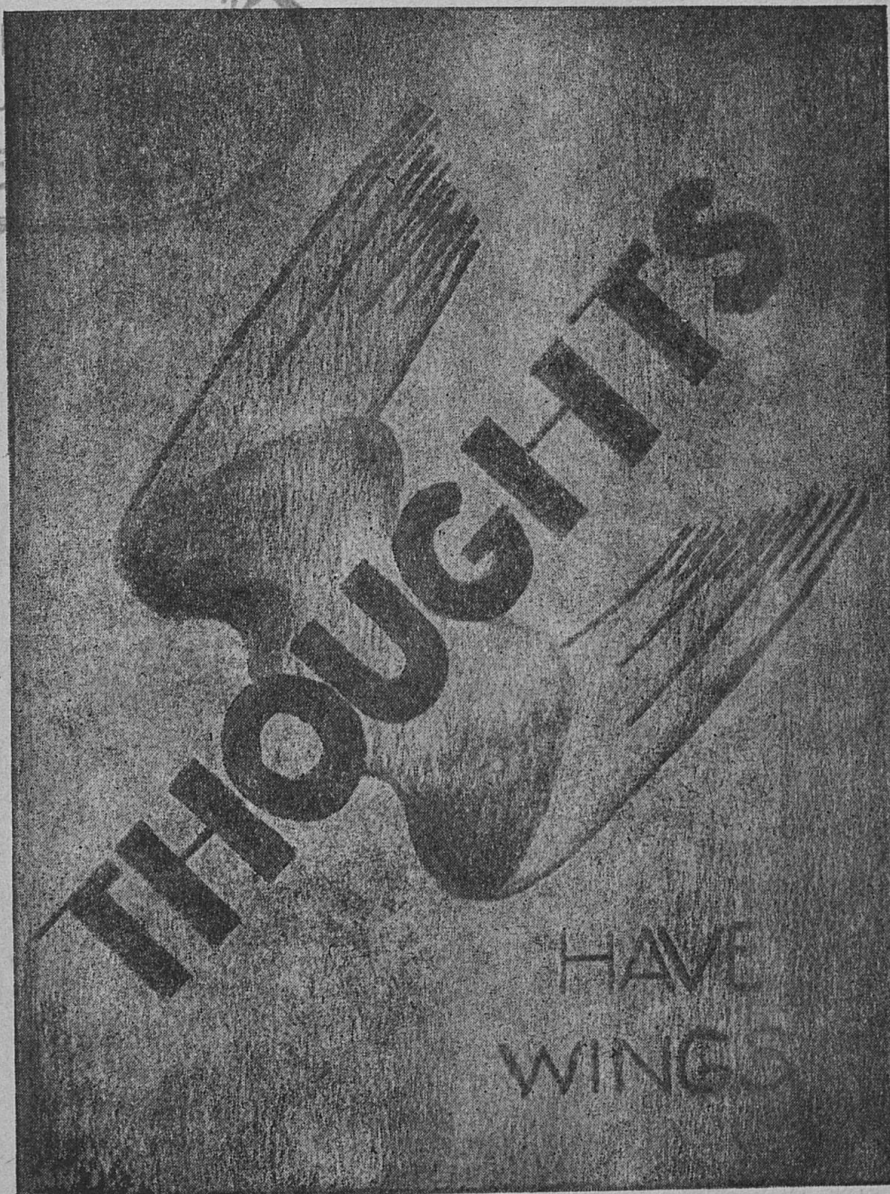


● Commonwealth of Kentucky ●
EDUCATIONAL BULLETIN



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JOHN FRED WILLIAMS
Superintendent of Public Instruction

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HISTORY OF KENTUCKY POETRY DAY

In 1942 a resolution, prepared by Mrs. Marguerite T. Rosebery of Louisville, establishing a day to be devoted to Kentucky poets and their poetry, was introduced in the Legislature. It passed both houses and was duly signed by Governor Keen Johnson. Kentucky Poetry Day has had a definite place on the State Calendar each year beginning April 7, 1942.

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FOREWORD

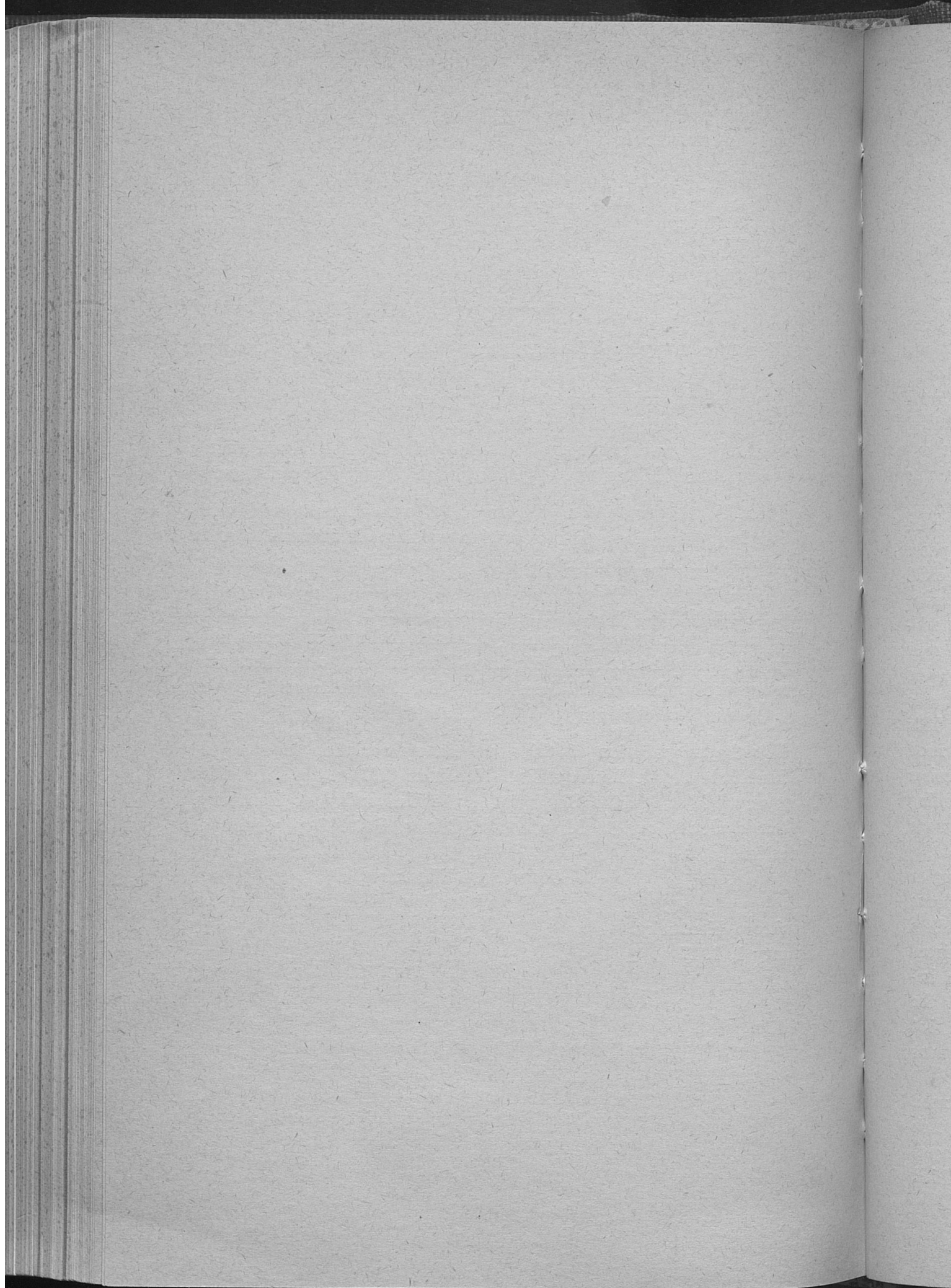
There are many tangible evidences that the annual observance of Kentucky Poetry Day has aroused deeper interest in Kentucky poets and poetry, and in the writing of poetry. This is particularly true in the elementary and secondary schools. Inherent in this feature of the school program is the problem—how to get children and young people to write with freedom, originality, and beauty of expression.

This Bulletin presents a glimpse of three teachers at work with children in getting them to do creative writing. It illustrates some of the methods and approaches that comport with what is known about children and how they learn. These examples of children's writings demonstrate what can be accomplished with children in getting them to express their thoughts and feelings in poems and stories. It is hoped that this Bulletin will be helpful to teachers who are concerned with how children really learn to write and how to promote growth of children through written expression.

For the preparation of this Bulletin appreciation is extended to Miss Rubie Smith, Murray State Teachers College, to Miss Kitty Conroy and Miss Martha Shipman of the University of Kentucky, to their students, and to Miss Louise Combs, State Department of Education.

JOHN FRED WILLIAMS,
Superintendent of Public Instruction

Frankfort, Kentucky
January 1, 1947



Part I

THOUGHTS HAVE WINGS

Examples of creative writings produced by groups of sixth grade children during the years 1939-1946, under the guidance of *Miss Rubie Smith, teacher, Training School, Murray State Teachers College

* Miss Smith is now Assistant Professor of Education, Murray State Teachers College.

THOUGHTS HAVE WINGS

By RUBIE SMITH

Assistant Professor of Education, Murray State Teachers College

The title used for this bulletin was created in 1946 by a group of children in the sixth grade of Murray Training School. It was first used as the title for a collection of poems, stories, and other literary forms written by these children. The subtitles in Part I were used in the same book. Illustrations were drawn by the children. The poetry section was called "Above the Clouds"; the prose collection was titled "Gliding Along"; and the section containing records of class activities was named "Down to Earth".

The approach to teaching a child to express his thoughts in correct form is necessarily an individual approach. In no phase of teaching is it more true than here that we must take the child where he is and carry him as far as he can go. In his first attempt to put his ideas on paper he needs to be let alone, the teacher standing ready to help on call. He should always be encouraged to read his paper carefully, correcting as many errors as he finds before he turns it in for anyone to see. It is then that the teacher, a sympathetic helper, finds other errors and shows him how to correct them. This is the place for drill. Only when a sizable group of children need help in the same technique does the teacher conduct drill exercises with several children. There is nothing so boring or so deadening to the creative spirit as the hour after hour drilling on some language technique already mastered. The teacher must also realize that the child writes with ease about the things he knows something about or has an interest in. Assigned subjects for compositions often leave children with a helpless feeling. We must realize they have endless interests and need only a suggestion of something in their environment and a feeling that everything which is about them is important enough to write about. The new calf, the fire engine, the new baby, swimming on a hot day, a flying kite, a new puppy, hot chocolate—these and myriad other things are far better suggestions than those on "page 27" of any text book.

The young child will say his thoughts to you, but you will need to write his stories or poems for him because writing is such a task for little hands. Time spent in recording these stories and poems is not wasted. Not until the child is in the latter half of the third

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grade does he write with enough ease and speed to do his own recording to a very great extent.

The wings of thought can gain strength with each satisfactory experience from year to year, or they can be kept pinioned and powerless by inadequate, unimaginative teaching at any level. It is exciting to see them strengthened and to feel you helped a little. Try it!

Examples of writing given in Part I of this bulletin were done by children from ten to twelve years of age. They have been collected between 1939 and 1946. Some of the children whose work is included are now in college.

Children's thoughts have wings,
And through these thoughts
Their souls can sing.



ABOVE THE CLOUDS

Children who enjoy a great deal of poetry by hearing it read, by learning it together, and by reciting it in concert or verse speaking choir, often try writing it. Some children seem to have a spark of creative genius and lovely poems come easily. For all children time to write and an atmosphere of freedom may result in poetry of surprising quality. It must not be forced, never assigned, but rather accepted as an expression, however rich or meager, from the soul of a child. Sometimes the poem is filled with humor and lilted merriment; again it has the simple beauty of a word picture; or it may reveal deep pride and feeling for something we had not realized meant so much. Whatever emotion brings loveliness from the fingers of any artist is present in children. It will result in creative expression if teachers do not, in the rush to get "things taught", literally clip the wings of thought.

The following poems were written by children. They enjoyed writing them, and hope you have fun reading them.

A QUEEN'S DRESS

A cobweb for her lacy mantle,
Lady's slippers for her feet,
Foxgloves for her milk white hands,
A skirt of rose leaves scented sweet,
These are fit for a fairy queen.

ANN LOWRY (10)

IN MY LOVELY GARDEN

In my lovely garden where the birds all sing,
In my lovely garden where the bluebells ring,
In my lovely garden I could stay all day.
For in my lovely garden there's a lovely
Place to play.

WANDA FARMER (11)

APPLE BLOSSOMS

Apple blossoms are having a ball tonight
Dressed in gowns of pinkish white.
The winds make the music with a rhythmic sound.
Baby petals are confetti
Tumbling to the ground.
The orchard is the ballroom in decoration gay.
The admission?—None.
You don't have to pay.

GLORIA SPANN (11)

ANGRY FATHER

Oh, goodness gracious me.
Can't you ever, ever see
That I'm working?
The very way you bother
Would anger any father.
Now stop that smirking!

ANN LOWRY (10)

HOW OLD IS MA?

How old is Ma, how old is she?
Her birthday is today.
She won't tell a single she or he
How old she is today.
How old is Ma, how old is she?
I don't have any idea;
But Papa knows and here he comes,
But I'll wait 'til Ma's not near.

JACKIE SHARBOROUGH (11)

MAKING A MURAL

We cut out paper, nice and neat,
Then we sketch on a notebook sheet.
We put the sky in, and then the hills,
Then come the students who have great skill.
We work as carefully as we can,
Then we can tell people we did it by hand.

JOE SPANN (12)

MY CHARGER

Oh, see my black charger
Riding around!
Now up in the sky,
Now down to the ground.
His flying black mane and floating black tail
Make me look, though I'm sunbrowned,
Quite a bit pale.

ANN LOWRY (10)

SNOW FAIRIES

At the old farm house upon the hill
When the moon's in the sky,
If you watch carefully you're sure to see
The lovely snow fairies going by
The waters are lapping
And everything's still,
The fairies are coming
To dance by the mill.

MARY DODGE (10)

I MET A LITTLE ELF MAN

I met a little elf man
Out on the lawn one day.
He had a coat of red
That was very fine I'd say
The toes of his shoes were pointed
The laces on them were so neat,
And the bells on his shoes went ting-a-ling-ling
To everyone he'd meet.

LURENE WILKERSON (12)

BED

When I go to bed at night
I look in the heavens bright
And see the stars with their glittering light.
Then Old Man Moon peeks over the hill
To see if all the world is still.

ARDATH BOYD (11)

RED MAPLE

Oh, Red Maple, how did you get your leaves?
Did you have someone weave them?
Or did a gypsy leave a red dress on your branches
and they fought over it?
Is this how you got your tattered edges?

RALPH WADE MORRIS (11)

SPRING FAIRY

There in slumber she did lie
Beneath the cloudy sky,
The fairy princess of the spring,
Waiting for the birds to sing
And waken her from slumber.

ARDATH BOYD (11)

GRANDMA HARRIET

There is a hair trunk in our garret
And Grandpa said it belonged to
Grandma Harriet.
But if you won't tell anyone,
Best friends the same,
Best friends the same,

ANN LOWRY (10)

DAWN

The mists had passed and the sky was filled with
delicate purple clouds.
The dawn had come.
A gorgeous ray of yellow crept across the sky.
And in the east the ball of fire was seen against the
heavens.
The flowers opened up their eyes, the birds were
singing gaily
They let the whole world know that another day
was here.

MARY DODGE (11)

A WILD MARCH WIND

The wind blows high,
The winds blows low,
It's whistling around the house, O-Ho;
Twisting and whirling, singing and dancing.
Clearing the way for the March wind is prancing.
Up in the tree he calls aloud;
His audience is a white fleecy cloud.
Clear the way for wild March wind.

ANN SHROAT (12)

LITTLE LEAVES

Little leaves, where have you been
Upon the trees so gay?
Have any birds built on your branches
And hatched little birds today?

WANDA TREVATHAN (11)

SPRING SUNSET

The golden sun was sinking low in a sky of blue
And on the grass most everywhere
Were frosty drops of dew.
Yellow jonquils and crocuses were nodding to and fro.
Long and slender daffodils
Were bobing in a row.

FRANCES WASHAM (12)

SNOW PALACES

The woods were snow palaces
With dainty 'ceilings that no sculptor could have
shaped,
With all his tools and skill.
The lacy bushes no weaver could have woven or
draped,
The path was hard and clear.

ANN LOWRY (10)



Not all children write poetry, but everyone learns to express his ideas in clear, interesting sentences if we are really teaching the language arts. This prose includes letters, stories, descriptions, editorials, accounts of happenings, records of conversations, plays, and other types. In this section examples of writing not specifically about room activities will be given. Sometimes an event at home is the subject; sometimes a picture gives the suggestion; or the theme may come from the weather, a radio announcement, a heated discussion, a book recently read, or a feeling the child has. A great deal of work on vocabulary, beauty of expression, and clarity of ideas is done day by day. Children who write well usually read well. They are always alert to interesting sections in the books they read, often sharing aloud an especially well written paragraph. It can be seen rather readily what the motivation was in the selections given below.

POT OF GOLD

How would you like a pot of gold? I knew you would. Here is what you have to do. Listen carefully. First, you go to see Johnny Kite. Ask him if he will take you up to see Mr. Sun. Then slide down the sunbeams and you'll land on rainbow end. You'll find a pot of gold. It is a lot of fun to do. Do you want to try?

ARDATH BOYD (11)

A DOG

A dog is such a lovely friend with soft brown eyes and a shaggy brown coat; a rough red tongue and a waggy tail; a black wet nose and a whine that would never be forgotten.

ARDATH BOYD (11)

BEWARE THE MOSQUITO

Do you know that the mosquito is a dangerous insect?

There is just one of all types of mosquitoes around here that is dangerous. Although others call him "Anopheles", I call him the "Dive Bomber", for he is the only one which comes in head first, and stands on his front feet with his hind feet in the air. This mosquito is the one which gives malaria. Symptoms are chills, fever, aching, tiredness, and also laziness.

The most common way to keep mosquitoes out of your house is by means of mosquito nets and good screens.

JAMES GLASGOW (10)

RAIN AND SNOW

It was a rainy night and the cold wind hissed by the house, slipping into the cracks. The firelight made a glittering sparkle on the wet snow. The sky was dark and gray. Trees were hanging with icicles.

CHARLIE WALDROP (11)

A PRAYER

Dear Lord, thank you for my Mommy, and for Daddy, and for my Grandma and my Grandpa, and for my little dog, Jack.

And please forgive me for trying to put Jack in our flour sack. I was only playing like I was a great hunter capturing lions.

And forgive me for eating all those green apples.

And forgive me for pushing little Willie in the creek. We were only playing commandos and I was trying to get him tough.

And forgive me for giving little Willie a black eye today. If he hadn't thrown stones at Jack, I wouldn't have popped him so.

And, Dear Lord, have all Angels watch over me tonight.

BILLY JACKSON (11)

Dear Joe,

Somewhere in Scotland

I am writing you about Lassie. She was very unhappy here. The other day when Hynes was taking her for a walk the collar pulled over her head. Then she was free. He tried to catch her but he couldn't. He got her inside of the wall. He told me to shut the gate, but I didn't, so she got away. I hope she comes back.

Yours truly,

Priscilla

By VERONA AMITH (12)

THE STORM

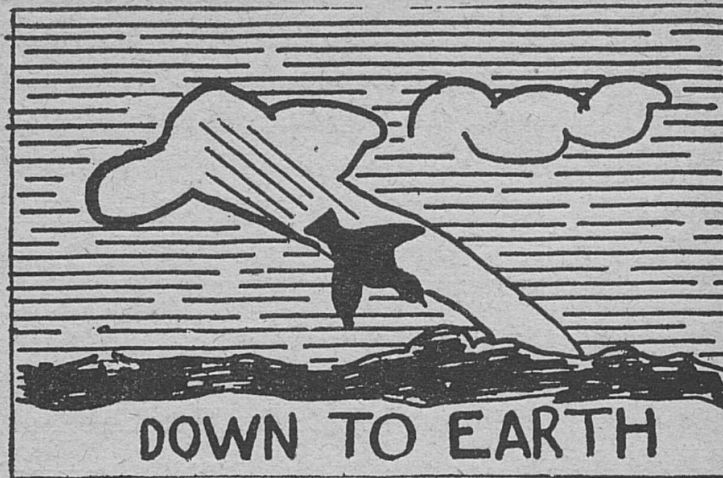
A storm is made of lightning, thunder, wind, and rain. The wind whistles around corners, down chimneys, in the woods and tears up large oak trees by the roots. The lightning flashes across the sky in zig-zag paths. The thunder booms in the sky like a huge giant clapping his hands.

MARY LEE HICKS (12)

WINTER MORNING

Monday morning when I got out of bed, I started to feed. The snow crunched under my feet and the bitter wind whistled in my frozen ears. My cold, stiff fingers ached when I took hold of the chain that held the crib door.

W. D. POYNER (12)



If children are not writing just for the fun of it, the reason should be a very real one. When they are busy people, working at real tasks of responsibility endless occasions for writing arise. Letters can always be written to people either to invite them to come to school or to thank them for a service performed. Publicity articles have to be written, minutes of meetings must be kept, accounts of activities are needed. The examples of these are chosen to show how these situations arise naturally and are taken care of in very business-like fashion by little people who are developing into active, responsible big people.

Murray Training School
Murray, Kentucky
February 13, 1946

Dear Dad and Mother,

There is going to be a Pot Luck Supper at the Training School in the lunchroom at 6:15 on February 15. I hope you will come, be with the teachers, and talk with them.

Sincerely,

KATHLEEN HAWKINS (12)

EDITORIAL ON SALESMEN

At our last stockholders' meeting we criticized the Buyers and Arrangers very heavily. Today I worked at Buying and Arranging and I found out that it is not all together their fault about several things we brought up. One of the things was that they were not keeping the stand in fruit. This is not their fault. The salesmen will wait until ther are completely out of fruit before they call for more.

BILLY JACKSON (11)

Mr. S
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Murray Training School
Murray, Kentucky
April 24, 1946

Mr. S. V. Foy, County Agent
Murray, Kentucky

Dear Mr. Foy :

The Sixth Grade thanks you for taking them to the Test Demonstration farms and telling them about soil. I hope you can come back soon. We are looking forward to the day you test soil for us.

Yours truly,

EUGENE BURKEEN (12)

GAME CABINET

The Sixth Grade has organized a Game Cabinet for the children that have to wait for the buses. The Mother's Club bought games to put in the cabinet. Some of the games are parcheesi, checkers, pit, rook, lotto, jacks, etc. The Sixth Grade children are serving as game librarians.

BARBARA CLOUTON (11)

OUR VITAMIN VILLAGE

We have a fruit stand that we call Vitamin Village, and the Sixth Grade is very proud of it. We open Vitamin Village every day at 9:30 and stay open until 10:30. We have a lot of fun selling, auditing, and loading trays, although sometimes it is a "teensy weensy" little bit difficult. We bought shares so we can make money. We give half of the profit to the Training School.

LEVENIA JONES (11)

* * * *

Children's thoughts have wings,
And through these thoughts
Their souls can sing.

* * * *

PROCLAMATION
BY THE
GOVERNOR
OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY

To All to Whom These Presents Shall Come:

WHEREAS, The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky at its regular session in 1942, did, by resolution, recognize the need of stimulating cultural development through an educational program giving particular recognition to Kentucky poetry, and by that resolution did authorize the Governor to designate by proclamation the seventh day of April in each year as Kentucky Poetry Day to honor and preserve the memory of poets of Kentucky, to promote the study and appreciation of Kentucky poetry, and to encourage creative talent in this field; and,

WHEREAS, It is further provided that this day shall be observed with suitable activities by the citizens of the Commonwealth, and by study and special observance of poetry in the public schools of the state according to such program as may be suggested by the Superintendent of Public Instruction;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Simeon Willis, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, do hereby proclaim the seventh day of April, 1947, as

KENTUCKY POETRY DAY

and request all citizens of the Commonwealth to join with the schools in observing through an appropriate program the memory of the leaders who have contributed to the literature and poetry of Kentucky.

Done at Frankfort, Kentucky, this the twenty-fourth day of March in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and forty-seven, and in the year of the Commonwealth, the one hundred and fifty-fifth.

(Signed) SIMEON WILLIS,
Governor

(Signed) CHARLES K. O'CONNELL,
Secretary of State

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DEDICATION



J. T. Cotton

POET LAUREATE OF KENTUCKY

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165 N. Carson Road, Beverly Hills, California

January 23, 1947

“Committee on Kentucky Poetry Day:

In compliance with your request for a brief sketch of my career, I am happy to submit the following:

I was born in Washington County, Kentucky, near Springfield, the county seat, a good many years ago. My early education was obtained in the schools of Springfield and Perryville, following which I attended Franklin College (Indiana). After my graduation from Franklin, I taught and was principal of high schools in Kentucky and Indiana for four years, and then did graduate work in Cornell University, where I studied Philology under James Morgan Hart, and Literature with Hiram Corson, a famed Shakespearean critic and teacher of Poetry. I practiced law in Springfield for four years, and then returned to teaching in Hartsville, Tennessee, Pineville, Kentucky, and Lincoln Memorial University, from which place I went to the University of Kentucky, where I remained a member of the faculty for nearly thirty years, retiring in 1934.

I am the author of the following books of poetry: *The Loom of Life*; *The Blood of Rachel*; *Tip Sams of Kentucky*; *The Legend of the Silver Band*; *The Valleys of Parnassus*; *Oolooloon*; *In Kentucky*; *A Brief Anthology of Kentucky Poetry*; and *Tip Sams Again*, just now coming from the University of Kentucky Press.

I was made Poet Laureate of Kentucky in March of 1926, by a joint resolution of the General Assembly of Kentucky. This seems to be the general method of creating poets laureate. John G. Neihardt was made Poet Laureate of Nebraska by joint resolution of the General Assembly of that state, and, so far as I know, he was the first official Poet Laureate of any state in the Union. Since then; I believe, it has been the custom to appoint a poet laureate by joint resolution of the legislative branch of the state, though Governors sometimes do commission a poet laureate.

I am very happy that Kentucky is encouraging the schools in teaching poetry and creative writing. I doubt that any state of the Union has more native talent than does Kentucky, which needs only the stimulus which the schools can give to make it productive in the end.

J. T. COTTON NOE.”

Part II

GAINING ALTITUDE IN CREATIVENESS

Examples of creativeness expressed in prose and poetry this year by a group of eighth grade students, under guidance of Miss Martha Shipman, teacher, University School, University of Kentucky

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GAINING ALTITUDE IN CREATIVENESS

By MARTHA SHIPMAN

Eighth Grade Teacher, University School, University of Kentucky

In my efforts to stimulate creative writing among my eighth grade children, I do not have a set, or even well planned, program. Always, however, I have before me the idea of leading them toward some creativeness in their expression. Since I feel that all children must write and write often to develop any facility in writing, my children are first urged to write, and then written work is required of them at regular intervals. The children are free to write about almost anything that appeals to them: book reviews, retelling of experiences they have had, read, or heard, informational articles, editorials, letters, essays, poetry, paraphrasing of poems, "pieces" designed to convey to the reader the author's feeling, impression, or emotion, and descriptive compositions.

I frequently suggest that any writing should be just long enough to tell what the author has to say; that every sentence or idea that does not move the composition forward with ease and clarity should be eliminated; and that the most effective writing is usually based on the author's own experience or emotion. Furthermore, a short article or story allows the child time and energy to revise and polish so that he can avoid errors and perhaps produce the effect he desires.

We hold frequent evaluative discussions, in which we consider the good and bad elements of a piece of work. We pay particular attention to such things as the author's purpose and the means by which he achieved that purpose, unity of thought or impression, logical development of the idea, the complexity or simplicity of the concepts involved, timeliness, appropriateness, choice of words, phrasing, imagery, and figures of speech.

Wherever I notice a sentence or phrase that seems particularly effective, original, or interesting, which lifts the composition above the everyday or hum-drum, I make a great deal of it. On a social studies test, I found this sentence: "America's march toward democracy is a slow and often interrupted procession." That one sentence, written by a boy who had appeared timid, shy, and afraid, made the grading of those papers a pleasure instead of a chore. I told the class of its effect, without mentioning the name of the author. He knew, and his whole bearing changed. And a few other children were encouraged to say what they wanted to say.

One of the big jobs is to help the children to overcome their fear of appearing ridiculous in their efforts, to reestablish in them that

freedom of expression and richness of imagination which is revealed in the small child in imaginative play and which the adults about him so completely destroy or drive inside. If a child tries out his wings, I discuss his efforts with him and usually obtain his permission to read his composition to the class. Some other child "lets himself go" because of the first child's success. Soon there are several children who try. And some succeed. I never expect many in any group to do really creative writing. But I am happy over those who do.

Here are some samples of the work done by my eighth grade pupils this year. As has been said, "Even the gods on Olympus nod."

THE WORLD

The world is a queer old thing,
With hidden secrets unfound, undreamed.
Tortured by her many wars,
Upon her surface lay the scars of hate, and death,
and all that enmity brings.
Ever moving on her unchanged path,
She whirls and twirls, unwilling to stop and rest.
The world is a mighty thing,
For only God knows what the future brings.

AURA JEAN PRICE

February 13, 1947

NIGHT

Night is a mystery ;
It envelops all with a deep cloak,
It hides the ugly scars of life
Leaving blurry lights surrounded by darkness.
Night is disillusionment.
Night is a mystery ;
It fills up the holes of the world,
And keeps one dreaming and wondering
About the unknown, until daylight comes.
Night is disillusionment.
Night is a mystery ;
It holds everyone in its magic spell,
It possesses an air of solemnity and stillness
That is wonderful, for it covers truth.
Night is disillusionment.

MARY LEWIS PATTERSON

February 21, 1947

MOONLIGHT

The moon rises over the mountain,
Its silver fingers reach far down into the valley
 covering the river huts with a clear brightness.
Tomorrow they will be as ever.
But tonight they are enchanted like some strange
 dream.

ROSA TUCKER
January 23, 1947

THE VIOLET

The violet of ravishing blue,
Stood on the hillside with all its colors true,
Swaying in the evening breeze,
Like some king ruling the grassy seas.
His head erect, his petals out,
Reminded me of an Eagle Scout.
His body stern and long and straight
Looked to heaven as each sunset ray
Reflected light upon his purplish face
As he swayed and bowed at the close of another day.

AURA JEAN PRICE
February 21, 1947

THE MISSISSIPPI

Ever rusing, forward crushing,
Swirls the mighty Mississippi
Onward to its mouth,
Always swirling, always whirling
Forward to the south.
Always nearer, always farther,
It strains against its banks
Like a young man, adventurous, brave and free.
And sometimes grows too large,
Too impatient, for the course
It's destined to follow and the life its' meant to lead.
Like an old man, too, crooked, bent and old,
Many's the tale it shares which
Still may lie untold.
The Mississippi is the young, restless and strong;
It is the old, a dreamer of the past, and destined to
 live long.

NAN MITCHELL
January, 1947

FADED DREAM

The swamp so splashed with restful colors was like a faded dream.
The silent crystal waters lapped against the rocky ledges and
made the soft moss swing.

A wand struck the waters and circles grew.
The magic colors dripped into a whirlpool—and I awoke.

ROSEMARY McLAIN

February 13, 1947

SNOW FLAKES

The snow flakes come dancing
And falling over all the land,
Coming to join all the snow.
The storm has hushed, yet still
More little flakes keep whirling
As down, down they go!
They are madly whirling, whirling,
Dancing all the steps they know
As if dancing at a fairy ball.
They hide in every nook and cranny
As they jump to and fro.
All different patterns sprinkle their dresses
And sparkle in the sun's glow.
Now they seem to be whirling
As if at a glimmering fashion show.
No two of these beautiful designs are alike,
And invisible to the human eye
While jumping all over the land,
As down, down they go!

CAROLYN CARTER

February 20, 1947

THE PRAYER

The congregation was silent as the preacher rose in his pulpit.
The sunlight streaming in through the stained glass windows
marked golden rainbows over the people, whose heads were bowed in
prayer.

He stood there, head bowed as the others, and his black robe
made his face look pale but very wise and understnading.

Then he spoke; his voice filled the quiet surroundings with
great and wise words.

His prayer was lengthy, but it took him a long time to express his strong feelings. When he finished, the people lifted their heads and their voices sang out in glorious refrains.

JEAN WILLIS

February 17, 1947

MY DEAR LITTLE BROTHER

I have a little brother
Who always gets in Dutch,
He seldom minds his mother—
But I don't blame him much.
He won't put up his toys,
They litter every chair;
And what he most enjoys
Is yanking on my hair.
If you have such a creature,
There's but one thing I can say:
Kiss him every morning
But spank him every day.

MERLE HAFFLER

January 23, 1947

OCEAN

I looked at it. There it was, stretched before me in its beauty and wonder. I had never seen it before, and now I loved it—the scent of freshness; the sound that kept roaring through my ears. It was so wonderful.

The second day was warm and sunny. I ran down the hill to look at my treasure. It looked so calm and peaceful, with the sun catching every particle and making it gleam like a gem, that I wanted literally to take it in my arms and hug it. I suddenly had a feeling of possessiveness that was reluctant to leave me.

Only a moment I paused, before running through the sand to feel this wonderful discovery. When looking more closely at it, though, it seemed mysterious; mysterious, even a bit treacherous. I didn't hesitate after that first moment, however, but went flying over the hot sand to meet my new playmate. Here *it* was, rushing to meet me! It seemed to roll closer, as if it were a great moving mountain. I was terrified, all at once, for I couldn't move. It was

upon me, and suddenly seemed to burst and ran away, leaving a white foam to gurgle around my feet for an instant.

I had not run away; I was too stunned, and for a moment I sat, contemplating my calamity. Yet, here *it* came again, rushing and roaring. I got up and ran to the contrastingly hot sand, trying to warm myself from the cold shock of my experience.

This great thing, tossing about, was no longer my friend; I started away, seeing that never ceased coming at one, that it was cruel and relentless. The sun had gone behind a cloud; the world was cold and gray. Disappointedly I turned and walked through the sand. Once again I looked at it, wondering how something that had seemed to be so much a part of me, could let me down.

MARY LEWIS PATTERSON

COTTON NOE, POET LAUREATE

James T. Cotton Noe, the Poet Laureate of Kentucky, was born in a small crossroad settlement called Tompsonville, Kentucky. Even when he was quite young, Noe had a very poetic spirit and loved beautiful things around him, things which children of his age rarely notice.

Noe's first education was obtained in a log school house which, even though crude, he remembers with great affection. In his later schooling, one of Noe's teachers gave him his inspiration. Through the teacher's influence, Noe entered and was graduated with honors from Franklin College in Indiana.

Later Mr. Noe taught, after which he did graduate work in English literature and philosophy at Cornell University and at the University of Chicago.

He met his wife, the former Sidney Stanfill, while teaching at Williamsburg Institute, now Cumberland College at Williamsburg, Kentucky. After practicing law for four years, Cotton Noe returned to teaching as a profession. He taught in various schools until he was called to Lexington, Kentucky, where he taught English in the A. & M. College. This college developed into the University of Kentucky. When a Teachers College was established at the University, Mr. Noe was made acting head; he was later appointed permanently to the staff. He remained with the College of Education until 1934, when he retired from active teaching and was assigned to literary work for the college. In 1926, by a resolution of the Kentucky Assembly, J. T. Cotton Noe was made poet laureate of Kentucky. At the present time, he lives in Beverly Hills, California.

I love Kentucky

A hundred years her hundred streams
Have poured their waters through my dreams;
A hundred years her bluegrass plains
And wooded hills have been my fanes.
God never made a land
More beautiful than Kentucky.

The Poet Laureate of Kentucky spoke thus of his native state in a poem expressing the thoughts of Daniel Boone. In many of his poems, Cotton Noe shows his feelings toward the mountains and the bluegrass. His descriptive poetry gives the reader a complimentary picture of the plain people around him, as do his characterizations.

Many of his poems take a humorous vein:

Old Tip raised tobacco
And he trafficked in skins.
For he had seven sons
In addition to the twins,
And every mother's son
And the little mammy, Jude,
Smoked a pipe all day
And the twins both chewed.

Cotton Noe is the author of five volumes of poetry and has published an anthology of Kentucky poems. Those people who enjoyed *Tip Sams of Kentucky* will enjoy *Tip Sams Again*, to be published in June, 1947, by the University of Kentucky Press.

Kentucky's poet does his writing as a hobby and not as a profession. He has never written anything but poetry, and as one of his close friends said, "He would be ashamed to write anything else." As some persons have put it, Noe is a people's poet, along with James Whitcomb Riley and others, because he has always written poems that the everyday person enjoys.

NAN MITCHELL
MARY LEWIS PATTERSON

February 21, 1947

Part III

"THE SKYWRITER" by JUNIOR JOURNALISTS

Examples of original poems and stories produced by children in grades one to eight and contributed to the "SKYWRITER", the University School paper which has been sponsored for sixteen years by Miss Kitty Conroy and groups of sixth grade boys and girls

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"THE SKYWRITER" by JUNIOR JOURNALISTS

By KITTY CONROY

Sixth Grade Teacher, University School, Lexington, Kentucky

"Let's make a book of our stories," said Dottie one day as we finished reading aloud the original stories the children had written.

"We can put them into a book and draw pictures to go with them," Jimmy suggested.

"How would you like to have the stories mimeographed, so each of you could have a copy?" I asked.

The children were delighted. "Then we can have editors and reporters like a real newspaper," they said.

In this way the "SKYWRITER", a children's magazine, written and edited by the children of the Sixth Grade, University School, University of Kentucky, was begun in the fall of 1931. The first editor, Clayton Robinson, son of Mr. and Mrs. H. C. Robinson, gave the magazine its name.

In the beginning the magazine was a collection of short stories, poems, and news of the Sixth Grade, but as interest grew among the children of other grades, stories and poems from all groups in the elementary school and in the junior high school were included.

The staff was composed of an editor, assistant editor, business manager and assistant, art editor, sports and book review editors, and reporters for each of the grades that contributed.

Originality is emphasized in all stories, and as few changes as possible are made in the material as it is written by the children. The editorial staff checks for errors in English and spelling, but even then a few mistakes always creep in.

I had long hoped to establish a paper or magazine which would offer opportunity for children's stories and poems to be published. I was delighted, however, that the children themselves had made the suggestion. Whereupon, we set to work.

Those first issues were simple affairs—collections of stories or poems that had accumulated over a period of weeks or months. The magazine sold for the price of 5c a copy, and always our supply of 200 copies was soon exhausted. Children of other grades showed almost as much interest as the Sixth Grade. We made posters in advance to advertise the sale and also made a survey of the school to estimate the approximate number of copies to be printed. The publication of the magazine was to be on a non-profit basis, with the cost held to the minimum in order to cover only the cost of materials.

In creative writing for children, freedom of expression is the essential thing. Too much criticism or refinishing of stories may result in the loss of natural charm.

The children are encouraged to write about things with which they are familiar. Pets, flowers, home, parents, trees, birds and sky are all close and understandable to children. Many and varied methods are used in developing and improving children's expression in written form. Sometimes the teacher may begin a story and allow each child to finish it in his own way and to suit his own fancy. She may also provide several subjects for stories, which lend themselves to imaginative writing. Some of the titles I have used are "Lost", "A Snowstorm", "The Secret Door", "The Surprise Package", and others. As each child interprets the title in his own way, the resulting stories are often surprising and delightful.

Creative writing comes more easily for some children than for others, but all can be guided and encouraged to an improved way of expressing ideas. For many children, one or two well written sentences may signify considerable growth and achievement, while others may write with more ease and clearness of style with considerably less effort.

In our first efforts at creative writing we give little thought or attention to the mechanics of English . . . the *idea* is the thing . . . Later we go over the story or poem for improvement in spelling, punctuation and correct form. We encourage self-evaluation, as well as evaluation by the group. One mother told me she criticized her ten-year-old daughter for an untidy looking paper she found in the child's notebook. The little girl replied, "Now, Mother, don't get excited; that's just my *idea* paper. I'll improve all that later with periods and commas and capitals."

Care should be taken that children do not undertake more than they can accomplish in writing. Guidance is necessary in helping children to keep their writing simple and to the point. Too often a child's story becomes too involved and the point is lost. Training in writing clearly and simply with emphasis upon omitting unnecessary detail is important for the teacher to keep in mind.

In writing poetry we take time to read many poems for children before writing our own. Walter de la Mare, Rose Fyleman, Dorothy Aldis, Louis Untermeyer, Elizabeth Madox Roberts and Vachel Lindsay are among the poets most frequently read. A child who is conversant with good poetry is more likely to produce a poem of his own. Although rhyme is often desirable in children's poems, it is

not essential. One day during a poetry writing period, one child said, "I can't write a poem. I can't get it to rhyme." Before I could reply, another child answered, "A poem doesn't have to rhyme. A poem is just a beautiful thought."

We do not necessarily write solely for the SKYWRITER. The SKYWRITER is merely the instrument through which many of the best writings of the children of the school are brought before others. An endless amount of excellent creative material is written that never finds its way into the pages of our magazine. We only wish there were some way we could handle more than we do.

One great value of the SKYWRITER is that it provides many opportunities for learning, aside from actual writing. An account is kept of all material used, such as stencils and paper. Expenses are estimated by the class, money collected, and bills paid. Sales talks are given to other classes before the magazine is printed and subscriptions are taken. The cover of the magazine provided opportunity of expression in art. Any child may draw a design for the cover page, and a vote of the group determines the one to be used. Often we have as many as fifteen cover designs to choose from. Various media have been used in producing the cover, including block printing, spatterwork, paper cut-outs, stencilling and hand painting. Although the cover page is usually designed by a child talented in art, all children of the grade participate in the actual production work.

The children are encouraged to illustrate their stories. These illustrations are drawn by the children on the stencil. Each year the Sixth Grade visits the newspaper plant of the Lexington Herald-Leader. Through a tour conducted by a representative of the press, the children see news in the making, as they visit the news room, the teletype and composition rooms, the storage room and finally gaze in wide-eyed wonder at the huge presses in operation.

Included here are a few of the stories and poems that have appeared in the pages of the SKYWRITER. These are given to illustrate the type of material that has gone, through the years, into the making of the magazine.

A STORY

Flowers bloom.
I had a dog named Snowball.
Leaves are on trees.
I saw a bluebird yesterday.

VIRGINIA (First Grade)

A PICNIC

Saturday we went out to a picnic.
Mother and Father and Brother Jack,
George, Camilla, Uncle, Aunt Anna and Auntie.
We went fishing.
It's true.

BETTY ANN (First Grade)

A STORY

A little girl and a little boy
Lived in a house with a dog.
They were very, very poor.
The little boy said to the little girl,
"We must find some work to do."
And they did.
They were rich.

BETTY Jo (First Grade)

THE STORY OF MAMMY WITCH

Once there was a witch.
She was a mammy witch.
She had four witch children.
On Hallowe'en they all went out
And flew around like bats.
Each had a jack-o-lantern.
They lighted up the sky

BARBARA (First Grade)

MY DOG

I have a little dog. Her name is Cindy. She is as black as coal and is a varmint, too. But she is smart. She can catch a ball. She can catch a mouse. She barks all the time at night. She sleeps with Dad and Mother. She sleeps well, too. Don't you?

BUDDY (Third Grade)

MY PRAYER

I am thankful
For my table cleanly spread,
For my meat and bread.
For my bed,

So clean and white,
On which to rest at night.
For the sunshine warm and bright,
That gives us strength,
To fight with all our might.
For the rain,
That gently falls,
On grass, flowers and all.

JANE (Third Grade)

FUZZY KITTEN

Once there was a kitten. Her name was Fuzzy Kitten. She lived in a big house. A little girl lived there, too. She liked the kitten and the kitten liked the girl. They are the best of friends.

MARGARET (Third Grade)

HOW THE RABBIT GOT HIS EARS

Once upon a time there was a rabbit who lived in a little house under a tree. His name was Hippity-Hoppity. One day he started out to look for a job to make some money. He started to go to a place where they milked cows to see if he could get a job. He talked to the boss. Hippity-Hoppity said to the boss that he wanted a job. The boss said, "No, you don't have any ears and you can't hear what the cows say." Hippity-Hoppity ran straight to town and bought the biggest ears he could find and has been wearing them ever since.

MARSHALL (Fourth Grade)

BOW-WOW, THE PUPPY

Once Bow-Wow lived in a pretty house, but now he lives in a pen. Bow-Wow is very unhappy now because he doesn't have a Pa or Ma. (They ran away.) One day Bow-Wow was going to eat his lunch when he noticed the bush wiggle. "Ma", said Bow-Wow, "is that you?" "Yes", was the answer. Soon after that the bush wiggled again. "Pa", said Bow-Wow, "is that you?" "Yes", was the answer.

Soon Ma and Pa and Bow-Wow were living together, happy and having a wonderful time.

DOROTHY (Third Grade)

SNOWFLAKES

One day Betty said, "Look, Mother, see how hard it is snowing."
"Yes", answered her mother. "Would you like for me to tell you something about the snowflakes?"

"Oh, yes", replied Betty.

"Did you know that all snowflakes have six sides?"

"Is that really so?"

"Yes, and every one is different."

"Oh, Mother, may I get some and look at them?"

"Yes, but you cannot see them with just your eyes. If you will get some in a pan, they will not melt so fast. Then you may look at them through Tom's microscope."

JULIET (Sixth Grade)

UNDER WATER BALL

"Under water", said the fishes,
"Under water", said the fishes,
I saw a ball last night.
Turtles were the waiters,
Turtles were the band,
But the fishes were the dancers,
Kicking up the sand,
Kicking up the sand,
But the fishes were the dancers,
Kicking up the sand.
The sword-fish saw a lady,
The sword-fish saw a lady,
The sword-fish saw a lady,
With lovely golden hair,
Lovely golden hair, lovely golden hair.
The sword-fish saw a lady
With lovely golden hair.
There was one oyster,
He was silvery gray and slim,
The lady loved his dancing,
The lady loved his dancing,
The lady loved his dancing,
She danced all night with him.
Alas, he was an oyster,

So when she swam away
They threw him on a lily-pad,
And there he is to stay.

FRANCES (Fifth Grade)

(The rhythm and idea for this poem are based on the "Potato Dance" by Vachel Lindsay. Otherwise this poem is original.)

MEETING A NEW MOTHER AND FATHER

As Mrs. Brooks helped Virginia on the train, Virginia thought how scared she would be in this new life.

Virginia thought this, for she was an orphan, who had been in an Orphan's Home. One day a man and a lady had come to the orphanage and wanted her for their little girl. She did not want to leave that place where all of her friends were.

To think she was on the train! It was moving!

Virginia was eleven years old, but by being in the Home she had not ever had the responsibility of being alone downtown or being with any other children. She had always gone with some of the teachers. When she came to Bardwell, Mr. and Mrs. Newberry were there to meet her. Oh! How nice they were. She already liked this new life.

ANNE (Sixth Grade)

WANDERING

I'd rather roam the fields afar,
And pick the flowers fair,
Than stay in cities where you are
And not go anywhere.
I'd rather take some dogs with me,
Than wander all alone,
For dogs are lots of company,
Although they're not my own.

EMILY (Sixth Grade)

DAISIES

Have you ever seen the daisies
In a meadow grow?
When they blossom, they appear
A field of purest snow.
But when you go to pick them

And take them to your mother,
They look like many little suns
Nodding to one another.
The petals are the fleecy clouds,
The center is the sun,
I think that playing in the daisies
Is a lot of fun!

EMILY (Sixth Grade)

SPOTTED PONIES—NOT FOR SALE

One day late in August, a man drove up to our house in a big car. He got out and announced that he was the manager of a circus. He said, "As I was riding along the road, I saw three spotted ponies. I stopped and inquired of a man nearby to whom they belonged, and he sent me here."

As I said, I am the manager of a circus and would like to buy these ponies for the circus."

Daddy said, "Those fillies are not for sale at any price, even for the circus."

The man said, "Would you let me see them closer?"

"Of course you can," I said. "Come right this way."

When we reached the field, I whistled and all three fillies came straight to me. I gave each a piece of sugar and patted Cookie on the nose and said to the man, "You like them, don't you?"

He said, "Yes, very much. Won't you let me have them?"

"No. I am very sorry, but you can see these are my pets." I gave all three ponies another lump of sugar and walked away.

"Good-bye", said the man and drove away.

JANE (Sixth Grade)

THE METAL BIRD

Chapter I

On the border of Chapman Field, Florida, in a small cottage, lived Peggy Bryan, a pretty young girl engaged to be married to Mr. Bill Johnson, an aviator and test pilot on that field. Mr. Chapman, the head manager, is just sending him on a dangerous flight.

The day he was to leave was to have been his wedding day. Peggy was there to see him off. Just before he left, Mr. Chapman gave Bill a tiny box and said, "Don't lose this for anything, for if you do it means death to all of us, even Peggy. That's why I am sending you."

Bill spoke. "Thanks, old fellow, but why do you have such confidence in me?"

Firmly but gently, Mr. Chapman spoke. "Because you are the *only* aviator here that does not know what is in the box."

Peggy looked at both of them puzzled. Bill gently said, "Don't worry, Peg, I'll be back in no time."

Waving to Bill till he was out of sight Peggy stood there almost rooted to the ground. She whispered, "I wonder what he meant . . . only pilot that did not know."

Chapter II

Meanwhile Bill was fighting to prevent a crash, for his motor was clogged and he was spinning, nosing downward. A crash was heard by an Indian girl, "Lona". A muffled groan and then "SILENCE!" Dreaded silence!

Lona ran up to the broken plane. She saw Bill in there, almost twisted into a knot. She rushed back to the Seminole village, her native home, to get help. She got her father, a strong, husky man, to dig Bill out of the ruins of what her father called "A METAL BIRD".

The crash wasn't far from the village. They dug Bill out and Lona's father carried him back to the village.

Chapter III

There in the peaceful and quiet village Bill soon recovered and was repairing his radio equipment to wire back to Chapman Field to send him another plane. He finally managed to get it fixed. He wired back and soon another "Metal Bird" was zooming over head to take Bill back.

He reached home safely. After Peg and Bill's honeymoon was over Bill went to Mister Chapman and said, "I delivered the package to the head of the Seminoles, as you asked."

He turned to Peggy, "He was a good 'Metal Bird.'"

LOVIE (Sixth Grade)

THE STORY OF THE LITTLE BROWN PANTS

I am a pair of brown pants. I am in a store. I have been on the counter for a month waiting for someone to come in and buy me.

The other day a little boy came in and tried me on, and then put me down and tried some blue ones on. He took them off and looked

at me and then looked at the blue pair again. At first, I thought he was going to buy me, but he said, "I'll take the blue pair."

A big tear dropped from my eye because I was so sorry. It didn't seem like anyone wanted me.

I asked myself, "Do I cost too much? Am I ugly, or what?" I just didn't know.

One Monday I had a big surprise. A little boy named Jack came in and wanted a pair of brown pants. My face brightened up like a light. He saw me and tried me on. He liked me so well that he said he would take me. Then I knew that I would have a home and be loved like all the other pants. I would go to school every day and to church every Sunday.

One day after school, Jack came home and said that everyone liked his pants and wished they had them. Then his mother told him to take them off and put on some old ones to play in, but Jack said, "I want to play in them because I want everyone to see them."

Then his mother said, "All right, but don't tear them or get them dirty."

Jack said, "I won't."

So he went to the garage and got his bicycle. He rode down the hill with the rest of the boys, but when he reached the bottom he fell on some rocks and tore his pants in the knees. A tear came in each of Jack's eyes and in mine also. He was afraid to tell his mother for he knew he should have changed them before he came out like his mother told him to.

But when Jack got home and told his mother, she found she had some brown cloth almost like his pants and she patched them right away. I looked just like new again.

So if you are a pair of brown pants in a store and don't get sold right off, don't give up. Some day you will be sold to a fine person just like Jack.

TISSIE (Seventh Grade)

P. S.—Mothers are always right.

LAND OF LIBERTY

The other day when I was sitting in the library I glanced around at the shelves. On one shelf I saw several books bearing titles, such as these: "Little Known Facts About Japan", "Children of the Rising Sun" and "Land of Cherry Blossoms". Nearby I saw "Mein Kampf". I wondered, "Would books about the United States be allowed in Japan or Germany?" I knew the answer. Any such books

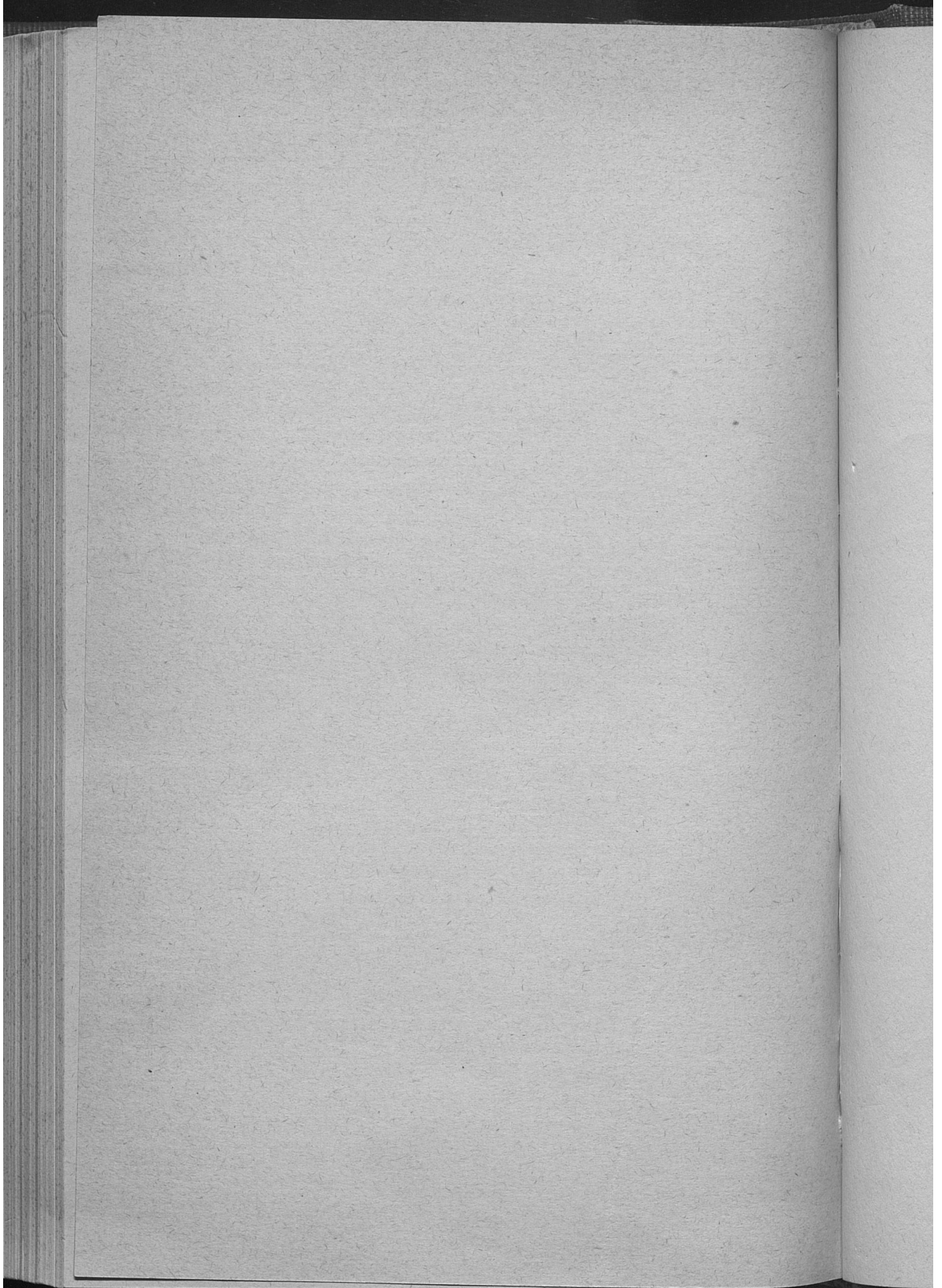
were probably burned years ago. I thought a moment. We are fighting to the death in a bitter war. We are shedding our life's blood to defeat Japan and Germany, and yet we have books about these two countries in the libraries of our schools.

I felt a warm glow of happiness. Suddenly I knew what America meant!

HELEN (Eighth Grade)

* * * *

The SKYWRITER is now in its 16th year of publication at the University School. It has weathered the depression and the War and its stories reflect the lives and times of the children who have written for it. Many of those young editors and reporters on the first issues have finished college and are now married and established in life with children of their own. Many of them and those of more recent years have become students of journalism in the University, and likewise editors and reporters on larger, better-known publications. I like to think they first got the smell of printer's ink in those early, formative years, when they, as children, published the SKYWRITER.



EPH ANDERSON

Eph Anderson, forspent, forlorn,
Took from the wall his old fox-horn
And blew an awful blast,
Till every hound that heard the sound,
Of every breed and caste,
Yellow, grizzly, black and tan,
Untrained pup and veteran,
Old and fat, and young and thin,
Came yelping, trooping in.
And Eph who knew he held the key
That unlocked dog psychology,
Now made a speech to them,
In brevity a gem:
"My little crap of corn,"
He said, "has failed."
At this an old hound wailed.
"My 'baccers felt the blight."
Here howling rent the night.
His voice grew husky now.
"Yet we must live, but how?
The mast this year is light.
But boys and girls, I know a den,
A mile from here beyond the glen,
Where two big foxes live.
Goldstein told me that he would give
A hundred for the two.
Do what you can."
Old Sol had sensed the cue.
The overture began.
A whine as thin as clarinet,
And then a deep-mouthed baritone,
And Eph was left alone.
All night the woodlands rang:
Soprano, bass; solo, duet,
Ensemble, and a great quartet.
Eph listened till his eyes were wet.
Next day the dogs were fed.
A silver hide
Wirth half a hundred hung beside
A crown of golden sang.
Old Ephraim bowed his trembling head,
"We thank Thee, Lord, for bread."

J. T. COTTON NOE.

REVELATION

A little lad just fresh from God,
I loved the stars called Aaron's Rod,
And knew who swung the Pleiades
Above the earth and over seas.
Sophistication made me blind.
For forty years I tried to find
The scientific proof of God,
While all the time the Seraphim
Of Beauty were revealing Him
In gardens where His feet had trod.

THE CARDINAL

Animated, flashing flame of scarlet,
Teasing, tantalizing madcap varlet,
Glooming, glinting through the boughs,
Making, braking lover's vows;
Dashing leader of the choir,
Standing on the topmost spire,
Scintillating song and fire,
Calls me; *Come up—come up—higher,
higher, higher.*
Daytime meteor trailing light,
Like a shooting star at night—
Just a moment of delight,
Followed by a mad desire;
But the flaming flash of scarlet—
Teasing, tantalizing madcap varlet,
Hiding from my aching sight—
This time just a little nigher—
Laughing from his leafy height,
Mocks me: *Come up—come up—higher,
higher, higher.*

GOLDEN ROD

Beauty is a sprite
And like a beam of light,
She dances over mountains
And on velvet bluegrass sod;
But when the summer's over,
And the bees have left the clover,
She turns her fairy slippers
Into flames of Goldenrod.

J. T. COTTON NOE

Periodical Librarian
University of Kentucky
Lexington, Ky.

Entere

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