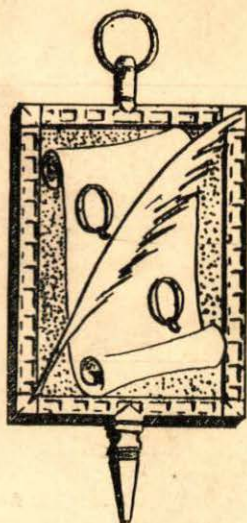


QUILL and QUAIR



Morehead State Teachers College

Morehead, Kentucky

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MOREHEAD STATE UNIVERSITY

MOREHEAD, KENTUCKY

VOL. X

May, 1944

NO. 3

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Inside Back Cover

QUILL and QUAIR

Morehead State Teachers College
Morehead, Kentucky

Volume X

May, 1944

Number 3

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Mary C. Haggan

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Gate-Legs

Margaret Shannon

"Hu'lo, Art."

"Hullo, Ned."

"What'll you have, Art?"

"Figure I'll need a box of steel wool; about to finish old Miss Effie's corner-cupboard."

"Yea, Art?"

"Yep, been working on it long 'nough; oughta suit her by now."

Ned Riley of Riley's Hardware picked a box of fine grain steel wool, No. 00, from the shelves and set it on the worn counter. "Say, Art, reckon I'd best tell you what I most near forgot. They's a Mrs. Hinkel from over on Oak Street asking about you the other day. Asking me if you was all right. Acted kinda fussy, so I told her you was the best cabinet-maker in this here state of Arkansas. She got kinda smart so I talked back purty strong to her. Acts mighty particular, that woman. Wants a table or somethin' made."

"Does, huh?"

"Yep, Art, and you'd do purty well not to try any of that pig headedness of yourn. She spoke like she knowed what she wanted and intended to git."

"Thanks, Ned. Reckon I'd better git back to the shop; still got lot of work to do."

Arthur Burk picked up the box and left the store. He was a small, wiry old man with a springy step. As he walked up Main Street, the hot summer afternoon sun seemed to be lul'ing the little town of Rogers, Arkansas, to sleep. The locusts were droning incessantly in every cottonwood and maple.

Back in his own shop, Uncle Art took off his straw hat and wiped his neck and face with a handkerchief from his hip pocket. His neatly pointed goatee looked particularly uncomfortable for such a sticky, sweaty day. He took off his gold-rimmed glasses and cleaned them deliberately and systematically. He polished one g'ass with circular strokes, looked through it at the light, and then wiped the other with the same methodical treatment. His gray-black hair hung damply over his forehead again immediately after he ran his fingers through it.

Walking over to Miss Effie's cupboard, the old man rubbed his hands gently over the doors. He ticked his teeth with satisfaction. He picked up a small wad of steel wool and smoothed the surface here and there.

"May I come in, Mr. Burk?"

MAY, 1944

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MOREHEAD, KENTUCKY

Uncle Art looked up to see a large, domineering woman standing in the door. She had a toothsome smile which looked as if she had practiced it before a mirror.

"Yes, come in. Something I could do fer you?"

Art picked his way across the heavy oak floor covered with sawdust, scraps of wood, and nails to the woman standing, hesitant whether to come in or stay out.

"I came to ask you about a table I wanted someone to make for me; but it looks as if you have more than you can handle in here already. I jst wanted to see if you could make it for me. If you are busy—"

"Nope, I reckon I can stop to talk to you. What kinda table you got in mind?"

"I want a large table for my dining room. I have some beautiful pieces of cherry from my grandfather's farm near Hot Springs I want you to use."

"Suppose I could do the job if anyone was to do it. Made plenty a tables in my day; never had an unsatisfied customer, least as fer as I calculate. What's it to look like?"

"I have in mind a square-cornered drop leaf, 48" by 72", two spare leaves, dark finish, linseed rub, and, of course, two brace-hinges on each side to support the leaves. Oh, yes, I want a rather low table, because my chairs are low—make it about 31 inches from the floor."

"Hinges, you say? You mean besides the gate-legs?"

"No, I have seen several tables lately with only four legs and strong brace-hinges to support the leaves. I've decided they are what I want."

"Wa', I don't recollect seeing what you're askin' about, but we won't have to fit 'em until towards the last."

"I should like to have the table as soon as you can make it. Are the directions clear enough? How soon could you start the work? The wood is at the house whenever you can come by and get it."

"Figure I'll finish the piece I been working on by this evening. I could come git your wood tomorrow sometime and start right soon."

The woman began to look around the big room as if inspecting or searching for examples of Art's work.

Art said, "This here's a cupboard I've been makin' fer a woman. Right nice bit of work if I do say so myself."

She looked at the finish of the cupboard critically—inside and out. She felt the panels and doors. Her expression did not change, but she said with a tone of finality, "Yes, I think this piece looks quite nice."

Uncle Art pulled a stubby pencil from behind his ear and

walked over to a desk in the far corner of the shop. He searched through several stacks of things and finally, from underneath last month's "Rogers Gazette," a hardware catalog, and a broken drill bit, he picked a small, gray order book. He wetted the end of the pencil with his tongue and approached the woman with the pencil poised over the book.

"Reckon I ought to have your name and address. I don't know as how I remember."

"Oh, yes, certainly. I'm Mrs. Stanley Hinkel, 329 Oak Street. It's a big ye low brick house; you won't have any difficulty finding it."

"Must be the old Franklin place. Wal, don't figure you'll have any trouble with the table. I been in business nigh on fo ty-five years. Yep, don't suppose anyone in Arkansas state knows their business better than I do."

Mrs. Hinkel smiled her "mirror" smile, thanked him, and left the shop. Uncle Art wetted the end of his pencil again and wrote in the book: "Mrs. Hinkel, old Franklin house—1 cherry table; 48" by 72"; square-cornered."

The next morning Uncle Art went by Mrs. Hinkel's for the wood in his Model A pick-up truck. He brought the cherry wood back to his barn-like shop, and began to work on the gate-leg table for Mrs. Stanley Hinkel.

Two weeks passed before Uncle Art could say that the table was almost finished. Six legs had been turned and matched; the base of the table fitted and braced solidly; the top and side leaves sanded and oiled, and the extra leaves made. The table stood exactly 35 inches from the floor, not considering the casters which had not been fitted.

Uncle Arthur rubbed his hand almost lovingly over the surface of the top. He ticked his teeth three times, stood back, admired the table, then came back again to touch the wood.

"Anybody'd be mighty proud to have this table in their home. Must say, it's a fine piece as any I've done. All I got to do is to fit the casters."

He whistled softly through his teeth as he turned and walked towards an ugly, drab chest with numerous drawers. He pulled out the top drawer and quickly searched through screws, nails, braces, and hinges. With the same movement, he pushed that drawer to and pulled out the next, looked through it, closed it, and continued down the row to the bottom one. He searched more thoroughly, then with a disgusted shove, pushed the last drawer shut. He turned abruptly on his heel, jammed his old straw hat on his head, and stalked from the shop.

He marched down Murphy Street past the Rogers Consolidated High School, on to Main Street past the two banks, the Methodist Church, the five-and-ten, until he came to Riley's Hardware.

"Hullo, Ned."

"Hullo, Art."

"How's business, Ned?"

"Fairly middlin' around here, Art. How's it with you? Did that Mrs. Hinkel ever get in touch with you?"

"Yep, working on her table now."

"She seen it?"

"Nope, she's called up bunch of times and asked how it was. Kind a pesky about callin'. Have to quit work to talk."

New chuckled and said, "What's the table like?"

"Oh, fool woman, wanted some kind of new fangled brace-hinges under the leaves, 'stead of gate-legs; yea, she wanted it only 31 inches high. It's easy to tell she don't know much about furniture. Anyone could a told her gate-legs was the thing to have; a table ain't worth settin' at if it ain't high enough to get your legs under it. I figure I know enough about furniture now to go ahead and make it right anyhow."

"Wal, now, Art, don't know about that. She impressed me like she knew what she aimed to have. Reckon she'd be hard to deal with if she don't like it. I'm warning you, trouble is apt to come."

"Mebbe you're right, Ned, but when it come to buying some of this new stuff fer furniture, I just cain't take it. Nothing is better than what's been proved good. Think she'll like gate-legs when she sees them. By the way, what I come down fer, Ned. Gotta git some casters fer it. Six of them. Got any inch and a half size?"

Art stood fingering his goatee with one hand and drumming the counter with the other. His pale blue eyes had a far away look in them.

"Say, Ned, don't you reckon Mrs. Hinkel will be kinda relieved when she sees I put gate-legs on the table? I don't predict but what she don't really want them special hinges; just was scared not to order them if she happen to seen some of her friends with 'em."

Ned returned with a peculiar expression on his face. He stared at Art for a second, and then shrugged his shoulders. He handed Art the box with the casters in it and said, "Don't know, Art, reckon you know best."

As Art stepped out onto the sidewalk in front of the store, he heard his name called. He looked around and saw Mrs.

Hinkel sitting in a car at the curb. She motioned for him to come to the car.

"Mr. Burk, I've been wondering how my table was coming. Is it finished yet? I am so eager to have it; it is going to be lovely in my dining room, I just know."

"Yep, it's near ready, Mrs. Hinkel. I just been to the hardware to git six casters for it."

"How simply marvelous! You mean it's all finished except for six casters? . . . Oh, you must mean four casters, don't you?" Mrs. Hinkel asked jokingly.

Uncle Art ticked his teeth, scratched his ear, and said, "No, you see, I figured the table'd be much more steady if I used gate-legs. Don't have much faith in them hinges that fit up under the leaves. Make them too weak like."

Mrs. Hinkel's expression sharpened; her eyes widened and then changed to a darker shade of brown. Her nose twitched slightly, and her neck flushed to pink. She looked as if she were holding her breath.

"Why, Mr. Burk, I believe we decided that we would put on the brace-hinges. I have several friends who are quite satisfied with their table leaves braced with hinges. Of course, it won't be much of a trick to remove those legs and replace them with hinges, will it?"

Uncle Arthur ticked his teeth and answered, "No, I don't reckon I'd best do that. Gate-legs always make a mighty fine table; you can always depend on them."

By then the pink in Mrs. Hinkel's neck had darkened to a deep red and climbed up to her hairline. She cleared her throat roughly and began to speak, "I think you misunderstood me, Mr. Burk, in my order for the table I stated that I wanted the hinges. Surely you—" Her voice cracked angrily, but she began again, "Surely you don't expect—" Mrs. Hinkel sighed heavily and tried to soften the deep frown on her forehead. She even tried to smile with her lips at Uncle Art.

"I'll tell you what, Mr. Burk, wouldn't it be better if I come over this afternoon to see the table before it is delivered?"

Uncle Art accepted this proposal without a word, shifted the box of casters to his left hand, tipped his hat, and strode away towards his shop.

"That woman wouldn't know a pretty table when she seen it. There weren't no use in her ordering a table like that. I've been in business long enough to know. After she uses the table, she's going to be glad to have it higher with gate-legs that-a-way. That's the kind a table I been making for

years, and people is always satisfied. Just wait 'til she sees it."

Uncle Art walked towards his cabinet shop with a complacent expression on his face. He stroked his goatee and smiled to himself with pride at the thoughts of his latest masterpiece. "Just wait until Mrs. Hinkel sees it."

That afternoon at 1:05 Mrs. Stanley Hinkel strode unannounced into the workshop and walked over to where Art was fitting his fifth caster on her table.

"Just one more caster, and it'll be finished."

"So I see, Mr. Burk."

"You figure you want it delivered this afternoon? Reckon it ought to be ready for sure by 2 o'clock."

"Are you determined, Mr. Burk, that you can't remove those two extra legs and put brace-hinges as I ordered?"

"Wal, Mrs. Hinkel, as I been telling you, a person wouldn't be satisfied with one like that kind a table. It won't take you long to see my point."

"Mr. Burk, I'm entirely aware of your so-called 'point.' I'm sure that there is a number of people who have been satisfied with your judgment, but I happen to want the other kind of table."

Uncle Arthur continued fitting the caster as if he had not heard a word Mrs. Hinkel had last said.

Mrs. Hinkel shrugged her shoulders in despair, but she braced herself for just one more "round."

"Mr. Burk, do you suppose there is anyone else in town who would fix this table like I want it? I think you have done a lovely job on the finish of the wood, but I was so depending on a table with just four legs. It would look so much simpler and plainer with that many fewer legs. I like it that way, you know. The table looks a little high, too, but maybe that is just my imagination."

"Reckon I'll deliver it to you later this afternoon. This is the best I can do."

Mrs. Hinkel, realizing that she was dismissed from Art's mind and also from his shop, sighed and walked from the building.

Nine days later on a hot August afternoon Uncle Art Burk had gone to Ned Riley's place to talk over the latest local news and to tell Ned his latest peevs.

"Hullo, Ned. Hot ain't it?"

"Hullo, Art. Yep, I reckon this will make the hottest spell for the summer. Got to have one ever' summer, you know."

Art removed his straw hat and wiped his face and neck

with his handkerchief. He settled himself against the counter as if he intended to have a good long session with Ned.

"Wal, Ned, you know this town's getting so doggoned wild about some of these new fangled ideas in the furniture line they pick up in New York and places like that. I wonder what things around a hosue will look like when another ten years gits gone."

"Don't reckon I know what you mean, Art. Just what exactly was you thinking about?"

"Wal, take that Hinkel woman, fer instance. She claimed she —"

A young, freckle-faced high school boy bounded into the hardware store in two leaps and boomed out, "Mr. Riley, do you have any of those metal brace hinges that you're supposed to put on tables? You know, for the leaves?"

"Let's see, sonny, don't just understand what you mean. Tell it to me again; a little slower this time."

"Oh, you know, those steel or iron clamp-like things they use for table leaves. Mr. Kennedy sent me down here from the shop over at school to get some from you. He said you might have got some in."

Ned scratched his head and peered doubtfully at the young boy. The boy twisted impatiently and started to explain again.

"Wait here a bit, young feller. I'll go back and see what I can find that fits that description."

The boy's order was much clearer to Art, who had been standing by the counter. He asked the boy, "Making a table or something over at the high school?"

The boy, with a relieved expression, turned an expectant face towards Art. He thought, "Yea, maybe old man Burk would understand what I want."

He said, "Yes, sir, my project at school is to take off some gate legs for a new lady in town. I'm supposed to put some brace-hinges under the leaves instead of those legs. She told Mr. Kennedy she didn't like the legs; they were too high besides so I've got to cut the four down after I get the other two off. Don't know whether I can do it very good or not. I may have to have Mr. Kennedy help me."

A though Ned was farther back in the store, he had not missed any of the conversation which had been going on in front between Art and the boy. His eyes were twinkling mischievously as he returned to the front of the store.

"Young feller, I don't seem to be able to find what you was asking for. Seems to me I used to have some, but I can't seem to locate any now. Here, you look in this catalog and

find a picture of what you are wanting. It ought to be in there some place."

While the boy was looking at the catalog, Ned turned back to Art to finish the discussion.

"Now, Art, as you was saying about them people with them ideas?"

Art merely "humphed," put on his hat, and, with a brief "Got to get back to work," stomped from the hardware store.

Ned smiled and turned back to the boy. "Have you found what you was looking for, sonny?"

First Recital

Marie S. Rodewald

Bill looked to see if his new brown oxfords were tied, and if his trouser knees were still clean before going into his mother's bedroom for the final inspection and approval.

"Let's see your finger-nails, son; no pianist has dirty nails or hands," and his mother carefully turned the little boy's square hands over to see just how well he had scrubbed them. "And now let's see those ears." Then, as though finding everything satisfactory, she added, "That's the best bath you have taken, Bill. You are growing up. Now run to the piano, and without playing, study your music like mother showed you." She kissed the top of his head where the little tuft of hair waved and wouldn't lie down. After all, a seven year old boy wouldn't care for mother-kisses much longer; he felt so very grown-up.

Bill turned away and with the Sunday school paper he had found in his pocket, soared it in the air for an imaginary bomber, and machine-gunned himself from the room.

The recital was called for seven o'clock at the Methodist church. With the family dressed, mother inquired, "Are you ready, Bill?"

"May I play it once more? I didn't know it very well at rehearsal."

For five weeks the family had listened to the stubborn fingers master the "March Slav," and now after memorizing the piece for three weeks, had seen Bill go into a panic period of lost confidence. He had played it miserably the last few days.

"No, Bill, you know your piece, and we're very proud of you. Remember you are the youngest in the recital, and only Mrs. Carson and I have ever heard you play," the mother advised, covering her anxiety and trying to quiet any misgivings he might feel.

A few minutes later everyone was seated within the church. Over the heads of the people mother cou'd see the little brown head of Bill listening quietly to the first participant. He was listed as third on the program.

Soon his turn came. Timidly he approached the piano and shoved himself onto the bench.

He began to play. Something was bad in the left hand. Four measures passed; that awful music continued. Mother felt herself become awfully warm but Bill didn't seem to notice anything wrong. Then taking his hands from the piano, like a master might do at the end of a great concerto, Bill paused, relaxed and began again. This time the music was there.

The close harmony and wildness of this Slavic piece was portrayed through these same little square hands, by the same little boy. The short piece ended; Bill stood up, peered over the heads of the people until he found his mother and grinned; then exultantly took his seat. The applause died down, and Bill grinned with sheepish pride at a job well done.

Apology

Virginia Karrick

She walked slowly, kicking her toes against loose rocks. Darned old Mr. Walton. Hated him worse every day. Oh, sure, she had used to like him. He'd always been nice—but he took Mr. Smith's place. She kicked a rock vehemently, sending it through the fence into the field beyond. Mr. Smith had been the grandest principal on earth. Wasn't right, Mr. Walton's taking his place. Well, what if the kids didn't always do what Mr. Smith told them? She walked past the rambling old saw mill and around the curve in the road. That impudent, mean little Martha Harris. Ought to be killed. Jumping up and sassing Mr. Smith and then walking out of the room.

Started all the trouble. The other kids didn't have any better sense than to think it was cute—copy cats.

The tolling of the school bell came wearily through the still air. She didn't care if she was late. That old Mr. Walton had her first class. Despised to sit in his stinking old class. She left the road and walked on the sidewalk. Well, what if he hadn't asked for the principal's place? He hadn't had to take it.

"Hi, Dot." Little Bily leaned back on his knees, and stopped the buzzing noise he was making for a car motor. "Last bell's done rung. Heard it a-while ago."

"I don't care if it has." She glared at his grimy little face grinning up at her.

"Well, O. K., grannie. Just thought I'd tell ya." His lips resumed their buzzing.

The noise filled her senses and lingered with her long after she had passed beyond hearing distance. She turned onto the school ground, her feet stepping on and off the shade-spotted sidewalk. Pulling a leaf from the maple tree, she immediately forgot it, letting it fall to the sidewalk. Through the school windows she saw her class already assembled—Mr. Walton sitting behind his desk, his slender body straight in his chair—Ruth and Jim waving their hands in the air. Smart alecks. They always wanted to answer any question the old devil asked. She jerked open the door and walked down the hall. They could answer all the questions they wanted to, but she wouldn't answer a question, not one. She entered the classroom and sat down in a back seat.

"Little late, aren't we Dorothy?" Mr. Walton took up his record book and checked it.

She laid her books on the desk with a bang and looked at him without speaking.

"Well, Jim," he resumed the class discussion. "Well, Jim, what's your speech about?" as he talked he ran a slender hand along his spectacles and down behind his ear.

Jim pecked the desk with his pencil. "Birds O.K.?"

"Sounds all right. That's every one but Dorothy. What will yours be, Dorothy?"

She sat silent, then, "Don't know. Don't think I'll write any."

He studied her. "Why not, Dorothy?"

"Oh." Her voice clung to the word as if caressing it. "Just don't wanna. That's all."

"We're all writing one, Dorothy." He pulled his chair in closer to his desk. Then he gave his attention to the front of the room again. "John Edward, have you found any material?"

Dorothy sat sullenly, her gaze on a crack in the ceiling. Old mean thing. Trying to ignore her. She drew a stick figure on a piece of paper and labeled it Mr. Walton. Noisily folding it, she threw it up the aisle to Lena.

Mr. Walton held out his hand. "Bring it to me, Lena. You girls must remember this is high school, not the primer." He took the paper and dropped it, still folded, into the waste basket. "John Allen, have——?"

"Lena," Dorothy called up the aisle.

"Dorothy," Mr. Walton deliberately stacked the books on his desk. "Dorothy, will you take a front seat?"

She studied the blackboard closely—every little clipped spot and chalky smear.

"All right, Dorothy." He rose from his chair. "You're taking up the class's time. You've created enough disturbance already by coming in late."

"I'm not coming." She accented her words by lifting her hair quickly over her shoulder, away from her face. "Hate you anyway," she mumbled.

He walked to the first row of seats. "What was that, Dorothy? I didn't quite understand."

The class was looking at her. She sat up straight and stiff. "I said I hate you. An' —." Her face was hot. Old meanie. Calling her out before the whole class. "An' if I ever—," she searched her mind for something to say to him. "Someday I'll meet you in hell and I'll scratch your old eyes out!" The words stuck in her brain, rose and fell in sharp, little rhythms. She caught her lip between her teeth and listened to the swelling reiteration. Oh, Lord, what made her

say a thing like that? She watched him as he stood quietly, a muscle in his cheek twitching. She had hurt him. Her throat was suddenly dry and burning. She stared at him and held her lips tightly together.

"Dorothy," his voice was husky, "I'm sorry you force this upon me, but I must suspend you from this class till you decide to treat me with more respect. Will you leave now, please?"

She took her notebook and stomped across the floor. At the door she stole a glance at him. Tears were starting down his cheeks. She paused. "I'm—." No, she wasn't. She banged the door after her. Wouldn't go to study hall. Just go outside till time for her next class. She hurried down the hall and stepped out on the back porch. "Oh, go on, darn it. Leave me alone." She batted at a fly that had fastened itself to her arm. Oh, what if he had cried. He ought to cry. She walked out to the pump. Hadn't his face looked funny with that little muscle jumping around in his cheek? Well, it had looked funny, hadn't it? She folded a paper cup carefully and pumped herself a drink. His eyes. Why couldn't she quit seeing them? Well, so what? Maybe she had been mean but she wouldn't apologize to him. No, sir. She wadded the paper cup tightly in her hand and threw it into the garbage can. Sure he had always been nice to her—had saved her a place in his car their last ball game at Lawton. She sat down on the sidewalk, glancing at her watch—8:40—five minutes till next class. Oh, shucks, she had been awful mean. Shouldn't have said that to him. After all the board had offered him the principal's place. But why did he have to take it? She pulled a grass blade and tore it apart, letting it fall on the sidewalk beside her. They wouldn't have hired Mr. Smith again, though, anyway. Besides—she pushed the pieces of grass around, lined them up and studied them—besides Mr. Smith wouldn't want her to act this way. She'd have to apologize to Mr. Walton. No, she just couldn't walk up to him and tell him she was sorry after talking to him like that. He cried, poor thing. She picked up the pieces of grass and turned them over in her hand. Maybe if she just stayed

out of class, he'd say something to her first. It would be easier to tell him. How could she have done it, anyway? It was impossible to figure herself out. She rose and walked back to the house. Oh, gosh, her arithmetic book. She'd have to go back in the room where he was. She opened the door and the hurrying pupils, pouring from the classrooms, carried her along the hallway.

Lena came down the hall. "Sure told old Walton, didn't you, Dot?"

"Yeah, guess I did," she said, but her tone was flat.

She was in front of his door, her hand on the knob. She just couldn't go in. Her hand fell away from the knob and she stood staring at it. You're a coward, Dorothy Lee, she taunted herself. Again her hand was on the knob. She couldn't let herself be a fraidy-cat. She opened the door quickly and slipped inside.

Mr. Walton glanced up at her and then returned his attention to his reading.

She walked to her desk and picked up her book. She'd go on back out. Let him say something to her first. No, she couldn't. Had to tell him she was sorry. Wouldn't see a bit of peace till she did. "Mr. Walton," she walked slowly up to him, lowering her gaze to the floor. "Mr. Walton, I didn't mean to hurt you. Gee, I don't know what made me act so awful. I guess I—. Well, you see I think so much of—. I won't ever do it again. Honest I won't" She raised her head and saw that he was smiling.

"That's a l right, Dorothy. Mr. Smith is a fine man; naturally you would resent my filling his position."

"Oh, Mr. Walton! Oh, gee, Mr. Walton. Oh—gee." She bounded out of the room.

He Planted A Lovely Garden

Mary Jane Beatty

Raceland, Kentucky

He planted a lovely garden
Of flowers with varieties rare,
And I, an humble servant,
Was given unto the care
Of the rarest of these—
The lily, so pure, so fair.

I cherished this delicate one
While it grew midst thistle and thorn,
Fondling it each precious hour
Lest it be cruelly shorn
Of its pure and holy raiment
Before the bud was born.

He walked in his lovely garden
At lonely and happy hours
To protect the rarest of these,
To gather a bouquet of flowers.
He plucked my snow-white lily—
His choice, my love, His flower.

Success Story

Alene Scott

"But, Pop," groaned Larry, "I've got to have the money. What I paid earlier was only the deposit. The balance on the ring is \$9.85."

"Sorry, son. Can't spare a cent."

Larry's hands dropped despairingly at his side. Picking up the battered bucket he had used to slop the hogs, he turned toward the house, his shoulders sagging wearily and his chin almost resting on his chest.

"Gee, Pop, all the other kids'll have theirs."

"Now, Larry, you know your Maw and me have done the best we know how, but since we lost that cow and had to borrow money to buy another it's been hit and miss about money. You know how it is."

"Yeah, I guess I do, Pop. It's just that having that ring means so much to me. I'd do almost anything to get it."

"But you don't need the money just yet. Maybe I can give it to you later."

"But if you don't have it later. Then what?"

Larry walked into the classroom and glanced idly about. Flinging his book down on a near-by table he turned to stare out the windows which were brightly decorated with red cherries and brown hatchets. Preoccupied with his thoughts, he failed to notice other boys filing into the room until one stopped to inquire, "How are your chickens coming along, Larry?"

"Pretty good, Joe, only lost four so far."

"All right, boys. Quiet now. I have something to say to you."

The hum of the boys' voices died down and they turned their attention to their agricultural teacher as he stopped before his desk.

"As you know, Mr. Hayes, the state agent, promised we could have some of the new variety of potatoes to see if they can be grown successfully in this part of the country. Much to my regret he has only sent us enough to plant half an acre, so I'm giving them to just one boy. I hope it is agreeable with

the rest of you if I give them to Larry. He has worked the hardest so far and this will require even more work."

"Sure," "O.K. by me, Mr. DeWitt," "Sucker," came the various remarks as the boys turned back to putting eggs in the incubator.

"My gosh," thought Larry, "don't I have enough work to do without this? You'd think I was a slave the way I work in this old Ag class. Besides all the work I do at home, too. Think I'll just tell him I can't do it. I don't care if I don't make an A. What good are grades if you can't have a ring?"

"Come up here, Larry, and we'll plan our campaign. Oh, I almost forgot to tell you. Since this is an experiment and most of the work will be done by you, you can have all the profit—if any—that we make."

"What?" This was almost too good to believe.

"Yes, that's right, but don't worry. You'll work for anything you get. Now, do you have a piece of land suitable for our purpose?"

"Oh yes, sir," said Larry, leaning forward eagerly. "I know just the place. Pop won't mind. He didn't grow anything on it at all last year."

The rest of the afternoon was spent in discussing what kind of fertilizer to use, best time for planting, and working out a complete program. Larry's enthusiasm mounted with each passing moment.

The ride home on the school bus seemed end'less. Larry figeted in his seat, absent-mindedly chewing the eraser off his pencil. When the bus stopped in front of his home, he was off in a split second. As he entered the gate Skippy, his pup, ran forward to greet him.

"Get down," scolded Larry, hurrying on by.

Bounding upon the porch Larry called, "Moth-er, Moth-er."

"Yes-s-s. Here in the kitchen."

"Mother, guess what!"

"Now, Larry. Calm down. You won't be able to eat no supper."

"Mother, I've got it, I've got it," said Larry, dancing about the room.

"Got what? Why in thunder don't you light some place and talk like you got some sense?"

"Do you think Pop'll let me have it? He's just got to."

"Larry, what in Heaven's name are you talking about?"

With an effort he calmed down enough to tell her about the experimental crop.

"Well," she commented when he had finished, "ain't I always said God finds ways to provide for his children? Guess Pop can let you have the land all right. Just remember that you can't let this come before the work on our own crops. Now go wash your hands so you can eat your supper before it gets cold."

Larry plodded up and down the field, the reins around his neck and both hands on the handles of the swaying plow. He squinted at the sun high in the sky and yelled at the chestnut horse, "Giddy up there." Only a few more feet to go and the field would be turned.

"Whoa, Charlie. Guess that's got it good. Now for the harrow."

Quickly he hopped aboard the harrow, and as the thing leaped and swayed under his feet he whistled snatches of "My Old Kentucky Home." He waved his hat at a low flying airplane and laughed as he was rewarded by a dip of the gleaming wing. Just three more rounds and the field was harrowed. He unhitched the harrow, hitched up the plow and started down the field again, leaving in his wake a straight gash in the smooth soil.

By early afternoon he had all the potatoes dropped and covered. He sat down for a few minutes in the shade of an oak tree and fanned himself with his hat. "What I wouldn't give to go in swimming now," he thought. "Gee, I'm tired. I'd like to quit for the rest of the day, but since I promised Pop I'd plow the upper bottom I don't see how I can. Guess I'd better get up and get at it." With a sigh he pulled himself to his feet.

Thus the spring and summer passed, Larry forever busy with his father's crop as well as with his own. First this corn field had to be plowed, then the garden, and yet another corn field. In spite of long hours at his labor, it was hard to find

time to work in his own crop. He always seemed to be busy because he realized that in those potatoes lay his failure or success. Often it was dark before he came dragging wearily home to a warmed-over supper and a waiting bed.

Mr. DeWitt drove to Larry's home one afternoon to look at the crop. School had been going on for about four weeks and Mr. DeWitt thought the potatoes might be ready to dig.

"Hi, Larry," he called as he climbed out of his car and went over where Larry was digging a few potatoes.

"Oh, hello, Mr. DeWitt. Just thought I'd dig a few to see how they were coming along."

"Let's see one. Um-m m. Looks pretty good. I'd say they'll be ready to dig in a week or so."

"Week or so? But we decided to send the balance on our rings Tuesday so we can get them early."

"I'd say Tuesday was the soonest they could be dug. Sorry, Larry."

"But the ring was what I wanted the money for, why I grew this crop."

"If they were my potatoes, Larry, I'd say it was perfectly all right, but this is an experiment and all our time and effort are wasted if our plans aren't carried to completion down to the last detail. I'd be glad to lend the money to you, though."

"Thanks for the offer, but I'll make out some way. I guess you're right about the crop. Anything worth doing at all is certainly worth doing right. I'll dig them Tuesday."

"This sure is a fine crop of potatoes, Larry. Best I've seen around here. I'm right proud of you."

"Thanks. Pop says he likes them fine. Thinks he'll plant some next year himself. I heard some of the neighbors talking about how they'd like to have some, too."

"Say, I've sold your entire crop to a man who is going to take them for seed potatoes next year. All you have to do is deliver them Tuesday or Wednesday and get your money. Mr. Hayes thinks you did a fine job, too. Guess you deserve that A in Agriculture."

"Well, so long, Larry. Sorry about your ring. See you tomorrow."

"Sure. Good bye, Mr. DeWitt."

Larry was walking around the school yard the next day at lunch hour with head bent and hands in his pockets. Not watching where he was going, he collided with something that gave.

"Ouch!"

"Oh, I'm sorry, Doris. I didn't see you."

She laughed, shook her brown hair out of her eyes and watched him as he picked up the book he had knocked from her hand..

"Was that any way for a dignified Senior to act? Gee, you look like some one stole your only marble. What's wrong?"

"It's nothing much, Doris. At least nothing you can do anything about."

"Now, Larry, you know you can tell me about anything and everything. Haven't we known each other since we were knee high to a duck?"

"Well, it's about the rings."

"The rings? I know all about them. Aren't I the treasurer of the class? I'm supposed to order them Tuesday."

"That's just it. I don't have the money for mine. I can have it on Thursday afternoon but not before."

"Larry, that's awful. Gee, I wish I could help."

He stood for a moment in silence; then, "Doris, do you really want to help me?"

"You know I do."

"Could you hold the order until Thursday and send it on the 6:05 train? I'd have the money to you in time for you to get a money order. I know it's an awful thing to ask you, but would you do it, Doris—just for me?"

"Well——"

"Come on, Doris. If you do, I'll take you to the prom."

"O. K., Larry. It's a deal. If the rest of the class ever find out why their rings are a couple of days late, they'll murder me, but it's worth it. Are you sure you'll have the money?"

"Yes, I've already got the potatoes sold, just have to deliver them and get my money. I got quite a bit out of them, too. Potatoes are selling at a good price this fall. Mr. DeWitt

said they were the finest potatoes he'd ever seen in this part of the country.

"Want to stop in and get a coke before I have to catch the bus home?"

She smiled up at him and linked her arm through his. "Sure, Larry."

Mine Tunnel

Minnie Tiller

The entrance to the coal mines was only about four feet high. A pile of dirt completely covered the top, leaving only a dark, yawning hole through which to enter. The sides had been rudely timbered up with slabs and scraps of old lumber. Unbalanced in a half-bent position, we walked into a peculiar odor, a damp, cool smell reminiscent of my father's work clothes. In a short while we had passed the timbered sides. Now only black, shiny sides of coal were around us. The small flickering carbide lamps revealed only small parts of the interior at a time. Black lumps of coal, hard and ugly, had been changed by the reflected light into beautiful glittering objects. Dampness, stale air and decaying bank posts seemed to dominate the small space of the tunnel.

As we progressed farther into the hill the floor of the mines became covered with a thick, sticky clay mud. With each step forward the weight of my shoes increased, pulling me downward. I turned back and noticed that the opening to daylight was becoming smaller and smaller. It was square and white like a clean handkerchief. Just then we turned sharply to the right and the square of daylight vanished. The darkness became more sinister and oppressive. I began to feel apprehensive and slightly nervous. I recalled some of the tales of mining accidents. I began to think of the unstable top. Layers of slate partially scaled off in thin, flaky pieces. It gave me a vague sense of uneasiness. I seemed so far away from the outside world, trapped in the vast interior of the earth, powerless to escape if the top should fall.

We Did It

Lavina Waters

Mother whispered to Pete and me that if we wanted to see Grandmother again before time for the funeral we'd better go in now while nobody was in there, because they'd all gone to put on their hats and get ready to go to the church. So Pete slipped along the wall to the doorway of the front parlor, and I followed him. He spread apart the heavy purplish draperies that hung to the floor, went into the parlor, and I stepped in quickly before the curtains swished shut.

Th room was dark, and warm, and sickly sweet with the air from shut-in flowers. I didn't want to breathe, and I inhaled in little, short breaths, trying to push out more of the smell than I took in. Although there was little light to reflect, the long metal casket glared up shiny and cold over in the corner. Banked high around the casket were flowers, all kinds and colors of flowers, some of them already wilted and droopy.

Pete tiptoed over toward Granny, and I tiptoed after him. I was scared, looking at her lying there stonily still, sort of greyish and cold. She had on the same black dress she always wore to church, with the diamond clip at the neck; but she wasn't smiling with her eyes wide open like usual, and didn't look like granny. And her hands, folded still over a bunch of little white flowers, were smoother and bonier than when she always worked around the house.

I didn't know what Pete was doing, and there were too many bumps in my throat for me to whisper a word when I saw him lift the thin lace veil just enough to slip his hand under it. A shiver tickled up and down inside of me when Pete poked a finger inside and easily touched Granny's unmoving hands! He jerked back quickly, and looked questioningly at me.

I gulped hard. Pete lifted the veil a little higher, and I stepped up a step, curled up my fist, and slipped it inside the casket. Then I straightened out my forefinger, and lightly touched the dead skin. It was hard and tight and leathery—

but it wasn't scary. I rubbed along Granny's thumb, and then pulled my hand out.

Pete smoothed down the veil, and looked at me. Both of us nodded our heads.

Navy Math

Mary Denney

"Hey Joe," yelled Frank, bursting into the room, "I made the honor roll!" He twirled his sailor cap in the air and poked his roommate in the ribs. "Say, aren't you proud of me, sailor?"

Joe was sitting on his bunk staring absently at the shoe he had been polishing. "Sure, you know I'm proud of you," he said.

"You don't sound very happy," Frank's spirits were dampened. "Don't you realize that took hours of work?" he pretended to wipe the sweat off of his forehead.

"Yeah, I know it took work, but it took something more than that. You gotta have brains to learn something."

"Hey, Joe, cut out the intellectual stuff. It's not like you. I guess you did make a darn sight better standing than I did, but that's no sign you have to go bustin' around about brains and all that. I was happy just to skim through and get liberty Wednesday night till you started this stuff. Did you make top standing? If you didn't you should have the way you study."

Joe had been looking at his roommate while he talked, but he began to polish the shoe again, slowly and carefully. When Joe didn't say anything Frank turned around, "What's the matter?"

Without looking up Joe said, "I didn't make honor roll."

"Didn't make honor roll!" Frank exploded. "Why they've made a mistake—of course you did. Did you look over the list good?"

"My name's not on it."

"Say, Joe, when did you go to look anyway? They just posted the grades a minute ago."

"I haven't looked, but there's no use," said Joe. "I know I failed so I didn't bother to look."

"But the way you study—" Frank was still incredulous.

"Look, Frank," Joe dropped the shoe, "I never heard of a sine or cosine or tangent till a week ago. I don't even know what that teacher is talking about. I been studying trying to find out what all those words mean so I can understand what he's talking about, but—"

"Didn't you have any algebra in High School? I thought that was required everywhere."

Joe dropped his eyes. "I've never been to High School. I had to quit after the eighth grade and go to work when Dad died."

"Say, kid, that's tough," said Frank. "I'm sorry I said what I did. Could I help you with the algebra? I don't know much, but maybe there's be something I could—"

"Would you, Frank?" Joe's eyes sparkled. "I believe I could learn with just a little help over the rough places."

Fear

Isamay Riggle

"I would not have you ignorant
Concerning these things, my brethren . . ."

"Fear is for the ignorant," you said.

Fear of what?

Fear of the storm?
The storm that ashes in wrath across the world,
Breaking and bending and scattering,
Bruising and killing,
Bitter wind and merciless snow. . . .

But the sycamore stands white-bodied,
Naked to the blasting;
The pines hush the roar to a sighing
And nestle the birds in their branches;
The briars bend and sway unharmed.

Fear of the night?
"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray thee, Lord, my soul to keep. . . ."

Fear of tomorrow?
Tomorrow will just be another today,
With its round of homey things to do,
Clothes to wash and iron and mend,
Chickens to feed,
Cows to milk,
Hours too short for all that we have to do.

Fear of the battle for you?
Fear of the screaming shells
Breaking the air above your head,
You who are used to the cluck of the hen
And the coo of the dove.
But I've seen you land square in the middle
Of a dog fight to help your collie against odds.
I've seen you bring a hawk down
With a chicken warm in its mouth
Fear of the battle for you?
You with the lean body like a willow,
The hard brown muscles like iron?

Not so will I fear
Nor will you fear the unknown.

Fear was meant for the ones who have no faith,
And we have planted the seed and waited the harvest;
Now we face the night
And wait your return.

Isamay Riggle
(Kitts Hill, Ohio)

Goodbye, Now

With this issue, **QUILL AND QUAIR** temporarily suspends publication.

Paper is scarce and urgently needed for critical uses. Printing, like other things, is hampered by the manpower shortage. The supply of good stories and poems by students is smaller than it used to be.

We are grateful to the English majors who have edited and sold the magazine, to the college and high school students who have contributed to it, and to our friends everywhere who have bought it.

Soon after victory—or earlier if conditions permit—we hope to start Volume XI. For the present, with this final number in Volume X, we sign off.

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