



Lea Kilgore-Nottingham

**Monticello Native
Writes Prize Poems
Mrs. A. R. Nottingham, Detroit, Honored by
Publishers**

Mrs. A. E. Nottingham, 84 W. Park Hurst, well known, in Highland Park and north Detroit for her creative poetry, this week received the first copies of her book, "Bittersweet," just off the press. It was published by Horizon House, as the first prize entry in a poetry contest that it held, participated in by 300 contestants from all parts of the United States. Mrs. Nottingham, who writes under the name of "Lea Nottingham," is an active member of the Detroit Writers' League and is at present its poetry chairman.

The above is from a Detroit newspaper. Mrs. Nottingham is the former Lea Kilgore. She was born here, taught in the public schools for several years, and has made frequent visits to her hometown.

The book is now on sale at the leading bookstores in Detroit. It contains 75 of the author's own poems, one of which is about Monticello.

Mrs. Nottingham a sister of Mrs. Geo. C. Steinmann, of this village.

Monticello Messenger, Mar. 18, 1943

Bittersweet

BITTERSWEET

With best wishes to

Lenore Quest - see
"Detroit pg 19"

Lea Nottingham

Bittersweet

By

LEA KILGORE NOTTINGHAM



1942

HORIZON HOUSE
NEW YORK

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DEDICATED TO
MY HUSBAND AND MY SON
WHOSE ENCOURAGEMENT AND SYMPATHY
HAVE BEEN MY INSPIRATION

Greatful acknowledgment is made to the following newspapers and magazines:

The Detroit News, Highland Park Times, Dane County News, Madison State Journal, Madison Capitol Times, Wayne University Engineer, Highland Parker, Flint Masonic News, Ambassador Magazine, Michigan Christian Advocate, and Horizon House.

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*"To the hungry soul every bitter thing is
sweet"*

—OLD PROVERB

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BITTERSWEET

BITTERSWEET

Perhaps it takes its name from life itself,
Which, sweet to every man has much of gloom.
Take heart, my friends, from lowly bittersweet,
When dark and lowering clouds your lives surround,
Lift high the flaming badge of courage, too,
And lend your bit of cheer to all around.
Gay bittersweet now brightens my dark room,
In ivory vase upon the mantel shelf.

THE INNER LIGHT

Though its bed is like iron with an icy sheet,
There is life astir in the winter wheat,
Which needs no rain, nor visible light,
But silently works in continual night.
How does it know that the sun will shine,
Or warm rains fall in their proper time,
For all that it has is an inner glow,
As it quietly toils in the dark below.

Our lives are hard, and the world seems cold,
But we must keep on 'til our tale is told,
Though we cannot see from day to day,
What the act shall be, or what part we play,
For we, too, have an inner light —
Which leads us on, and guides us aright.

TREASURES

In our safety box the usual things —
The value of many has taken wings,
Some old bank books of banks long closed
The stocks and bonds whose value knows?
There's life and fire insurance too,
A will of all when we get through,
Several abstracts and deeds, a lot,
Goodness knows what we haven't got.

In our treasure box is laid away
The ribbon from a bride's bouquet
White baby shoes so very small
Mothers grey combs, I well recall,
Great grandma's veil of silken brown
Through each family it's handed down
My father's badges of the war
Grim tokens of the part he bore.

As I compare these boxes two
The contents also I review,
To this I have made up my mind
As I think of values of each kind,
The things where money plays a part
May change, decrease, even depart —
But those of the heart can never die
Their values rise as time goes by.

I LIKE THE CITY

Some like to hear the whirling snow
And winds, blow over hill and plain,
And see dense forests of tall trees
In summer rain, or autumn breeze,
And cows come up the lane again,
And hear the barnyard cockerel crow,
And watch the golden stars at night
Peep forth, and darkness put to flight.

I like to hear, before the sun,
The roaring of the steady stream
Of cars, at dawn, all rushing by
The forests thick of chimneys high,
The newsboys with their extras, scream
And cars come home when work is done,
The arc lights in a glowing line
And friendly lamps through windows shine.

CONFIDENCE

I looked out my window, quite early this morning,
And saw the small sparrows, all searching for food,
But the snow had now covered, the grass and the seed pods,
The birds looked discouraged, as hungry ones would.

I pushed my door gently, and threw bits of biscuit,
The birds flew away then, afraid for their lives,
But came back in a minute, as brave now as could be,
And ate all the cold crumbs, and scolded their wives.

COULD I BUT FORGET

Night, with her black gloved fingers
Presses gently on my eyes,
But still the fond memory lingers
Of many gay laughs and sighs.
Laughs when you came too early,
Sighs when you went too soon,
It cannot be last year, surely!
Or was it this afternoon?
Vainly I seek to slumber,
Counting those countless sheep.
Do you dream of me, I wonder,
Or forgetting, do you sleep?

MEMORIES

Tho many miles and years now lie between,
These pleasant sights and sounds are plainer still
Than all the grandeur I have ever seen
Or pleasures that my busy days now fill;
The warm sweet smell of fragrant baking bread,
The freshly cleaned and shining kitchen floor,
The laughing children waiting to be fed,
The lamplight's pictures on the cellar door.

The cooing, crowing baby in his chair,
The plaything and the idol of us all,
My Mother's apron and neat parted hair,
And Father's hurried footsteps in the hall.
How carelessly I came so far away —
And can the time be more than yesterday?

PREJUDICE

Suppose the fragrant lily white
Should draw her leaves aside,
And say, "Those common colored flowers
Should seek their heads to hide,
The poppy in her flaming red,
The yellow daffodil,
The pansy with her petals dark,
No worthy place can fill."

"Those bright and ordinary flowers
Must keep their lowly place,
For I was born to rule and shine,
For I have pride of race.
My family blood is ever pure,
Distinguished far and wide,
The poets often mention us,
We keep our family pride."

And thus she would a barrier build,
Between her and her kind,
Not looking for their loveliness,
Expecting none to find.
While all the rest would bravely bloom,
With beauty fill the dawn,
And she wrapped up within herself,
Would find her beauty gone.

WHAT MAKES A HOME?

When first I wished to found a home,
I dreamed that home would be,
A stately, quaint colonial,
With spreading maple tree.
The furniture the finest made,
The hangings, rich and rare,
With rugs from out the orient,
To carpet floor and stair.

But I have dwelt in furnished rooms,
In cottages and flats,
And spent a summer in a tent,
Where on my cot I sat,
But strange as it may seem to you,
Though my poor place looked bare,
I've always had a happy home,
For those I loved were there.

The finest kind of furnishing
Is love and tolerance,
Companionship and humor, too,
And kindly common sense.
Prepare to place these in your home
It's effort wisely spent,
For love can make a home complete,
And there we dwell content.

DETROIT

Our name for you, "The great dynamic city,"
With spoke-like streets converging in a wheel,
Which radiate from out the city's center,
Where tons of steel are gulped down at a meal.
And smoking stacks which rear high heads toward heaven,
Where men swarm in the factory like flies,
And where all languages are freely spoken,
But muscle is the thing you dearly prize.

Young men with hope, potential power, and vigor,
Now lend their all to the assembly line,
Your proudest goal to get a great production,
Surpass each other, racing against time.
You surely are a marvel of mechanics,
O, city great, which gives its life for gold,
Your cars emerge with style, and speed and beauty,
When men come out at forty — they are old!

RECOMPENSE

It might be a roast, or it could be stew,
Food fit for a king, or a bite or two,
But when he has eaten, she's sure to hear,
Those welcome words, "A good dinner, my dear!"

Though her feet are tired, and her back aches sore,
And she says to herself, "All cooking's a bore,"
When he smiles at her, all her cares seem light,
And she hears again, "A good dinner tonight!"

RESIGNATION

When life was all before me,
 And night came all too soon,
I raised my arms up higher
 And reached to get the moon.

But when the clouds sailed over
 And hid the moon from view,
I aimed a little lower
 And said a star might do.

When youth was still my portion
 And happiness my aim,
I stood, expectant, tiptoe,
 And reached for fickle fame.

But when the clouds of fortune
 Brought disappointment, too,
I almost let go courage,
 And knew that faith would do.

BETTY

I had no gift to send, my dear,
But only give my wish to you,
May life's best gifts through future years
Be fair as those you have passed through.
May fortune smile on all your days,
Your time in usefulness be spent
With friends not few, and true always
And life be filled with sweet content.

WEAR AND TEAR

The rambling old frame house of ours,
Was always painted the same dull shade,
Said mother "The finest paint of all
Is the color grey which does not fade,
It stands up well through sun and rain,
It may be years till we paint again."

Our shades were tinted a durable drab,
The carpet was woven of tan or brown
The chairs so solid to stand the strain,
And also shoes or hat or gown,
Not bought so much for a dainty air,
But would always stand life's wear and tear.

And so with virtues mother taught,
A proper pride in family name,
To keep ourselves above deceit,
And hold our high ideals aflame,
To keep our courage nor despair —
These all have stood life's wear and tear.

LAST DANCE

The snow flake whirls in her sylph like dance,
With the wintry wind as her partner gay,
In one mad shimmering glittering prance,
She circles near, then drifts away.
In her crystal gown she moves about
And curtsies in a minuet,
Thru the frosty haze flits in and out,
Then proudly twirls in pirouette
As closely held in the wind's embrace,
She glides about in fairy ease
And floats away with a fairy's grace,
She cannot rest till the music cease,
Its rhythmic tones now loud, now low;
Then flutters down to her couch of snow.

POSTPONEMENT

As I listen to the whistle
Of the engine on the track,
Loudly call, "I'm going places,
I'll bring you back, I'll bring you back.
As I listen to the rumble
Of the car wheels steady hum,
They are calling, calling always,
"Will you come, will you come?"
But I answer, as I listen,
To their rhythm and their rhyme,
(From my fire-side warm and cozy,)
"Some other time, some other time."

SANCTUARY

So strangely dim the farm-yard seems,
When clouds obscure the summer sun;
From wandering among the weeds,
The little chickens homeward run
To safety for beloved things —
A Mother's soft, protecting wings.

As day draws close her dusky folds,
And twilight settles softly down,
The children, too, all hurry home
From distant school, and shops in town,
To comfort, food and fireside warm,
And Mother's dear, familiar form.

LANGSYNE

After many years of silence,
Like a letter from the dead,
"Kindest greetings of the season,"
That was all the message said,
Calling forth a myriad memories
Buried deep since last they met.
Causing not that retrospection,
Would have been much kinder yet.

PAYING THE MORTGAGE

Though life is fairly humdrum still
And thrills are rather few,
We had some fine red letter days
And so I'm sure have you.
We've traveled on together now
For many many years
We had our share of laughter
And shed some bitter tears,
But I'm looking forward on it all
I think I'll safely say
That sunny days were plentiful
And quite outranked the grey.

The day the baby came to us
I think led all the rest
We waited quite some time for it
And felt that we were blest.
The day we bargained for a house
With just a little down
And made our payments month by month,
We felt we owned the town,
And when we bought our first new car
We were so thrilled with pride
We tried to call up all our friends
And take them for a ride.

You see we've shared our many joys
And disappointments, too,
And by the fire side like to sit
And olden days review.
And think how bit by bit we saved
What little goods we own,
And all the sacrifices made
And all the seeds we've sown.

Tonight we sit so satisfied,
At little thrills we scoff —
For we both went to town today
And paid the mortgage off.

MONTICELLO

Monticello, like a jewel
Set between two emerald hills
Threaded on a silver ribbon
Which the narrow channel fills.
Fringed about with oak and maple
Serenaded by the birds
Center of the farmers haven
Home of countless dairy herds.
Calm and peaceful in the valley
No unrest that cities give,
Far away from crowds confusion
Where men still have time to live.

DELIGHTS OF SUMMER

A wee fairy garden is my window box,
Where the dainty petunia grows,
Nodding and swaying in soft summer breeze,
Bending with each wind that blows.

No still life that's painted can picture to me,
All framed by my window sill there,
One half of the radiant beauty I see
It's foliage so fragrant and fair.

While I feel my soul on this border of flame
A humming bird flits into view
And dines in the manner of royalty there
As he sips from each cup cleansed in dew.

Do petunias know as so proudly they stand
Lifting heads from their lacy green vine
To this tiny bright bird, as their nectar he sips
They have brightened both his day and mine?

OUT AT AUNT GRACE'S

Out at Aunt Grace's
I do as I please
Swing in the hammock
Out under the trees,
Sit out in the back
And watch for the wrens
Or see her make cookies,
Eat raisins from stems.

Or ride an old horse
As meek as a lamb,
Or sit on the porch
And eat bread and jam.
Or play in the kitchen
With all the nice tins,
Or go watch the farmer
Put grain into bins.

My mother is sick
And lets me stay here,
I hope she gets better
But I'd stay a year,
Just fooling around
Taking rides in the car,
Up and down these old hills
We go ever so far.

HOLLYHOCKS

A lovely sanctuary in my back yard
With stately hollyhocks always on guard,
Lilacs nodding and blowing in the breeze
Old Mr. Blue Jay a swinging in the trees,
My pink rose is such a pretty thing
Surrounded by an iris ring.

The wild cucumbers climbing up the wall
Little apple trees standing straight and tall
Gay robins singing to me as they pass,
The sparrows hunting for seeds in the grass
All nature gives me peace within
Safe from the city's noise and din.

I pause awhile at my daily task
In summer's loveliness to bask,
I do not thru the city roam
But do my shopping here at home —
I need not long and seek so hard
With perfect beauty in my back yard.

LONGING

Though years have fled,
I never can forget you,
My thoughts are like
The tall grass after rain.
Old memories confuse
Their sane uprightness,
And sway them all
The same way once again.

PATIENCE

O, tiny pup, why do you seek
To pull and strain with feverish haste,
To get the bone beyond your reach,
And that near by refuse to taste?

We, too, do fret and strive to reach
For much beyond our present fate,
While quite neglecting things at hand,
And smaller pleasures lightly rate.

Our duty also holds us here,
All twisted round with love's allure,
We, too, are chained by circumstance,
That liberty alone can't cure.

But may we ever look close by,
Enjoy delights here at our feet,
And keep a watch upon the sky,
Expectantly our good to greet.

VIOLA

Just a friend, a word we lightly speak,
Not giving it much serious thought,
Accepting some un-selfish one
Who brings their love to us unsought.

But when our darkest days arrive,
We turn to one who understands,
And know that though our ship should sink,
They stand on shore with out-stretched hands.

If fortune should so favor us,
And fame should lift us to the skies,
As we took flight, we'd find our friends
Still watching us with tender eyes.

For health and wealth may come and go,
All youth and beauty have an end,
But we'll be rich beyond compare,
If always close we keep a friend.

SUMMER EASE

Visiting at Sisters, How the days fly by,
Nothing now to bother. Not a care have I.
Gone the care of family, Planning of the food,
Every meal surprising, All things tasting good.
Idling thru vacation, Hiding from the heat,
Gone all sense of duty, This a safe retreat. Soon the
visit's over, Back to care go I,
What to have for dinner. This my daily cry.
Shaking out the dust cloth, Making windows shine,
Days are O, so different, In that home of mine.

VESPERS

The autumn air was fresh and cool,
And on the maple tree,
The leaves had turned to green and gold
And rustled restlessly, as though
A fan moved too and fro,
By bold and ceaseless fluttering hands,
The tree was filled with feathered folk
A roving, singing band.

A chorus from a thousand throats —
For, as I strolled along
My lonely melancholy way,
I heard the sweetest song,
With notes so clear and soft and low,
So gay, with many solos new,
From topmost branches of the tree,
Before they lower flew.

The air was filled with heavenly hymns
As though they would express
Their love for all who wandered by,
Their hope and happiness.
No fear of clouds so dark and drear—
Grey sky. If only I might be,
A singer on the lowest limb,
With a song so fine and free.

FRIENDLINESS

A tiny evergreen stood straight
Close by the garden wall,
Laden with fleecy flakes of snow,
Covered as by a pall.
All summer long I watched that tree,
As soldier like he stood,
As fresh and green as when he grew.
In native northern wood.

But now he seemed no longer green,
Not fresh, nor fragrant fair,
But covered well and weighted down,
With burdens he must bear.
And as I watched the branches moved,
Stirred by a gentle breeze,
As soon the fallen snow revealed,
The greenest of small trees.

Some people too, get crusted well,
With grief and heavy care,
Until small breaths of friendliness,
Reveal the true self there.
There's fun and wit, and honesty
Uncovered by a smile,
Once cold and stiff, we find they were
Worth knowing all the while.

THE SKETCH BOOK

With out the great trials of travel
With none of the worries or care,
I enjoyed the most exquisite scenery,
As I sat in my cushioned arm chair.

There were caught all the colors of Capri,
The delicate tints of the sea,
With the clouds on the towering mountains,
And the storm tossed trunk of a tree.

The grandeur of castle and ramparts
And the lacquer red bridge of Japan,
And the pale pastel tints of the waters,
Where the river of Jordan began.

There were scenes in romantic old Venice,
Where the bold gondolier rows you home,
And the beautiful tiled roofs of Florence,
And the ancient cathedral of Rome.

Thus we saw all the glories of nature,
The soft tones both mellow and old,
And enjoyed through the art of another,
The beauties that cannot be told.

NEVER FAILING

If we could always have the feeling
That we have when we're in lodge
With a heart warm towards our brother
No occasion would we dodge,
When we found he needed friendship
If his courage once grew low,
We would always do a favor,
Try to soften any blow.

We would ever give out kindness
To a member of our band
And no matter where we met him
We would lend a helping hand.
So let us try to keep this fervor
Thinking much of duty near,
Not forgetting any brother
As we journey through the year.

YOUTH

Here he storms the door of manhood,
And I needs must stand aside,
For I cannot follow further,
But shall watch his manly stride,
And remembering all the pitfalls,
And dark shadows on life's street,
I can point to hidden dangers
For the gay and careless feet.
None but God alone can guide him
Mother now must stand and wait,
As he climbs, alone, life's staircase
May his life be easy, straight.

A SOUTHERN MARKET

Yes Ma'am, lady, see what I mean,
Right nice side meat, boil with your greens,
Big box of snap beans, all picked today.
Ever use them, Ma'am? try them anyway.
Sure sweet, fresh figs, and peanut ham
Just taste that now, sweeter than jam.
It's whiter than cotton bolls, I say,
This homemade lard, I got to-day.
Cart load of melons, salad bright and green
You can't go wrong, Ma'am, yes'm, I mean!

FAITH

I crawl about, a grub, a worm,
A very earthly common thing,
And groveling here among the weeds,
Still dare to lift my head and sing,
As I, by faith, can look above
The sordidness of daily things,
My spirit lifts above the mire,
To sail aloft on heavenly wings.

HEALING

Come, Snow!
And all about my garden blow
To blanket deep the city's dust,
Against the fences fling your gust,
To cover well the fertile seed
And ornament each barren weed,
Come spread your covers high and low,
Come, snow!

Come, time!
And heal this weary heart of mine,
And cover well each hurt and scar,
So I again may sense the star
Of hope, and hold within my breast,
A greater love for every guest,
Forgiving with this heart of mine.
Come, time!

GOOD WILL TO MEN

O, Christmas is a merry time,
With all our friends about,
A fine fire glowing in the grate,
And wintry chill without.

With candles on the mantel shelf,
And wreaths against the pane,
A great feast spread upon the cloth,
At Christmas time again.

And messages from far and near,
From friends of other days,
Who send to us their greetings gay,
On these glad holidays.

But under, over, all the joys,
And all the festive mirth,
We feel the current of good will,
Brought by our Saviour's birth.

So may we strive with earnestness
All nations love to win,
The peace on earth, good will to men,
He came to usher in.

HOPE

I would not always dwell
Upon dull plains of mediocrity,
But would look backward to the valleys
Which in memory, look not so deep as then,
Look upward to my highest hills,
With hope, where I may climb,
And then look onward, upward still.

THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

A little bit of what the Master felt,
Of love for all mankind,
Has crept into the world today;
Into your heart and mine.

A little of our Saviour's touch,
To lift the loads of men,
Has come to our human hands today,
To ease their loads again.

A bit of Jesus' keener sight,
Who saw the best in men,
Has helped us to see in our brother here,
The real child of God again.

A little of his listening ear,
To hear sad stories told,
With hearts of forgiveness for every one,
Seven and seventy fold.

FULFILMENT

The meek, who find their good deferred,
Take refuge in the printed word,
While those whose lives with joy are filled
Find sweet poetic longings stilled.

May those I love the beauty see,
Of lives well lived, of fear be free —
Face all of life with courage bold —
And write no rhymes till they grow old.

CHOICE

When I got off the car today
A dozens persons came this way,
I watched to see what they would choose
As people have such different views.

Some crossed over to get the sun,
Did window shopping, and had some fun,
While some went on the shady side
Nor looked about, but kept their stride.

As on the road of life we run
We have a choice, the shade or sun
Choosing to look for the bright and gay
Or moping along where the skies are gray.

TRIMMING THE TREE

Youth set about to trim the tree, and age stood by,
And leaned upon a hickory stick, and cocked an eye,
Upon the topmost spreading branch, and told with glee,
How he, when young and tall and strong, had felled a tree.

And middle age would lend a hand, the ladder hold,
And caution give and sage advice, to youth so bold.
And tell of accidents he saw, in days gone by,
When none could fell a mightier elm, nor be so spry.

Youth needed not to brag nor boast, of days gone by,
But whistling gayly, sawed and chopped, made branches fly,
And soon the old elm tree was shaped, while they all three,
Considered their fore-noon well spent, They trimmed the tree.

ENNUI

When life is new how eagerly we watch,
As day unfolds each fresh surprising hour,
And know the while we face some richer joy,
And feel the promise of potential power.
Life seems a box of lovely bonbons then,
Enjoyed before the box is opened quite,
Or like a rope of unmatched priceless pearls,
A never ending beauty to the sight.
The beads and bonbons are alike enjoyed
When eyes love beauty and the taste is new,
But when the snows of winter crown the head
Its then we find that thrills are faint and few.
Could we but feel the joys of youth again
We would be willing, too, to bear its pain.

SHOPPING JOYS

Shopping to her is a serious thing,
In the crowded car she scans her list,
Impatiently whirls through the swinging doors,
Hoping there'll be no item missed.
On elevators to highest floors,
On escalators crawls below,
As all day long she rushes 'round
Till her tired feet refuse to go,
She limps into the safety zone,
And wonders where the day has sped,
She stands an hour, as she rides home,
But proudly bears a spool of thread.

THE BEAUTY PARLOR

I sat and watched them enter
As they all hurried in,
The slim and pale and tall ones
And those with double chin.
No trace of youthful freshness
Or beauty could I see —
But as they hurried homeward
All beauties seemed to be.
And I who play with letters
And let the figure be —
Began to hope and wonder —
Could she do that to me?

THIMBLE BISCUIT

With my mother's thimble
Standing on a stool
Cutting little biscuits
With a silver tool.
Placing them so gently
On a tiny tin,
Set them close together
All around the rim.
Such a busy cook, then
Standing by the wall.
Never had a failure
That I can recall.

STRIVINGS

I may not reach the stratosphere
In rocket touch the sky,
Nor journey make toward the moon
To watch the stars march by.

But I can try to keep above
The clouds of doubt and fear
The shadows of deep discontent
So dark about me here.

And I can hold my thinking high
Tho hands may busy be,
With very earthly common things —
Still keep my spirit free.

What matters it to you and me
If rockets pierce the sky
If we can look above the clouds
Still keep our vision high?

VULNERABLE

How few in the throng can understand,
They think her both proud and cold,
As she stands aloof in an alien land,
With her life story left untold.
Wrapping herself, as she walks about,
In a mantle of chill disdain,
From the world's rough darts, she protects her heart,
For fear it be pierced again.

GROWN UP

As I went through the chest today,
I found a Teddy bear,
He seemed forlorn, neglected quite,
With such a lonely air.
His paws were worn completely off,
When he could patty-cake,
His feet had danced so many jigs,
All for his master's sake.

He looked at me so solemnly,
His button eyes so dim,
As if to ask where his hero was,
If he had forgotten him.
For many years he was a chum,
Of a boy with eyes so brown,
Who snuggled him close in bed at night,
And carried him off to town.

He shared his cookies and chocolate drops,
He rode in the kiddie-car,
Was always the best bear in the school,
Of every show the star.
"O, where is the boy?" he seemed to ask,
"I'll go to him, show the way,"
I patted his paws and tucked him in,
For the boy had gone away.

INSECURITY

Lura, three years old, stood by Mother's bed
Never very bold, and she softly said,
When she saw the baby, there, she knew not how
Snuggled close to Mother, "What will me do now?"

WEAVING

She cannot travel as she did
All nature's wonders to enjoy,
To feast her soul on things not hid
From all who would their eyes employ.
She weaves a rug, and as she weaves,
The beauties stored by memories go,
Into the flowers and graceful leaves
As her needle moves both to and fro.

She hears the roaring of the sea,
And sees the grandeur of the falls,
The mountains tower so wild and free —
The peace of nature over all;
As sorting wools and blending shades,
She puts both love and beauty in,
She knows that these can never fade,
And time itself will never dim.

This rug can never fail to be
A thing of joy and beauty, too
More went there-in than you can see
Of hope, that lovely thoughts renew.

HUNGRY

Toddy the youngster, how he liked bread,
Went up to sister, eagerly said,
"Give me a piece now, please give me one,
With lots of butter," Sister in fun
Holding the loaf up, says, "Will this do."
He answered soberly, "Tut it in two."

OBSERVATION

Mother made a cradle
For a dolly's bed,
It was a peach crate, really,
Which Father painted red.
On a Christmas morning,
Sonny called with glee,
"Santa's wife's been buying peaches,
I can plainly see."

TO NANCY

A quilt to cover a maiden sweet,
From her innocent head to her willing feet.
To keep her snug from the wind and cold,
And comfort her always as she grows old.

O, sunbonnet babies, guard her well
And in her dreams, sweet stories tell,
May the love we placed in stitches here
Keep her heart warm for many a year.

MEMORIAL DAY

My neighbors, they all laugh and say
"Let's have a good time on Memorial Day."
"I think we shall attend the races,
Or seek the great wide open spaces,
The children all would like to take
The camp out-fit and go to the lake."

How different it was when I was small,
It wasn't a day for play at all,
But when the day came 'round again,
My father would say to all his men,
We shall not work to-morrow, boys,
Go children, put away your toys."

Said he to mother, "the comrades all,
Met last night in the army hall,
Comrade Taft will play the flute,
And Comrade Grey will give the salute,
One more of the boys has been mustered out,
But ten will come without a doubt."

Then mother would brush his suit of blue,
And find the wreath and the gilt cord, too,
And tack them on his wide black hat,
And sponge and press his best cravat,
He'd make his army musket shine,
And talk about the olden time.

When President Lincoln shook his hand,
When he marched by in step with the band,
Of how he knew his General Grant
And how the boys would joyfully chant,
"Tramp, tramp, we're on the way,
Back to the north where the old folks stay."

Then boys and girls would gather flowers,
 And beautiful ferns; between the showers
 Would drape and decorate the hall,
 Till you wouldn't know the place at all,
 Their interest would never lag,
 Before them hung the dear old flag.

With all the exercises done,
 We marched along to the beat of the drum,
 The proud little boys and fair little girls,
 Dainty white dresses and pretty curls,
 The scene is fresh in my memory yet,
 For those are the things we can't forget.

I'm far away from home today
 Curls once fair have turned to grey,
 So many once loved, now mustered out,
 I can't forget what it's all about.
 My thoughts still drift from now to then,
 As I lift my flag to the breeze again.

NECESSITY

Gee, my feet are getting sore!
 Up the steps and down again.
 Wearing shoes that others wore
 Up the steps, and down again!
 Hope there's not a hundred more —
 Up the steps and down again —
 Leaving sale bills at the door —
 Up the steps, and down again!

THOUGHTS

Women are like flakes of snow,
Soft but rather cold
Still I'd rather have them so,
Than a bit too bold.

We are as soft as cookie dough
Till flattened in life's tin,
May I be firm when baking's done
But a little soft within!

If you give joy, and I give joy
We'll banish all our fears
If you give grief, and I give grief
We'll drown ourselves in tears.

Mothers all the world around
Give and give and give,
Children too are much alike,
Take and take and take,
Still there's joy in giving.

COLD

She lay in bed this woman old,
I wonder why I feel so cold,
The fire is on, I've blankets four,
Can all this cold come in the door?
The next day late, cold in her bed,
Her body lay, but she had fled.

THE GUARD

O you may sing of daffodils
Or orchids fair and fine,
Your choice may be a rare red rose
But hollyhocks are mine.

I see them in the morning light
When all the world's asleep
They stand about the garden gate
A constant vigil keep.

I pause awhile, admire their style
In mid-day's blazing sun,
They never seem to sleep or dream
When their stair stalk's begun.

At even time I rest awhile
I walk in my back yard
And bravely still the hollyhock
Keeps gay and stately guard.

FORGIVENESS

Glancing out my kitchen door
I saw a noise, quarreling four
There on the fence with snapping eyes
Those sparrows spoke with angry cries.

Becoming tired of such shrill sounds
I scattered bread crumbs on the ground,
And they at once the quarrel forgot
Flew down a noisy happy lot.

They pecked away in peaceful style,
As though they friends were all the while
Then wiped their lips on feathered sleeves
And sauntered off among the leaves.
So we in hospitality
Forget our animosity.

A HOUSE IS NOT ENOUGH

"This is the very house for you," he stated,
With the red brick walls, and the wide, wide eaves,
With the tall elms guarding the broad front door-way,
And the pigeons cooing among the leaves,
I know you will like the marble thresholds,
The shine, and the gleam on the thick birch doors.
With a glowing log in the fire-place burning,
And the luster rich on the hard wood floors."
But how can all these give me pleasure,
With the house so still, and you away?
I would rather sit in a rough log cabin,
With you by my side to spend the day.

A KINDLY COVERING

As the kindly snow has covered well,
The dirt and dust of yesterday,
Has made the sidewalk lily white,
And the bare brown earth pure velvet,
And the city dust and grime,
As though it had never been —
So my forgiveness has covered too,
The hurts and scars of yesterday,
Has made my heart a happy shrine,
Where I adore you always,
And your gay carelessness,
As tho it had never been.

MASQUERADE

When I was but a village maid
I used to dress in masquerade,
And then felt gay and winked an eye
'Cause no one really knew 'twas I.

But now my mask is dignity,
You cannot see what's really me;
And when I hear a wild tune gay,
My feet still wish to trip away.

And when the bright moon shines again,
I would stroll forth in lovers' lane;
I still feel just as gay and free,
But must maintain my *dignity*.

HOUSECLEANING TIME

I wish I were a lucky bruin,
And when the sun shone in the spring,
To show the utter rack and ruin
The dinginess that winters bring,
Then when I gazed on wall and ceiling
Where cobwebs hung in gay festoons,
I never once would think of kneeling
To clean the dust and clear the rooms,
But would, without a look behind me,
Leave my old den, with brief adieu,
And, when approached the winds of winter,
Go find a cave, both clean and new!

ADAPTATION

The hollyhock high by the garden wall
Stands proud and unbowed in its lowly place,
A constant struggle to grow at all
And always carry a smiling face.

The blossoms grow in profusion there
Dozens of them in pink and red,
Giving the bees an ample share
Brightening all from their humble bed.

They turned their backs on the alleys grim
Nor do look down at the common clod,
Gallantly letting their beauty shine
Being true to themselves and God.

VACATION JOYS

Traveling in a trailer
What a lot of fun.
Keeping house a pleasure,
All my rooms in one.
Not a lot of dusting
Running up the stairs,
Answering the door-bell
Viewing agents' wares.
Seeing sights a plenty
As we move about;
This a real vacation.
Putting care to rout.

NIGHT

There's the tick of the clock,
 And the tock of the rain,
As it makes to my ears,
 A sweet refrain.

There's the tick of my hope,
 And the tock of my fears,
For the one yet to come,
 As the grey dawn appears,

There's no sleep for my eyes,
 As I listen again,
To the tick of the clock,
 And the tock of the rain.

WHEEL OF FORTUNE

I bought shoe-strings at the door,
Black and brown.
From all comers as they worked
Through the town.
Soon all storage space was filled
High and low,
For I never had the nerve
To say no.
Now my money is all gone
Through the town.
I sell shoe-strings at the door,
Black and brown!

THE PRICE

Out of the clouds there sails the moon,
Out of the dew, the sweet perfume.
From April's mud, the flowers in June.
Out of the darkness comes the dawn,
Out of the suffering comes a song,
Then why does waiting seem so long?

ENLIGHTENMENT

Grave duty stood outside my door,
With pleasure close behind,
I gladly let young pleasure in,
My happiness to find.
Gay pleasure filled my lonely hours,
Dull duty, I defied,
But yet I never could forget,
The one who stood outside.
I opened wide my door again,
To get a larger view,
And as I let my duty in,
Great pleasure came in, too.

PALMER PARK

God puts a coat of paint upon the elms,
And spreads a rustling rug upon the ground.
He flecks the shumac with a flaming red,
Where hums through all the park a murmuring sound,
And breathes into the air this bracing tang,
While happy children scamper through the leaves,
And elders bask on benches in the sun,
As melancholy autumn, magic weaves.

DERVISHES

With the sheen of the steel on the silvery lake,
 With the grace of the birds the skaters glide,
And gayly racing and whirling make
 Their figure eights at their partner's side.
With a swirl and a swing on their winging feet,
 Backward and forward the skaters go,
With the frost on their breath, their shouts repeat,
 Till the fire dies down, and the moon sinks low.

W. P. A.

White frost filled air, and a wind so raw
That even the snow birds hid from view,
When I, from my front window saw
Some shovels marching, two by two,
By shivering shoulders held up high;
And I heard a plaintive Negro sigh,
"It sure am cold to work outside;"
And chattering, came the white's reply,
"I'll say it is, but a man must eat."
And they went on plodding down the street.

NEGLECT

Some wonder why
friends do not flock
about at their direction;
But did they
as the days flew by
strew crumbs
of their affection?

GREEN COUNTY FLOWERS

O, where are the old fashioned flowers
That we hunted in childhood days
As we roamed around in the fields and woods
Through sunny summer days.

There stood the jack-in-the-pulpit tall
With Johnny-jump-up near by,
A golden ladies' slipper rare,
And cow slip yellow we'd spy.

The blue bells ready to ring for us
Frail buttercups dolls could hold,
And wild geraniums, pink and pure —
Old golden rods so bold.

Wild roses fragile, too, and fresh
The violets shy but sweet
With buds of brilliant shooting stars
And May flowers at our feet,

Minnie and Maude, Viola and I
Four maids in search so gay —
As we wandered through the shady wood
Found many a bright bouquet.

MARY

Somehow, she never seemed to be
 A perfect housewife like the rest,
Although she always liked to see
 A perfect home to greet a guest.
She never did have quite the knack,
 The strength, or natural aptitude
The others had, but seemed to lack
 The trick, or just the proper mood.

She never could catch up with things;
 The corners always held some dust;
Her baking was not fit for kings,
 Pans always had a little rust.
But still she made a home of it
 Where love and truth and faith prevailed,
Where thoughts were high, not without wit;
 Now, could you say that she had failed?