rapping at a dark doorway. Madame Braas met him with an embrace and admitted him into a dark, low-ceilinged dining room punctuated here and there with the charming ooh-la-lahs of the women as they cooed at the jests of their escorts. She led him into her kitchen where she implanted a kiss upon his cheek. In response to his query as to Ruth's arrival, she sang out gayly "non, non, monsieur, pas encore." With an upsweep of her arm she continued, "Elle n'est pas ici." Chuck understood and shaking his head he sat down at the big circular table and began sipping wine from a filled glass.

Fatima, the Arab cook, arched her back considerably so as to escape the steaming vapors arising from the potatoes frying over a gas flame. She looked over at Chuck and smiled. At the same time she opened the oven door and exhibited the chicken she was roasting for dinner. Then Mme. Braas appeared in the doorway with Ruth. As usual Chuck watched the two go through the technique of embracing each other. The madame never failed to execute this routine. Ruth, he observed, followed through with complete understanding as she threw a wink at him. He poured a glass of wine for her. As they conversed, the Arab cook came over to the table and placed a small basket of brown bread before them.

The madame appeared in the doorway with another couple who were seated around the commodious table after the accepted exchange of felicitations. The girl was tall and graceful and part of her long blonde hair obscured her left eye. The young man, it developed, was a French naval officer and a nephew of Madame Braas. Fatima limped

over to the party and served apertifs. In short time the young Frenchman was gesticulating wildly and explaining the technical superiority of the Allied powers. The blonde was showing Ruth an arm laden with costume jewelry which twinkled in the candlelight. All the time Chuck was eyeing the blonde. Suddenly it struck him that he had seen her some place recently. He remembered her now. He had seen her at a recent party on the beach. But he recalled that she was brunette. She was still comely, he was thinking, when he responded to the officer's tapping on his shoulder. The crippled Fatima returned with more apertifs.

During the meal there was less conversation on the part of the young naval officer. In fact, everyone seemed more meditative in the shadowy kitchen. The smoke, the fatty odors, and the wine served to deaden the responses of the diners. The tall blonde was watching Chuck with languid eyes; the Frenchman reached over and lighted Ruth's cigarette.

An ensemble of accordion and guitar began playing a familiar chanson. The naval officer and Ruth got up from the table and went through the doorway into the dining room where couples were already dancing. And after two dances they had failed to return to the kitchen table. Nor did Chuck care for he was becoming more attracted to the blonde all the time. And as for the blonde, she affected infatuation easily, as was her habit, with her gentle purrings of "mon cherie" and "mon petit chou." They arose from the table.

As they left by the back entrance, Chuck pressed a thousand franc note into Madame Braas' hand. In the alley he drew the blonde's warm body to his and they walked into the dark Algiers night. Rue d'Isly was less crowded now and the tempo of Algiers had subsided somewhat. The salt breeze was stimulating at this time of night and the path of the moon was visible upon the calm sea. Under the stars Algiers reposed in its tiered whiteness.

# PUT DOWN THAT SPADE, SAM

Edwin Carter

## DEDICATIONS:

*This work is humbly dedicated to: Dashiell Hammett, Raymond Chandler, Ernest Hemingway, James M. Cain, Thomas Wolfe, and Marcel Proust.*

On the door was the sign: Ben Knucklehead, Private Investigations. A large, glaring eye was under the lettering. The eye was slightly blood-shot.

Knucklehead opened the door and staggered into his office. He paused on his way to the door of the inner office to rape his stenographer, but he had no time for idle frivolity. He had to think.

A blonde dressed in an expensive shark-skin slack suit was waiting in the inner office. She was the pin-up type blonde. Before either spoke, Ben tossed his camel's hair coat over the bust of Allan Pinkerton and drank two fingers—neat—of embalming fluid. The woman spoke first:

"I got a case for you, Big Boy," she said in a voice that seemed to come from a deep cave or somewhere.

"Yeah? Scotch or Rye?"

"No, Bright-Eyes, the kind of case you call criminal—with money and dames and guns and things. You know—just like in the movies."

"Keep talking. What's the caper?" He leaned back in his chair and put his feet up.

"I want you to find my husband. He's a rat," she said. She perched on top of the desk.

"If he's a rat, why find him?"

"Because the skunk owes me three months' alimony." She took out a cigar and a jade holder from her white linen handbag and began to smoke. "My name is Frances Remley and my husband Al is a used-car dealer. He hadn't paid me any alimony in three months. Someone told me he was in the Cormorant Club last night, throwing away the greenbacks."

She paused to blow a smoke-ring.

"I want you to find him. I want to twist his arm off and knock his teeth out with it." She tossed a hundred-dollar bill on Knucklehead's desk, flicked the ashes from her cigar onto the carpet, and strode out.



Knucklehead rubbed the bill. The ink didn't come off. He put it into the office safe. He drank two more fingers of embalming fluid and stared at the calendar, which was for February, 1932. The picture of Herbert Hoover stared back at him. Finally he put on his light-tan trench-coat and dropped a Luger automatic into the left pocket. The embalming fluid went into the right. He left the office, got into his car, and drove to the Cormorant Club. A grey Ford coupe followed him. He made no attempt to lose it.

The Cormorant Club was empty except for a tall, thin old man who was the doorman. His hair fell lankly over his forehead like moss clinging to rock. His voice was an old rusty hinge.

"Did you see Al Remley last night?" Knucklehead asked, crinkling a five-dollar bill between his fingers.

"Yeah." The old man glued his eyes to the bill.

"Who did he leave with?"

"With Siegfried Greenroad. The big fat guy who collects little statues of birds."

Knucklehead sneered at him and put the five-dollar bill back into his pocket. The old man's face was like a lost battle. Knucklehead started out. He saw from the window the grey Ford coupe parked outside. Before he could do anything, the outside door opened and a small man entered.

He was very small. He wore a dark suit, a dark shirt, and a white tie. His eyes were large and sad. He slugged Knucklehead with a cricket-bat.

The Green Bay Packers were kicking a football. The football was Knucklehead's head. He forced his eyes open.

The old doorman was lying in a pool of blood. He had been beaten to death with the cricket-bat. Knucklehead reeled toward the bar. Behind the bar lay the body of a large fat man. Knucklehead recognized him as Siegfried Greenroad. He had been strangled with a garden-hose.

Knucklehead drove back to his office. This time no car followed him.

The lights were on in the office. The filing cabinets were torn open. Books and papers were scattered on the floor. The small, sad-eyed man in the dark suit was sitting at Knucklehead's desk. He was smiling thoughtfully. He had been stabbed with a garden-spade.

Knucklehead searched the little man's pockets. He found a .25 automatic pistol, two pieces of chewing gum, a packet of belladonna seed, a membership card in the Jolly Boys'

Cricket Club, and a driver's license. The dead man had been called Joel Karo. He had been employed as a gardener by Al Remley.

Knucklehead drove to Al Remley's house. It was a white functional concrete structure. A garden was in front. A few calla lilies were planted there, but they weren't trying.

Frances Remley answered the door herself. She was wearing a satin dressing gown. It made obvious the fact that she was stacked and not like pan-cakes either. She didn't say anything. She took Knucklehead out to the sun porch and gave him a drink.

He sniffed at it. There was a faint odor of bitter almonds.

"I've found out where your husband is," he said.

"Yeah?"

"Yeah. He's dead. You did it."

"You're drunk," she said, "get out before I call the police." She had turned pale and sat up on the lounge. She slid one hand under a cushion.

Knucklehead put down his drink before he spoke. "No. I'm not tanked up. You killed him and buried him out under the calla lilies. You killed all the others, too."

He slid his hand into the coat pocket and grasped the rough grip of the Luger. Then he went on:

"You picked me for an out, a fall guy. I was supposed to knock off Greenroad and the gardener, and then you could claim they killed your dear husband Al. You didn't want alimony. You wanted the insurance.

"Your big mistake was putting Al under the calla lilies. It isn't good for them."

"Yeah?"

"Yeah."

Frances Remley pulled a .45 from under the cushion and shot him twice in the belly before he shot the gun from her hand.

She sat on the couch and watched him call the police.

"Ben," she said, "Ben, you wouldn't do this to me. No, you wouldn't. You love me, Ben."

"Yeah."

She was very quiet after that. The police came and took her away. Ben sat in the chair, bleeding. There was a faint odor of jasmine and stale axle-grease in the air.

"It doesn't matter," he said. "It doesn't matter where you die. In the sun porch or under the lilies. You die. You sleep the big sleep."

He took the bottle of embalming fluid from his pocket. It was empty. He sobbed softly.



## A HOME

William C. Kearney

Man, what wantest thou of me?  
To you I've given life,  
A mind to think  
And a world to roam.  
Man, what wantest thou of me?  
What! A home?

Yes, a home.  
My pilgrimage has run  
From East to West,  
Yea, North to South,  
And yet, I find  
No solace for my mind,  
No dirt in this great land  
Unstained by greedy hands.  
Selfish, Cruel and Glutty,  
All are rulers of this sainted sand;  
I find no peace, no home.

Ah! Man, you searchest long to find—  
Your peace will come, when in your mind,  
You displace Selfish, Cruel and Glutty  
With, Honor, Service, and Love Divine;  
This can be found in all mankind,  
Only then, will you find  
Your home.

---

## LINES WRITTEN AFTER BATTLE

Laura Virginia Roberts

I fell into Eternity for a little while—  
And all was dark,  
But guns still sounded; voices called.

My eyes ached and burned and I knew fear—  
Fear of Hell—  
But I had already seen Hell.

The vision cleared:  
I was alone—  
No guns, no voices—

Others had fallen into Eternity  
But not as I—  
*They* are still out there.

# CRY TO THE WILD WIND!

Harold E. Richardson



I came out of the darkness.  
With a broken heart and chilled spine I viewed  
The multitude.  
I saw the faces, I saw them all ;  
The proud, the sad, the happy, jubilant faces,  
"Too happy in thy happiness."  
I saw the hopeless faces,  
The taunt, thin, wasted, emaciated faces.  
I saw the crying face, the sweating face,  
The lovely face, the defeated—  
The dead face.

I saw the drunken sot, the millionaire.  
I saw the minister pass.  
All were running ; aimlessly running, escaping,  
Vainly endeavoring to leave behind this bit of dust.

I sat beside the highway on a cold rock and saw them pass,  
All speeding, madly, recklessly—  
Knowing not where to go or  
From whence they came.—  
All struggling, all slaves,  
Alone.

Alone! Alone!  
Oh, that pitiable, forlorn word.  
Ring out! Echo in my mind! Alone!  
I see them all and myself, forsaken,

Not knowing what lies within the conscience of my comrade.  
Are we just a speck of marl taken from a grimy planet  
And molded into this unfathomable  
Witch that we call "life?"  
Moaning, crying, smiling, cheating, stealing, slaying—  
And for what? Who knows? Why? Why?

I saw them pass.  
I ate the greasy food on which they subsist.  
No, on which *we* subsist.  
I looked into the clouds,  
I looked into my heart—  
I cried to the wild wind!—  
I vomited in the gutter.

---

## A SOUTHERN GENTLEMAN

Elizabeth Pennington

The wedding of Raymond and Alice was solemnized at eight o'clock on Easter morning in the year 1924. Their marriage was performed in the cathedral of their small Louisiana home town.

To the romantic Raymond, his bride was blonde beautiful Alice, lovely in the white satin wedding gown of her mother. He would love her forever for her own perfect self.

To the practical aristocratic Raymond, his bride was Alice Carroll, daughter of Judge and Mrs. David Morris Carroll, one of the oldest and most distinguished families in the town. He would be proud to share his name with her.

They went to a secluded but select mountain lodge for their honeymoon. In two weeks they were back in the three-room apartment which they had rented. The apartment was only a temporary abode since they were to begin at once the building of the house which they had planned during their courtship.

Raymond's furniture store seemed to prosper from the beginning. Everybody was buying furniture, or so it seemed. He enjoyed selling furniture. Raymond felt a personal interest in helping to build homes. "The home is the basis of our democracy, our religion, our own particular American way of life," he'd tell his wife when in one of his philosophizing moods. With this enterprising store established, he was one of the town's leading business men. Alice was not surprised when he came home boasting, "Look at your husband and with the same glance, see the new presi-

dent of the Junior Chamber of Commerce. Boy, are you a lucky woman!" She knew that the act was all for her benefit, so she laughed with him.

Their first child, a daughter, was born not long after they had been married a year. She had inherited Raymond's dark complexion and black curly hair. Alice would have it no other way, but to call her Rayma.

Life for them was made more complete by the success of Carita, Alice's younger sister. Dark-haired, dark-eyed Carita, opposite in features to her sister, was the family's career girl. Since early childhood she had shown a remarkable talent and love for the piano. Her parents had provided her lessons from Professor Linneman at home during her school years. As soon as she was graduated from high school, she went to New York to study at the conservatory.

Carita had the determination to practice and to study long hours. The professors at the school called her a brilliant pupil. Her first concerts were highly praised. The public was beginning to recognize her name, she noted. By the critics' claims she was a promising young artist with a mature interpretation of the music she played.

The family at home followed her success with the usual family pride. They saved the clippings she sent and showed them to their friends. Eagerly they awaited a home-town concert.

Carita's ambition was to tour the country as a concert pianist; at times her dream did not seem so far from realization. This summer she had come home for a vacation. Actually, it was not a vacation from the piano, "An artist," she explained, "does not leave his work as a business man shuts up his office." Music to her was the most vital part of living.

The young pianist knew that the concert she had booked for the end of the summer would be one of the most momentous of her career. This program would be played before a home town audience. Success here meant more personally than in the large places she had played. It was scheduled for her to appear as soloist with the New Orleans Symphony. The concert was to be given in the local high school auditorium. Her thrill and pride of the coming event was almost childlike. To her the hours of practicing seemed like minutes.

In the preparation for the event of the concert, Carita made a shopping trip to New Orleans. The chief concern of the day was to find a formal gown suitable for the occasion. She was woman enough to worry about her dress, yet musician enough to know that her attire must be sub-

dued so that her playing would hold the spotlight. "This will require extensive shopping," she said as she left her home for New Orleans.

She must have been in a dream-like trance, for that day she stepped in front of a moving street car. The trolley, as it struck her, knocked her body onto the tracks. She died instantly.

The shock that came with her death was more than the loss of an artist to the world, or the grief that those who loved her had to bear. Several intimately close lives were affected.

All of the home-town people had read her obituary as it appeared in the New Orleans newspapers. They saw the word *Colored*. It was the custom of southern newspapers to list such information concerning those who had died.

A trace of Negro blood had been found far back in her family line. The conservatory officials had gained this information while investigating her background before she entered school. The knowledge had been relayed to the newspapers.

While the townspeople gossiped, reviving long forgotten tales of scandal, Raymond packed his clothes and without saying good-bye left his wife and home forever.

---

## MAN

William C. Kearney

Tired, toiling, tremulous thing—  
Starving, striving, seeking soul—  
Brought to live,  
Brought to die,  
Brought from where?  
Brought for why?  
Arise! you shrinking, straining thing,  
And live!  
Man—you are called.  
Man—you are to be.  
Cast off the sorrow Satan sought;  
Bring forth the blooming, blossomed branch—  
The happiness of Heaven's Hope;  
Strong will you be,  
Strong in will and mind  
—And FREE.



## THE COUNTRY TEACHER

Golda Pensol

"Here she comes," cried little Ken  
As up the path I hurried.  
The cry relayed from one to all  
And 'round the house they scurried.

"Good mornin' ma'am," said forward Rose  
"We'yuns got here kind o' early  
But we've been good, now ain't we Bea?  
That is we'uz almost, nearby.

Then Sherman laughed and poked at Don  
And Bonnie blushed slightly  
"We didn't tease her, no'm not us,"  
Said Billy, smiling brightly.

"The dogs 'fit' some, but 'twarn't our fault  
We only hissed a little"  
Then Harold and "T" laughed loud and long  
And Haz' and Covie giggled.

"Gee whizz," said Jim, "now ain't gals dumb  
Their tongues are loose and floppin'  
I guess ye got us in Dutch now  
We'll likely get a floggin."

I smiled and ruffled Tommy's hair  
And winked at bashful Mary.  
"We've had our fun, now what do you say  
We get our lessons, shall we?"

They got their books and settled down  
At first to study reading.  
I looked at Roy, his gaze was blank,  
I knew his mind was fleeting.

He saw not words upon his page  
But meadows ripe in clover,  
A barefoot boy in overalls,  
A fishing rod and Rover.

Ah me, a teacher I, but still  
On days like this I wonder  
If 'twould be very wrong if I  
Dismissed to nature plunder.

But as it is I guess I'll stay  
With formal education  
And in the end I'll know that I  
Built leaders for our nation.

## ORAN

John Vukovcan

The city of Oran was buttressed on one side by the majestic ranges of the Atlas Mountains. On the opposite side, the clear, blue, placid Mediterranean Sea washed the shores of the city. Running parallel between the sea and mountains and on either side of the city, a vast emptiness stretched itself far into the horizon. The monotony of the seemingly unlimited, drab, flat wasteland was broken by an occasional mound. These mounds were created by the wind which piled sand against any foreign object in its path. The wind raced unrestrained along the desert until it spent its force against the walls of the city. This desolate plain was canopied by an ever present blue sky, with the hot sun casting its brilliant rays earthward.

From atop a hill overlooking the city of Oran, a beautiful contrast of colors and patterns was presented. This site may have been an experimental station for architects because the homes did not conform to any singular plan. There were homes built on raised green lawns with colored paths leading up to them—whereas others had a path leading downward to the home which sat in a gentle depression. Some houses were built round with glass replacing most of the brick—others were built at right angles, “U” shaped, “X” shaped and various other angles. There were large, majestic houses which expressed pomp and splendor, and low clean, white bungalows which had an air of intimacy about them. There were large hotels and business buildings made in the latest artistic designs which had projections from each story to catch the rays of the sun. There were many other ingenious structures made, no doubt, in the height of the architect’s zeal for unconformity.

There was a blend of many races, colors and creeds housed in this teeming oriental city. Various Arab tribes, tired and spent after their futile fight against the natural elements outside the city wall, made this their home. Each tribe had some characteristic whereby one could differentiate them from the other. Some women had veils covering the lower portion of their face, others had intricate tattoo designs on their foreheads and cheeks; while others, which I remember most vividly had a large portion of their nose cut away which made them look gruesome. They may have done this to keep the Americans from them. The tribes were very meticulous as far as their women were concerned. The various races mingled freely and harmoniously.

There was a mysterious air about the whole place which



smacked of romance, intrigue, adventure and danger. A person could have any of them if he wished. Oran has an odor of its own which is indefinable. One can travel the world but could not find an odor which can haunt a person as it did.

---

## UMPIRE McGUIRE

Elizabeth A. Murphy

Mike J. McGuire was a most renowned "Class Z" umpire,  
Who was frequently spoken of as blind and often called a  
liar.

The game was between the Dead Birds and the Dirty Sox,  
The day Mike called them on the guy in the batter's box.

Already he's called strikes and balls wrong, and a homer a  
foul,  
Mike J. McGuire made as good an umpire as would a Jersey  
cow.

The Sox were leading 61-58, a mighty pitchers' duel.  
It seemed hopeless for the Birds, unless they'd bend or  
break a rule.

The terrible event happened in the last half of number nine,  
When the Birds' Slugger Fioraselli stepped to the plate to  
shine.

O'Leary, Sisopaski, and Jones were on, making the bases  
loaded;  
This was the time for Slugger to homer, for which he was  
noted.

The pitcher had a count of two and one on Outfielder  
Fioraselli,  
A powerful cut, a called strike, and a ball—too near the  
belly.

Another ball turned across the plate, but high, as anyone  
could see.  
But still, this blind thief of a fifth columnist said, "Strike  
three!"

The enraged Dead Bird fans rushed out as these sad words  
were said;  
Now, due to reasons beyond our control, Umpire McGuire  
is dead.

## BY THE WAYSIDE

John T. Blackburn

Over the week-end I took a trip to Richmond, Kentucky on a Greyhound Bus. It felt good just to be rolling along the country side, watching everything and wondering what about this or what about that. I saw an old house with its aged, decrepit shutters hanging against the sun like mighty flags of peace waving through the air. In their own sense they were mighty and strong as any army. They defied everything. On and on I went. The strong wooden fence-posts beside the road did not seem to care where anyone was going. They were just standing there with all the knowledge of the past few years wrapped up inside them. If only they could tell man what they knew, but man was trying to destroy them. He was digging and pulling them out of the ground where they had been so peaceful and quiet for so long. In their place he was putting steel posts—the symbol of a new age. Was man to forget his life-long friends of wood and destroy them with their worst enemy, fire? It was probable because man is that way, but he is being watched over. Large, shadowy trees were forever keeping their eyes on him. They had been watching him for many, many years. They had seen him drift from here to there. If only man was like a tree, firm, upright, and always high and mighty to the life around him. How can men be like trees? Trees are just things. They can't talk. If only they could, maybe man could learn the secret to many things.

On top of a hill I could see over miles and miles of beautiful, level land below me. It stretched far and wide until it was out of sight. There was the earth. Mighty and majestic in her own way. There was something for men to be thankful for. Men are always too busy to be thankful for anything until it is too late. He is sorry, then, that it all happened. Maybe the earth doesn't care or worry about anything. She goes about her business the same way every day. Man is the one who worries. He worries from day to day if this will happen or that will happen. He worries about the earth, sometimes. But nothing ever happens. Maybe it is man's destiny to worry.

The bus was rolling over man-made roads, unlike the things of the earth. It was hard, cold and lifeless all the way. You could tell it was man-made. It didn't possess the beauty of life like things created to hold their place on the earth among men. Then all of a sudden the road ran out. It was a different kind of a road we were on now. It

was like the road of a life. One thinks he is flying along fine when suddenly he is stirred to find that there is no road under him. What is one to do? I wondered as I left the bus and wandered aimlessly up the street to my destination.

---

## MY CREED

Gerald S. May

I believe that life is worth living, and worth living to the hilt. Whatever you do, do it to the best of your ability, bringing to play the standards of your beliefs. Anything worth doing is worth doing well. Too many people just get around to living when they die. Don't be like these people. Live while you can and enjoy it. In this life search out the truth, for truth is beautiful; also bring untruth into the light so that through this untruth may change to truth. Be the inferior of no man in this world. Be the superior of men, not thinking you are, but striving to reach as high a goal as you possibly can. To accomplish this you must work.

I believe there is a God. Even those who do not believe in God had best accept the fact that there is a reason to believe in Him. This belief is the basis for good and evil. If there is no God, why then should we be good, living to better ourselves or the world? Religion is the most comforting, encouraging element we have at our command today. Where else can we get such peace and solitude? Use everything that you have within your reach to make your life as full as possible.

Live not thinking that you must pay tomorrow for what you do today. Because you do good today, don't think that evil is justified for tomorrow. One right thing does not erase a wrong either in your conscience or in the eyes of others.

There is a time in each man's life when he must leave this world to go to another place where all his dreams of a perfect world may come true. When your time comes to do this have no regrets for things you have either done or left unfinished in this world. If you live according to your creed and belief, that is all the world can ask of you. You then can depart in peace with yourself, leaving your memory to live in your place.

# BOTH BARRELS BLAZING OR: TWO-GUN DRACULA RIDES AGAIN

*A Sizzling Saga of the Old West*

Edwin Carter

The great golden Palomino stallion thundered across the brown desert. By his easy control of the horse, the rider showed himself to be a true son of the old West, a man of distinction. Who was this mysterious stranger? Was it a bird? Was it a plane? Was it MacArthur? No! It was "Two-Gun" Dracula, the Poosey Kid.

"Two-Gun" Dracula soon reached the little town of Dowadiddy. Here was the famous Bucket of Blood saloon and gambling palace, once owned by the Smith Brothers, but now the property of the treacherous "Stacked-Deck" Greep, Dracula's most deadly enemy.

He wasted no time in town but sped to the simple cattle ranch of Daisy June Codliver, his beloved school marm. Dracula wasted no time in formality. In a short while both man and woman were sitting on the old corral fence and watching the moon rise over the purple sage-brush. Five hours later "Two-Gun" spoke:

"Purty night, ain't it, ma'am?"

"It shore is, "Two-Gun."

Two hours passed; at last he thought of something to say that would please her:

"You've really got purty hair, ma'am."

"Thank you, "Two-Gun." Do you really think so?"

"Why, shore, ma'am. It's so long and golden and—oh, shucks, I just remembered something I got to do.

"What is it, 'Two-Gun?'"

"I gotta go and curry-comb mah horse, ma'am."

---

Early the next morning Dracula received a message that the evil "stacked-Deck" Greep was planning to hold-up the stage-coach in Gopher Gulch. When he got to Gopher Gulch, the stage had already been robbed and the bandits had fled.

Dracula followed the trail, until he came to an Indian, seated on the desert, surrounded with products of his handicraft. Dracula wasted no words:

"Which way did they go?"

"They went thata way."

---

After buying six blankets and a bowl, Dracula thundered after the bandits. Suddenly he found himself in Steve Canyon. Bandits sprang up from all sides. There were at least a hundred. They all begin firing at once. With a sickening shock, Dracula realized that he had only five cartridges left. He was trapped.

---

Leaving Steve Canyon, Dracula urged his horse on to the Bucket of Blood saloon. He was going to settle up with "Stacked-Deck" Greep once and for all.

Just as he reached those green swinging doors, a shot was fired inside. The piano player hadn't been doing his best and he was now carried out on a shutter. As the corpse went by, Dracula took off his Stetson. After all, he had always been rather fond of Harry.

He drew his pearl-handled 45's and rushed through the door. Both barrels were blazing, spitting hot lead into the gold-plated spittoons. When the smoke cleared away, "Stacked-Deck" Greep was lying dead on one side of the saloon; "Two-Gun" Dracula was mortally wounded on the other side. Daisy June was kneeling beside him. Dimly he could hear the quartet singing *their* song: "I've Got a Humpty-Dumpty Heart."

"Oh, "Two-Gun," don't leave me," she sobbed.

He forced the words from his lips: "I'm a-goin', gal."

"Oh, 'Two-Gun,'" she moaned.

"I'm goin' down that long, long trail. I'm a-headin' for the last round-up, gal. I'm a-goin', gal."

"Well, why don't you go?", she said when she had her deep grief under control.

"You're a-sittin' on mah feet, gal."



## STRANGE BEDFELLOW

Leonor B. Adams

Mr. Jackson wearily climbed the stairs to the second floor of the old, rambling hotel. He had been on the road for several weeks attending tobacco auctions in various places in central Georgia. Accommodations were inadequate in these towns in the early 1900's. Tonight he had to share a bed with a man who had already retired. He gained the landing and stopped at the hub of three corridors. He rubbed his aching head and tried to remember the clerk's directions to the unnumbered room. Oh, yes. He turned left and walked to the end of the hall, turned right, and there was the room behind the first door on the left.

He opened the door. The kerosene lamp was burning low and the hearth-fire flickered shadows on the walls. A glance at the bed proved the clerk's supposition; a still form was clearly outlined by the neatly arranged bedclothes which were pulled up to the headboard.

Mr. Jackson quietly closed the door, tiptoed to the table and blew out the light. He divested himself of all his clothing except his long underwear. He slipped easily into bed without disturbing his bed-mate.

In a few minutes the door opened. A young man and woman entered. The man mentioned something about the lamp burning out and the girl giggled. They sat down in the chairs in front of the fireplace. Mr. Jackson was about to remonstrate when the young man tenderly embraced his companion. At this Jackson settled back to enjoy the fireside drama.

Then the thought came to him that he should not deny his bedfellow the pleasure of the scene. He nudged him with his elbow—no response! He poked him harder—still no reply. Finally he started to shake him by the shoulder. The arm felt strange. He ran his hand quickly down the body. It was hard, cold, and clammy. With a yell, Mr. Jackson leaped out of bed and ran out of the room, taking the bedclothes with him.

When he had completed his roll down the stairs and extricated himself from the bedclothes, he found the two frightened young people and the clerk looking on in amazement.

After a medley of who's, how's, and what's, the situation was clarified. An elderly hotel guest had passed on from a heart attack several hours earlier. The family had

been notified, but neither they nor the undertaker could arrive until the following morning. The young couple had volunteered to "sit up with the corpse," as was customary in that section. They had left the room to get something to eat. Mr. Jackson had confused the clerk's instructions and taken the wrong turn.

---

## LASSITUDES

William C. Kearney

Nothing to bind me to this world  
Save an obscure passion.  
A passion for life?  
Ha! Vile word of fools!  
A passion for personal pleasures—  
The reaped reward of achievement  
Stems from idle jealousy—  
Passion for mortal praise,  
Be you our seed of life?

---

Though we labor—  
Though we strive—  
All our gain is wasted lust,  
Our passions for the worldly treasures  
Will melt again into dust.

---

Dissolute lassitudes—  
Go!  
Strike not my mind  
Drown not my soul  
In your grasp, I sing to piteous depths of remorse;  
In your grasp, I welcome the league of Satan;  
Thou, gore-stained hand—  
Thou, ripped brow—  
Chide of Men—BE OUT!



## JUST THINKING

Gerald S. May

Cool, crisp, and clear comes the blanket of night  
With moonlight reflected from snow so white,  
Bringing with it . . . silence . . . and thoughts.

Thoughts of things so very dear,  
Thoughts of time when you will be near,  
Of a smile . . . and a kiss.

Holding hands, a walk in the dark,  
Ice skating and the amusement park,  
Football games . . . a heart to heart talk.

Thoughts of the future which we will share,  
Thoughts of love and why I care,  
Thoughts of children . . . and our home.

Beauty so rare will never be found  
Even if searched for the whole world round.  
The beauty of silence . . . and thoughts of you.

---

## MY WALK TO HELL

George W. Campbell

As I walk across these wooden floors to Hell,  
I look back through my past life  
To find the deeds that I have done:  
They are good and bad; the bad exceed the good.  
Therefore my soul is bound for Hell.

If the Judge would give me a chance,  
I would right the wrongs I have done.  
Some I don't know about;  
Others I have gloried in doing.  
These are the ones that hurt my conscience.

The jury is out now.  
Oh! Here they come; my knees are shaking.  
"Jury, how do you find this man on all charges?"  
"For black-mail, guilty.  
Stealing candy from a baby, guilty.  
For whipping his wife, guilty."

"My good man, what do you have to say for yourself?"  
"Your honor, I deny all charges."  
"You had a chance to reform on earth, but you didn't.  
Therefore I sentence you to the hottest pit in Hell."