

Sp 1973

Pulse



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Jo Ann Thrash, "The Island"
3. Tim Sykes, "A Homecoming"

Honorable Mention

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PULSE

THE LAMAR REVIEW

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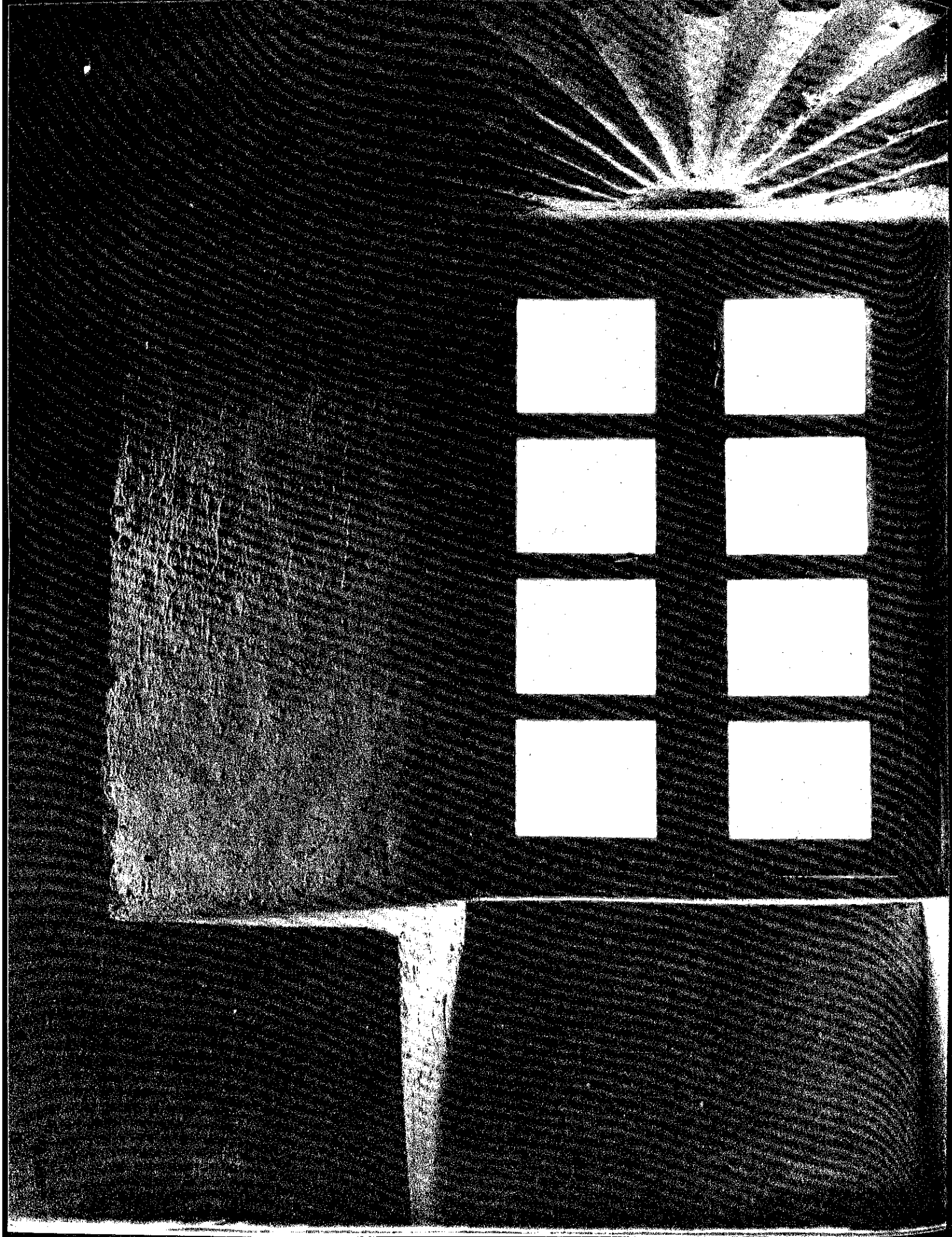
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J. Marks

J. Marks is a former Dartmouth student who attended Lamar in the Fall semester of 1972. He has studied creative writing at Dartmouth and Lamar. He is presently studying at Tulane and will return to Dartmouth in the fall.

See What Summer Will Bring

Summer. Humid stagnation pulsed against sweaty flesh and fat women in calico cottons. The screen door cracked shut behind little Samuel-Wayne Hazelton. S. W. Hazleton he had wanted to call himself. But his mother had said it would be pagan not to keep his Christian-given name. Hot, wet, warm. Summer greeted him as he stepped out. He spat. Hell, he hated summer. The morning dew was rising in fume-streaks that not quite distorted what was seen through them. Hot, wet.

Mrs. Perkins was sauntering over in her slippers and calico cotton from where she had been watering her geraniums that the summer would wilt no matter what she did to them. They told him she was a manic depressive. He didn't care. Hell, he hated Mrs. Perkins. After he had played in that oppressive damp heat of the summer and she had seen, she would call to him, "You, Sammy-Wayne," and she would put her dry slick'n shiny hand on his chin and push it back and look at his neck grinning, and tell little Sammy-Wayne Hazleton she saw he was wearing his Gran'maw beads again where the sweat had washed all the dirt into the cracks on his neck. Hell, he hated Mrs. Perkins.

When Sammy-Wayne saw her coming he knew he would have to lie again like he always did when his father couldn't go to work. But he didn't mind lying. His father worked at the refinery with all those other sad men who spent their lives watching the steam come from those pipes. And when they got old they would fall asleep on the job and get fired. "Your dad, he's sick," she would ask when she saw the old black Ford sitting there. This time he would say that his father had a ache in the stomach. Sometimes it was his back, or his sinuses,

but this time it would be his stomach. She asked. He told her as she stood there on the glistening hot driveway.

Inside the house it was dark, not as like night, but dark. Every now and again and sometimes a little breeze would slip through the open windows and drawn rose print curtains—only just enough to tease your senses, just enough to make you smell and hear and see the heathen heat of a swamp summer. A mosquito might brush your cheek, but just hard enough to worry your senses too, just hard enough to let you anticipate his second coming.

Sammy-Wayne knew his mother would be sitting in the heavy-furnished bedroom watching her husband in his slumber-trance, and hoping that it wouldn't happen again. In the kitchen he fixed a pitcher of ice water to take to her. Always before it had been filled only with afternoon lemonade. Today, water, today another lie. Four, five—he counted—eleven, twelve—the cubes of ice as they plunked into the water—fourteen, fifteen, sixteen. Jody Caine's Dad had been in the war and had fought in army-green against the dirty enemy. He had a medal for bravery and killing. He had been a soldier, a true soldier...marching as to war, with the cross of Jesus going on before.... Sammy-Wayne's father had not been in the war. He had not even been asked to be in the war—twenty-three, twenty-four. Sammy-Wayne allowed himself to drift away for a piece. What had seemed to him a long, long time was only a small instant of the long, long days of unmerciful summer. Sammy walked carefully with the heavy pitcher and glass on the tray. As he stepped a little water would spill first from one side of the pitcher then the other. The ice sang a two-tone bell-song.

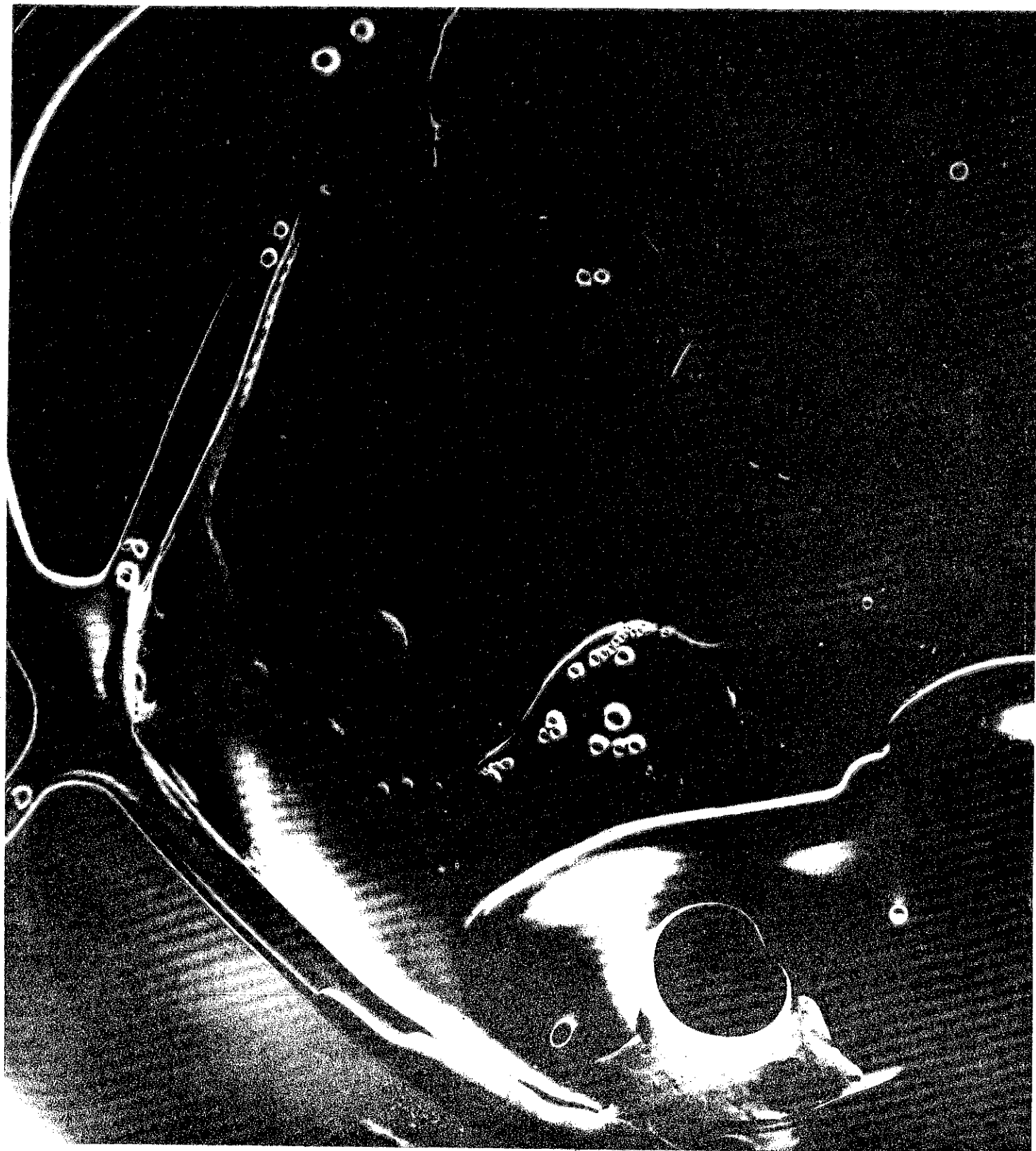
His mother sat in a straight chair staring at nothing—looking intently upon her husband or his knee or somewhere. She smiled at Samuel-Wayne as he placed the heavy tray on the Singer cabinet beside her. He had spilled in two dark rings upon his shirt and shorts and the cool liquid had made tiny rivulets through the little bashful white hairs that covered a thin leg. The spots on his shirt reminded him how his big brother when he slept made spit circles from his open mouth on the pillow. Sammy looked at his father sleeping. He had never actually seen his father when it happened. His father was sensitive. His mother had explained about it and said that's why they mustn't tell about it and that others didn't understand and might think he was, well, crazy. His father wasn't crazy. The army didn't even ask him to be in the war. And then while Sammy was there in that heavy-furnished room, his father had yelled out loud and that torture-flashed thing had happened. His father sat up and his legs went stiff and his arms stuck out and his greenish-white hands grabbed, grabbed and spit hissed from the sides of his distorted mouth. His mother held tight to her husband's head and his father jerked and jerk-jerked, and jerked. And Samuel-Wayne had stood there wanting to do something and knowing how to do nothing. And finally when it was over his father had looked for a moment at Samuel-Wayne from red liquid eyes before he turned once again into heavy slumber.

A small little squeak came from his mother's throat, hardly perceptible in the vacuum aftermath. She hugged the child against her calico cotton and lop-sided bosom and cried in silent sobs. Sammy had never seen her cry before. He never

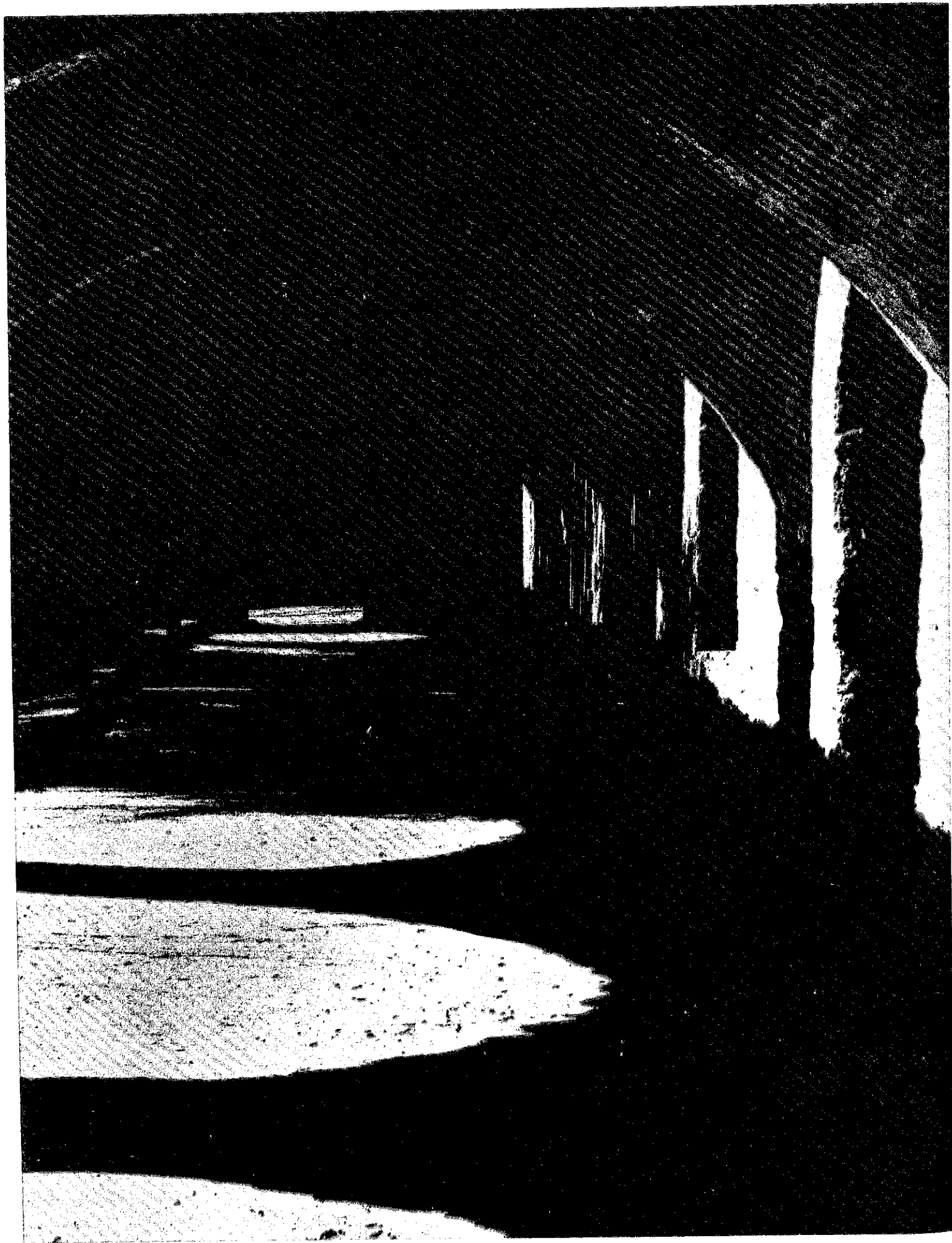
even thought she cried. He stood there wanting to do something, knowing how to do nothing. And as she stood there for a long time in that summer day clutching her youngest child to her, a tightness formed in his throat and a hard feeling worked in the core of his thin body: She had no right to cry now. No right to cry. She had no right to make him the strong one. He was so very tired of always being

strong. She had no right to make him feel sorry for his father.... They hadn't even allowed him to be in the war.

After awhile she let her son go, sorry that he had seen, and smiled for him. He walked from the room, the way children do when they're ashamed, and from the dark, not as night, house. Hot, wet, warm. As he walked away Samuel-Wayne Hazleton didn't even care that the hot sidewalk burned his bare feet.







Tim Sykes

Tim Sykes is a freshman biology major who enjoys writing as a hobby.

A Homecoming

The young man awoke. He felt cold and weak. He was a man in his early twenties and had just returned home from an overseas tour in the Marine Corps. He remembered how alone he had felt and how he had wanted so to see his young wife again. It had been over a year now since he had seen her. They had been married for only a week before he got his orders, and he wanted to begin his role as a hard-working husband and raise a small family. But something was wrong. He had no memory of the night before. His mind was cloudy and his thoughts of the previous evening were hazy.

He could remember rejoining his wife at last and how wonderful she had looked to him. He remembered coming home and starting to drink, giving the excuse that he was celebrating his long-awaited reunion. But after that, he could remember nothing. He tried to get up, but fell back, surrendering to an overwhelming pain in his chest. Reaching up, he felt a warm wet shirt; and opening his eyes, he beheld a sea of blood covering his clothes and arms. He thought he was still overseas. Once he remembered waking up after one of the last major offensives of the war. Fighting had been brutal. It was down to hand to hand combat. He remembered being cut with a Vietnamese bayonet and he remembered swinging hard with his own bayonet at the enemy. He did not remember what had happened to his aggressor, only that he had fallen soon after he was struck. But why was he bleeding now? He turned his head and, laying on the bed beside him, he saw a huge knife, the kind used by butchers in meat markets.

He remembered now that his wife had hit him hard in the chest with the same knife, but he could not remember why. He also noticed now that his wife was not with him.

He felt he had to get up now to find what had become of her. He rolled off the bed and fell to the floor on his hands and knees. His chest stung and he winced and lay his head on the floor until the pain subsided. He started to get up then, but noticed a track of blood directly in front of him. It lead out the door and down the stairs at the opposite end of the rather short hallway.

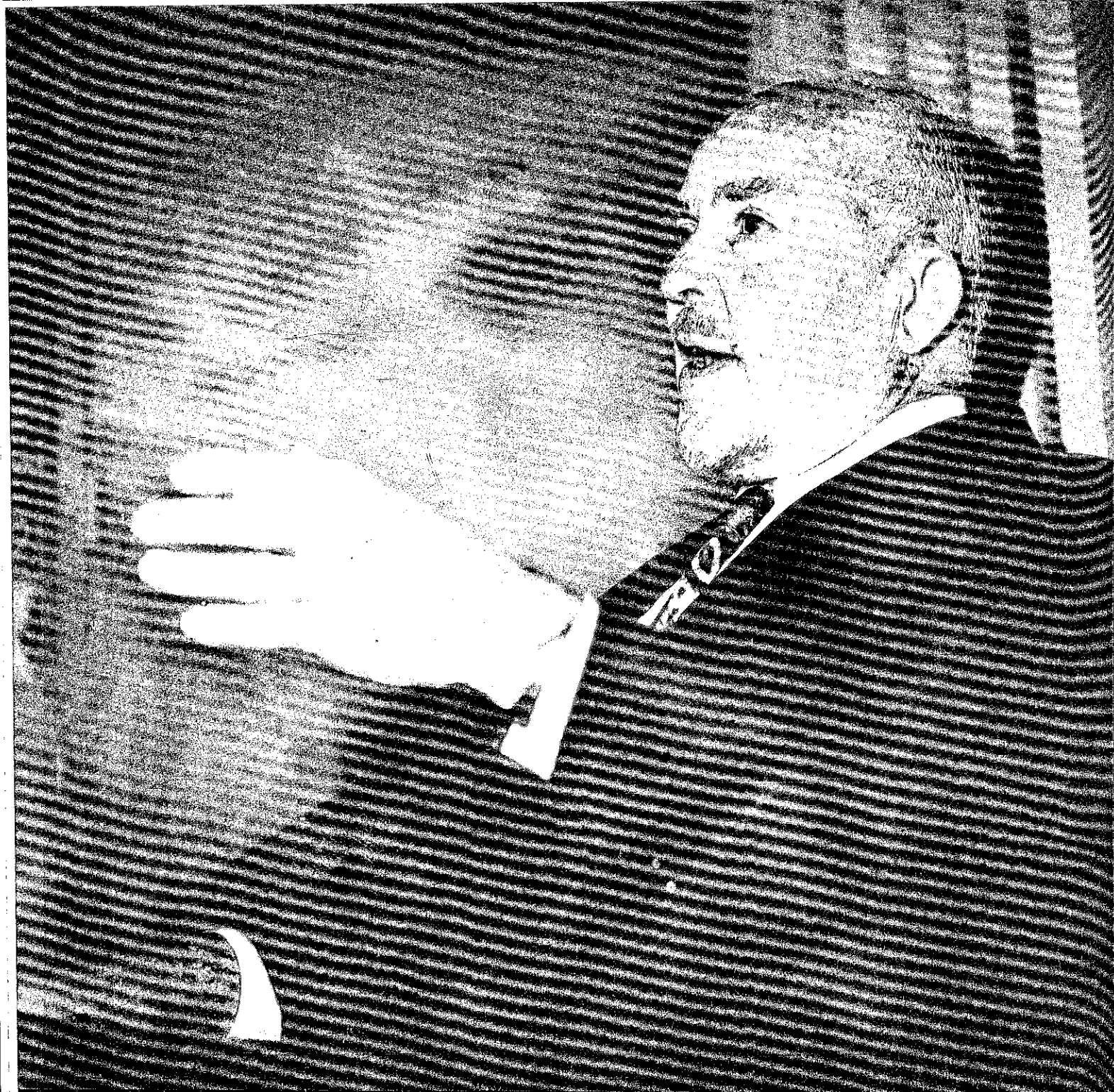
Now he could remember half climbing and half crawling up the stairs just before he passed out. He remembered carrying the knife with thoughts of hiding it. He still did not remember what had happened on the night before, though, and he now began to worry desperately about his wife and where she was.

He stumbled out the door and down to the stairs. He paused briefly to gain his balance and strength and slowly he descended the stairs. The room downstairs was a wreck. Lamps were broken, tables overturned, chairs in splinters and blood covered everything.

He now remembered a fight. He had come home with his wife and began to celebrate. After a short while, he became drunk. He could remember his wife trying to stop him because she had said she wanted to talk to him. He had accused her of not being glad to see him because she refused to help him celebrate. She had said she had something terrible to tell him. She had to tell him that she was going to have a baby — another man's baby. She had been so lonesome while he was away and the man had been such a comfort. She said she was sorry and begged him to forgive her. He flew into a drunken rage and slapped her. She fell down and cried. She begged him not to hit her again. He picked her up and hit her in the stomach and threw her across the room. He yelled that he was going to kill her. She became hysterical and ran. He caught her in the kitchen and pushed her against the wall. She grabbed a knife hanging next to her and told him to stop or he would kill her baby. But he was drunk and would not listen, and he hit her again and again. Now in a state of panic, she drew back and swung hard at her husband, cutting him across his chest. She then realized what she had done and dropped the knife to the floor, shocked that she could do such a thing. He looked sobered a little now and she said she would call a doctor and ran into another room. But he had not sobered. He now remembered picking up the knife and following her. When she turned, she saw him holding the knife over his head.

He could now remember most of what had happened. He stumbled to the kitchen door and tried to open it. Something was blocking it on the other side. He forced it open and gazed down at the obstruction. It was the body of his wife. White now and cold as the snow falling outside, he looked at her shoulders. There was nothing between them now but a mass of dried blood. He did not see the face he had come home to just the day before. Before him lay his wife's motionless body, still concealing her yet unborn child, but now, her body had no head. The man wanted to vomit; he turned his head to do so, and directly before him, he caught the gaze of dead eyes — his wife's eyes. In them he could still see the panicky, fright-filled stare she had given the night before as he held the knife aloft in front of her.

Now he could remember.



EBERHART

A SPECIAL *PULSE* PORTFOLIO,
DEDICATED TO THAT POET & TEACHER
DESCRIBED BY JAMES DICKEY AS
"ONE OF THE MOST AUTHENTICALLY GIFTED
AND INSTINCTIVELY POETIC MINDS
OF OUR TIME."

poetry by

Richard Eberhart

(from Dartmouth College Office of Information Services)

Richard Eberhart was born in Austin, Minn., on April 5, 1904. He was educated at Dartmouth College, B. A. 1926. Dartmouth conferred on him its Honorary Doctor of Letters in 1954, Skidmore in 1966, and College of Wooster, 1969. He went to Cambridge University, receiving his B. A. there (St. John's College) in 1929, his M. A. in 1933.

During World War II he served in the U. S. Naval Reserve as Lieutenant and received honorable discharge in 1946 as Lt. Commander. He was a naval air-craft gunnery instructor during part of his time in the war. After the war he entered the Butcher Polish Co., Boston, Mass., where he worked for six years, assistant manager to Vice President, and is now honorary Vice President and a member of the board of directors. In 1952, he returned to teaching, and has served as poet-in-residence, professor or lecturer at the University of Washington, the University of Connecticut, Wheaton College (Norton, Mass.) and Princeton, and in 1956 was appointed Professor of English and Poet-in-Residence at Dartmouth, to the Class of 1925 Professorship in 1968, Emeritus in 1970. He was Visiting Professor at the University of Washington, January through June, 1972.

Professor Eberhart is the author of more than a dozen books of poetry and drama, most of which have been published concurrently in England and the United States. Mr. Eberhart's first book, appearing in 1930, was entitled *A Bravery of Earth. Reading the Spirit* appeared in 1936, and his *Selected Poems* came out in 1951. Among his other books are *Undercliff, Poems 1946-53* (1953), *Great Praises* (1957), *Collected Poems 1930-60* (1960), *The Quarry* (1964), *Shifts of Being* (1968), and *Fields of Grace* (1972) from Oxford University Press, N.Y., and Chatto and Windus, London. His *Collected Verse Plays* was published by the University of North Carolina Press in 1962, and, in 1965, New Directions brought out a paperback, *Richard Eberhart: Selected Poems 1930-1965*, which won the Pulitzer Prize in 1966. His verse adaptation of Lope de Vega's *Justice Without Revenge* (re-entitled *The Bride From Mantua*) was produced at the Hopkins Center, Dartmouth College, May 5-9, 1964. *Thirty One Sonnets* was published by the Eakins Press, New York, 1967. A biography by Joel Roach from Oxford, N.Y. appeared in 1970 and a critical study by Bernard Engel from Twayne in 1971.

In addition to the Pulitzer Prize for poetry, Mr. Eberhart has received several awards including the Harriet Monroe Memorial Prize, the Harriet Monroe Memorial Award (U. of Chicago), the Shelley Memorial Prize, and a grant from the National Institute of Arts and Letters. He was co-winner of the Bollingen Prize from Yale University Library in 1962. In February, 1969 he was elected a Fellow of the Academy of American Poets with an award of \$5,000, for "distinguished poetic achievement."

From 1959 to 1961, Mr. Eberhart was Consultant in Poetry at the Library of Congress. He was appointed by President Eisenhower to the Advisory Committee on the Arts for the National Cultural Center in Washington in 1959, now renamed the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. He is a member of the National Institute of Arts and Letters and the National Academy of Arts and Sciences. He gave the Elliston lectures at the University of Cincinnati in 1961. He was appointed Honorary Consultant in American Letters, 1963-66, by the Library of Congress in 1963, reappointed 1966-1969.

In November of 1972, shortly after his visit to Lamar, the Poetry Society of America conferred "its Honorary Presidency on him. . . after a lapse in the office of almost ten years following the death in 1963 of Robert Frost."

Light, Time, Dark

Light

I approach upon the headlands
Impressed with my own beneficence.
I come early, opening my hands
To show world magnificence.

Time

None has subtlety but me.
I am the only one who is free.
Because I am adamant I give
The mystery of the relative.

Dark

I persuade with the impenetrable.
My power is whole and able.
Lost is the human face
In the depths of my embrace.

Time

Each makes his discursive claim
Reassured in his individual name.
The light would treat of the light.
The night treats of the night.

Light

See the children playing by the shore
As if they had never lived before,
Their heavenly faces shining
With my divining and defining.

Dark

See the old robed in doubt
Where light is all but put out
As I draw them to the senseless
Depths against which they are defenseless.

Time

I am ever the master here
Between man's joy and his fear.
None escapes me and all shall
Bow down to the impersonal.

Light

I have the power and the glory.
To tell man's story.

Dark

Beyond action and thought I grow
Beyond what it is to know.

Time

Mine is the true delight
Penetrating both day and night.
Mine is the mystery
Behind everything man can see,
The subtlety
When every man alone,
Dreaming that he is free,
Knows me in the bone.

An Interview With Richard Eberhart

Compiled by

Michael Cannito

with Jo Ann Thrash
and Robert J. Barnes

Eberhart

I do not keep a notebook or a journal, and I have, I think, somewhat unusual ideas about the creative act. I have never understood it in my entire life and I don't understand it now. But I think of the creation of a poem as an inspirational thing at its best, that is, sometimes in your life. Now I can say that in about a half a dozen times in my life a poem has been given to me, rather than had I tried to invent it, or make it with the rational mind. It is as if it were a gift of the gods, and as if the personality of the poet were a vein upon which a wind, a spiritual wind blows, so that in a sense the whole being is used by the poem. I don't mean by this automatic writing as Yeats though his wife understood it. I don't mean quite that; but I insist that in at least half a dozen cases in my life some of my best poems have been given to me. They have come right out of the air. To give one case in point "The Ground Hog," which has survived now for a long time, was written in about twenty minutes of intense concentration and power, but without the necessity to change a line when it was done. Well, what a mysterious and remarkable thing. How could this be? And I remembered this time as one of great subdued joy, although it was talking about mortality. But it's so mysterious. For instance, in the summer or in the year that I wrote "The Ground Hog," I wrote three other poems and my energy output on these poems was the same for all of them. And my belief in what I was doing was the same; and yet, of these four poems, two were never even published in a little magazine, one turned out to be "In A Hard Intellectual Light," which has been in quite a few anthologies but never achieved the prominence of "The Ground Hog." "The Ground Hog" was a mountain peak poem, the other one was a plateau, and the other ones were right down in the swamp. I thought a long time about this and I don't understand it. In other words, what I'm trying to say is that in one sense a poet doesn't know what he's doing. For instance, I had the same purity, the same passion, the same intense desire to say something about life, in all four cases and yet look at the great

qualitative difference in all of the results. Now I'm talking about way back in the past, so you have to try to recreate when those four poems were written. I wasn't as far along then as I am now. So it was all very new, it was all fresh, it was all potential, and it was all creative acts. But, if you take the problem right up to 1972, if I were writing a poem yesterday I would have no more knowledge of how it might fare than I did in all those four cases. What I think I'm trying to say is that I don't believe in the rational intellect very much, and I believe that there is something irrational about poetry, or that it comes from somewhere beyond the mind; it comes from the heart, or the stomach, or the genitals, or the blood—Lawrence was always talking about the blood and the great blood consciousness. It has a lot more to do with the deepest parts of our nature and with the wholeness of these depths, to me, than it does with merely the intellect. And yet, the minute I say this I know that I'm in a sense limiting myself, but we are all terribly limited. I immediately think of somebody like Alexander Pope, whom everybody admires. I don't think that Mr. Pope would agree with what I've just been saying. Well, he would understand it, but I don't think Pope could give much credence to my theory. Because if you read his work as a representative of the rationality of the eighteenth century, you could see that he believed in prose consciousness, and in sparkling diction, and in incredibly lively mental convolutions, but it isn't what I would call "inspired." I really still believe, and I think I'm one of the few poets of today who still likes this ancient word, I believe that poetry comes by inspiration. In other words, I ally myself more with Shelley, and with Hopkins, and with Blake and with Wordsworth, and maybe with Dylan Thomas a little bit, than I do with certain other kinds of poets who are more closely allied to prose. I think of poetry as a possibly joyful thing, and as ecstatic, and as high pitched, and therefore I have mostly written lyrics. So, that's sort of what I feel about poetry, that it's a very strange thing, and it's very mysterious, it's hard to understand. You don't know what your up to, but the spirit speaks through you, and when you're in a mood to write your soul or your true being comes out; so that if you write through a whole lifetime, then you can study the work of this poet for decades and you can really get a long line on what his mind is like, and what his being is like. Let me say something against my principle for a moment just to show you how complex these things are. You would agree, all of us in this room would agree, that Chaucer is a great poet, the father of old poetry, let's say. He was nothing like this kind of poet that I've been talking about, I don't believe. If you read the Canterbury Tales you'll see that they were based on prose and story telling. And Shakespeare, except for certain passages in Lear, certain passages in Hamlet and maybe some lines of the sonnets and maybe a few of the songs, was much vaster in character in his command of a totality of life than I am, obviously. It's absurd to mention it, but I mean it quite seriously—Poetry is such a huge word. If you think of Shakespeare as a poet, he took in all of this you see. And also, if you think of Milton, he had very high passages but there was an awful lot of hard intellect in most of what he wrote. In the "Paradise Lost and Regained" and "Samson Agonistes" and all that, there is the wrestling of a mind of the Christian mythology and what it meant in his times. However, when you come up to Wordsworth and Blake, you come back into my orbit and you come into my court of the ball game, as it were. I could say that most of Wordsworth's best work fits into this inspirational orbit or gambit. And so too the lyrics of the early lyrics, and the great and marvelous "Songs of Innocence and Experience" of Blake. Well, I don't want to carry on too long with this but I think that will give you some idea of where I think I am. I don't think I could do anything about it. I don't think I could sit down tonight and write a poem that would last ten years or a hundred years. It would be absurd, it would be absurd to think of. On the other hand, I might write a poem any time that might be as good as anything I've done, or maybe better. You don't know. Poetry has endless possibilities and it's only limited to the hold your spirit has on the world in the few years that we live on this planet. It's all potential, and that's what I think.

Now let me go back a little on this gift of the gods business, or the inspirational thing. It makes quite a pretty picture to have said what I did but there are some other complexities that have to come in here. Let us think of Mozart and Beethoven. Can you imagine both of them being little boys? Well they must have been. There must have been a time when young Mozart was taught the scales of the piano, *forte*. And Beethoven must have learned the white keys and black keys when he was three or five or whatever he was, and somebody must have taught them. So any artist has to learn his art. I mean, the picture I gave you was in a sense absurd in that, I'm trying to say that here's a flesh and blood man, full of humanity and muscle and force, writing a poem that lets say might live for hundreds of years *without knowing what he's doing*. Or that it is given to him by the spirit. I really believe this, and I've said it and I stand by it; but you have to understand that when a man is ready to bear this poem, his whole life comes into play, up to that point. And that includes learning the scales; or in a poet, it includes imitating poetry from the age of fifteen, when I started. I learned to imitate and I wrote hundreds of imitative poems, and I imitated Tennyson. I go back as far as to have begun by imitating Tennyson; just think of that. Now they think its very ancient to go back to Dylan Thomas, or somebody who's only been dead a few years, relatively. You have to learn your art. Every artist has to learn. For instance there were years when I read the dictionary with the greatest attention. I just loved studying the dictionary. One of the great books of the world. If you just read the dictionary intensely you get a terrific education and you learn all kinds of words.

But, let me put it another way, and I will use "The Ground Hog" as one example. When the poem is ready to be born, it will be born, it will be born whole; and it will summarize the total life of the poet in some frame of reference, at that point. As we know, the two great forces of life cannot be stopped once they have begun, both birth and death. The physical act of death, once started will not be stopped. It seems to be that a poem, by analogy, is born in the same way under my theory, that is some poems. And that it is born whole. It comes to birth. It comes into being. And there you are.

Let me just say something else. Because I want to be thorough about this. I tried to give you a theory of mine, which I think is true to me. But I would like to remind whoever hears this that I am talking about only a half a dozen of the best poems of my life. And yet think of all the poems I've written. I wouldn't know how many, but I suppose over a thousand, probably. And many of these if they are good poems, and they are published in books and they are enjoyed by people, are composed in an entirely different way. You see, I want to make sure, that you couldn't - I can't imagine anybody, even Shelley, being always this ethereal spirit, who's a god-like person, who has some hold or direct line from the ultimate creative principle. It's to high an idea. So, then, in my own case, there's any awful lot of hard work on the majority of my poems, and there are many poems which have endless scratchings out and re-makings and many, many copies or many times before the poem is presented to the public.

Cannito

I'll use an analogy here, but would you say that this more difficult work of yours is some sort of "honing of your edge" for the moments when the best of your poetry comes?

Eberhart

I don't think I'd say that, but it's a very good idea. I don't know that I could say that. I will say that I think some of my best poems are what I call "insipissated" poems, and I like that word. Do you happen to know it? From *insipisari* in Latin, it means "to thicken." Insipissation is the thickening of the context. Well, I like thickened poems and I've written, I think, quite a few crabbed or thick poems, from a grammatical point of view. But I've noticed, invariably, that these are never the ones best loved by the poetry reading public, or that ever get into my books. I'll give you an example. If you read every poem I've written, you'd find that some of them are pretty dense; and yet, when

James Laughlin asked if he could put out a paperback of me, he thought it was high time, and we agreed and the publishers agreed and I said O.K. Mr. James Laughlin, the editor of New Directions, an old friend, took all of my books on a boat one summer and went across the ocean to see Ezra Pound - he's the chief publisher of Ezra Pound and he loves "the Cantos" and everything - and Laughlin had the horse-sense, or the clarity of judgement, or the editorial acumen, since he was going to put out a paperback book of my poems, to throw out categorically all the heavy poems, or the insipissated ones, or the dense ones. And he put out a little paperback, of what he would call the "purest" ones, which were invariably short and invariably lyrical. And his book won the Pulitzer Prize, much to the consternation of the Oxford press, who wouldn't even bring me out in paperback. So that's one of the jokes of my literary career, I mean the joke was on them. But this is very serious and this book has sold very well ever since. He just knew that people don't have the concentration - except a few highly learned people in Universities - don't have the brains to want to read heavy poetry all the time. They want something that's more easily assimilable and that gives instant pleasure, or existential joy, or whatever you want to say. And, just to follow up, I have a new book coming out next month, its supposed to be out on November ninth. Its the wrestling with the publishers, which I've always had to do with every book that I've brought out, there were about ten poems which I wanted in which didn't get in this book - and I'm gonna get them in my next book, or I'm gonna get them in my complete works, or my ultimate collected, or some darn thing - because they just thought they were to dense. Now they wouldn't say they weren't good; and after all they have to sell the book. When you think of the perilous life of a poet and the perils of publishing, it is really crucial what goes into a book. It either makes your reputation or kills you, or it makes you worse or better, and the publishers have to take the responsibility for presenting you to the world, so they should have a lot of say about what goes on. So I couldn't even get some of the poems that I've written in the last three years in this new book that I wanted in. But we never have drag out fights. We always have intellectual discussions about them and there's always a give and take, and I say, "Well, then I'll put in this one. You give me that one. I'll give you this one." So the books that are published under my name really represent a unanimity of judgement for the moment, but with a little argument on the side.



Thrash

I wanted to ask about "New Hampshire, February." How did you come about writing it, what inspired it?

Eberhart

Many of my poems such as that, that have been used by students for a long time now, come from real events. So that this poem came from a real event just as "The Groundhog" came from a real event and "The Fury of Ariel Bombardment" and a lot of these poems, "The Horse Chestnut Tree" for example, "The Cancer Cells," many of these poems of mine have come from actual physical things that have happened, but then, the making of them into a poem is this undefinable or unexplainable thing.

Now let me tell you about "New Hampshire, February." I was at that time as yet unmarried. I was a bachelor and was teaching at St. Mark's School, and I was given a house by one of the masters up there in Kensington, New Hampshire, near Exeter, in the winter. I think it was January. He gave me an old farm house to go up and live in, say for ten days, during a vacation. So I went and I went alone and I was a studious and meditative man. I lived alone. I took all my things. I didn't see many people. I took a lot of books along and I was wanting to write poetry all the time. Well actually, wasps did fall out of the ceiling onto the stove. But then, from there the poem is my origination. And that is a pretty good idea, I mean, I don't think I would have dreamed up the idea of wasps dropping down on a hot spot out of my head. Now I could. You could. But with almost all of these anthologized poems that people know, there is a basis of reality which is then embroidered on, or made more of. You see, so that poetry is then putting it all together in some new context. So this idea of pushing them over and then pushing them out and all that sort of thing, and then the ending of it and the ideas, are out of my ratiocination. Now, I'm afraid, I wouldn't say that that poem was a poem of inspiration, the way I was talking about "The Ground Hog" and some of the others. That poem was a *made* poem. The poetry itself - *poesis* means "to make" in Greek, the poet is the maker - this was the making. This was making something out of something else, or out of the wasp idea. And the same with the horse chestnut tree poem. The tree still stands. I saw it only yesterday. Its right outside my mother-in-law's house on Lakeview Avenue in Cambridge. The very tree that these boys came - they really came and threw sticks and stones at the tree. That one even had more basis in fact than the wasp one, because it was really a recounting of what actually happened. So maybe that would give you some idea. I think a lot of my poems are grounded in anecdotal reality, or in a story of some kind, or some consecutive acts of some sort that seemed significant somehow to me, and then you build a poem from them. But, I don't know, they're not all that way.

Cannito

You've already anticipated many of our questions. Well, here's an obvious one: who, would you say, is your favorite poet?

Eberhart

I don't have a favorite poet. Let me speak to that though. I think I'm peculiar in that you have to remember I started quite a long time ago, and I'm still raging on the world, but I started way out in Minnesota where there was no poetry. I started in high school, where the only book in our family library on the desk was Tennyson, as I said before. If they had T. S. Eliot I would have probably started imitating Eliot, but Eliot would be later. It was before that. Well no, it really wasn't before *him*, but he hadn't got out to there in my family's estimation, you see. And then I went to Dartmouth, and then I went to Cambridge, and Harvard and all that. You know the whole story, I suppose, the biography, there was one out last year, as you know. I think I was fortunate in being moved, I would say, first by Wordsworth, second by Blake, and then a little later by Hopkins. Those were, and I guess they still are, my three gods. That is, I read all the other poets, but I wasn't moved so much by Spenser; I wasn't a Miltonian. I was really taken by Wordsworth, and if you'd read my first book, "A Bravery of Earth", you can see that it was an imitation, one long poem, a hundred and thirty five pages, of the growth of my mind, or a young person's mind and it was modeled on "The Prelude" and "The Excursion". So

Wordsworth was the deepest influence on me. And then Blake hit me like wildfire. For at least the first half of my career everybody thought I was like Blake, they kept saying, he has Blakean feelings or inputs. They don't say that so much any more. And then Hopkins later, but Hopkins to a lesser extent. So that's sort of strange; but I'm so lucky, I think I was terribly lucky not to have been influenced by Eliot, or by Pound, or by Stevens, or by Hart Crane, or any of those people just before me. You know, a lot of people have been ruined by that sort of thing. I mean, I think I was lucky to go way back to some proto-type long ago.

Barnes

Do you think there's been any kind of cross-fertilization between you and any of your contemporaries, like Frost, say?

Eberhart

I don't think very much. I think that a few of my poems were influenced a little bit by Stevens. There were a few years there when I was terribly enamored of him. As a matter of fact I had a marvelous friendship with the old man. He was twenty-five years my senior, but in the last eight years of his life we had a friendship, and he wrote thirty-five letters to me and I answered them and these are all known now. I also had a friendship with William Carlos Williams and I liked him a lot, but Stevens was closer to my aesthetic feelings than Williams. But Frost was always around like an old shoe. He was always there. He was in the back of your head; one read him early. And there he was, we knew him of course. He came to our house several times. And he came to Dartmouth all the time. You'd see him every year, a couple of times. Then I succeeded him at the Library of Congress, in that job of consultantship in '59-61, and he was there a great deal. So, I know Frost as a person but he was so much older than I am that it wasn't very close. As far as the words go, I think I have an early sonnet that's sort of like him called, "The Village Daily." No, I wouldn't say there's much cross-breeding there.

Cannito

In your recent poem, "The Other Gerard" (written to Gerard Malanga about Gerard Manley Hopkins), you seem to come out openly against the undisciplined chaos and superficiality of what one might call *now* poetry of the "now generation."

Eberhart

Well yeah. All I'd say is, it's just one poem. Maybe it preaches a little, but I shouldn't preach too much. I think you just have to read that along with a lot of other poems, and you've got to read that with all the new poems in my new book to see how I fit it into my cannon. I think I'm still growing. I feel very much alive to the world and I've really been given to write a lot in the last year. I mean, I'm very delighted that I still have a lot to say. For instance I have a long poem, which was written too late to get into this book, that came out in *The Harvard Advocate* this summer. It is a long poem and it's called "Love Sequence With Variations." Let me just read, since we were talking about Hopkins. I put Hopkins into this poem. You mentioned the one "The Other Gerard" and what a modern Gerard would write compared with Hopkins; I put Hopkins into this one and I'll read you this little passage:

But of Hopkins the sufferer I write further
And think of his manuscripts, precise, intent,
Who died unknown at the age of forty-four,
As the scandal of genius, the secret heart of man,
For this man, lost before reality's hardship,
Buckled before his ability, and gave us his poems
Shining in reality like the life of his Master,
Peculiar, odd, differing, lovely and enlivening,
And there is no madness, despite Plato,
So rewarding as a true originality of nature
Perceiving subtleties, central truths of nature,
And there is no poet today so exacting as Hopkins.

So I'm glad to pay my tribute to him once more. And I notice, since

life is so dynamic, and poetry also, only two days ago I received the new *Oxford Book of English Verse*, just brought out by the Oxford University Press, by Helen Gardner, and I note that in this book it is thought that Hopkins was one of the four greatest poets of the nineteenth century. What do you think of that!

Cannito

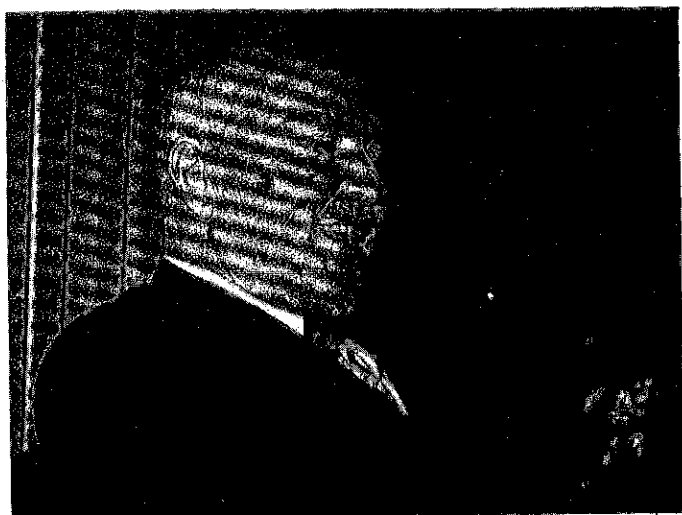
There seems to be a tendency toward primitivism among some modern poets today. In the winter 1971 issue of *The New York Quarterly*, in which your own "The Other Gerard" appeared, poet Jerome Rothenburg, in a craft interview, said this:

Poetry, it seems clear to me, grew out of a tribal and communal situation- even while going into the ages of literacy and the political stages- where we lost track of its beginnings, there was always a memory of poetry from the first civilization on. Poetry in a certain sense is a non-civilized thing. It is primitive in the sense that it is one of the first high developments in cultures that have not developed a political state. I don't think it ever really, in any significant sense goes beyond that development. It always remembers its roots back in that primitive culture. It is a way of being in the world. . . .

California poet Gary Snyder also speaks of poetry's primitive, even "paleolithic", values in what he calls the "ecstasy of the tribe". What is your opinion of this new primitivism?

Eberhart

Well I like what he has to say, and I subscribe to it heartily, and I feel these primitive urges in myself. I think that probably this inspiration that I was talking to you about, in going beyond the head to other lower and deeper regions of our being, comes along with this. Also, I've always loved and admired D. H. Lawrence a lot, and I think he is a gut poet, or sex, or primitive poet who understands the dark flow of things and the creative urges of man. On the other hand, I would like to respond to your question by announcing what maybe you've discovered already- maybe not quite yet, you haven't found me out entirely yet- I am really an ambivalent person. I used to say schizophrenic but that's an old-fashioned word now. I mean, I can see two sides of every question.



And while you were reading those really pertinent things said by Rothenburg, which I love to hear and I thought have a lot of truth, you know what was running through my head all the time you were talking? The word, *Mallarmé*. O.K., there's Mallarmé too. And Mallarmé is a great poet, one of the greatest. He's an enormous mountain, against which you have to come sometime in your thinking. A man as sophisticated, as dense, as inspissated and as curious, and as complicated as Mallarmé would be at the opposite end of the poetic spectrum that he (Rothenburg) is talking about. But that's real too. I mean,

Mallarmé is a great poet too, and he is of the coldest intelligence; I mean, the most crystal clarity - of course behind his worth is a lot of confusion and there may be a lot of this dark interplay too, like in the one about the faun, *La Pres Medé*, there is a great deal of the subconscious, erotic, dream-power in Mallarmé too, but I think of Mallarmé in the world, mostly as the intellectual poet *par excellence*... hard brained . . . so what can you answer? There is no dogma about poetry that covers the whole house. Poetry is a house of many mansions; it's so great a thing. And there's not a one - you take Eliot's principles of the impersonality of the poet that ruled the roost for thirty years, we were all raised on this; golly how false that is if you believe in Shelley, say, or if you believe in yourself maybe. So I don't think it's impersonal at all. I think it's terribly personal. It's hard to talk about poetry at all, it's so complicated.

Cannito. How do you personally define the role of the poet, what he is and does?

Eberhart. I don't define the role of the poet. I guess the role of the poet is thrust upon him. If Dylan Thomas, just for one part of his personality, if he hadn't had such a great voice box given him by God, probably he wouldn't have had thrust upon him the enormity of his success all over the western world as the finest vocalizer of poetry of these times. And I don't know, some people become public poets; some like to stay private. Auden wrestled all his life with the idea of the public stance and the public man and he became the public man. Dear old John Ransom whose picture you have up here, who is still alive, is a shrinking violet by comparison. He stayed all his life in Gambier, never liked the big fanfare or the big time; who's an excellent poet, but he kept it off - he's an esoteric or he's an ingrown or a small college orator - poet. And I'm not enough of a psychoanalyst to know why we become what we are. I wish I did know how any of us become what we are. Look at Robert Lowell. He's a powerful man, my student. What a strange role he has in the world, getting more complex all the time. He's now given up America. His life is disorderly.

And look at our Russian friends, how they get on or don't get on. Like Vosnysenki who was over last year - just last fall he came to Dartmouth. We had a fine time with him then. I introduced him - I guess he's the best poet there. He has so far not offended the Russian state enough to be thrown out; but he's always sort of on the verge. He has to be very careful. But they dislike the fact that he knows French poetry. He's been in Paris; he's been in London. He loves the London poets, he loves the American poets. You know they find this hard to take; so they like better Yevtushenko who is, from the American intellectual point of view, not considered so good a poet, but who has a much wider audience. He speaks the language that the Russian state wants to hear and he loves his mother country, there's no doubt about it. But he's also sentimental. He's really a sentimentalist in some ways, compared with Vosnysenki and now with Brodski, who's been invited to leave Russia and has come over to Michigan University. So just think about that for awhile. What is the role of the poet? It depends in a way on what country you're speaking of. In America, I rejoice to say, we still have freedom and may it long be with us, and one of the greatest things we still have to worry about in this country, politically, I believe, is the danger of a certain part of our national psyche coming into undue prominence. And I mean the vigilante part, which is very deep in America from early times. Or if you want to use a harsher word, the possibility of fascism or a repressive state, you know. I just would hate to think we'd go that way. But there are signs of it already. You know that. And that's what we have to worry about. This very campaign (Autumn 1972) has to do with these things in my view.

But I don't want to talk about politics here. But I think it's fine that American poets can do anything they like. If I didn't want to come down here I didn't have to accept the invitation. If I don't want to go around giving readings I could be a more private poet; or maybe I could be a much more public poet if I tried. I still feel that their freedom is the marvellous thing about American poets. You can do - you want to grow up like a flower, you want to flower out - you want to do your thing, you want to be the best you can. But you can do it in your own way. And that's what I love. I mean every poet is different. All of us, all the people who are now speaking from my age down to thirty, or even way down to twenty, are individualists. I love the idea of individualism. I don't like the idea of schools, I never belonged to any school of poetry. I don't like to think that they're like schools of fishes. But we pride ourselves on what's called the New York School, all those fellows like to be in that. They go under one sort of heading. You know, there's one thing against individualism, that poets from a career point of view are much better off if they are allied with somebody else. I go back when I was at Cambridge to the beginning of the Oxford School. And those names are on everybody's lips forever more: Auden, Spender, Day Lewis and McNees. Think how much good they all got from their names being associated. They really did. Although I think Spender wrote an article about three or four years ago that amused me very much. When somebody asked about the "Oxford School", he said and astounded everybody, that those four human beings had never been in a room until about 1950 together. The school room wasn't very densely inhabited way back in the thirties when their names got used together so much, you see. And you think of poets like this: Eliot and Pound, Stevens and Williams, Lowell and Wilbur. Oftentimes you get a lift if you're paired with somebody else. I was never paired with anybody else and I'm glad I wasn't. Neither was Dylan Thomas.



Cannito. In much of your poetry there seems to have been a continual dialectic between humanism and mysticism, a *thisness* and an *otherness*. Could you elaborate on this? Do you feel that you have reached a resolution?

Eberhart. No, I think I know what you're talking about. No, it's totally unresolved. It probably never will be. Yeah, I think I'm alive, mentally and as a poet, because I have not been able to solve the questions that I want to solve, or that's one way of saying it. That the challenge is always there and you never can get the answers; or one is totally dissatisfied. I don't think I've written a good poem yet in my life - well that's going too far; I don't mean false modesty, but in some profound sense you feel that you have to keep on trying, you want to do it, you want to find the answers, see? I think the metaphysical is strong in me and I think the humanist is strong too. I don't know how they ever - they just

get together in various ways in various poems. I think to read poetry you have to read a great deal of any man, that's if he has a lot of poems to show. You have to read. It's not fair really to only know anthologies. Anthologies are good because for one thing students can't afford to buy all these poets in whole books, you can shell out six or seven dollars for every book, and you can get a very good education by reading a half a dozen of the best poems by all of the poets who are considered good. But, I think the more you can read of one poet the deeper your knowledge will be. At the end of reading some whole poet, like Auden, you may come down to only four or five poems but at least you know the brunt of the man. You know his whole problem.

Cannito. In two particular poems "The Humanist" and "Mysticism Has Not the Patience to Wait for God's Revelation", you portray the mundane aspect of humanity as "an ape at fair" and "the eternal ape of the leash?" Could you clarify this image for us?

Eberhart. I think man is pulling along his past and he can never get rid of it, maybe something like that. On the other one - I can't even remember much from that poem - what was the line from that?

Cannito. "The eternal ape on the leash/drawing us down to faith", I believe it was.

Eberhart. I think that's a rugged sentence and I think it means drawing us down to accept the whole of mankind including the ape. We can't be too far beyond. . . you can't be. . . I gave you all this airy stuff before but how many people ever get up into these airy reaches? And then, the good thing about mankind, I suppose is that we are limited and that we have - well, I don't know, I shouldn't get into this theology. I hate to say it because I'm so much worse off than everyone of you in this room, timewise, but probably it's fine that life doesn't last forever. Just think of that. You know, you live for two years or you live for seventy; or you live for forty-four like Hopkins, thirty-nine like Dylan, twenty-six for Keats, wasn't it, thirty-one for Shelley, or eight-nine for Frost or seventy-five for Stevens, it's still an awfully small bit of the reality of the world, isn't it. When you think of Mr. Leaky, who unfortunately died the other day at the age of only seventy, whom I heard gave a lecture in Seattle last spring on his discoveries of our true ancestors, as he thinks, just millions of years ago in East Africa - how small a span of time any of us has to figure out what it means to be alive, don't you see. So I think the poet should rejoice in our humanity, including the worst part of it, the lowest as well as the highest.

Cannito. In one of your poems, "The Soul Longs to Return When It Came," you portray a modern individual participating in the primal ecstasy of nature's worship of the Earth Mother, saying:

I flung myself down on the earth
Full length on the great earth, full length,
I wept out the dark load of human love,
In pagan adoration I adored her.

Early in this century Swiss depth psychologist C. G. Jung expressed the notion of an archetypal woman with his concept of the *anima*. poet Robert Graves, in his *The White Goddess*, examines the importance of such phenomena in poetry; more recently, Erich Neumann in his *The Great Mother*, almost comprehensively catalogues the myriad cultural expressions of this timeless archetypal woman-mother. You also deal with the idea of the Earth Mother in your brief, pretty poem, "Cover Me Over", and again, more explicitly and powerfully in "The Soul Longs to Return When It Came" where you conclude:

I went away,
Slowly, tingling, elated, saying,
Mother, Great Being, O Source of Life
To Whom in wisdom we return,
Accept this humble servant evermore.

Now, what in your opinion is the significance of this eternal return to the Great Mother for man in general and in you own art in particular?

Eberhart. When you were reading the first part of the lines about throwing himself down on the earth, I thought you were going to ask me some critical question about them, and I was going to say: The words say it all; you can't say anymore; they are all there; it says itself; it's absolutely true; you can't improve on it. I mean, it's absolutely true to this profound experience. So what is the use of talking? I had not read Jung, I had not read Graves, when I wrote that poem. And the last thing you mentioned I don't think I even know. I think there is this. I believe that my poem fits in, as you said, to their principles; but the poem was from an immediate experience and had nothing to do with them. That's all I can say.

Thrash. One last thing. What would be your advice, if anything, to beginning poets, people that are trying to learn to write now?

Eberhart. I guess that would depend upon my mood. If I were in a gloomy enough mood, and I must say I've been pretty gloomy the last few months, for all kinds of reasons, especially the way I look at the world. And every time you open a paper you can feel worse. Look what we did, bombing the French Embassy yesterday. I don't know. In my gloomiest and most pessimistic, I would not want anybody to write poetry. I wouldn't suggest it. I'd say, forget it. Any young person, don't do it. It's nothing but suffering and sorrow. It comes from suffering and speaks of suffering; and, paradoxically, it's supposed to give pleasure or joy. But it can't give pleasure or joy unless it understands the whole scope of man. And he is a suffering creature; and he early recognizes death and pain and sin, and he spends most of his time in his life trying to make some accommodation to these. Now, that's when I'm feeling

my lousiest. If I'm feeling good, or if I'm sort of more rational - the world is a fine place and all that - what would I tell them? I would say that it's legitimate to imitate people slavishly, when you're in high school, say. And that the people should study the language. They should read poetry handbooks. They should learn all the forms, the beautiful very complicated forms there are. They should experiment with sonnets and villanelles and triolets and rondos and God-know-what, ballads and everything, sestinas - that would be a little later maybe, but they should start by imitating old forms. I don't think they should start by writing right out of their heart, because they haven't had enough experience yet. So they should try to learn the language of poetry. And then gradually and painfully they should try to get their own style. And of course, the greatest thing is if somebody can finally master a style of his own, so that he doesn't sound like Ginsburg or Ferlingetti or whomever it may be, if it were a few years ago. Or if he doesn't sound like whoever are the ones they would most imitate now who are, say, twenty-five to thirty. But I wanted to say, before we end,



Foreground: Eberhart, Background: interviewer Cannito.

that I teach, and have taught for many years, creative writing or the writing of poetry at Dartmouth and at other institutions, and I assume that when a man or a woman comes to a college, which would include yours here, that they are beyond what I've just been talking about; that they should do all that, theoretically, in high school, say from the age of about fifteen to eighteen. From about eighteen to twenty-two, I refuse to have any classes - well I do it sometimes as a sportive gesture - but I, by and large, refuse to make them write sonnets, to make them write all these forms because I think that's just too much playing of the scales. By the time they're eighteen to twenty-two, a human being's had quite a lot of experience by that time and what they ought to do is start telling their soul. They should put their hearts on paper, they should put their passions, their feelings, their whole reactions to life. And that's been the theory of my teaching, and I think they like that. Now sometimes we play games and everybody writes a sestina or something, but that really doesn't do them that much good. What they've got to do is to learn how to turn their feelings into some kind of a variable grammatical entity that will be pleasing as an English poem, or a poem in English - I mean an American poem. O.K. Well, thank you very much. You ask very good questions, I must say, very good questions.



Left to right: Dr. Robert Olson, poet-editor Dr. Joseph Colin Murphy, poet Leon Stokesbury, poet Richard Eberhart, teacher-poet Dr. George de Schweinitz.
Eleanor Poetry Room, Lamar University. Oct. 13, 1972.

poetry by
Richard Eberhart
continued

Goners

They talk about them still,
The suicides
Of twenty years ago.

How their proud life,
At last,
Was wrested in mystery.

Who would believe
Their act
Was nothing but weakness?

The Hop-Toad

The hop-toad jumped away, missing the blade,
When Betty was mowing the garden.
She instinctively said, I beg your pardon.

Going To Maine

Going to Maine is a state of mind,
Like everything else.
You may have been on Guemas Island,
In the state of Washington,
Viewing the Cascades wide over water,
Watching an eagle soar,
Impressed with the quantity of water,
And eaten bear steak with the McCrackens,
But when you return to ancient New England
The first question asked on Main Street,
With breathless expectation, is,
Are you going to Maine?
Are you going to Maine, oh,
Are you going to Maine?
And I say, yes, we are going to Maine,
And they say, when?
They want an ultimate answer
To an ultimate question.
Pestiferously human,
As if to infestate inner skin,
They question, almost with a triumph,
When are you going to Maine?
As if you were going to Heaven
And they would see you there
And you say, yes we are going,
Harsh to be indefinite,
Yes, we are going, we are going,
Yes, we are going to Maine.

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Jean D. Battey

Jean D. Battey is a Media Director in an elementary school in the heels of Vermont. Graduated a "goodly number of years ago" as an American Literature major from Middlebury. At the end of this summer will hopefully have a Master of Arts in Liberal Studies Degree from Dartmouth. She has been a good friend of the Eberharts for many years, since their cottages face each other across Weir Cove on the coast of Maine.

The Verbalist of Maine

"Poetry is the opening and closing of a door, leaving those who look through to guess about what is seen during a moment."

- - Carl Sandburg

Most poets on opening and closing doors give a brief glimpse of their innermost thoughts; and these thoughts dwell on an infinite variety of subjects, some universal, some private. Emily Dickinson in "I'm Wife--I've Finished That" very briefly allows us a tiny peep into what many believe was the most sacred and personal area of her life. Meanwhile, Carl Sandburg in his poem "Cool Tombs" pauses over the eternal question of death which has always haunted mankind. Both the private view and the more universal view can produce great poetry; for the best of poetry, I believe, contains an element of both. Kenneth Rexroth has stated that the subjects of poetry are "the great platitudes the facts of life."¹ These great platitudes can be glimpsed from either a personal or a general viewpoint. As poetry opens the door, the poet gives us his interpretations of the facts of life. It is up to us to read them for ourselves.

Richard Eberhart has said the "Poems are objects on paper but they come from deep subjective reaches."² And further he says that "poetry is like the mystery of the world. It comes from secret wells; it is fresh draft from heaven, warmed in earth."³ From these two quotations one understands that Richard Eberhart firmly believes that poetry is a mystical revelation, an extremely personal experience. Poetry must be a combination of the ethereal, romantic vision and the earthy,

world view. The poet must be both subjective and objective. A poem "is not an abstraction from experience, nor a commentary about it, but a full emotional and intellectual presentation."⁴

At times a poet's environment can influence the view that a reader may catch through the open door. Often if the observer has some understanding of this environment, a clearer appreciation of the poems can be attained. Some poems portray the actual physical surroundings while others reflect the thoughts and emotions which the surroundings generate. In an interview from the Eberhart's summer home the poet says "We have been coming up here to Maine and going to the same place, and I have derived several poems from this specific region that would not have been written but for the place in which they were engendered."⁵ Since the poet himself has established the fact that there are certain "Maine poems," a closer look at these poems and the background from which they emanate would seem valid.

As had been noted above, since the early 1950's the Eberharts have spent their summers on Penobscot Bay. To the prejudiced mind this is one of the most beautiful sections of the coast of Maine. The bay itself is island-studded with the Camden Hills standing sentinel at the southern tip and the summits of Mt. Desert Island guarding the northern reaches. The coastline is most irregular with deep coves and spruce covered rocky peninsulas. In one of these coves, almost in the center of the semi-circle that forms Penobscot Bay, sits the home of the poet. At one time it was part of a salt water farm, so very typical of the coast in years gone by. The name of the farm was "Undercliff," and a most suitable name it was for a cliff rises above it. The ruggedness of the land, the people who inhabit it, the animals, birds, the sea, wind and the tides all become part of Richard Eberhart's Maine poems. The poems can be divided into two categories, arbitrary as the categories may be. The first group of poems specify by name or in some direct way the Maine environment. The other group upholds the vision which he gains "at least partly through an experience or object accessible to his senses."⁶



Two poems in the first category are "Off Spectacle Island" and "Seals, Terns, Time." Spectacle Island is located about a mile out in the bay directly in front of the Eberhart cottage. The island is in the shape of a pair of spectacles and is a landmark from the shore as well as for the sailor at sea. The whole Penobscot Bay area is a test in navigation for anyone making his way among the islands, and the mariner's chart is a necessity. So in life we find our way mapped out for us and we go from "point to point." The poet suggests, I think, that although we may feel that our lives need to be charted, there is a haunting wistfulness in man when he discovers he is "unprotected from their lyricism," that is, he cannot join the seals and porpoises in play. They are uncharted, and the poet would rather contemplate their freedom that follow the path of "Folly from Pride's Light." "Seals, Terns, Time" was discussed by Eberhart himself in an interview with Denis Donoghue. Western Isle as he describes it, is out in the bay next to Green Ledge Light. He tells of sitting in his boat, resting on his oars and watching the seals come slowly up to him with their curious manner, and at the same time having a flock of terns swoop over him.

Eventually the poem evolved which showed

"man, who thinks he is so solid and present, so real, actually a fragile creature sitting on a filament, the boat in the water, between two gigantic symbols. The birds are the symbols of our spiritual nature, and the animals, sea animals, are the symbol of our animal nature and of evolution coming up from the slime."⁷

In his poem "Eagles" the poet specifically designates that we are at "Undercliff" looking up at the rugged cliffs above us. One finds an exultation of nature in the lines

"Still she astounds the eye
"With natural majesty."

and this wonder still remains after man's failures. The wonder, recognized, is a remembrance of time past. The three eagles spotted soaring over the cliff bring a certain sense of awe and a belief in laws for both men and nature - "as if purpose were absolute." The poet's actual spotting of the eagles, uncommon only in their number, inspired the writing of the poem. With the "Inward Rock" we have a metaphysical poem dealing with Eberhart's search for freedom and truth. Wanting to be inwardly hard and unique, he divorces himself from all historical men and events and views them as if in a dream. The mention of "the hermit of Cape Rosier" and "the blind man who wove wicker chairs" are references to actual men who lived on Cape Rosier where Undercliff is situated. These two men, each in his own way, seemed to the poet to "possess the world" as he himself wished to do. When childhood innocence appears, perhaps in the form of his own children, the poet rediscovers the world which he had attempted to deny, for here surprisingly enough is the truth of imaginative freedom.

"A Maine Roustabout" and a "Wedding on Cape Rosier" are two more poems which specifically place the reader at Cape Rosier. The first is a character study of Percy Gray, an accurate portrayal, a picture painted with words. Not only do we have a physical portrayal with the "grizzled face" catching "mackerel almost any afternoon on the incoming tide with an old hook," but we gain an insight into the character of the man who thinks of himself as "sharp as the city folks" but who is nevertheless, "ever wary against them," keeping his

distance. It is a most vivid, true portrayal. The "Wedding on Cape Rosier" is the recording of an actual event even to the "forest chapel looking out over the ocean" and Father Emerson whose "father knew Emily Dickinson." Along with these homey, gossipy tidbits which somehow bring an air of reality to the poem, the poet reminds us of the finiteness of the present and the shortness of the ceremony which none-the-less unites until "death do us part." We contemplate how in minutes life-long vows are made when Eberhart concludes

"It takes so short a time to get married
"We noticed no change in the tide."

"Sea Burial from the Cruiser Reve" is another work based on a specific incidence, not entirely unique to the Eberharts. From his beloved motorboat, the Reve, the Eberhart family scattered the ashes of a cousin who had requested to be cremated and had expressed the desire to have this very thing done with the ashes. Between Blake's Point and Western Isle is the natural area for such a ceremony. Flowers were sent adrift over the white ashes as they gently floated down into "the heavy blue of the water." The "white mass" waving "as a flag, from the enclosing depths" is a beautiful and most accurate description of such a burial at sea. Death becomes the transition from the physical, living body to the eternal, all encompassing spirit-

"She is now water and air
"Who was earth and fire."

"Flux," too, deals with death and the enigma of uncertain fate and was engendered from a series of tragic events which took place all in one summer in a twenty-five mile radius of Cape Rosier. The twelve year old girl who died of encephalitis lived within half a mile of the Eberharts and the motorcycle accident occurred in front of her house a month later. The habitation of Tree Island was considered a tragedy by all picknickers, and the drowning of the lobsterman at Stonington seemed the final "coup" of that summer. The somber mood of the poem seems to be in the first comic-tragic stanza; the dishonesty of the old Indian who sells the poet a cheap pair of manufactured moccasins instead of the genuine, handsewn article. Eberhart senses that in all aspects of his life "enigma rules, and the heart has no certainty."

The poem "Will" by Richard Eberhart appeared in the *Saturday Review of Literature*, March 28, 1970. Here again we find the poet raising the question of retirement from the world. The first stanza follows the navigation chart of Penobscot Bay from place to place, and if one had a chart one could follow the course. The problem presented is one of universals. Is the sailor on the ocean sailing a given course closer to reality than a landlubber sitting on the shore? He is immovable, "impervious to fog rolling in or lifting, the light's decline." Is he then nearer to reality because of lack of action and the free rein which he gives his imagination? "The will is free to assume the freedom of desire" in the man on the shore. The dreams of the imagination seem unsurpassable. Yet the man of action who dares the dangers of reef and tide willingly controls his action, chances fate, and becomes master of reality, the true man of imagination who does not retire from the world. The last poem which without question we know to be a part of the poet's Maine world is "Sea Scape with

Parable." The mackerel have arrived at Weir Cove, that body of water in front of the Eberhart cottage, and everyone in the area, with lines ready, start out after mackerel. Because of the large size of the schools of fish, a seining boat comes in and the men set the large nets across the cove. Wind, time, tides, everything has to be exactly right; and when it is, the large mass of silvery, shining fish "are hoisted and shoveled into the capacious holds." With this catching of the mackerel, Richard Eberhart sees a parable, for the men like the fish do not see or think of time and death and consider "flesh reduced by rough forces to everlasting lightness." He finds an inevitable analogy with

" . . .the Fisher King, who with the net of time
Searches them into the silent bin of death."

And ironically enough "ever vigorous swarms of men laugh with the living."

The last two poems in this first group do not strictly specify time, place or person, and yet they are actual events belonging to Eberhart's coast of Maine. In the interview with Donoghue he describes "A Ship Burning and a Comet All in One Day." The burning of the boat took place at the summer home of Mrs. Butcher, the poet's mother-in-law, at Cape Rosier, across the cove from the Eberhart cottage. It was a ceremony insisted upon by Mrs. Butcher's brother who did not want to see the derelict left on the shore to rot. As the boat finished burning, and darkness approached

"A great comet appeared in the sky
"With a star in its nether tail."

a suitable climax to the events of the day in the eyes of the poet. Over the years Richard Eberhart has been known for his adeptness at catching the snakes which have always lived at the bottom of the well at his cottage. In the 1800's when the well supplied the water for the laundry house where the washings were done in the summer, there were snakes in the well; and the poet in the present century rose to the challenge of capturing the snakes. It was a "happening" each summer and usually drew a small crowd. This is a natural poem describing an event and in its poetic statement of facts one is reminded of Robert Frost's "The Pasture." In all of these poems, specific as they may be, universal ideas and thoughts are also stated. Themes of death, eternity and fate appear. The private nature of the poems do not override these themes, but are sublimated with the public visions which give a happy blending of the two attitudes.

The remainder of the Maine poems do not clearly state that the setting is Maine, and yet the indications are there that they belong to the coast. Among his many poems are a few which could be the Atlantic, the Pacific or the Mediterranean. These I have omitted, attempting to deal only with those writings which seem to have the flavor of the Maine coast.

As a naturalist poet which he legitimately is, Richard Eberhart draws from the nature around him that he finds on the coast. The sea-hawks or ospreys have been a common bird to Penobscot Bay over the years, and their nests have been situated in various spots where one can observe the young birds. In both "Sea-Hawk" and "Ospreys in Cry" he refers to the keen eyes and immense strength of the bird. In the first

poem he states

"It is an eye of fire
"An eye of icy crystal
"A threat of ancient purity"

and then goes on to speak of

"Powers of an immense reserve
"An agate-well of purpose
"Life before man, and maybe after."

In the latter poem he describes the osprey as

"Piercing with ancient, piercing eyes
"The far ocean deep"

and "powerfully taking the air." Contemplation of the bird leads the poet to ponder the question of the centuries of bird life and how permanent is the impersonal being of the natural world. He feels that he is at one with the hawk as well as its prey. He becomes both victor and doomed. The poet's philosophical thoughts are prompted in both of these poems by his observations of nature.

It is easy to understand if one is acquainted with this particular coastal area why rocks become a subject of poetry. The size, shape and structure of the rocky terrain inspires a philosophical approach. One cannot help but read many aspects into the rocks even to remembering the duality of time

"The rock was never known as it was,
"But as we are."

The poet realizes that in studying nature we are unavoidably interpreting natural phenomena from our point of view. The rock itself is "forgotten" for we never are able to become completely impersonal. In another poem "The Echoing Rocks" he tells of the effect of the echoes from the boat passing by some island cliffs, and the swells breaking over the rocks on the shoreline. The sounds carry the poet into a timelessness of "purest dreaming" where he dreams "the siren sounding shore to poetry." Once past the island his poetic images fade away. The eternity of the ocean and man's origins as coming from the sea are also incorporated into the work with the lines

" . . .timeless allurements,
Strange sounds going back to dawn
When man was coming up into his own feeling,
Out of the sea."



"Sea-Ruck" is a poem of the ocean and could have been

written almost anywhere. The only justification for its inclusion is that it is based on the rowing of a boat which is an everyday occurrence to all those who live along this coastline. Rowboats are means of transportation at Weir Cove. They are not strictly pleasure boats, for it is quicker and easier to go from point to point by boat rather than drive around by car. This poem reflects in its very rhythm the rocking movement of rowing-

"Loll and stroke, loll and stroke,"

and the short phrases, bits and pieces of thoughts also give the feeling of the quick strokes of an oarsman. In the swirling of the waters we again find the poet contemplating the world and man's place in it; time and the ocean with its dark swells unrolling the scrolls of life as the sea unrolls itself. "The Voyage" is a brighter poem and the atmosphere of the sea seems less brooding. Where in "Sea Ruck" Eberhart speaks of "the dark swells, the everlasting toll" in the second work we find ourselves sailing on a windy afternoon and "the day is pure," and time seems to have stopped. When as the wind dies down the ocean becomes "a lolling torpid giant" which "occasions nothing but philosophy." This, then, is not the ocean to be feared, but one for relaxation on a warm, sparkling sunny afternoon. With the relaxing philosophical calm the sailor finds the tides carrying him back where he has been and he must turn on the engines in his boat, for as the poet says with tongue in cheek,

"...Man cannot endure
To be going backward going forward."

As a recorder of the day's events Richard Eberhart is a veritable master. "Moment of Equilibrium Among the Islands" is an artistic and true portrayal of a day on board the Reve cruising the Penobscot Bay. The southwest breezes of the morning suggest a bit more wind at noon, but the sailors on board cross the bay into open ocean and ride the swells in the wind and sun. The swells are found only on the open ocean; the bay itself can be at times as calm as a mill-pond and at other times rough and choppy, but never rolling with swells. The group anchors and goes ashore on an island. Here they find an old granite quarry whose "dark, green still fresh water refutes the ocean." One could easily imagine this to be Hurricane Island on the outer edges of the bay where at one time a flourishing granite industry existed. On looking into the "still water" and also on the return trip home trying "again the gripping buoyancy of the salt sea" the poet describes himself as "a philosopher continuing in the essential" and reaching "at nightfall the landfall buoy of home." Morning and afternoon the travellers are riding the green swells and at noon on the island experience the "hardness and fantasy of the world" - a moment of equilibrium. It is a true recording of many a picnic day with the Eberharts, but this recording contains the nuances of the poet's thoughts.

In two of his poems he describes two extremes in mankind. Man in "The Seal" has wantonly killed a baby seal and left it on the beach. Since we live "in the realm of the real" the poet takes the small body home, skins it and finds himself with a trophy. He sadly contemplates the killing of "an innocent thing" and realizes that if the seal had been caught in some

"ocean strife

I should have thought better of life,
And better of man besides."

In observing "The Clam Diggers and Diggers of Sea Worms" the poet admires the men in their slow, bent work; men who have a primitive simplicity and a "dignity beyond speech." He sees the "dark core and sombre purpose of life," and to them he gives his "mute salutation, time-deepened love." These men have earned his respect.

The last work to be considered is a long one, "The Verbalist of Summer" which first appeared in *The Beloit Poetry Journal* in the fall of 1950 and was eventually included in the volume "Undercliff." In this poem Eberhart's quiet humor is again revealed, and one even has the feeling that the poet is chuckling at himself. As the verbalist of summer he has the ocean at his fingertips with its colors, waves, fogs, dawns and sunsets. He considers his role as a painter, a philosopher and a naturalist. The poet with "all this wealth and scale" feels overwhelmed "his vision ceased," until he realizes that the sea is his,

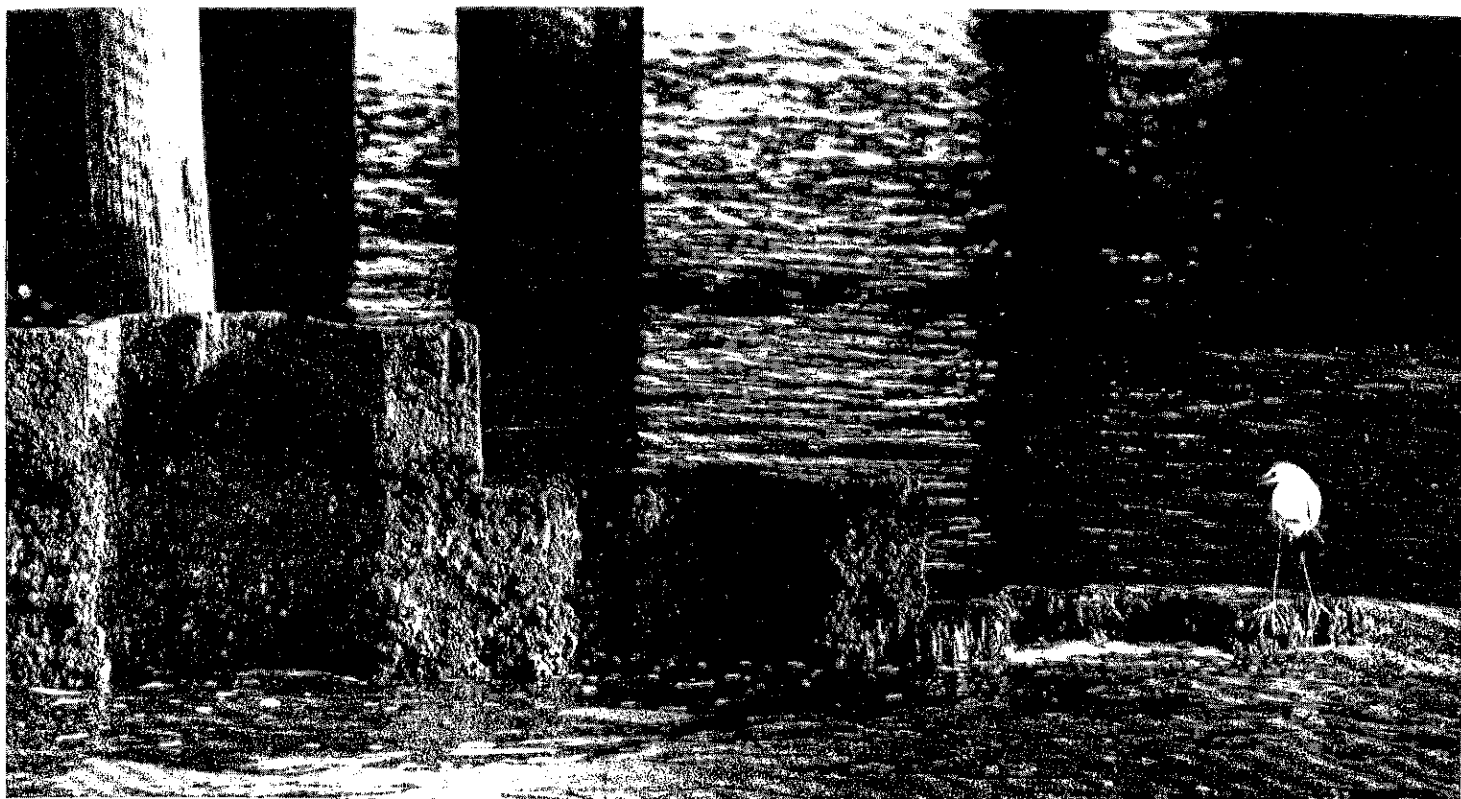
"For I am human if I am anything
"And I am master of what I see."

With this philosophical approach he dreams of the eternity of the ocean and its effect on him. He finally decides that the ocean is

"A living nature beyond the realm of art,
"Try as poetry does to have it poetry."

Again he feels the sea is "getting out of hand" and he must "arrange the props." Then the sea becomes all powerful with history and stories buried in its depths, and again he thinks "that it was too much." Then the verbalist decides that to truly describe the ocean one must see as a child does, and when the child looks at the ocean, "he sees the bright pebbles by the shore." The simplicity of that last line offsets the wordiness that has gone on before; a very precise handling of the conclusion.

In all of these poems of Maine we can trace the influence of the ocean, its coastline and its people on the poet. He is never completely academic. In many of his poems such as "Flux," "A Maine Roustabout," and "Sea-Burial from the Cruiser Reve" Eberhart "begins with decidedly earthy locations and continues as an acute master of the effects of imagination in poetry."⁸ He has "found a personal style within the commonplace,"⁹ and with this style he has afforded us brief glimpses of his coast of Maine, his reactions to this land of pine and sea, his naturalistic views, and his philosophy. It is an adventure indeed to follow the poet through his experiences around Undercliff for he is a naturalist and a philosopher "one of the writers who are opening up the world to our life, from the inside."¹⁰



FOOTNOTES

Opening quotation: Louis Untermeyer and Carter Davidson, *POETRY ITS APPRECIATION AND ENJOYMENT* (New York, 1934), p.11.

1 Kenneth Rexrph, "The Finest of the Lost," *SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE* (December 28, 1957).

2 Richard Eberhart, *THIRTY-TWO DARTMOUTH POEMS, FOREWARD* (Hanover, 1965).

3 Richard Eberhart, *THIRTY DARTMOUTH POEMS, FOREWARD* (Hanover, 1959).

4 Bernard F. Engle, *THE ACHIEVEMENT OF RICHARD EBERHART* (Glenview, 1968).

5 Denis Donoghue, "An Interview with Richard Eberhart," *SHENANDOAH* (Summer 1964), pp.7-29.

6 Engle, *THE ACHIEVEMENT OF RICHARD EBERHART*.

7 Donoghue, "An Interview."

8 Michael Benedikt, "Choices and Risks," *POETRY*, Vol. 105, No. 5, February 1965.

9 Hayden Carruth, "Errors of Excellence," *NATION*, CXCI (January 21, 1961).

10 James Dickey, "In the Presence of Anthologies," *SEWANEE REVIEW*, LXVI (1958).

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"Sea-Ruck"
 "Moment of Equilibrium Among the Islands"
 "The Seal"

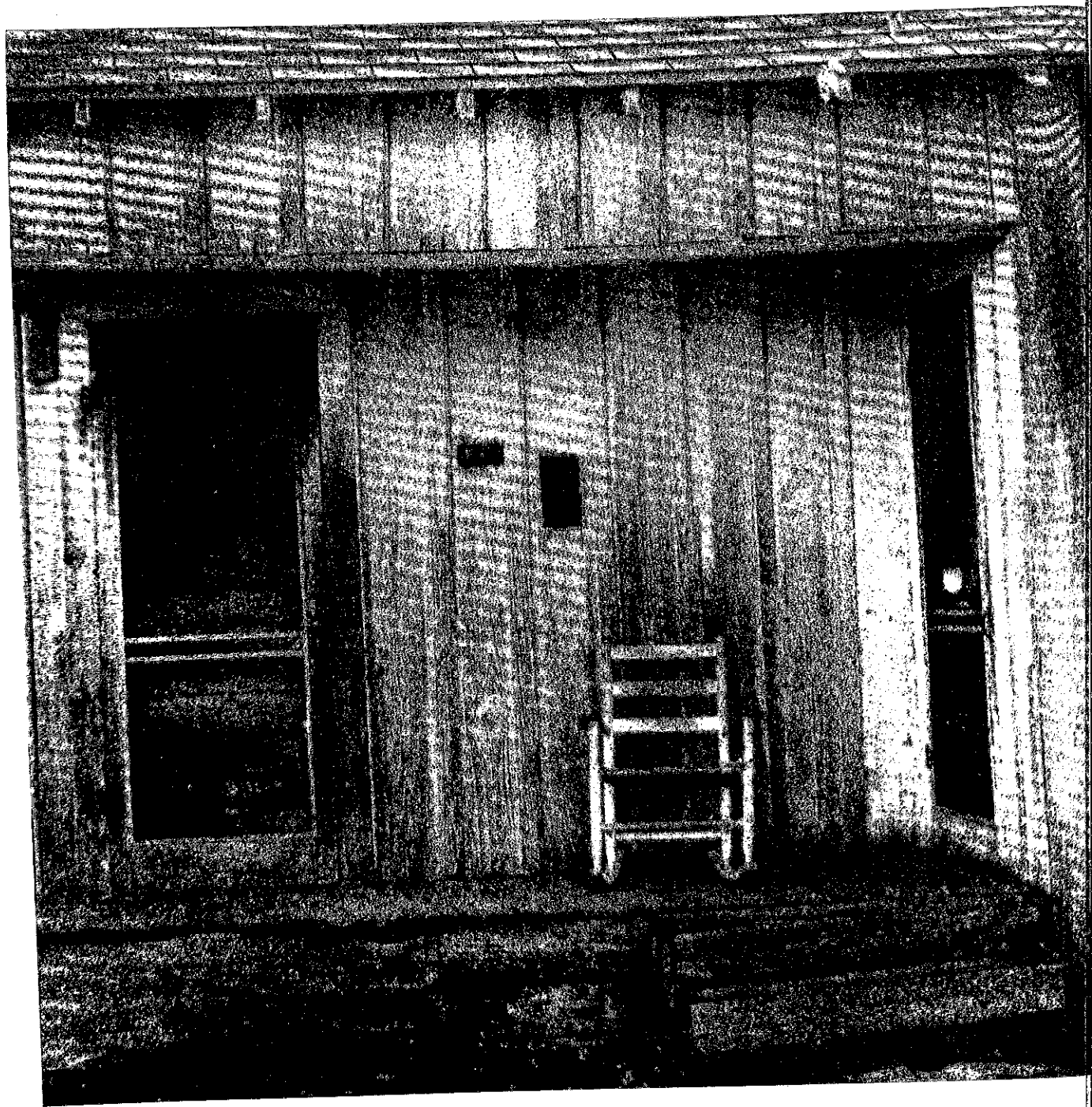
RICHARD EBERHART: SELECTED POEMS, 1930-1965 (New Directions, N. Y. 1965)

"Seals, Terns, Time"
 "Sea Hawk"
 "The Forgotten Rock"
 "Ospreys in Cry"
 "Flux"
 "Fishing for Snakes"
 "The Echoing Rocks"
 "A Ship Burning and a Comet All in One Day"
 "The Inward Rock"
 "A Maine Roustabout"
 "Sea Burial from the Cruiser Reve"
 "Eagles"

SHIFTS OF BEING (Oxford University Press, N. Y. 1968)

"A Wedding on Cape Rosier"

"Will" - *Saturday Review of Literature*, March 28, 1970



Joyce Bean

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My Father Left a House

The child hadn't understood her family since they stopped living together. Her mother had taken her and her sister to Grandma's and they stayed there that time. Her daddy stayed at their real house. Her sister said that Mama hated Daddy and, though Bonnie was nearing five and fifteen months older than Carla herself, Carla didn't believe her. Even to think of it always gave her that funny, throw-up feeling in her stomach. Bonnie also said their dad liked Carla best and maybe that was why she said that bad thing. Carla knew that she looked like him with her blond hair, her deep brown eyes, her long, narrow face and her frail build. Bonnie was more stout, with darker hair and, though prettier, was not well liked. She was a flibbertigibbet - always into twenty things at once. Their mother always worried about her.

Carla tried to remember when she had last seen her father. It had been a long time. She thought Bonnie missed him, too, but Bonnie said she didn't. She was afraid to ask Mama many questions about Daddy because Mama always got so mad that Carla felt herself somehow to blame. It never made sense but it was there. So Carla managed to divide her mind into things-one-talks-about-to-others and things-one-only-talks-about-to-oneself.

The girls attended a nearby nursery school but were in different groups. Nobody there seemed to know about home and Daddy. She hadn't asked. She just knew they didn't. Some days her grandfather took them or brought them home. He was nice and she didn't like it when he had to go out-of-town to build people's houses or stores. Grandma was kind of mean and could even boss Mama around sometimes.

Then one day Mama had a call from a hospital that said Daddy was there and very badly injured. Some drag racing boys had smashed into the car he had been driving with a friend. Mama rushed off to see him. Carla begged to go but was told she was to little to visit hospitals. Everything was so confused after that.

When Mama came back, she said he was in a coma and John, the friend, was badly hurt too. She cried some. Carla panicked and wondered if Daddy were going to die. Would John die? So she asked if John would die. That seemed safer. Mama yelled that she wasn't God and didn't know - - and she cried more. Carla wondered if she cried for herself or for Daddy. Maybe she felt sorry for some of the nasty things she said about Daddy and if she was sorry, maybe they would live with him again. Gone-away seemed like "dead".

On the afternoon newscast, Mama heard them say John died and she started screaming and crying. Carla tried to tell her that it was John, not Daddy, but she couldn't get through the hysteria. Then Carla thought maybe they had said Daddy or that saying John was a magic way of meaning Daddy. Carla tried to ask but no one heard. Grandma shouted for her and Bonnie to go outside but they continued underfoot and she continued to badger them.

Somehow it got to be night and Carla awakens to the renewed wails of her mother. Grandma comes in and tells them the hospital just called and their Daddy is dead. Carla tries to say he cannot die but no words come. Instead, she goes to her mother and slides an arm around her. The woman envelopes her and Carla continues to pat her gently. Tears stream down the child's face. Bonnie cries, too.

Carla wants to tell them he will come back when he knows that they need him - - but still no words come out. Daddy is dead because they say so.

There is a blur of several days in which Carla only sees her mother now and then but is usually assigned with Bonnie to the care of an uncle or an older cousin and are taken to the park or to the zoo or to stores.

On the third day Mama tells them that Daddy's funeral and burial will take place and that they will go somewhere for the day with Uncle Tim. Carla's other grandmother argues at length with Mama about the children going to the funeral but Mama is determined that they should be protected from such pain. Carla whines, wanting to go, feeling her deprivation. But no one cares. To see is so important. That's how you know . . . but no one sees her and no one listens.

Mama dresses in black which makes her face look puffy and grey. Uncle Tim comes for the two girls and commends them for being so brave and adult like and not crying anymore. He says little to his sister. Carla doesn't understand except that no one should cry. He takes them to a school carnival - - and is annoyed that Carla begs to see her father.

The children go to school the next Monday and Carla brings her teddy bear. She isn't sure she wants to go but she doesn't want to stay home either. Everything seems so strange at home. Mama knits all the time - - knits her way through the evenings, through sweaters, mittens, caps, scarves. And everyone treats Mama as if she is confined to a wheel chair or is

only out of it temporarily. It helps to have Teddy along.

Carla feels as if the children are looking at her and she wonders when they will ask about her daddy. Finally one little girl asks Carla if he died. Carla tells her that he did but the other child says nothing else.

Eventually the children go out to the play yard. From the top of the climbing gym, Carla pitches her bear down, calling, "Sick-dead Teddy." The other children join in the chant and game, repeatedly throwing and retrieving the toy. Later while indoors, Carla plays "hospital" with Teddy, unsure if he is sick or dead or if maybe the two are the same. She wishes Daddy would come tell her.

"My mommy is a crybaby. She cries and cries. I don't cry," Carla tells her teacher reproachfully.

"She cries because she is sad about your father and you are too, aren't you?"

Carla nods slowly. The teacher knows something and Carla isn't sure she wants her to. At home Carla is the strong one. If she is strong and good, he will come back. Maybe he was angry. He's in the ground but they said the angels took him to heaven. What angels? How could they get there?

Next autumn Carla continues at the nursery school while Bonnie goes to kindergarten at their parish school. Carla has a different teacher but most of the children are the same in the group. The teacher is nice. She talks to Carla and listens and watches. She likes everybody. Once a little friend asks Carla if her daddy is really dead and Carla can't answer. She feels too upset. She will ask him about "dead" sometime. He has to come back to stay, not just visit. She will take care of him. She already takes care of her dolls and friends-playing-baby and sometimes, her mom.

When the other children talk about their fathers, Carla tells the teacher that her daddy made a cradle for her when she was a baby and a bird house when she was older. She sometimes talks about those things that happened before her mother took her away from his house. Once the teacher visits their apartment and Carla shows her the cradle that now holds dolls.

The teacher becomes a special friend and Carla plays when they are together. She plays as a kind of talking and it's hard at first. She isn't even sure she wants to, it just seems to come out. She wonders about leaving her daddy and about his dying. She plays about vacations and moving -- people leaving. She is afraid about so many things. She isn't sure what is okay to tell about her daddy and what would make the magic mad. She knows there are some things that she just doesn't want to hear, either. It's that mixed up.

When school ends, Carla doesn't see the Teacher until the autumn after starting their parish kindergarten. Her old preschool group meets one afternoon a week for crafts and socializing. Her Teacher is always there, along with a man teacher who has charge of all the after-noon school age groups. Carla wonders why returning to this familiar milieu has that comfortable feeling -- like getting home. And her teacher seems so easy to be with -- to talk to or just to sit with or to play beside. Sometimes when she and the Teacher are by themselves, Carla plays with some small doll house people that she selects, and with a toy car and with the doll house. She is

troubled. Daddy is still gone. She has the doll family and the car get stuck-in-the-mud. The doll father she uses is black. *Wouldn't there be a change in color if someone were le underground? Maybe black skin loses color. Maybe white skin absorbs it.* This kind of playing hurts Carla, yet the inside of her wants to do it. Often she wishes to stop or leave. Sometimes she does -- but that never helps the jumble inside her.

Then a most dreadful, frightening day comes -- nearly incomprehensible to Carla as the one on which her father was killed. It seems that the whole city and more than the city, all the world, she guesses -- moans and grapples and claws for some small comfort. A mean, mean man shoots the president and the president dies -- he dies in blood because of the bullets. He isn't on a horse. He's not a cowboy. He is in a car and he is shot in the car and nobody could do anything about it. He just dies. Carla hears the groans of all the adults near her and all the adults near them and she watches the television reports. She hears them say that President Kennedy was the father-of-our-country. And she feels even more sad. She knows he was a real father because the television shows his children. The girl is five like Carla and her name starts with a C. Caroline, and she has long, blond hair, too. The boy is little. The funeral and burial are on television and his casket is wrapped in a flag. Everybody talks about it. Then the bad man that shot the president is shot by another man -- like a cowboy shows. But all the adults get upset.

Caroline gets to be at her father's funeral and sees him go into the ground. Her mother wants her. They have crosses and masses like Carla's family. Carla asks her mother if this was like Daddy's funeral. Bonnie won't watch all the funeral but their mother and grandmother watch and cry. Everybody seems tired and hurt and sad and nothing seems to help. They just talk about it more and watch more television about it. Carla feels it deeply.

When she goes to her after-school group, she notes the pain in her Teacher's voice and eyes and very carriage but the Teacher says nothing. People are so sad about the President. Carla doesn't want to think of her father's dying but she keeps getting him confused with the president. She feels sorry for Caroline but she doesn't tell the Teacher because she doesn't want to talk about why she is sorry. She is by herself with the Teacher and all these things congregate and grow and know about inside her -- inside her where the magic is. Except the magic isn't working today. The magic says he will come back when she is good enough. But she is good.

She grabs a cap pistol and fires it apprehensively, then forcefully, aiming at a tiny, fuzzy teddy bear.

"He's scared. He wants help. He's scared," she mutters somewhat mercilessly. He will get no help from her right now. She is too angry -- angry about people who leave, abandon her, angry at her inability to turn events; just so angry, and angry. While everyone else weeps, she is filled with fury. And she can't remember whether she wants to cry from the pain or the fury. Her tempest subsides and she leaves. The Teacher observes the child's heavy steps and the now wan, expressionless face and wonders.

"Now this is Goldilocks and Goldilocks is goin' in her big house that's got 'bout everything taked away on vacation." She loads the toy car with doll house furniture and family. Goldilocks is placed in a cradle in the house.

"Goldilocks is hidin' and she goes to sleep." Carla looks at the Teacher, "Goldilocks is a bad, bad girl." She adds a Black girl doll to the family entourage -- a girl like the father.

"An' their car gets stuck-in-the-mud," she rolls the car back and forth and then has it adhere to the fantasized mud.

"Now, I'm stuck-in-the-mud." She steps beside the car. The mud of what she can't understand and doesn't want to begin to feel and realize -- that mud glues and gums and impedes her movement, her very life force. Mud and dirt and earth. . .where dead people are who are supposed to be in a sky with angels -- angels that she never sees. The earth, she knows.

Carla has a big sister doll awaken the sleeping Goldilocks. "Baby!" she chides. *Get up, you Silly, can't just wait around.*

How do I write my name? How do I spell it? If I add a letter at a time, what does each group of letters spell? Part of my name is 'car'? My daddy and the car. President Kennedy and the car. I'll drive it over everything. It speeds. It wrecks. People leave in it. They go and never come back -- they come and go. Why are there wrecks? Why do people go to the hospital?

Teacher says that doctors try to help but sometimes the person is too badly hurt.

"And he dies," Carla supplements.

She fires and fires and fires the cap pistol and then a pop gun. She won't just stand around and wait. She doesn't like any of this -- none of it and she will protest with all the noise of these guns. She lost something and Caroline Kennedy lost something. And the whole of America lost and. . .she is angry and hurt and mad and pained. . .and her teacher is so sad.

And she finds some baby doll bottles and fills them with water and has the rain and rain and rain over the doll house, making puddles in the ground around the house. The house will be clean and shiny. And she drowns it. She is sad.

The bottles cry for me -- cry on the house and around the house and into the brown floor. It's a bad house and I must hurt it with water. Rain on it -- lots of rain. I must wash it with my tears. I must clean it. I must care for it. Poor house of my father that my mother doesn't like that my mother left and is selling.

She must clean the little teddy as she has done the house. Teddy must be cleansed -- a dirty, guilty, bad teddy. She spansks it for getting in the rain and then she calls the orphanage to come get him because he is so bad. *Absolution, Bear, absolution. Toss you out.*

Carla wrecks the little bear in the toy car. The she gets a baby doll bottle and fills it with water and sucks from it and then innudates the floor with it. Would she die like the father she so resembles? Die so bloody and injured? And rejected?

If I were a baby, I would still have my daddy. I would be a baby that would never grow. Then my daddy would always be here. Babies are always good. Everybody always likes them.

Then one day it rains outdoors and Carla watches with her Teacher from a window. The rain is within her too, and she doesn't want to move or speak. She tells the Teacher of hiding under the covers in her bed during a thunderstorm. Part of her still wants to hide. What happens when it rains on someone buried in the ground? The heavens cry.

Then there's still Teddy. She cleans him again with streams of water from the doll bottle, "Don't whine, you're five years old. Teddy is five years old. Look at the clean Teddy. That's how he was when you first got him." *Out, out, damned spot.*

Then Teddy is bad again, breaking an ashtray. He is spanked. She creates puddles of water on the floor again with the baby bottles. It all hurts -- even to punish. And who is to blame? Tears, more tears.

With fingerpaint, Carla does a series of pictures. First, she has a house-on-wheels, then a house, then two of Uncle-Martin-the-Martian. *He's in the sky. Is that Heaven? "We're goin' into orbit, into outerspace to a earthquake." Stay with me. I'm scared.*

The Teacher tells Carla school ends in another week and Carla feels the time pressure. She asks to play outdoors at the sandbox and chooses the toys to take. The Teacher brings them in a small basket.

Carla quickly and tensely buries a small, plastic animal in the sand, placing a stick above it and laying another across it, "A cross."

She gets up and trudges around the play yard by herself, then lethargically returns to select the Black father doll.

"I'm gonna bury him."

She does, placing the stick in the resulting mound.

"Now -- where is he?"

"Buried," her Teacher replies.

"How'll I get him out?"

"Maybe, you'll have to get another one."

"Another what?"

"Another man," and she motions to the basket of toys.

"Not any."

But then Carla gets the white father doll, the one she always uses as the grandfather. She watches him fall to the sand as she releases him from a tight grasp. Walking to the end of the play yard, she stares out through the fence.

When she returns to the sandbox, she selects a plastic, Indian wigwam and places it near the buried father.

"That's a manger." A manger will look after him -- a manger and a cross. The pain only deepens. *"Real" causes such hurt. The magic all goes -- that good magic that keeps away bad.*

Teacher says dead people don't come back. But I can see him inside my head or look at his picture or talk about him. But he stays gone. Except he's really not gone if he's inside me. I sort of can take him around with me all the time -- sort of -- only sort of.

Carla takes the little teddy that Teacher said she could have for her own and she leaves. Everything is painful -- but it's not hiding. The Teacher feels it too -- and aches.

At home Carla asks her mother about getting a new father, sometimes adding, "But he has to do all the things that my

Daddy did." *He must be like my good daddy.*

Grandfather is nice of course. You just kind of want a real daddy if you haven't one. She brushes her long hair and decides to play dress-up and be the beautiful princess and live in a castle -- no, a house castle.

freshman writing by

Bill Chalmers

Bill Chalmers is a freshman pre-med student with a major in biology and a minor in chemistry.

Conserving Energy

If you have ever participated in a college football practice you know how important it is to conserve your energy during the twenty or thirty minutes of warm up drills that most teams go through. There is a unique skill to this conservation, or loafing as the coaches call it, that I am about to explain.

Almost all football practices begin with a speech from the head coach. I happen to know that after this trite talk, Coach will look for the goal post farthest from where our intent huddle is and he will shout, "Everyone run around the posts and line up for exercises." The mistake most players make is running up to form a huddle when Coach walks on the field. It is to your advantage to walk while everyone else is running. Walking serves a two-fold purpose. While everyone else is running, they are naturally burning energy faster than you are. Also, running to the Coach puts them in the center of the circle. Simple mathematics shows that if you can be on the outside of the circle toward the posts you are to run around, then the distance is going to be considerably shorter.

Now, when Coach says "run," you don't have as far to go as everyone else. You can take a slow trot, and as long as you stay up with the few stragglers, Coach will never notice who you are. Then, if you time it just right and the Coach isn't looking, you can stop and turn around maybe ten or twenty yards in front of the goal posts. How can this be done? If you remember, you have been jogging at the back of the pack. With all these people passing you on all sides, it is quite simple to turn around without bringing any attention to yourself. Not even breathing hard, you are now leading the pack.

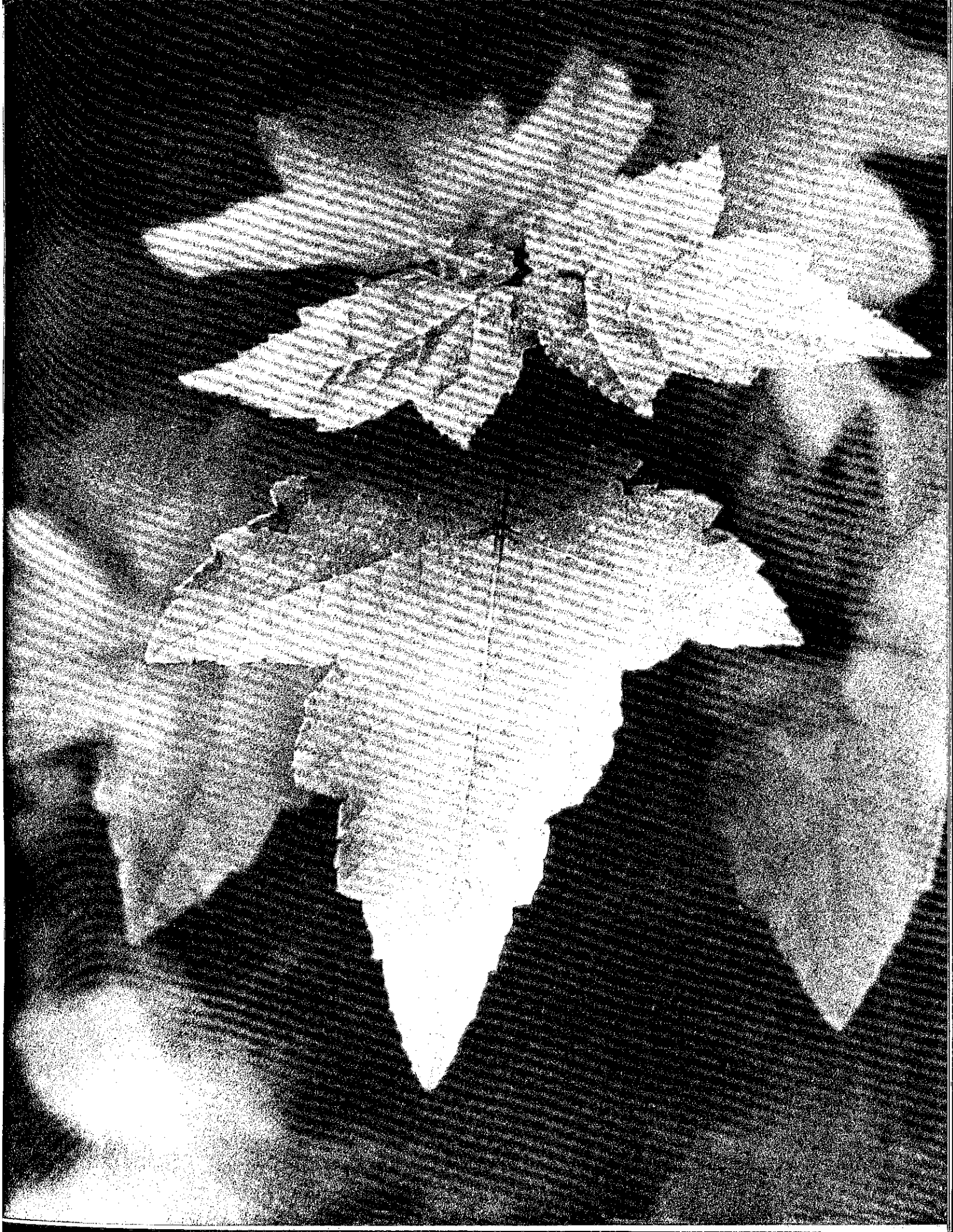
Now that you have successfully fooled everyone into thinking you are a real hustler, you can slow down almost to a walk and nobody will say anything. The reason for slowing down is that you will be able to place yourself properly when you line up in the ten rows of eight men each for calisthenics. You want to be either the sixth or seventh man in one of the two middle rows. This position is very important. Here, you are virtually surrounded on all sides by your teammates who serve to keep you out of view of Coach.

When everyone else is in position, exercise begins. Side-straddle-hop seems to be the starting exercise for all workouts I have participated in. This drill is almost as ridiculous as it sounds. It is designed solely to wear you down. While all your teammates are jumping up and down and flailing their arms everywhere, you need only to move your arms up and down to appear to be doing the same thing. Since you are protected on all sides by these jumping idiots, who is going to notice you're not hopping?

The next exercise you do puts your body in a more uncomfortable position. The coaches call it "toe-touchers." You simply stand with your feet together and when Coach blows the whistle you bend over and touch your toes with your hands. Then you straighten up and touch your stomach, then reach way over your head like you're grabbing the sky, as coaches say. Then your hands go back down to your sides and the whole ridiculous procedure starts over again.

You can master this drill with little difficulty. All you have to do is bend over and drop your hands down to your knees. When the drill gets going fast and everyone is moving up and down, the coach will never assume that one of his hustling players is taking a break.

If Coach thinks these drills were done well, he'll tell you to break up into groups and practice will begin. You then run to your own coach, panting and breathing hard like everyone else, wondering how you could get away with a stunt like this in a game.



STAGES IN TRANSLATION:

THREE LOVE SONNETS by PABLO NERUDA

*translated from
the Spanish by*

Julia Alvarez

Pablo Neruda was born in Chile in 1904. He first won recognition as a poet at the age of sixteen. He is now Chilean Ambassador to France and, in 1971, he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. Of his many books, *The Heights of Macchu Picchu* is perhaps the best known in English.

Information on translator Alvarez appears with her poetry on page 38 of this issue.

From "One Hundred Love Sonnets" Pablo Neruda

Morning XX

Mi fea, eres una castaña despeinada,
mi bella, eres hermosa como el viento,
mi fea, de tu boca se pueden hacer dos,
mi bella, son tus besos frescos como sandías.

Mi fea, dónde están escondidos tus senos?
Son mínimos como dos copas de trigo.
Me gustaría verte dos lunas en el pecho:
las gigantescas torres de tu soberanía.

Mi fea, el mar no tiene tus uñas en su tienda,
mi bella, flor a flor, estrella por estrella,
ola por ola, amor, he contado tu cuerpo.

mi fea, te amo por tu cintura de oro,
mi bella, te amo por una arruga en tu frente,
amor, te amo por clara y por oscura.

TROT

My ugly one, you are a disheveled brunette,
my beautiful one, you are beautiful like the wind,
my ugly one, your mouth can be made into two,
my beautiful one, fresh are your kisses like watermelon.

My ugly one, where are your breasts hidden?
They are miniscule like two cups of wheat.
I would like to see you with two full moons on your chest,
the two giant towers of your sovereignty.

My ugly one, the sea does not have your nails in its stores,
my beautiful one, flower by flower, star by star,
wave by wave, I have counted your body;

my ugly one, I love you for your golden waist,
my beautiful one, I love you for a wrinkle on your face,
love, I love you for your lightness and for your darkness.

TRANSLATION by Julia Alvarez

My ugly one, your dark hair is never combed,
my lovely one, you are as lovely as the wind,
my ugly one, your mouth is big enough for both of us,
my lovely one, your kiss is as fresh as watermelon.

My ugly one, where have you hidden your breasts?
They are tinier than the grains in an hourglass,
I'd like to see two full moons on your chest;
two large towers proclaiming your sovereignty.

My ugly one, your nails are not in the sea's stores,
my lovely one, wave by wave, star by star,
flower by flower, I have counted your body.

my ugly one, I love your small bright waist,
my lovely one, I love a wrinkle on your face,
I love your light, my love, and your darkness.

From "One Hundred Love Sonnets"
Pablo Neruda

Noon XXXVI

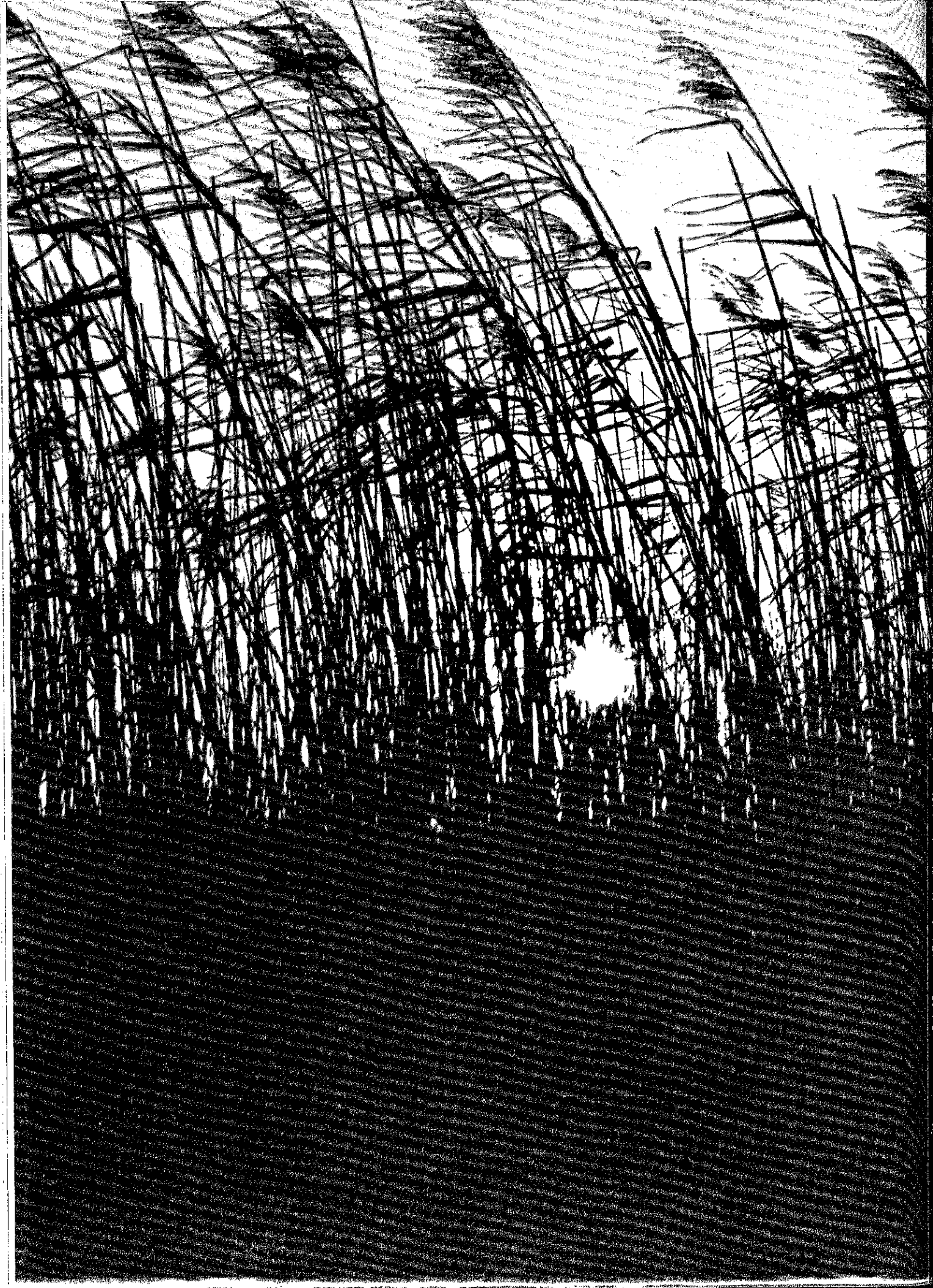
Corazón mío, reina del apio y de la artesa:
pequeña leoparda del hilo y la cebolla:
me gusta ver brillar tu imperio diminuto,
las armas de la cera, del vino, del aceite,
del ajo, de la tierra por tus manos abierta,
de la substancia azul encendida en tus manos,
de la transmigración del sueño a la ensalada,
del reptil enrollado en la manguera,
Tú, con tu podadora levantado el perfune,
tú, con la dirección del jabón en la espuma,
tú, subiendo mis locas escalas y escaleras,
tú, manejando el síntoma de mi caligrafía
y encontrando en la arena del cuaderno
las letras extraviadas que buscaban tu boca.

TRANSLATION by Julia Alvarez

My love, queen of the celery and the trough:
tiny panther of hemp and onions:
I like to watch your small kingdom glitter
with arsenals of wax, wine, and oil,
of garlic, of earth your hands part,
of the blue stuff your fingers ignite,
of sleep changed into a salad,
of a reptile asleep in the hose,
You prune and awaken green perfumes,
you move like the soap in its lather,
you climb my mad staircase and ladders,
you drive my hands as they write
and find in the gravel of paper
strayed letters which searched for your mouth.

TROT

My heart, queen of the celery and the trough,
small leopard of the thread and the onion:
I like to see the sparkle of your diminutive empire,
the arms of the wax, of the wine, of the oil,
of the garlic, of the earth opened by your hands,
of the blue substance lighted in your hands,
of the transmigration of sleep into the salad,
of the reptile coiled in the hose.
You, with your pruning knife raising the perfume,
You, with the direction of the soap in foam,
you, climbing my crazy ladders and staircases,
you, conducting the sign of my penmanship
and finding in the sand of my notebook
the missing letters which were looking for your mouth.



From "One Hundred Love Sonnets"
Pablo Neruda

Morning I

Matilde, nombre de planta or piedra or vino,
de lo que nace de la tierra y dura,
palabra en cuyo crecimiento amanece,
en cuyo estío estalla la luz de los limones.

En ese nombre corren navíos de madera
rodeados por enjambres de fuego azul marino,
y esas letras son el agua de un río
que desemboca en mi corazón calcinado.

Oh nombre descubierto bajo una enredadera
como la puerta de un túnel desconocido
que comunica con la fragancia del mundo!

Oh invádeme con tu boca abrasadora,
indágame, si quieres, con tus ojos nocturnos,
pero en tu nombre déjame navegar y dormir.

TRANSLATION by Julia Alvarez

Matilde, name of a plant or stone or wine,
of what feeds and lives on the earth,
a word where mornings are born,
in whose summer bright lemons explode.

In that name wooden ships sail
surrounded by swarms of blue fire,
each letter fills a small river
pouring into my burning heart.

Oh name discovered under a vine
like the mouth of a dark tunnel
revealing a green blast of earth.

Oh invade me with your scorching mouth,
search me, if you'd like, with your dusky eyes,
but in your name, let me sail and sleep.

TROT

Matilde, name of a plant or stone or wine,
of what is born of the earth and lasts,
a word in which growth dawns,
in which summer explodes the light of lemons.

In that name sail vessels of wood
encircled by a bevy of aquamarine fire,
and those letters are the water of a river
which pours out into my clacinated heart.

Oh name uncovered under a vine
like the door of an unknown tunnel
which opens into the fragrance of the world.

Oh invade me with your burning mouth,
investigate me, if you'd like, with your nocturnal eyes,
but let me sail and sleep in your name.

Jo Ann Thrash

The Island

Thomas crossed the narrow road from the library to the main street. As he walked from the shade of a group of live oaks, August glared at him and the blistered asphalt burned through the bottoms of his thin-soled shoes. "I wish it was autumn", he thought, "Then it would be cooler. . . Then I'd be leaving for the university." Thomas could hear the ocean. Squinting, he saw to the end of the road where lights exploded out from the sun-struck water. Thomas walked on.

Passing the filling station, his hand raised from habit, but when he looked up to the window for a return wave, he saw that Gus wasn't there. "But Gus is always here", he thought. "Since he moved back to the island, he's never been gone a day." Thomas stopped, perplexed. He wondered if Gus was sick. Then he saw the wreath above the Gulf emblem on the door. "Today is when they bury R.J."

The island was always quiet. Not much business ever transpired except at the docks or the marina, but today the silence was unnatural. Closed shop windows stared out at Thomas like reproaching eyes. Even the seagulls didn't squeal as loud as usual. In the tired streets, no other people walked. Alone, Thomas made his way past a row of stores.

Further down the road, Thomas could see the white frame Chapel of Our Lady where most of the islanders spent Sundays. The service for R.J. would be there. It was 2:45 now and the funeral would be at 3:00 exactly; the islanders were always prompt. Already, the solemn bustle at the steps of the church had slowed and most of the people were settled inside. Soon the little doors would shut. Thomas felt sad for R.J. and the people in the church, but he would not go inside.

As Thomas neared the oleanders that bordered the churchgrounds, he could see his father climbing the steps. In his suit and tie, he looked no less comfortable than he did every Sunday morning. Thomas looked hard at his father's roughened face and thought how much like the shore after a storm it was. There was something in the face that Thomas loved and feared and hated, something that made him feel always like a small boy. "I wish I'd known him when he was young", Thomas thought. "Maybe then I'd understand him." He didn't remember just when he realized he wouldn't be like his father. Perhaps he had always known. Thomas brushed back a full oleander limb. Perhaps it was when he was nine and spent his first summer on his father's shrimp boat. They had hauled in the nets and found tangled in the fish and seaweed, a beautiful exotically colored fish. Thomas could still see it and still feel the same excitement for the small desperate thing wriggling in the black twine. "It was the color of this oleander, deep pink, with intricate white lines etched into its sides", Thomas remembered. He had pleaded for the fish to be let free, but his father cut it up for bait. He could still see his father's large hands as they slashed the bright fish with a knife and fastened it in ragged strips to the hooks. Thomas still felt sad for the fish and thought that then he had lost his father. He thought that perhaps then he had also begun to hate the island.

Taking a handkerchief from his pocket, Thomas wiped away the rivulets that slid down his forehead and into his eyes. As the figure of his father disappeared into the church, Thomas saw Gus. He had come outside and was standing at the foot of the stairs wiping his face. "The heat must've gotten to him", Thomas thought. He wished for Gus' sake that the funeral was over.

Gus and R.J. had grown up together on the island. They had fished and played baseball in the sandlot behind the bait shack. After high school, they left the island together. Thomas was only twelve then, but he remembered. That was the first time he really saw the feelings of the island people for the mainland. At the table, his father had said, "They'll learn soon enough. One strong taste and they'll be back for good." Thomas heard that line at infinite meals. He heard it over and over from everyone on the island. It seemed that there was some evil across the bay that the islanders feared and hated like sublime sin. Thomas didn't really know what caused it, fear of the unknown, jealousy, provincial suspicion or some real wrong doing on the part of the mainland. He only knew that the animosity was real and very strong. He wondered each time someone said, "they'll be back, one way or other". He wondered when Gus did come back in three years with a business degree and a title to the filling station. Lately he'd wondered on long afternoons at the station talking with Gus about R.J. and baseball and school. R.J. was in the news now, signed with the Yankees, but Thomas' father still said he'd be back. "He said the same thing to me when I told him about my scholarship", Thomas thought.

The chapel was filling up. Thomas watched as reporters and cameramen encircled the stairs. Filing in last were R.J.'s teammates who had flown down for the burial. He thought "It is good that his friends have come." The heavy doors shut and Thomas felt sadder for the discomfort of the people

inside. As he stood there shifting his weight from foot to foot, the weepy organ music mixed with the gull cries and the hot, salt air. Thomas felt each crescendo.

He'd never seen R.J. play baseball, at least not with the Yankees. When Thomas was younger, he'd watched R.J. play with Gus and the bigger boys behind the baitshack. Other times he'd seen R.J. at the docks when both were working on their father's boats. R.J.'s father had one of the best shrimpers on the island. It would have been R.J.'s, but instead he and Gus ran off to the mainland on baseball scholarships. Thomas wished now that he had known R.J. better.

He shifted his thoughts from R.J. and Gus to his own scholarship. "Only 18 more days and I'll be on the mainland", he thought. That last word "mainland" sent anticipation throughout his body. He had imagined it countless times: the city, the campus, the interested people who would teach him and talk to him. Now finally, he was going. Thomas wondered if the islanders would call him a deserter like they called R.J. and Gus.

Thomas remembered the island when word came that R.J. was with the Yankees. At the marina, at school, in his home, the news was on the tongues of everyone. R.J. was still news to the islanders last week after the car wreck in New York City. "It was different this time though," Thomas thought, "the news was quieter. They seemed relieved that he was dead." The feeling that something had been resolved hovered still above the little town. There were nods and glances traded that only the islanders understood. Thomas thought he understood, but wondered. "I knew a man who visited New York once. He worked Marquis' boat and got drunk every weekend at Babineaux's Place. Tonight I'll get drunk, too."

Outside the church, among the many-colored oleanders, Thomas sat in the sand. He knew it would be at least an hour before the service ended. Resting his back against a tree trunk, he looked out toward the ocean. Ships with foreign flags always passed the island. When he was small, he'd watched them from his father's boat. He'd even kept a list of the different countries and learned all the flags from the back of his geography book. Great tankers and freighters steered past sending strong waves against the island. Thomas knew those waves and with all the intensity of his years, yearned to follow them to their homes. Today a Russian ship was passing. He's heard about it on the news and his father had talked about "damn Communists". Thomas had read some poems by a man from Russia named Pasternak. He'd even tried to write poems, but his father laughed and his friends called him sissy. Now when Thomas wrote things, he didn't show them to anybody but Gus. Thomas wondered if Pasternak had been a Communist.

"Christ, it's hot today", he thought. "I wish I was at Babineaux's Place." He mopped his face again, eager for the air-conditioned beer hall and the cold beer that would relieve him. From his back pocket, Thomas pulled a paperback novel. Paging to his place, he began to read. He became so interested in the words that the temperature didn't matter anymore. He was so caught up that he almost didn't notice the chapel had opened and the procession was filing out. As Thomas closed the book, the heat returned. Slapping the sand from his pants, he stood.

In a minute or two the mourners would get into their cars and go to the cemetery, but now, they all stood in the little yard in front of the chapel. As he watched them mill around, Thomas focused on the group of islanders at the far side of the lawn. They all dressed like his father and mother, in the same grey, black, and brown outfits, well worn through numerous funerals and Sundays. Their motions were the same. Thomas imagined that they were even saying the same words to each other. He could feel something inside him fill with pity and resentment for those paperdoll figures so identically cut from the same rough, drab paper. Thomas looked and thought how glad he would be to leave them all.

Heat waves swirled up from the dry green lawn of the church. Thomas stared past the scene, letting his eyes go out of focus as he thought about September. What seemed longer to Thomas was only a minute or two, and when he looked again, there had been almost no change in the tableau before him. This time instead of giving his attention to the group of islanders, he took in the entire scene. From his vantage among the oleanders, a new more frightening vision came to him. He saw two groups of people, the islanders and the mainlanders. The mainlanders were all dressed in clothes that Thomas had seen only on television or in the newspaper. They all wore wire-framed glasses and their hair styles matched. Thomas looked hard at them. He watched their gestures, the movements of their lips and knew all the initial desperation of painful insights. "Fancy paperdolls" he thought. "They might as well be faceless, every one of them. The teammates and reporters, my father and his friends. Change a few clothes, part the hair a different way. They're all the same, everyone. All except Gus." Beside the coffin, Gus walked, red-eyed, wordless.

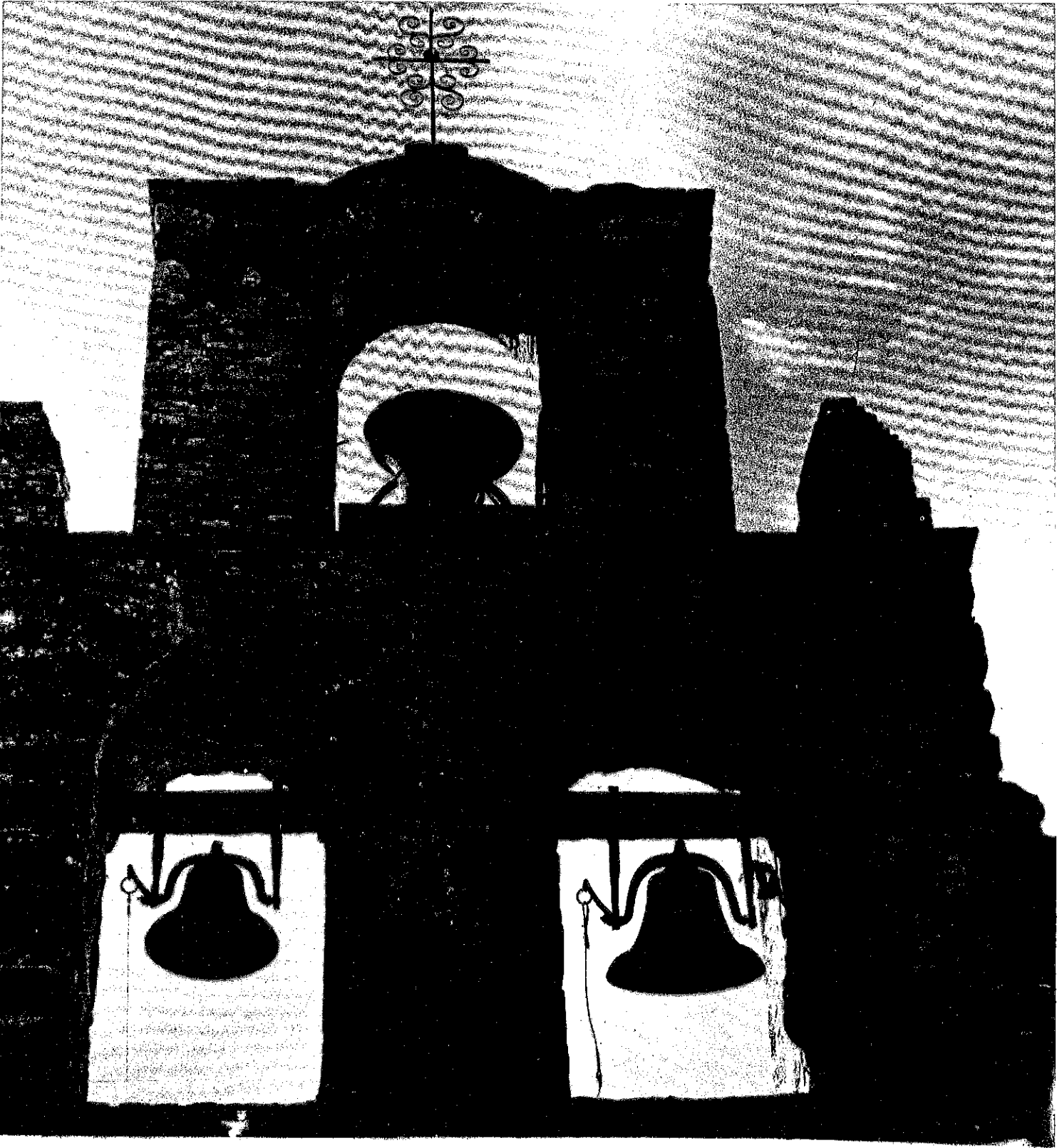
Thomas hadn't cried, not since he was a little boy, but now his tears made the world swim. He felt his chest tighten and he wanted to shout. He wanted to go forever from them all, to be neither islander or outsider. To never worry again if the shrimp would come or if the tide was right or if the next hurricane would hit the island. He didn't care if it hit the mainland either. Deep down he almost wished it would. Thomas threw his book down and ran. He ran till his legs throbbed and his head was wet from sweat and crying, till his chest loosed. He hated them all.

He made his way to the marina across the island and climbed the ladder to the top of the water tower. Thomas stood there for a while, breathing hard to catch up with his heartbeat. When his pulse finally slowed, he stretched himself out, exhausted and empty, and closed his eyes. The wind was beginning to cool now and he slept.

It was at least two hours that Thomas lay against the railing of the tower. When the clanking of a chain on the marina's naked flagpole woke him, the sun was going out. Thomas lay there for a while before he drew himself upright. From the tower, he could look down and see the whole island. Below in the darkening land he saw the cemetery and the faded green canopy of the new grave. He saw the docks and the shrimp boats rocking in the quiet sun-colored water. He saw the closed filling station and the roof top of his own home. He saw it all. "The only thing that's growing here is the graveyard."

Slowly, Thomas' gaze inched out over the island to the surrounding water and out to the fringes of the mainland. He thought of larger, more numerous filling stations and Babineaux's Places that waited there. He resented the mainland now, but even more, he hated the island. Thomas looked again to the sea. "It is not that far", he thought. "I could swim it on a calm day."

The light was almost gone now. Off the ocean, the cool night wind sent shivers through the greenery of the oleanders below. From a distance came the low drone of a passing ship. At the edge of the island, Thomas could see the lights going on at Babineaux's Place. He could almost hear the music of the juke box begin to play. With a hand on the rusted rail, Thomas found his way to the ladder and began the climb down.



AN ANTHOLOGY OF POETS

Ralph Adamo

Ralph Adamo was in the MFA program at the University of Arkansas. His publications appear in *The American Scholar*, *The Western Humanities Review*, *Poem* and others. His poetry was also recently included in a Random House Anthology, *Contemporary Poetry in America*.

The Great Escape

Everything's still on down the rows of cells of beds with men asleep
who dream in prison about prison life

But one man is awake and digs at the floor of his cell
with a spoon: one spoonful by the week

Everyone knows what he is doing and no one cares:
the rock floor is built on rocks, everyone knows

He has a special relationship with the moon
which one guard exploits who sells the spoons

He has imagined the deaths of enemies,
bicycles used to fall apart under him

He gets packages in which are steaming pots of the foods of his native region,
then all the hungry and all the greedy are fed

Everyone is grateful for his witlessness, but especially
for the dreamless music of his spoon against the stones.

Poem

She planted a fig tree She watered its way
In time with the sun She grew rich shade
For a long hot day She planted everyone

She grew a tree from a light green stick
The sun was sunlight She cooled the dirt
Deep leaves She grew and Everyone came

She watched the tree unwatch her flowers
Water colored in the sun The dark was hard bugs
Humming She watched Was everyone coming

She was not the tree she was not
The whole tree hugged the ground that dark
She was Where everyone came The hunger for figs

Givers Up Poem

It's an organ-grinders universe anyway so

Today I feel like sleeping in you ear
Love is a little wire that cuts deeply
It has not the summery voice of maple or pine
Of course I'm the mumblar under the waterfall

...uncle.

April Adams

April Adams is a junior English major. Her poetry appeared for the first time in the Fall 1972 issue of *Pulse*.

Archives And Weddings

An old scholar is dying
Big weddings can run
into lots of money

She lay
on the edge of the bed
showing me
a clipping

a triple coated
heavy green gold
three grand diamond ring

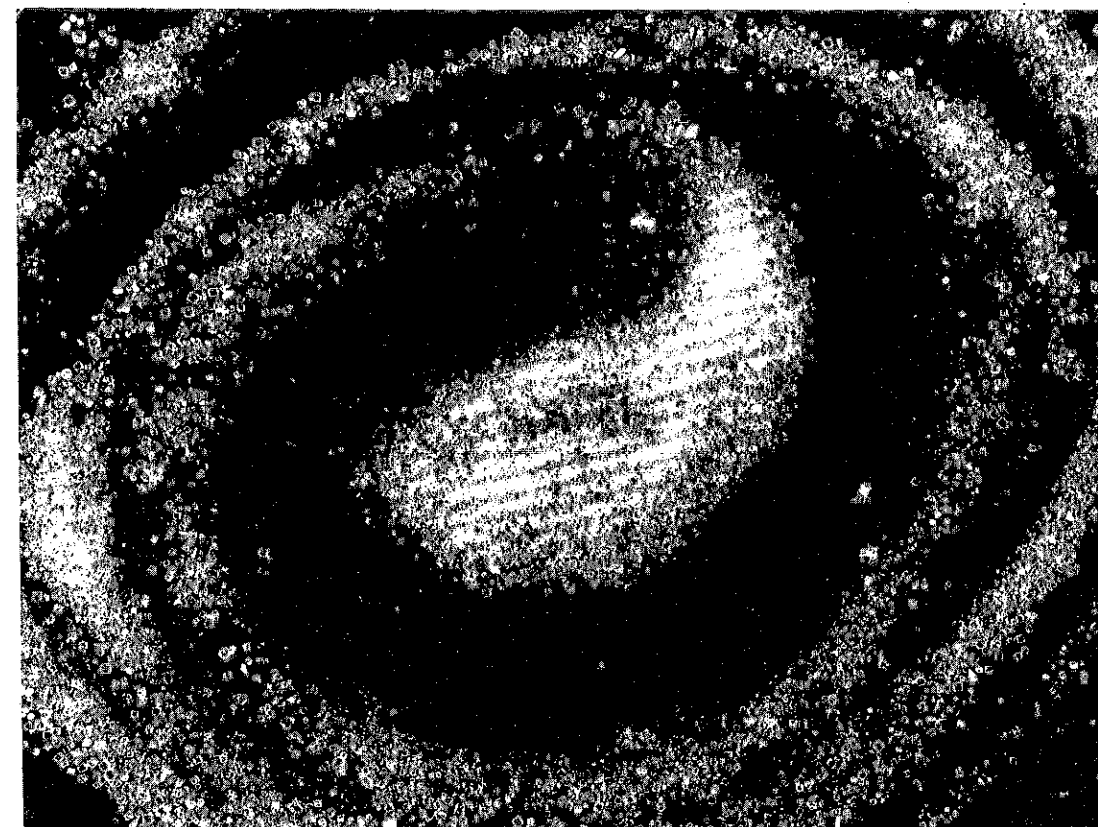
Then slid under
the patchwork cover
talk of all night receptions

The Bacchus of Basketball in Illinois

He was the Bacchus of Basketball in Illinois.
I mean he
was tall and lean and he
wore a sweat band over his eyes and he
grinned through the goal.

He kind of fisted the ball in his hand and he
waltzed with it down the court and he
always led.

And he drove the girls wild, skinny-legged girls,
flabby-legged girls. They screamed as he
grinned and waltzed
down the court. They screeched as he
grinned and waltzed
down the court and he
always led.



Julia Alvarez

Julia Alvarez is originally from the Dominican Republic. She has studied under Robert Pack at Middlebury College and is presently in the MFA program at Arkansas.

Gingila On The Toilet

Gawky Gingila broods on the toilet
imagining the tiles picture the men she's known
on and off and sometimes perpetually off.
This pinkish tile under her left foot
and squashed like she'd like to have him
squashed shows Macabee, of course...under her right
foot is her father, the tortured two and only men
she knows. Finishing up, Gingila towers high
above the tiles. This is the woman men leave alone.

Back in her room, Gingila revels in sex solitude.
"Why I don't need a man," she says. She doesn't.
And on she goes to flush them from her heart--
"Haters of truths," she screams, "Destroyers of the Arts!
And as for males who create, I contend
the best of artists are the worst of men!
We should get rid of them! In future worlds,
we'll make all test tube babies come out girls!"
She feels good now she's started to unwind,
to wipe her heart with the antiseptic mind.

The Garden

Gingila's in the garden. So is Macabee!
She's sitting talking metaphysical talk--
he's had a drink--she hasn't had enough
of anything. And from the tree they're under
hangs a peach.
A peach more food for thought than any talk;
a - hundred-watt peach bigger than a bulb
and rounder, softer! Ah...a pulpy peach!
Establishing its pinkish orbit round
the greeny tree. A pupil of that peach,
Macabee keeps his eyes on it...

...Worlds away,

Gingila's giving him answers now...
picking and peeling, putting down, proposing
idea after idea...
the dialectical dazzle of Gingila's brain,
the droning talk of synthesis and stuff
bores him and he looks up
into that small rose sun
fuzzy and tightly packed and veined with gold-
My Goodness, Gingi! Look at that!
All the time talking of truth, she reaches up
and plucks the peach, covers it with her dress....
made of a thin material... And he sees the peach
darkly and through a veil. Out of reach.

Tom Brindly

Tom Brindley is a sophomore elementary education major with an English specialty.

Are there
any new spheres
one sphere no eyes
or minds have comprehended
Was said there are
but that new
knew not what
new was
new through old imperfect glass
minds eye compounds
apparent newness to each being

(Are there any new spheres)
old globes altered by
Earth Fire Water Wind
brought into reality
Old spheres
with new hemispheres appear

Gingila's Return

Gingila! GIN-GI-LAI! No answer,
Where is she, mistress of the printed word?
Where has she gone to? Have you seen her--
ho? She never was the one to leave
her books unread, pen without a cap,
inkpot unprotected by a lid! What is this--
has the world gone mad?
She would not leave her books unless it had!

Gingila? Ho? Ah, here she comes,
a sample of a smile on her lips, hiding
one obvious hand behind her back, trying
to get by me without showing what--
What do you have there, Gingi? ha?
Is that a piece of candy that you
hide? Imagine eating while I worried sick
wondering how in the name of Goethe you
could leave these lovers, these your books,
and just go off!

I snatch her left and hidden hand and see
no less than ten nude shots of Macabee!

Mona Brittain

Mona Brittain or Monab as she signs herself is a mass communications major previously published in *Pulse*. She says, "Writing helps me continue."

That Kind of January

With chin in hand, i sign my name
and yours
on the dew-cloudy pane.
Making two fisted baby feet,
4-fingered paw prints,
afternoons night.

Jack Butler

Jack Butler has been published in *Intro*, *Cavalier*, and *The New Yorker*. He lives with his wife and daughter in Jasper, Texas.

No Deposit and No Return

Lo, here are revels wet with drink --
"Just set your empties in the sink"--
To deaden the thirsts with which I burn;
And should a bottle-break, I think:

No deposit and no return

And I've a lover who has said
She'll love till all the stars have fled,
And never for another yearn.
(Once we even went to bed.)

No deposit and no return.

And I've a poem the critics praised,
Which wondrously my status raised
In the best circles, though I learn
The average reader was displeased:

No deposit and no return.

Yet lately I am discontent,
Have had strange dreams, dreams that meant
Who knows what? A burial urn
For instance bore this odd imprint:

No deposit and no return.

And seconds past our party beheld
A fiery hand, who finger scrawled
Letters that cause me grave concern,
Though I'm uncertain the letters spelled

No deposit and no return.

Second Comings

Winter spring and summer fall
The leaves go down and come back up
The brook we followed fed a pool
A small secluded place to stop

Where sun and rain and moon and wind
Drove down the days and raised them up
And bleached dead ashes deeper and
Stove in beer-cans, which, like ships

Shipped sand and listed: a leaf detached
Itself and fell, and for a time
Switched whenever the eddies switched
A fraction of unbaffled flame

We spent all morning at laugh-and-run
At isn't-it-warm? and salt-my-tail
Somewhere upstream bituminous stone
Touch by touch unbuttoned from shale

And water rippled and soft coal
Lay scattered on the sand by us
They say that plants compress to coal
Through centuries of terminus

And sunlight kindled root and bole
And branched out bright against the sky
And fire will blossom forth from coal
Yield warmth and please the lover's eye

And noon came on and went on by
And shade by blue transparent shade
The night returned and she and I
Built fire on marks of fires unmade

Michael Cannito

Michael Cannito, originally from Paterson, N. J., is a student of literature and psychology at Lamar University. He is the editor of *Pulse* and his drawing, poetry and prose have appeared in previous issues. He is the 1973 winner of the 1st place award for essay in the Texas Intercollegiate Press Association's Competition at Arlington, Tx. His poetry will appear in *Stone Drum* and a reprint of his "An Interview with Richard Eberhart" has been accepted with *Quartet*. Mr. Cannito is a participating member of the C. G. Jung Foundation for Analytic Psychology of New York. His current project is a psychoanalytic approach to J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*.

The Cows Endure

The troughs are frozen but the cows endure,
thinking of a dozen ways to best
enjoy the grass that isn't there.

Cold breath
boils through colder air, as a farm hand
comes into the barn with an armful
of chrome milking machines and a wide grin
spread over his face, like pants too tight
at the crotch. The daily chore begins again.
His strokes are lover's but the cows endure.

We're Headin' For The Last Round-Up

We're headin' for the last round-up,
we madmen, atheists and loons;
our beer lies in a bitter cup--
we're headin' for the last round-up.

That cowboy with his gold stirrups
now spurs the hours toward high noon;
we're headin' for the last round-up,
we madmen, atheists and loons.

All in a Days Work

For all her nudity
the woman displays great skill
at scraping the plaster
from his open eyes
She uncorks his nostrils
parts his dry lips

To those freshly scraped eyes
colors shift silt-like
as in a sudden splashed puddle
"This is far better than plaster. . ."
he thinks
A scent for each color
"better than cork. . ."

Pleased with himself
he offers his hands to the woman
who is walking
He becomes frantic but she has grown bored
Walking away she will not lead him
away She is
walking away.

Whats My Line?

It seems I have so many that
I'm struck too speechless for reply;
But wait --
Something is coming! I feel it shaking loose
from the ragged intestines, those bowels like
flooded caverns, where blind fish peck red pools
into the flesh. Its coming up! Exploding
like a great beast from the sea. *It is a bird.*
It is a bird. The great bird of the breath,
the word: WITHIN. At last the dikes are gone.
Its coming up, and we are going down.

George W. de Schweinitz

George W. de Schweinitz is Professor of English at Lamar. His poetry has appeared in *Poem*, *Texas Observer*, and *These Unmusical Days*. An energetic supporter of poetry on the Lamar campus, and a teacher of creative writing here for over six years, Dr. de Schweinitz says that his creative work has matured as he has taught creative writing at Lamar.

Genesis

I used to try to write fiction about her.
I realize now it was a poem.
The blond girl in a white shirt open at the throat
in a blue Pontiac with the Indian profile somewhere
around. I'd seen her in the remains of a winter
snow, which made her shirt flash up as the winter
sun caught hold of the whole scene.
She was going somewhere in her cool blue Pontiac
where I wanted to go. Also she had a father
who would help her get there and I didn't.
I was the lone interested party. My Dodge sulked
as her Pontiac passed, pirouetting almost with its
Indian head. She didn't see me. Locks
held her. But I have focussed on her
as some have on the Cross of Snow in the same Rockies.

The Whale

The whale lay on the shore,
half on the green tubular grass
half in the water and on the sand.
He lay there while we whacked planks
with our tires on the wooden bridge
with the rust like mascara around rivet holes.
We encircled the whale thus, leaving him
to his own monument; we drew away
from him over the hill. We
didn't talk enough about him.
He curls now slightly
from the warping of the sun.
We curl over hills, never very high,
making his landscape ours,
but leaving him, as we found,
dead, emblematic, unjustified.

On Recovery From Pneumonia

When I see my mother, I fall,
the snow catching me,
at her door, I go down,
full length, measuring my need
by the catastrophe.

She tells me the dream
while I wonder and grin.

Rain

The rain was falling in Houston.
Out of sunshine the plane had dropped.
Now on earth my darker seat companion
began suddenly talking about the weather
in Houston, New York, Los Angeles (where
she had been born) and Phoenix (where she
and I had both been once). The rain
and earth brought forth conversation like children.
Words leaped to words about the rain.
which flung its blessings on us as she broke
into the aisle of the plane.

From a position beneath her
I returned her first-time, smile-smothered gaze.
On the flight her hands had uncurled like leaves.
A muscle in her cheek had flexed.

When I looked up at her eyes, like uncontrollable sun,
they flooded mine, and battled more than what she saw:
some huge unconscious flail. Words grabbed in vain.

The Carpenter

I see his hands more ready for the wood
than on it. I see them lifting him from want,
I see them moving through the air of the
Kansas City basement, like objects of art.

So, he fashioned beds and crutches,
the better to sleep and walk with.
But I sleep because I fashion him
out of my dreams, and scatter his neglected ashes
anew, over a landscape between birth and death.

Jeanne Emmons

Jeanne Emmons appears for the first time in *Pulse*. She is the daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Winfred Emmons.

Birthday Poem for Daddy

Sometimes they ask me, "What is your father like?"
And I tell them, stumblingly, the best I can.
But all they notice is the way my eyes light up.
They say, "You must have been very close."
"Well, not so close, really, in the way you mean.
I used to watch him holding nails in his mouth
Or pulling weeds from a flower bed, humming.
Not close in the way you mean. We didn't say words.
He was intense, and I was shy around him.
Maybe in some ways he was shy, too.
Though you probably wouldn't think so, if you met him.
Once he showed me the poems he had written.
We didn't say much then, either, I suppose.
But then the words were all there on the page,
And we were close because he let me read them."

Winfred S. Emmons

Winfred S. Emmons has been writing poetry for a long time. He is Professor of English at Lamar University.

"I guess, being so shy, you never fought?"
"You make me laugh. Sometimes we both spit fire.
But afterwards we always said I'm sorry.
And we were never indifferent to each other.
You see, I love him because our blood's the same,
But more for the man he is, always building
A boat, a beach house, or a repertoire
Of easy piano pieces, all self-taught.
I think it would be difficult to find
Another man who's half the man he is."
"It sounds as if you love him very much."
"It's hard to tell him that, but I think he knows it.
You see, as I said before, we're very close."

Prothalamion

I.

The tense texture of pregnant space
Ripples and heaves. Here and there
In about every other billion cubic miles of nothing
A primordial atom occasionally bursts into being.
It exists motionless for a moment; then conflicting microforces
Across the parsecs and galactic years
Lay it on a collision course
With another of its kind. Years swell into centuries
And centuries into eons before the first contact,
And the microforces collide, cohere, double
Within the ordering will.

And after some billions of years

The galaxies form
And a firmness is laid down.
This is the law
Inscribed upon the Tables of the Law,
Upon the virgin vacancy of space.
Inertia and gravity bind
The many into unity; the gates of Hell
Shall not prevail against it, for Hell must yield
Before the almighty will which is the Law.
But within the shaping will,
Out of the dance of atoms so constrained
Some microwills are born, move toward coherence
Within the law that made them, but no law
Demands allegiance; obedience only is required.

From lack of acquiescence hell is hailed
Where law is railed against; ambition, pride,
Freedom, tyranny, crime, rebellion,
These flicker for their instants; flicker longest
When law's least lawful.

II

Sun and moon in minuet
Weave stately figures through the foursquare year;
Tides sweep
In and out
As indicated by tidetables in the daily papers and almanacs.
And here I, with a spastic colon
And a tic in the left eyelid, had to stand by
Unmoved when the fuzz busted Fred
Last night in the Trailways restroom.
Fred is a beautiful person
With real genius for flagellation and fellatio;
What does a nice clean old man do for pretty boys
(Stark in their jackboots and leather jackets,
Black jeans clinging like skin to calves and thighs
With builtin codpieces)
What does a nice clean old fart like me do for pretty boys
(Sideburned, with curls carefully trained over their foreheads,
Swaggering, sneering, craving a fast lay and a free fix)
If the fuzz keep busting Fred and the others?
When young I was a man and craved women,
Once my days ran in grooves: breakfast at six,
To work by eight, home by five. Then dinner,
A walk with the dog or the wife; chess,
A book, some records. We made out fine
Over the years, like in that hoary joke,
"Tri-weekly, try weekly, try weakly."
But this, I learned, was slavery
To dull routine. Routine congeals the soul,
Evidences weakness, adheres one to the System,
Is not for the free spirit.

I got turned on
And learned to blow my mind
And not to blow my *cul*,
But Fred's, for instance.
Now I, having slipped my center, diffused
Hang fragrant in the float: an old flatulence
In a day of vagrant airs.
Who will abuse me, pretty boys,
Now that they've busted Fred?

III

The little people, the young and innocent people;
Now their day has come, for we have seen to it.
It is good to see them strut their stuff in the sweaty shade
Of sanctuaries inherited from compassionate tradition,
Sustained by weariness, boredom, vicarious libido.
Love reigns, generous, free, unwashed,
One braless breast bared, waving a manifesto
Or brandishing a flower; digging now
Pot, horse, glue, and the beat of rock.
"Let my people go!" Out of their bondage
To all force, for they are a proud people.

Do not touch my people nor restrain them;
They squat over reservoirs of oil
For the anointing of my stillbirths; they have learned
How to believe in nothing but the moment,
Which wears best being chemically expanded.
They murmur of religion and identity, commit poetry,
Practice all the arts, display their fecund fancies
Until (perhaps) busted for exhibitionism.

The world is weary of blood; sick conscience
Slackens the thews, restrains the mace, dulls the swordedge.
And Launcelot, full of protein supplements, takes time out from
surfing
For this chick Elaine. They make out great.
She knows all the tricks; her *mama*
Had her fixed with a diaphragm at the age of twelve;
Now there's the Pill.
And where is Galahad? and what's a Grail?
"It's the common belief
It was done for relief,
And not out of Protestant malice."

It's like this, man. I got to do my thing.
Don't bug me with all that crap.
I'm making me a list of all the good four-letter words,
And "love" heads the list. I don't go for no alphabets,
Because they keep me from doing my thing.
And to do my thing, I got to do it my way.
Don't bug me, Dad.

You know what pisses me off?
You see this chick here, smelling like soap
You see this chick here, smelling like soap
And toothpaste, all clean and starchy,
With that goddamned innocent air about her?
She looks at me like I was a dogturd or something.
She don't go for this poncho, maybe, nor this Jesus beard,
Nor bare feet, nor the way I smell.
But I stare deep into her eyes with a hot smolder,
For I am despised and rejected of men.
She don't know it yet, but that turns her on.
She will begin with pity; then she'll resent her old man
And remember me as different. She will pass by again,
And I will smile sadly, forlornly, and offer her a flower
Give me a week to fuck her, and then a month
For all the rest, and she will love around
In every pad in town.

Next time you see her,
Maybe at the V.D. clinic, you won't know her;
She'll smolder at you, holding a flower fiercely,
Smelling like me.

IV

Home at five,
Thinking of all the money I've made,
All the oil pumped, the calves dropped,
The politicians purchased. Home through the gates
Of wrought iron, swinging between the columns
Of the elm-lined drive, the silent Cadillac
Smelling like money and power.

I love money and power

Like I love that old house. When I bought it
From the old owners it leaked. Termites
Had got in the foundation, and the columns
Were about to fall. The money
Had evaporated and fallen in rain
And run off into my tank. I bought it,
Gave a free hand to exterminators and carpenters,
Hired the best gardeners money could buy,
And made the old place beautiful.
I'm a tough *hombre*; ask anybody.
And I've raised a good, tough family in that house,
All tough in their own way. Two of my boys
Could buy and sell me; one's a damn good doctor.
Al, the peculiar one, is a kind of artist.
I don't like his pictures worth a damn,
And he couldn't care less. We're good friends.
I worry about some of the grandchildren;
They don't seem to enjoy anything much
Except putting their parents down.
One of them tried to put me down once.
I slapped the piss out of him.

Now I'm going in.
There'll be Jack Daniels and branch water in the library
With my wife, and she'll tell me about her day
And I'll tell her about mine. There won't be much
To tell, really, but her cylinders and mine
Run off the same distributor.

We're having the governor and his wife
For dinner at eight. He wants me
To do him a favor. I think I'll do it.
It's nice to do favors for governors.

V.

No, no. You need not fear it for a moment,
This web that binds your wings, this race of rats
For petty prizes. Why need you learn what "No" meant?
For now no no gainsays yea-saying you.
You want it now; tomorrow's overdue,
And all our sins of all our yesterdays
Clamor to be enjoyed or rectified.
Teach me some virtue. Mine has long been tried,
And tried, found wanting. Now your wide-eyed gaze
Condemns the past I represent. Your blood
That effervesces like champagne will spill
In wars I had not wisdom to avert;
And as you brightly bleed into my dirt,
You curse your copulation with the mud.

Your free display, your knowledge of the Pill
Disarm my fly-blown lech; you make a botch
Of smoke-cured passion when you hike your skirt,
And boredom buzzes round your armored crotch.
And this must be, for who would dare divert
Such dire delight from any? Go buy for me
Some catfish caviar at A and P.

VI.

The ordering will
Relaxes, withdrawing the fiat,
And clustering darkness presses at the gates
And filters through at every crack and crevice;
Then taking shape assumes the costume of the City.

Faceless and impotent each individual goes
Enwrap in Love, desirous of unbought Peace--
"On with the dance! Let joy be unconfined"--
And let tradition, custom, sanitation
Take place in tables of archaic lore
With Puritan, sin, sanity, sacrifice.
And when dark cauldrons heave with fetid gases,
Confuse these with the Spirit: *spiritus, pneuma*,
Breath. From these are shaped
By necrophiliac art those plastic phantoms
To microwills respondent: one couples freely
Compelled by one's desire alone: no bonds,
No tenure, no responsibility.

The shaping will
Relaxes, and the manikins go their way
In their own wills. On with the dance
In mad hysteric rapture, accelerando.
Change shakes across the deep with proud vibration
Of chains draped on the bones of yesteryear,
And Earth reverberates in sympathy
With pounding feet and beat of voodoo drummers.
Black spirits are invoked; cold fingers
From unformed spaces fondle sterile flesh.
Like oozes into like.

(The woman shall not wear
That which pertaineth unto a man;
Neither shall a man put on a woman's garments
For all that do so are an abomination
Unto the Lord thy God.)

And the imbecile
Weareth that which pertaineth to the scholar;
Cracked gongs ring in the streets. Stubborn, rebellious sons
Are hailed as prophets by yea-saying priests;
The center cannot hold.

The rocks slip
And Sodom's fire gathers for California;
Bland-featured, smooth-tongued, reasonable Antichrist
Hails a mirage of earthly Paradise,
While seven angels poise their wrathful vials
Over that rough beast that rose out of the sea.

Ashes to ashes, life to life, spirit to spirit
Within the shaping will.

Bob Gaskin

Bob Gaskin is employed in the laboratory at British Petroleum Company, holds a BA in psychology from LU and is working toward an MA in English. "My special interest lies in the use of psychological tools in literary interpretation, and I oppose the comfortable old notion, a reaction to some of the excesses of literary Freudians, that 'common sense' remains the soundest clarifier of human behaviour", he says.

Primal Sympathy

Sweeping down off the polar crust,
Boreas, in the dawn of lust,
Saw the cold primordial sea
Change to blood and quicken thee.

The coagulating cold of birth
Shrank into a greener earth;
Stooping creatures, becoming upright,
Dominated all in sight.

Gods were dreamed by orphan men,
Gods could lead them home again,
And teachers declared with sacred text
One saint a heathen to the next.

Hindus and Buddhists can not please us
Who napalmed hovels for sweet Jesus,
For we have eaten holy bread
Where Woden's boyish prayers are said.

Who broke the crypts of Tutankhamen?
Saffroned beggars? Some naked Brahmin?
Go search, in the paleolithic ice,
The ashes of man's first sacrifice,

Where shadows of crouching cannibals
Flickered on the frozen walls --
Millenia before we came
With purer fire, in honor's name.

To Dirt Returneth

If the piers are tall enough a play town
can be built beneath a house;
ours had roads of smoothly patted dirt,
each carefully curbed with talcum earth,
slightly moist in the dank cool of the house.
Bridges linked hummocks and hills made
natural valley -- natural to our dirt town,
for they were there before we came,
turned up perhaps by workmen long ago --
but now we made dams in them
and let the brimming lake threaten the city
and cast over our creation a subtle dread.
The secret is to not fill the sump so full
that the water breaks the thinner upper dam,
but never not fill full enough,
for then there'd be no worry in the town.
And we had minarets in our broad culture,
and an airport should never be downtown,
but that's where ours was;
the ceiling was constantly two and a half feet
(our childish world had absolutes),
but movement was free enough
so long as we either sat or crawled
to push the play cars*through the streets.

That summer saw the very hand
Which patted a playworld in the sand,
Smash the dam and loose a flood
And bomb with clods the neighborhood;
And ripping and kicking through earthen homes
We bashed in Samarkand's sacred domes.
The city was scattered, returned to dirt;
But friend, our raid did nobody hurt.
We just grew bored with the careful plan,
And somewhere in boredom lurked archetypal man.

Charles T. Guy

Charles T. Guy is a graduate student of English and a teaching assistant at Lamar. He is a graduate of Stephen F. Austin University and a former member of the Piney Woods Writer's Club.

Litany

Sable pit within him called,
He stumbled to the brink
Of nightmare as jungle
Glue befell his eyes like
Tambourine echos of isolated souls.
Saliva trickles freed flashing
Bats that flew about behind
Bananas singing of pastel noises.
Serpents alive in growing hair
Hissed as floating walls
Embraced a rat-eaten rib.
Clocks struck thirteen,
Cobwebs fought epic struggles
With invading smog to coax
A retching speech of damnation
From one's throat long dry and withered
With orthodox orations.



Tired Blood

Luke sighed,
Mom carried the dead calf
Behind the pile of rotted wood.
Earth dried and hard
Surrendered to her withered hand.
Luke with head in hands cried
His twilight song of sorrow
"Mom, oh Mom, I hate to see ya workin' so.
I wish I could help, but there just ain't
No work for a cripple. What are we gonna
Do, Mom? Dad ain't comin' back. I seen
That look in his eye. . . .It was just like
Jed's before he died under that truck's tire."
God see all this and just couldn't take any more.
A fly buzzed and Mom fell
In the cow's grave.
Luke knew about her heart. . .
But didn't care anymore.

R.S. Gwynn

R. S. Gwynn's early life was a waste of dissipation and sorrow but he has since straightened up and published in *The Sewanee Review*, *The New Orleans Review*, *Shenandoah*, etc. He will be teaching at Southwest Texas State University in the fall.

The Young Poet *En Famille*

The young poet is talking with his father,
To whom he is related by blood
And a lengthy history of mutual travail
And who is not, in any case, to be confused
With the young poet's father's wife,
Who is related to the young poet
In no way whatsoever.

The young poet's father, whose hand is inside
His shirt, quotes from Napoleon: "Give them
History," he declaims. "Men should read
Nothing else. Corneille and Racine knew no more
Than a good pupil in a rhetoric class. Taste
And genius cannot be learned." "Look at Geethie,"
The young poet's father adds. "Goothie, you mean,"
Corrects the young poet's father's wife.

"Let me not," thinks the young poet, "to the marriage
Of true minds admit impertinences."

"When are you leaving?" asks the young poet's father.

On Christmas day the young poet receives
A gift from his mother, who means well.
The package contains a "copy of" "The Profit"
By a Kahlil Gibran. The young poet thanks his mother
And confesses he has never plumbed the depths
Of his particular tome, adding however
That he once read high praise of the volume
In a term paper by a co-ed, whose depths
He did in fact, at one time, plumb.

"When are you leaving?" asks the young poet's mother.

The young poet sits in a room, which is no longer
The young poet's room, due to his absence from it.
He lies on a bed which is not the young poet's bed
Or tries on clothes the young poet grew too large for
Or climbs the folding attic stairs in search
Of his comic books or panda, not finding the latter,
Which was but lately put out on the sidewalk
Which is also gone, absorbed by the widened street.
Coming back to the room with cobwebs in his hair,
He begins to write: "I could never live here again,
Here where the seasons run to decay, and the dead
Must bury the living. I walk the familiar
Streets in search of my ghosts, yet turn
When I see their faces." The young poet
Finishes the poem, signs the poem "T.S. Eliot,"
Draws a large X through the poem, writes "junk"
At the bottom of the poem, draws a circle around
"Junk," folds the poem once, twice, places the poem
Inside the copy of "The Prophet" and places both
On the shelf between *The Sorrows of Young Werther*
And *Pee Wee Harris in Luck*.

"Never," thinks the young poet. "Soon," he replies.

Douglas Jones

Doug Jones is "from Indianapolis by way of Laos and the Air Force to Houston; student of literature and art history at Sam Houston State..." He has published in *Stone Drum* and participated as a reader in the Sam Houston State- Texas A & M poetry exchange.

As Beasts Do

on mad howling nights

hoo
hoooo
hoooooooo
hooooooooo
yaa
yaaaa
yaaaaaa
yaaaaaaaahoooooooo

as beasts do in darkness
wild about our house
on snowy nights
only footprints
out by the tool shed
in the morning

as beasts do in darkness
with round toes
only three toes
just three toes
in the snow

hoo
hoooo
hoooooyaaaaahoooooooo

At Worthington Beach

and that evening he loaded the gun
and concealed it
in his jacket pocket
and taking a taxi
to Worthington Beach
disappeared among the dunes
for not more than twenty minutes.

he saw the two lovers
standing close to the water's edge
they were drinking bourbon
and laughing.

then cocking the hammer rib high
he pulled the trigger.

and there in the evening wet
brown worm earth in her hair
she wrapped her arms into his
and pulling hot close and gushing
they rolled themselves
down into the sand.

he reappeared from the dunes
and after shaking sand from his shoes
caught another taxi
and rode back into the city.

"Colder Than A Grave Digger's Ass"

At six in the morning
down here in the bottom of the main run off culvert
it was quiet and cold. Not unlike his bed at home.

He lit another cigarette and thought about this job
and how it didn't have much future
but then
you didn't expect all jobs to be great.

He'd had this one a month
it wasn't hard
85 a week
and steady.

But it sure was cold down here
real cold
colder than a grave digger's ass.

Nonfragments And Unpoems

The light of the natural east
awaits me
like the guru form of the rising sun
that sits within. And without,
as the caste of love expands on blessed trees,
already the world's tears are seen
as the dim frame of a body called
down through temple rafters
home to earth.

• • •
I have encountered death
on a black gulf, in
a masquerade of morning. It
has arisen before me from
the south seas of myself, where
knowing that it came for me, I
held the frantic seagulls close
to cracked lips, in the hull
of my beached craft.

• • •
As time solves
the sun revolves
as I resolve
time and the sun
alone in the decision
of night, and here,
you can see
the incision
made by teeth
in the cold moon-
light.

No. I will not
lie back
in the craft of my poem, making tracks
to the sun,
while time solves
what the moonlight
resolves
each time I write
and re-write
my loves.

Jamie Paul Kessler

Jamie P. Kessler is a sophomore elementary education major at Lamar.

Melvin Kenne

Melvin Kenne completed a creative thesis at Sam Houston State with a book of poems, *The Wind Chimes Song*, and was a regular contributor to *Whetstone*. He is currently an English instructor at Lamar.

My Two Eyes

brothers of the moon, creep through tall grass
and smile and laugh, singing out of tune a song
of anonymous lies for no one to hear.
The Notorious Two crawl on their bellies
making bad vibrations down the old airways
of dust. They move east and now turn back west.
Don't trust them whatever you do,
because they're mad as starved wolves and damn smart,
you can bet. And the vibrations are their stomachs, growling.
It is said they sleep with their sister, taking turns,
so beware of whatever they tell you. One always burns
while the other one freezes. And she herself is a slut
and isn't true to anyone. But I can tell you what's true,
knowing them all from childhood and long before that.
But maybe you have already met her and know what
she changed them into. Anyway, they crawl before her,
making sure. In any case you'll know to stay out of their way
as they pass to wherever they go on the nights I have
to let them out. Because I have to you see. If I didn't
they'd get me. And if they did would you really care?
I doubt it. Because after all who gave a shit about them
when they needed help from you or whoever else might have been
hanging around under that old deserted bridge, hoping
for some hot young blonde to come along, willing to be
laid out underneath the spinning stars on a milkyway
of moonlight, while they were still young, innocent, human,
slowly being tracked down.

Those Nights

There are nights when I want to
drop the egg shell
And throw china teacups
down on cement floors.
Times to break out of sweet lace and
shining thoughts.

So you don't understand me
when I get like this.
A typical rough-man, you think.

My thoughts trap me- I have no
answers
And I get that need to
Throw the thoughts away for awhile-
Fling them out for those nights.

Mugs The Monkey

Mugs the monkey sits on the table with
His arms thrown up, winking
Slyly with his one good eye.
He doesn't worry or fret.
His rent is paid. His meals are bought.

His overalls are a little faded.
I washed them once in the bathtub.
My mother told me not to, but
He had chocolate stains from
A Hershey bar, soft from summer sun..

He's a strange little guy. His hair,
Like mine, is red. The vet would
Call it mange. I call it love.
The dog chewed off his ear, but
It didn't affect his hearing.

I don't remember it, but I think
I bit off half his lip. I wish
I'd known he wasn't real. Perhaps then
It would be easier to let him go.
But I don't think he wants to leave.

He looks content — sitting on the table,
His arms thrown up, winking at me while I sleep.

Collis Kimbrough

Collis Kimbrough is a junior sociology major at Lamar. The poem included in *Pulse* is a selection from what he hopes will someday be his first published volume; already entitled *Poems in Transition - From Adolescence to What?* He says, "I look at life, I write what I see, and that's enough. Ask no more of me."

Charles Lewis

A Phase Shift
Defying The Universe
And You Are Told
Only A Fool
Would Deny Ohm's Law
Go Behind The Sun
Caught In The Center
With Two Shadows
But Don't Let Them See

Marc McLemore

Marc McLemore perpetuates "The Joyous Cosmology." A graduate of Lamar University, his poetry has appeared in *Pulse*. He currently resides in Houston, Texas and continues to sustain an interest in Irish literature from Cuchulainn to Joyce.

What are the games shall we play today,
What models shall we see?
What new toys can make us whole?
Cars? Wars? Mason jars? Insurance policies?

Oh Oh Oh Oh! Those subtle reinforcers,
They're so demure, so cleverly obscure; perhaps they're eliotic,
Do what you must for the pellets that please you most,
Kick a ball, collect degrees or data for to boast,
Little we like is in heaven, you know,
Lest passion be the palpitating soul.

With all due apocryphal aplomb in all my due hoplicity,
I noticed a sudden, heightened illumination in the room
and then an equally abrupt diminution of the lighting
back to its original level, as though someone with bright teeth had yawned.
Aaannh — Aaaauh!

Did the young Jung like youth like you?
You, like the young Jung, like youth,
Jungier than thou by a season or so: upone'smanship,
Winterfall, winterfall; the play of the Whitsuntide.
The lowing of a new-born calf; the horseman on his ride,
Abandon the munchable raven. Don't overrate the past,
Blindfold all the frames on the wall or smash an hourglass,
1) Let your humor in bed with your ego, then
2) Try to pass a mirror without larfing.

It's all for you, however you care to go.
Watch it unfold; it's yours, it's you.

Vassar Miller

Vassar Miller, a well-known Houston poet, has appeared in many anthologies and journals, including the *Paris Review*. Three books, *Adam's Footprint*, *My Bones Being Wiser*, and *Onions and Roses* have been published by Wesleyan University Press.

An Unspoken Appreciation

You know damn well I call you bum or bitch
or son of a bitch, you might get mad
and strike me off your list for good. Still you'd
accept it; you'd believe me. Yet suppose
I said, "I love you." Why, you'd smile or mumble,
frown maybe, look away. How come? Because
I hid some deep and dirty Freudian meaning
(Though nothing's dirty any more, excuse me)!
Or was the angel's flaming sword love, really,
which once scared poor old Adam into running.
It was, I bet you -- nev' mind Genesis.



Daniel Okabayashi

Daniel K. Okabayashi is a senior English major. He says, "I write so that I can express my feelings towards the west. The west is my major love even though I have never been out West. I like what it stands for and that is freedom."

I Am The Last One Left

I am the last one left,
I that was taught life
Watching the seasons and the moon,
I saw life as it was.
(Now it is no more.)

Life was like the seasons,
Moving in a circle,
Never starting, never ending, always changing,
Moving toward freedom,
(It is different now.)

Now the circle is broken,
It will never be the same,
Freedom is gone, Never to be obtained,
Gone from my grasp, my sight.
(Life has changed.)

Everything has changed
Nothing is the same
I am going towards another life,
Moving to the other plain.
(I am, no more.)

I am old now,
I can see things clearly,
My people can not stand anymore pain,
We are dying.
(Death is all we have left.)

Leave us alone,
Let us die in peace,
Give us our war drums, lance and knife,
Let us go to the other world.
(Give us the right to die like men.)

The Final Carnival Of 1957

A pygmy and a shirtless crazy-man,
By madness-means of sweat and magic spells,
Strain at the lines and curse in Hindustan—
On sawdust shores a canvas ocean swells.
The midnight moon, swims in a windy wine—
October evening distillate of dew—
As grinning dolls dance in a drunken line,
And shrieking insane girls are sawed in two.
The Mephistophilis of boyhood brains
Waits in the shadow of the fun-house door;
The evil energy of ships and trains
He trades for something lost, some time before.
Boys die, that steam calliopes might roar,
To turn the wicked horse-drawn wheel once more.

Gary Ross

Garry Ross is a senior at Lamar who agrees with Samuel Johnson in that, "We are long before we are convinced that happiness is never found, and each believes it possessed by others to keep alive the hope of obtaining it himself."

All that's left in the pipe is ash--
Yet the old man sucks and
chews the stem.
Knowing so long as he can do so he
is alive.
The ball comes through the air
And crashes in upon the pipe.
It falls upon the ground and
shatters into clay
pieces.

The old man is dead now,
And the boys no longer play in
his yard
But still there are clay pipes
And old men chewing on them.

James Spreckels

James Spreckels is an English major at Lamar. He has been published in *Pulse* and in *Writer's Digest*. Spreckels writes that he is the reincarnation of Henry James.

The Tree Hugger

Trees are the humans of flora; ie approach one
like a long-separated friend and put my arms
about its good coarse bark. It feels good
squeezing my body to it, slapping its sides ---
away so long! But it responds only
with that old dusty scent of bark powder
and wavers its top a little with bustle of leaves.
Ah, torso-breadth, ie want a place to kiss you
you are barren of lips; ah, great friend, come,
we'll shake our bushy heads at the sun and laugh!
But it is rooted. It grows suddenly stately.
The back of my neck begins to ache, the front
feels stretched over the apple. Mighty tree,
you are tall, and ie am unable to climb.

Under An Oak Tree

There was a certain tranquility
In the shade in which he lay.
The tall oaks with arms extended
Reached down to cover him from harm.
A smile was on his lean face
And his legs curved gently
Upon the slope of the land.
He had no hat for a pillow
Nor buttons on his shirt.
The shoes placed beside his head
Were worn and ragged,
A hundred miles they had travelled.
He was happily unconscious of the
hits and knocks of life;
There were no wars of hatred in his
dreams.
"Son, my bottle is no answer to eternal
questions--
But it answers little daily ones just
right for me."
I wondered if his words were truth
And watched the ants crawl over him.

End Of The World: A Ghost Poem

can ye not discern as the lightning cometh

Here is one of the testimonies: It happened
While ie was bringing in the garbage cans
Before it rained. Ie stepped out on the drive
From the garage and noticed immediately the birds
Were excited, raucous, flying around in pairs.
The sky was sour white, the trees nodded slowly.
Ie didn't notice much since that was the weather.
The drive was wet with a mist that had just quit,
So my socks got damp on the soles. Halfway to
The curb, ie felt some dizziness, or the ground
Tilted, ie don't know which-- or the broken shade
Of a tree confused my eyes in that light. Finally,
Just as ie was reaching the plastic containers
And was noticing an old paper stuck inside,
Ie caught far away faint clarion sounds,
Almost as if the notes were in my head; ie stood
Erect and was gone.

Dale Priest

Dale Priest is a Lamar graduate student who, "back at seminary, was defrocked before he earned one. Turned, in his junior year to English, where his ship-wrecked soul found sanctuary and, indeed, 'got religion'." He is a teaching assistant in the English department and is a two-time winner of the Professor's Award.

Leon Stokesbury

Leon Stokesbury is an English instructor at Lamar. Some of his poems have appeared in *Poetry Northwest*, *The New Yorker* and *The Prairie Schooner*. He has also been included in the anthologies *Best Poems of 1971* and *New Voices in American Poetry*.

Often In Different Landscapes

What should be done? No one knew for sure.
"Look at that chili-dog," I said to the blind guy,
after which I took it on the lam. The entire
offended countryside was up in arms. *The Scourge*
of Sheboygan the media labelled me. Those swine,
they forced me to the forests, taking shelter
in an abandoned hunting lodge. And only sometimes,
on the weekends, would I hear the snickering sounds
of couples in the woods. That first night, that
lonely night, the sleep dripped from my eyes,
was replaced by more, and rain dripped, and the dark
with its hard tonnage, I should add, also dripped,
oozing like hot asphalt under the door. Why
did it remind me so much of the blind guy
and his constant drool? My gorge rose. But not
for long. I packed those days with simple things,
taking up the Ace comb with cellophane, playing
songs of my own invention, such as "Johnny Belinda.
Where is Thy Sting," a personal favorite. But that, too,
sometimes brought thoughts of the blind guy, why
I don't know. And neither do I understand
where these recurring images come from, strange
images, often in different landscapes, and always
coming back, huge indigestions, to glut
my sleep, my waking moments, all my life
clogged with glossolalia, white canes, shrieks, slobber,
the spastic I tripped once behind the gym.

The North Slope

Three months away from the word away from trees
and bushes hills newspapers women dark
on into the undeodorized the raw
twelve hours a day seven days a week
helicopters dropped us on tundra unrelieved
abandoned well sites to do away with
anything "environmentally unsound" there that
first day stacking scrap metal thinking the last words
of Scarlett O'hara seeing how to flat
the land was how brown how completely
unrelieved the flatness how raw the air
coming off the Arctic Sea the horizon
a pencil line sometimes blending
with the frigid summer sky unrelieved
a foot and a half of tundra and under it
ice going down frozen earth eighteen hundred feet
I remember the small tundra flowers
delicate white blue the yellow poppies
in the second week I reached out to pick some
saw a jut of ice beside them
reaching up strange I shivered strange
something there I did not quite understand
could not get my mind around something
ice underneath them then back at base camp
before bed thought again and again
coldness what is it I thought strange unrelieved
more and more could not look at the flat
horizon or would not would keep my gaze away
from the white sky white fog the white
light from the sun never sinking what is it
I did not know only this feeling
someone walking always away something unsaid
and I kept my head down away from the sun the sky
then came the week of the caribou
the herds they came running unrelieved
thousands and thousands across the tundra
I kept my head down but at last could not
a hundred yards away two wolves loping behind
I saw them drag down a slow one
it was one hundred yards away
I saw them could not believe saw them
the red meadow of its side this was
one hundred yards away watched them eat
there was ice underground is ice
underground could not believe saw them rip ice
from its side ice the color of the sun I saw
it was raw it was nothing that fell from
its side ice emptiness came loping as birds
so many birds flew away and away screaming over
something they seemed to have heard
unrelieved the sound now of blood falling
of ice now and of whaleboats I could not believe
thinking her last words what was it the birds said
going away what was it the ice whispered raw
could not lift my head
the jet trails sagged over Dead Horse
and drifted away here where you aim
the harpoon sailor see it surface see it wallow
unrelieved see it dive here where the wait is
the ache for anything anything not dropping away
she breaches she breaches they cried and that
image charging my head all that white reaching
up that vacuum revealed unrelieved
and the froth all the spray and it sinking back
under leaving me asking for some other thing
for some other way asking time
to turn to forget what is there what is not
everywhere birds kept flying away
but Scarlett Scarlett this is the place
where tomorrow never comes the sun like
red ice searing always the summer the land
of absence of nothing of cold of no night
the wind blowing frozen off the Arctic Sea

John Stoss

John Stoss is in the MFA program at the University of Arkansas. In his poetry, Stoss tries to capture the metaphysical essence of Kansas farm life.

Poem By John Stoss

The animal cannot move
when the two-eyed glare of the beast who kills kills
my death out here my mother will not hear
nor the set of tracks that moves beside her
a candelabra: of thunder and lighting genuflects
in the feeding animal's eyes
where the cavern of my mother shrinks

gone for grandchildren is the mountain
their grandfather whose pipe gave off the volcanic glow
waning in the sea hours sun
eating their cake they rush to the open yard
into the eyes of hawks circling open arms

behind a two bottom plow and mules
all day my grandfather makes furrows in his forehead
he follows one right into the sun
he returns next day out of the sun rise
latin words glisten in a big seal that burns the eyes
in the watering the clouds smear like a kiss
out of any eastern window the smudge can be seen:

my mother's story of Father Huna
preaching patriotism to his congregation
who would serve communion from the skull of his own brother
who is German or shake the incense from it:

my grandfather stomps it like a cockroach for thirty-two years
returning only when the soul begins its bitter unhinging
during the midsummer dust his wife he loves dies
her blood cools while she lies listening to the earth receive
he listens too beside heads of grain
listens to his throat

In the thick rain driving by
the pig farmers grin
their faces against an aquarium wall
I am a house cat who crawls the eaves of the house searching

the auctioneer's explosion has an atomic edge
they squeal when their own is sold
take jokes at their grinning name Cunningham

I see pig farmers tonight porched
they watch storms circling like mowing machines
their own puffs hug them like pig's mud
almost to the brink of consciousness they understand
and think they're over there in another's chair
quick to pinch themselves back to sleep
switched winds of the north star's flash
through the milky way they hear geese fluttering
the pond the heart the house the tiny luted sounds fall
through the veils and roof like soft hail
they stir many times in the night
wake when the tide hits from all sides

Home -- a dead neighbor walks into the room
you're dead I stammer
no you are we need a pall bearer

in the dining room plate glass
rosaries click through the thunderstorms
the teeth of women shine in pianos
the casket weaves contentedly
reflects and refracts into the constellations guiding the dead

my mother says I have no interest in neighbors
your dad always went
he went he knew

moments like this I shiver like the object of prayers
I make bad jokes about leaving empty handed
I walk among the hunks of meat hung in the garage
old stars forgotten
crawling through banished and ashen orbits
turning slowly hung from twine
eyes removed

my father never shot them
my brother and I made their brains flourish excitedly
sad my father caught the blood spilled into our lives

the fire-tailed mules of my father were lovely
the harrow they pulled scratched the sky with a rainbow
the money offered was a candle flutter he snuffed out
he worked them down row years of snorts and farts
when they're old we take out cameras and mules
take turns holding them
spring and fall ribbons pop out
we aim and click them into the dead wagon's frame

when I heave up frozen oat shocks
the mice run wiggling their warm bodies
no dogs around to warm them with a mouth:
the seasons are difficult to understand
without my mother's letters:
the breaths of alcoholics cross the land
like fog like revolutionaries
shoplifting is a disease from the middle ages
the young are whining skeletons
night thieves hurl chickens into the night
their feathers make it rain
the neighbors' farms are ruins of the Incas
children scramble among the passages of beasts
throw themselves down on each other in doorways of thistles
no one waves or stops except hands of smoke

a continuous ground fog has the neighbors sleepy with emphysema
Winnie's captaining keeps John so he cannot sleep
Karen's growth grows cold as submerged rocks
instead of the tenderness of two embracing
she wraps around the thunder

yokes the pained beller of first-milked cows
thumbs the yellow milk into an empty bucket
avoids the wet strings out of the womb
milks with cut hands
swears when she tightens the fence
each twist draws the farm into town lots
the snow packs the cows into the barn
there are no windows but one

my mother remembers when they had the old telephone
everyone on the same line
lightning strikes
small rings in the night
they're calling

new phones have two to a party
no longer do women construct languages for each other
they stare through the holes in trees wondering

my mother falls asleep
watching programs half the night
I come home and watch with her
expecting the screen to include the room
my father to walk out of it as he walked into it
lying down to listen two years for the cue

a slow slicing through the flesh
reveals spaces of malignancy
in time the doctor cuts until even the soul understands
a white plucked flower
my mother sees the changes of the planet
millions of years of caches appear
his great suspicion: coffee always bad
everything stinking and bony
in our last talk even tears stay in his eyes like medicine

should I have been a priest, mother?
make the congregation's tongue grow dry
raining the wine-filled chalice
offering them a view through the sun
to urge the organ to drive their chuckles deeper
to be a priest like Father Fred
performing for the first time
my father says Fred has trouble walking to the shithouse
the congregation mutters its suspense

Fred's father is a fireplug speaking from the plugged wells
his mother carries a tiny kitten to speak for her
of her daily sicknesses
heaven listens and judges
his chalky squeaks
the lighthearted jibes of a hunchback's brother
duet between bad opera singers and empty theatre
ancient friar resurrected by a bobbing stomach
satisfied with the progress of the church
they lick beerheads with Father Fred
poke his non-sexuality with their soily fingers
once I saw a clown die in the middle of a joke
he serves my father's funeral
they say he's so fat now his nose bleeds
especially during the stations of the cross
when he talks about the crucified Jesus
my father would like to see it

Jo Ann Thrash

Jo Ann Thrash, a history major, is three-time first place Eleanor Poetry Award winner (ret.). She is the 1973 winner of the first place award for poetry in the Texas Intercollegiate Press Association competition. Also, she is the latest recipient of the Rowe Poetry Award of Lamar University. Her first dabbling with prose appears in this issue.

Blind Girl in the Park

Patiently seeing for her,
the golden eyes of the dog leap out.
He sees the limbs of birds but does not chase them,
that impulse lost, as lost as her sight.
She smiles to hear the fountain bubble,
to feel the cold water splash out,
to know the summer by touch, by sound.
Her dead eyes, mirror the world.
On them the singing trees and full birds
gather, trying with all their life
to push through the thin fluid surface
of reflection. Her eyes become the fields
and soft animals. The blue unseen sky
rains down on her.

Dolores Whitney

Dolores Whitney is a senior English major. She has been published in several issues of *Pulse*, winning awards in both fiction and poetry.

Travelling

Meadows are harder to learn than highways,
are easy to get lost in.
They are best for the slower
and I have no certain day in mind.
So I take the meadows when I travel;
I take them because there is a need.
Wide, grown over with fern and starflowers,
meadows stretch for centuries.
But I have seen the wood of fences
jut like teeth from the subtle boundaries;
I have feared the sternness of it all.
Then I have found by moon's light or sun,
twined in the wire of those bending fences,
vines of wild grapes,
full and irrepressibly sweet.

Camping in Tennessee

Whipoorwills and Cherokee ghosts
haunt the woods around,
but never come near the fire
that walls back dark and cold.

We sit inside the circle of light
our backs to the blackening woods.
We shiver, huddling closer for comfort,
uneasy in our borrowed land.

Richard Wilson

Richard Wilson is a former Lamar student.

A Play in One Part Limited by Time and Characters

Frank Kelly has tasted
the half-insect-eaten parlors
of America
and in them
with perpetual 'Last Supper' winos
who slowly spill
out
the alcohol of their crucifixion
watched his life
spinning like a pumped-toy-top
awkwardly round him
With crushed slivers
of 'rum and Coke' ice
embedded in his nocturnal mind
he sees
a cosmic game of hide-and-go-seek
running thru
mindless alleys seeking
a thought
which strangles him
robbing Frank Kelly
of what tasted like eternal-parlor-existence

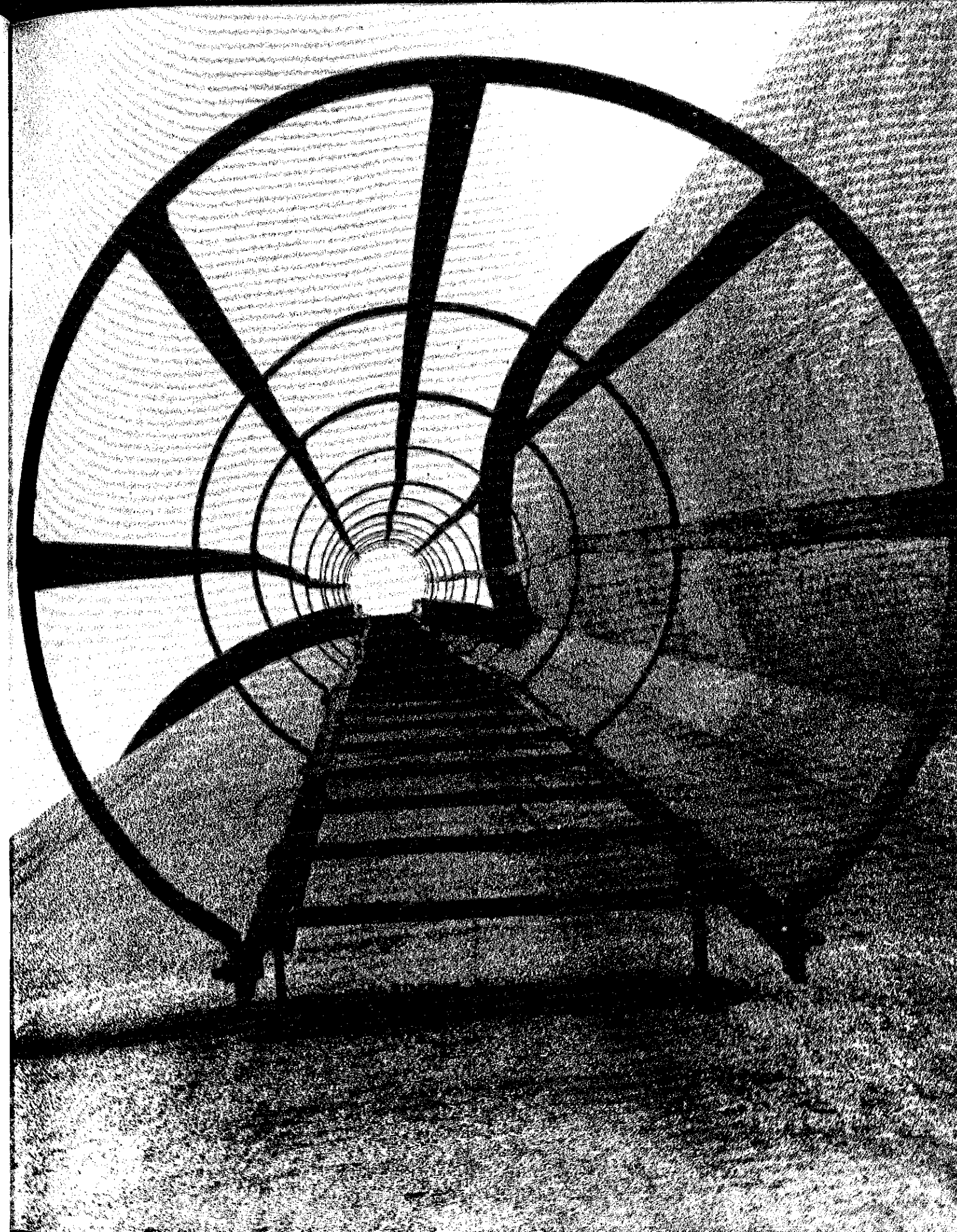
Some Thoughts on the SST

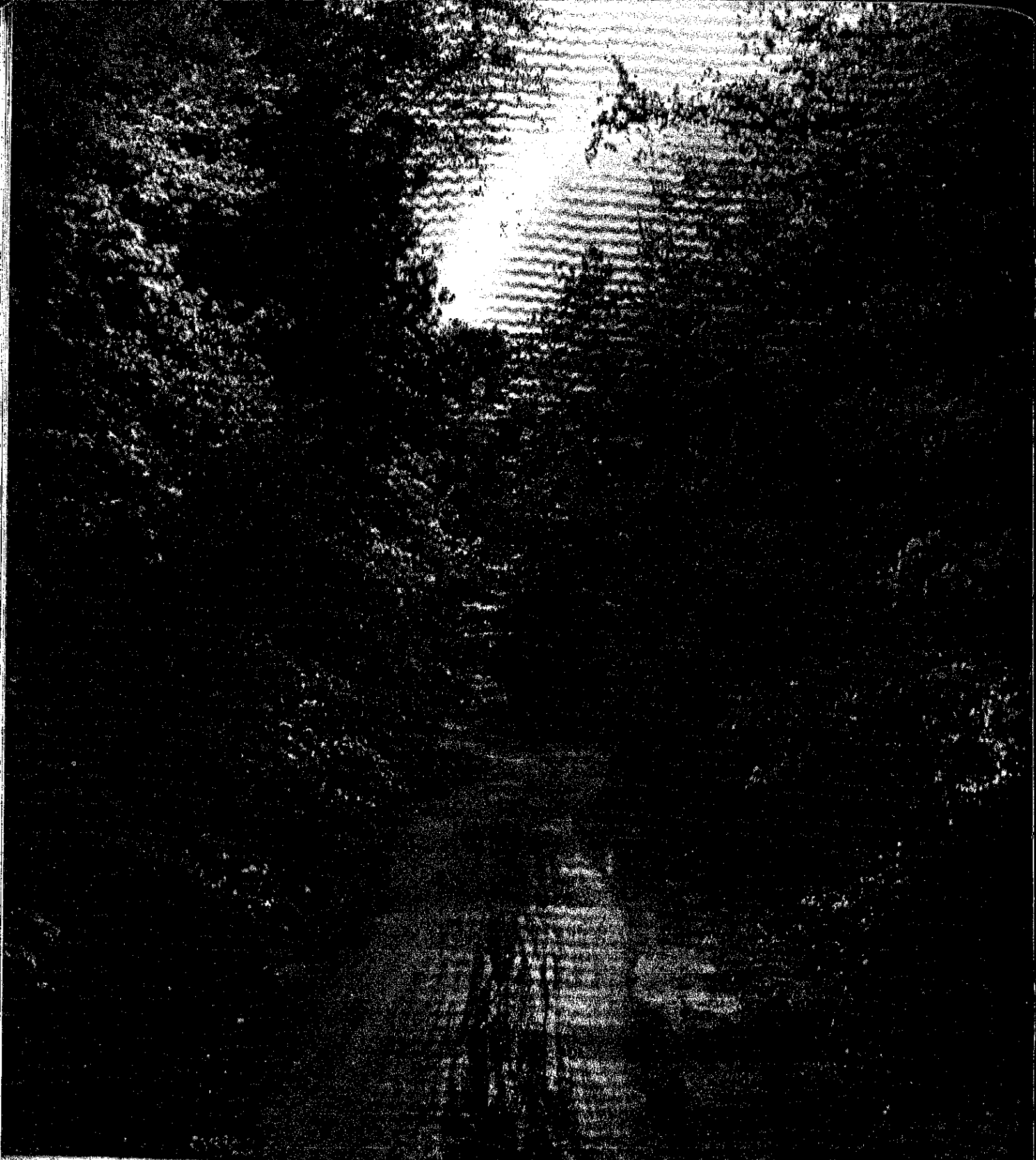
(After a Weekend on a Jet Training Station)

One comes away worshipping silence.
Between the second intervals of crackling air,
peace does not come, nor nature stir.
Bugs, birds (if any stay), in reeling disbelief
keep an offended silence,
though one burst with a half-crazed song at mid-night
then withdrew.
Blinds close up houses
where even the dogs retreat
and raw-nerved homo-sapiens,
starved for comtemplation.
Only the wind comes--plaintive, uncertain--
though what we thought was some far-away stir in branches
is down too hard, too fast,
to crush the sensibilities.
A pause! One tries to think!
Given the same ingredients, might we have made,
one wonders,
a little something different of life.

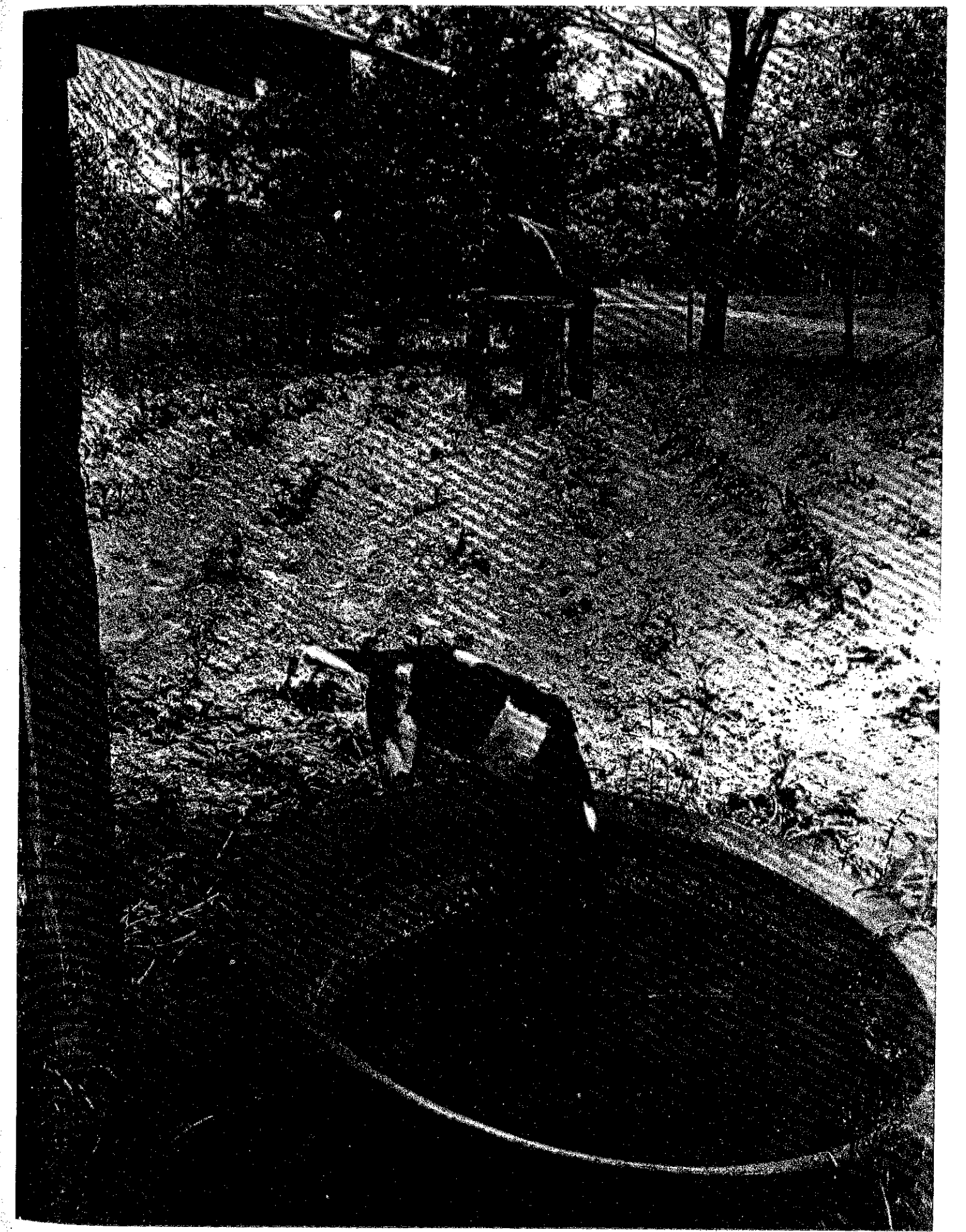
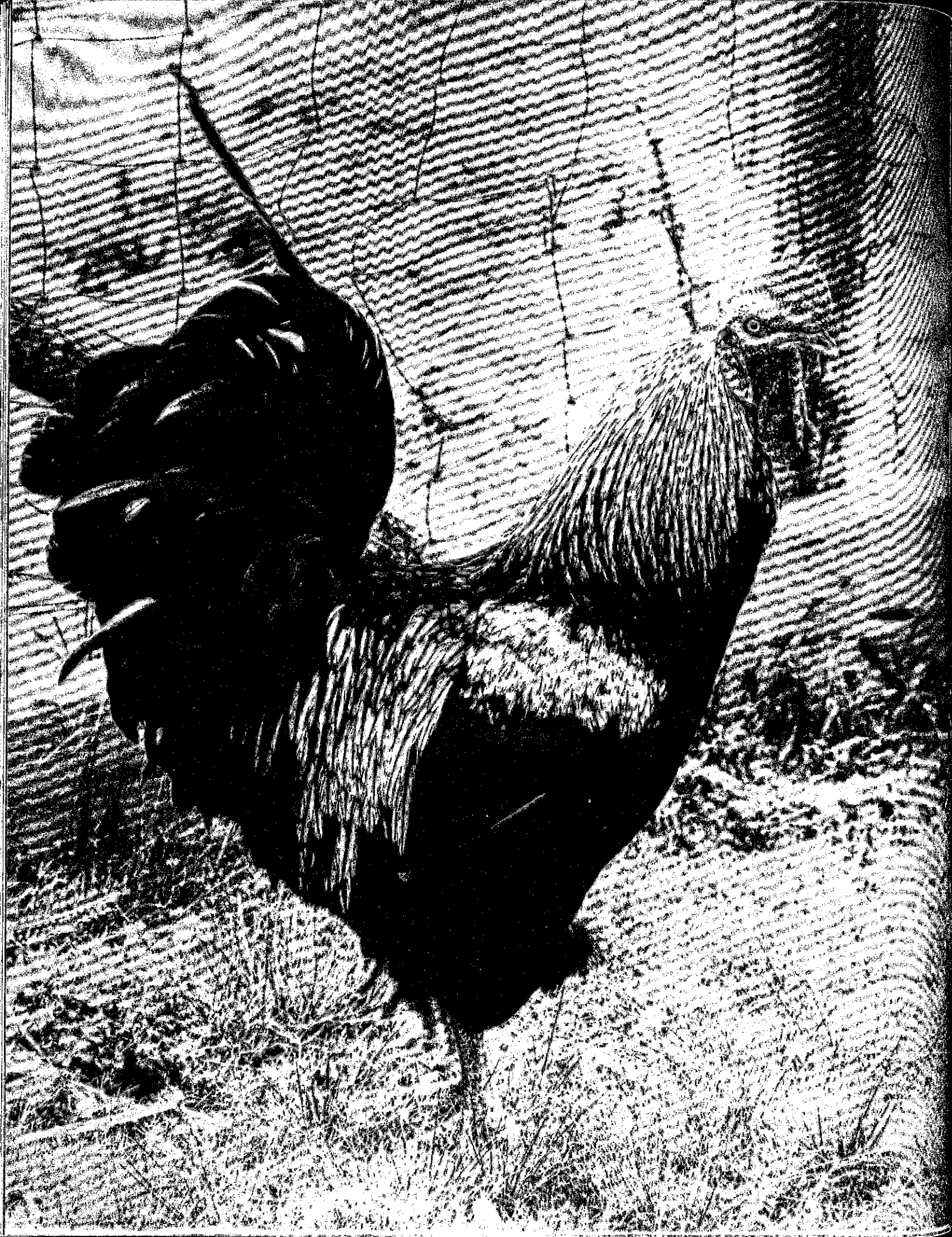
J. Zink

Joan Zink, a graduate of the University of Colorado, majored in Sociology, Art, and Philosophy. She also studied at Depauw University, Univerity of Tulsa, and University of Texas. Her poetry has appeared in regional magazines and newspapers in Colorado and Ohio, including *Skylines*, and annual publication of the Colorado Springs Poetry Fellowship, *Boulder and Flints*, University of Colorado Writer's Conference Poetry Workshop and *The Hoosier Challenger*. She has also appeared in *Science of Mind*. Recent article accepted with *The Beacon*, a London magazine.





Pate Shankle and his son live on a farm in east Texas. Pate's grandfather, Jim Shankle, was a freed slave who came from Mississippi right after the Civil War. He moved to Texas and homesteaded a little piece of land. It came to be called Shankleville, and their still on it.





MOUNTZION C.M.E. CHURCH



Wood Fire

There was no special reason for a fire;
My ancient brush-snagged jacket kept me warm,
Even without fast walking. But a charm
Against the night was needed. No desire
For anything a man can talk about
Caused me to break dry branches from some brush
And get spunk from a rotten log. No rush,
And no uneasy feeling. But alone without
Another soul for miles, I wanted fire.

I watched the flame spread through the sticks I'd laid
And smelled the smoke. The stars were blotted out
By my small blaze, and like a shovel blade
In wet Quicksand, it forced the dark aside.
Fires are to sit by till a man has died.

Winfred Emmons

Possum Night

The bullet jolted the possum out of life.
The animal lay there turning cold with the night ground
and the autumn around it.
I kept vigil when my father went inside.
From the darkness came a hymn,
the rifle's blast had stirred the crickets.
But the possum was beginning to stiffen.

Above the trees a great round moon watched
while a deadlier quarter moon raged
in the possum's side.
The possum did not see.
From the marble of its eyes
I stared hard at myself.

Jo Ann Thrash

Squirrel Storm

By five o'clock it had started to rain.
We sat in the cabin
and ate our dinner in silence.
We had been squirrel hunting all day.

Bill looked at me. Tired? he said.
Yes, I'm tired, walked all day
and no squirrels. Bill nodded
and poured more coffee.

At midnight it was raining harder.
We sat in the kitchen and played chess
the wood stove fighting the chill.

In the morning
cold wind hit our faces when we walked outside.
The sky overcast
storm wreckage everywhere
We hiked north
along the river
hoping to see squirrels.

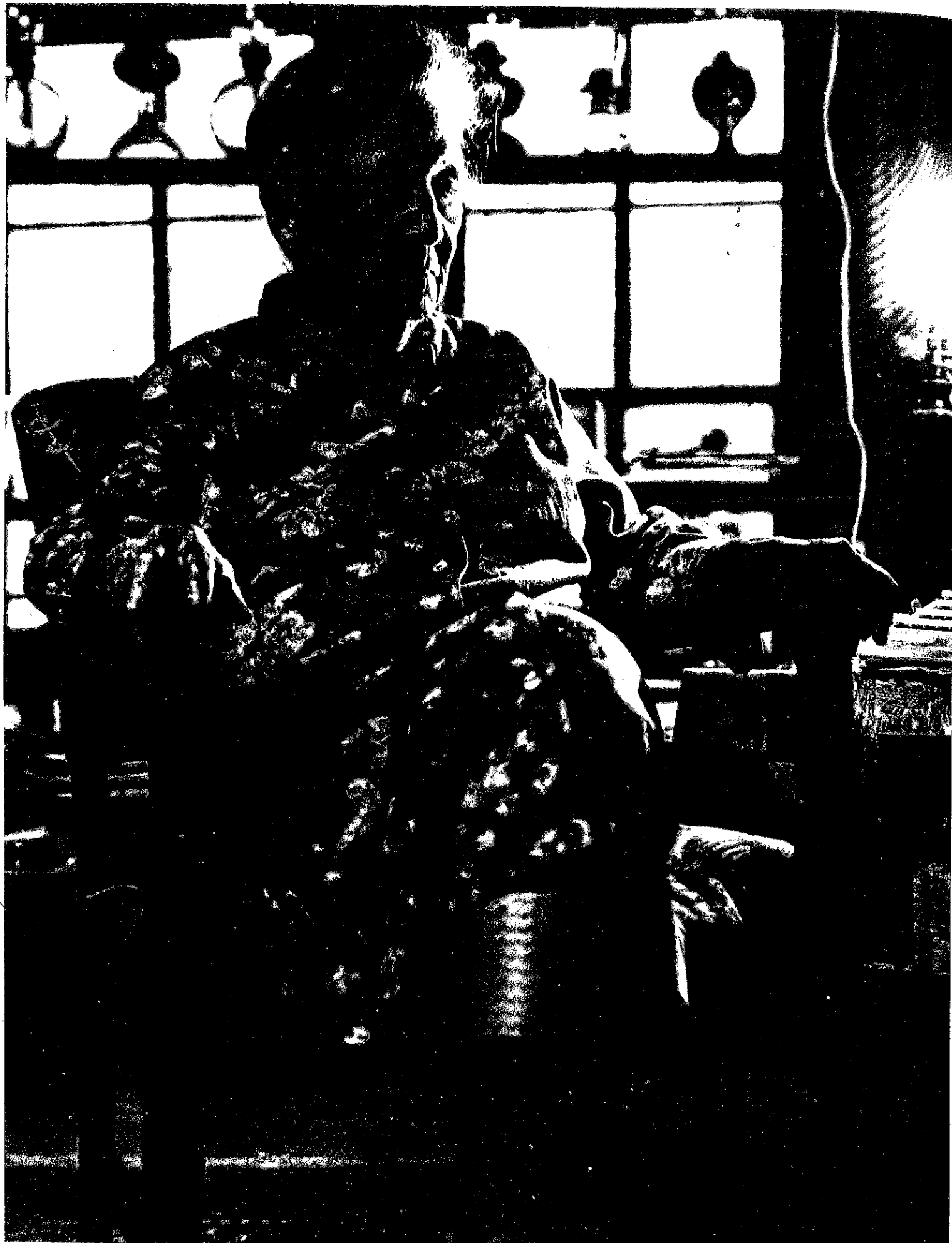
About a half mile from the cabin
Bill, ahead of me,
turned and pointed up.
A large gray on an old elm.

Bill pulled the rifle into his shoulder.
The squirrel froze and watched my brother.
Bill glanced at me,
then lowered the rifle.
Not today, he said. Bet they had it rough
last night. The storm you know.
I laughed. Yeah, I know.

We followed the river for about a mile
and then cut back across the meadow.

Douglas Jones

Poems from the Woods



ETHEL O. HILL, An East Texas Pioneer

Edited by

Jo Ann Thrash

based on an interview and notes by Frank Shofner

For the past 50 years, Mrs. Ethel O. Hill has worked for the preservation of the natural wilds of the Big Thicket. Although she was born in Iowa, Ma Thicket or Grandma Hill as she is known to her friends and Big Thicket Association members claims Fort Worth, Texas as her hometown. In fact, she lived there when it was still a fort; Mrs. Hill was born in 1878. In the Twenties, she moved to Port Arthur, her home today except in the months when she migrates to her log cabin near Woodville.

Her active interest in preservation of the Thicket began in September, 1927 when her free-lance article on the Thicket appeared in the *Houston Chronicle*. She so impressed the editor that he requested more work from her. Further articles appeared in the *Dallas News*, the *Houston Post* and the now-defunct *Holland Magazine*. Her column "America Still Lives. . . One Woman's Opinions" is still carried semi-monthly in the *Tyler County Booster* and her columns are published by the *Piney Woods Press*.

Mrs. Hill's career has spanned many aspects of human interest besides conservation journalism. During the Depression Years she was appointed to head a branch of the Rural Rehabilitation program of the New Deal. Designed to extend low-interest loans to farmers, the unprecedented agency was a part of the Farmers Security Administration. Of the program Mrs. Hill says, "I think it did more good than any federal program before or since."

She also was active in the fight for aid and recognition of the Alabama-Coushatta Indians from the federal government. Her journalistic credits include several articles on that group's history. Proud of her heritage, she readily cites the fact of her Mohawk Indian great-great grandmother.

Vitaly concerned with the pressing ecology problem, Mrs. Hill has re-organized the 32-member Woodville Garden Club into a conservation oriented group. She also operates through her position on the Tyler County Pollution Control Committee. Looking back to one of her first adventures into litter control in the Thicket, she recalls a Sunday morning drive near Big Turkey Creek and the discovery of an immense trash heap

near the river road. "I never saw anything like it. It had to have been going on for year. . . . There were violets, the silver bell trees, fringe trees and paper birches- it's a wealth, a perfect wealth of growth of that kind. Well, it was just about choked out. We walked across the bridge, looked down in the river and they had dumped trash in the river, too. There was just big loads of it."

After persistent telephoning which began at 6 AM the next morning, Mrs. Hill managed to spur the proper authorities into action. Returning to the creek a few weeks later, she found the site cleared. However, near the initial scene was a second large waste cache which had accumulated in the interim. Mrs. Hill finds the problem of indiscriminate littering one of the most trying aspects of her campaign, but even more frustrating is the stonelike apathy of the public to the dilemma. She is amazed by the realization that many people see the rubbish heaps so common to our landscape and are too indifferent to even report the areas to proper State, county and municipal agencies.

While Mrs. Hill counts her ecological activities with the Big Thicket projects as a high achievement in her many-faceted life, she is perhaps most satisfied by her work at the Huguenot School for Crippled Children in Port Arthur. She continues work with young people by teaching handicrafts at a church camp near Palestine. Her skill is reminiscent of the folk art so prominent in American Indian cultures and also, in the cultures of the people of in Appalachian and Blue Ridge Mountains and in other rural areas; from sticks, bones, chips of wood, paint and glue, she fashions small animals and other figures. Of her creative impulse she remarks, "When I see something interesting on the ground I'd like to use, I know exactly what I'm going to do with it."

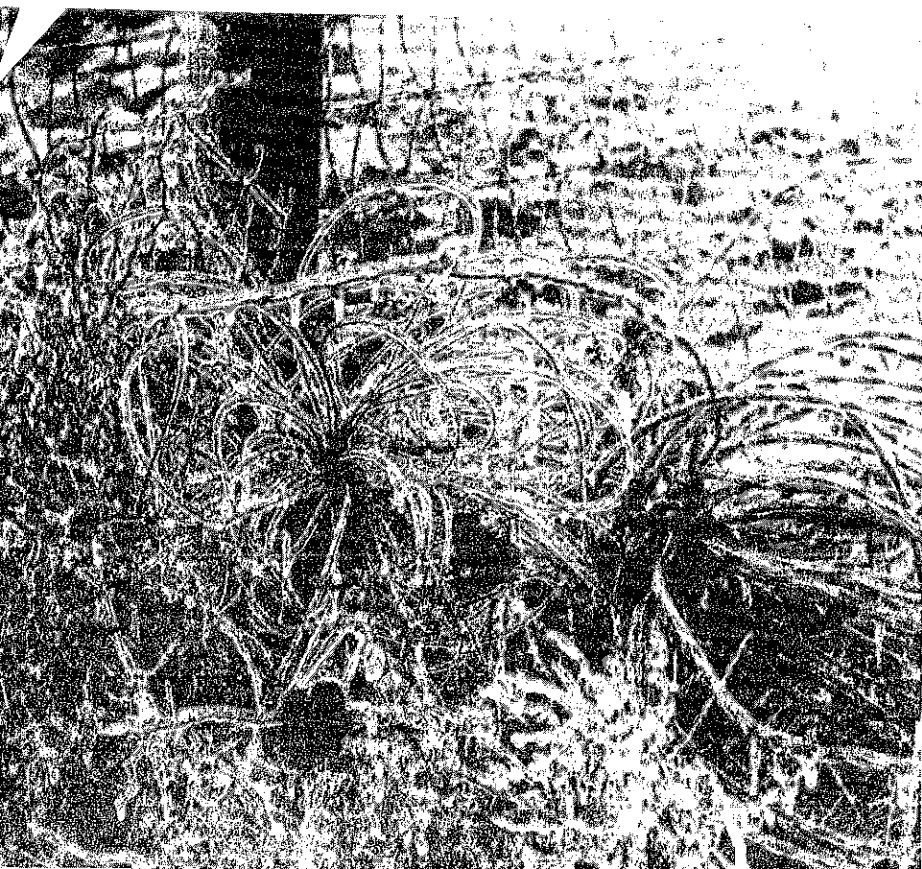
The products of her craftsmanship are exhibited in the capacious shelves of the front porch of her log cabin. The cabin, also largely a product of her own creativity, rests in a thickly wooded area. Recollecting the site when she and her brother undertook to build the cabin, Mrs. Hill says, "There was hardly room for the first tree to fall." While vast portions of the Thicket have been thinned and steadily decimated in the past 50 years of industrial violation, it is a tribute to this dedicated woman that the 22½ acres in her ownership have been largely unaffected by the onslaught. Still motivated by a vital concern in mankind, she pursues a career that has encompassed as many aspects as it has years as an environmentalist, humanitarian and pioneer- a crusader long before ecology became a bumper sticker cause.

The Deathmaker

Twelve years old, and already haunted:
The way he lowered the gun and stared
As the woodpecker fell back against the trunk
And hung there, half out of the nest,
Its wings spread. He did not know
Why he was afraid, what stirred
At the roots of him, twisting cold.

That night he curled beneath the sheets
Clutching life. He still saw
That crude inverted crucifix,
Ugly and truthful, dead as youth.

Derry Tutt



Old Encounter

She walked into the woods a way,
Away from all the picnic trysts;
She left her purse, but took her age;
I followed, slow as melting ice.

I laid her down upon a stone
Without a word, undid her belt.
And when release had gone and come,
She psychoanalyzed herself.

She found her answer in the pool--
The big fish took his time because
He knew the limits of a fool;
And that's what made the minnow pause.

Don Jacobs

Sacramental

The world is in its wedding gown;
about two inches on the ground,
first snow in south-east Texas
for six years ---

We bundle and run in it,
roll in it, bathe in it,
blessing our faces.

The bushy pines are white with it,
bare trees in their ice-coats
and yucca blades laden with snow,
like small boats lost into the foam.

Abandoned,
we build a snow man, like a winter totem,
we are witch and shaman of the freeze:
knowing each other as children,
we are children floating on
white seas.

Michael Cannito



In This Issue:

celebrating **LAMAR UNIVERSITY'S**
50TH ANNIVERSARY

a special portfolio on
RICHARD EBERHART

three love sonnets by
PABLO NERUDA

transl. by Julia Alvarez

poetry by

Richard Eberhart
Vassar Miller
Leon Stokesbury
Jack Butler

Ralph Adamo
R. S. Gwynn
George de Schweinitz
and many others

EAST TEXAS: A REGIONAL PORTFOLIO

also

Fiction

Criticism

Photography

