

Honorable
Mention

L. Beckford '25



THE LADY OF THE WOODS

ESTHER BOSCHÉE

(Prize Story)



BROAD, empty expanse of whiteness lay before me, with a fringe of towering evergreens bordering the horizon in lofty silence. Autumn had been perfect Indian summer with its mild weather, leaves turning red and gold, and squirrels and chipmunks, busily gathering their winter horde of nuts. Now the winter season was creeping in with no unusually cold weather as yet, and with every prospect of a perfect season. Still I dreaded the thought of spending six more weeks in my lone cabin in the thick of the woods. To be sure I had Tige, my dog, and Jim MacLean, who had been appointed assistant forest ranger with me by the National Forest Reserve, was expected in January.

As I stood before my door, arms folded, surveying the quiet scene before me, a sense of foreboding seized me and I was unable to shake it off. It had not left me when Andre, my half-breed Indian acquaintance, paid me a visit late in the afternoon. I was very glad for the friendly overtures he advanced to me, for a forest ranger's work is far from a pleasant association with mankind. He came to inform me that he would not be able to call on me again until the spring, as the snowdrifts would prevent him from leaving camp. Then he began, "I hope you stay more long than other mans. The' all leave ever' summer." And then he sadly shook his head, with a puzzled look on his face.

My curiosity was aroused at once, and I asked him what the trouble had been. "You no hear," he said without directly answering my question, "of the Lady of the Woods? She cry out an' walk in the woods, an' look for her lover. Many moons ago she come in the Phantom Ship that you see in the lake of the Crater, an' she haun' thees place, for she say her man ees killed here, an' she wan' to fin' the body to satisfy the Great Spirit. When eet ees ver' dark and col', she walk aroun' and moan for her lover, cause, he die in the winter."

I had heard many legends and traditions from this old man, but this seemed the most singular and interesting, perhaps because of the proximity of the place. And, too, I had often wondered why the rocky little island set on the azure surface of Crater Lake had been called the Phantom Ship, although there was some resemblance and I had guessed that there was some story connected with it. Still I couldn't comprehend why a supposed ghost would drive a brave ranger from his post of duty, since I had heard that this place had never been held for more than a year by any man—but I was to learn. However, I intended to stay longer than that; so I questioned Andre again. He answered, "I don' know why the' go; they never say." Apparently he was not afraid of wandering spirits. At this I determined more than ever to brave it at all events, and never allow myself to believe in such a thing, much less yield to it; although deep down in my heart I was glad Jim was coming soon. Forthwith I dismissed it from my mind.

It was about a week later that I was awakened from my sleep and lay still, heart throbbing and nerves tense, even though I heard nothing. I lighted a candle by my bedside, and I saw Tige standing near, his eyes glittering and his hair standing on end. I was quiet for a few minutes, and then my blood almost

congealed as a long drawn-out wail of what I thought was a human voice came through the night. It was repeated three times, each time shorter than before, and each time Tige gave a low growl of uneasiness. I had blown out the candle, and lay almost trembling in the darkness. After a few minutes I tried to shake off my fears and go to sleep, but had little success.

The next morning I laughed at myself, and made myself believe that a hungry wolf had been out on his nightly prowls. Wolf or no wolf, I didn't care to hear it again.

I performed my round of duties with pleasure the next few days. These were filled with trips of inspection through the forest, burning piles of old brush, and hunting; at night I was occupied filling out government reports and studying or reading. Thus my mind was kept off the weird incident. Not many nights later, however, I again woke up with that feeling of sudden apprehension, and Tige was again growling and drawing his lips back from his jaws. This time the sound was closer and more heartrending. Each fiber in my body was taut as a wire, and I scarcely dared breathe. Again time relieved me, and in the morning I felt easy, but the repetition of the event had forced its significance upon my mind. I was not and would not become superstitious and a believer of old-wives' tales I determined.

I resumed my work, and the occurrences almost slipped my mind. I had made a last trip to the settlement for supplies, and had received word that Jim would arrive in three weeks, for which I was secretly glad. I had put in an extra provision of wood and had generally settled down to a solitary existence.

It was just a few days before I expected Jim when I again woke up suddenly. I lighted a candle, and Tige and I seemed to feel that something unusual was at hand. A storm had come up, and the wind was not altogether pleasing. Suddenly above the roar of the tempest a most awful shriek reached our ears. It seemed to be just outside the door, and I sat up so quickly that Tige jumped. I grasped my revolver, although the idea that it would have any effect struck me as humorous, and went to the door of the cabin. I opened it, not without a qualm of misgiving. The night was intensely black, and the wind was tearing at everything. As I looked toward the background of pines, I beheld a silvery yet indefinable shape wavering between heaven and earth. Just then another cry pierced the darkness, and I fell back slamming and barring the door. I went to bed again, but lay wide-awake until the dawn lifted its gray head above the mountain tops.

Then Jim MacLean arrived, and I welcomed him with more than one feeling. I thought that now that call would not upset me as it had. I considered it only fair, nevertheless, to tell Jim of what had happened, and in a way prepare him if it should happen again, but I earnestly wished it never would. Accordingly I related each incident and told him of the legend that Andre had shared with me. But I had not counted on the Scotch blood of my companion with all his belief in Highland spirits and warlocks. He took the story seriously, and although as brave as man could wish to be, he didn't seem overjoyed at a possible encounter with our fair lady.

A number of days passed, and we thought that we would pass the remainder of the winter in peace and quiet. But we had reckoned too soon. It was the last week in January; the drifts were higher than they had ever been; the air had a twang of sharpness in it; and there was a perpetual black grayness in the sky. One day a severe hurricane arose. The wind blew fiercely, and it snowed

or hailed continually. This kept up for about a week and we were confined indoors.

One night we sat up rather late finishing some reports and then smoking by the fire-place and reflecting. The elements seemed to howl and tear at our shelter, trying to lift it from its very foundation. It was bitterly cold, and we had piled the fire high with pine-knots. All at once I happened to glance at Tige; he lay rigid, his eyes shining and his ears pricked up. There was a feeling of unrest and foreboding about the whole scene.

Finally we went to bed, and were hardly asleep when we were aroused by the incessant growling of Tige. We tried to quiet him, but although he lay down, his eyes shone and his hair bristled. We rested there, but I may be safe in saying there was little rest within our hearts and minds. Suddenly above the shrieks of the storm the ghostliest, most unearthly wail sent a chill to both our hearts. We sat up and looked at each other with staring eyes as the horrible cries continued.

At last I could tolerate it no longer, and I jumped out of bed and into my clothes. I intended to end this mystery once and for all. It took earnest persuasion to make Jim go with me, but finally we clad ourselves as warmly as possible, and with our guns in our hands (how useless they seemed) and Tige at our feet we set out. The moans had kept up, but seemed farther away. Now that we were outside, they seemed more distant yet, but we determined, that is I did, to learn their origin this night of nights. We moved slowly along in the gloomy and tempestuous darkness, hardly able to guide our footsteps. At times the awful outcries were louder and we almost stood frozen to the spot, seeming to see a floating mist here and there among the trees. We tried to gather courage to go on, but it was almost too difficult.

In this way we straggled on many miles through the forest, spending the whole night there. Dawn was stealing silently and almost wearily over the sky, and we had decided to return to our cabin for some deserved rest. We were near Crater Lake at this time, for we had made a steady rise in climbing, and the lake was at a high altitude. Accidentally, among the sparse sprinkling of pines across a small clearing before us, we saw what seemed to be a white rock in some form or other. We approached, and were amazed at our discovery, for the Lady of the Woods was revealed to us. She stood, a graceful figure, sculptured against a grayish stone as if grieving or dejected. Her flowing hair almost concealed her slender body, and one arm was flung out in despair. We stood mute for many seconds. Then we turned, and left without a word.

The next year there were other forest rangers in our positions, for Jim and I preferred work which afforded more peace to the mind and more rest to the body.

AT THE TOP OF THE WORLD

ELSIE NEUMANN, '26

(Prize Poem)

Mountaineering in the morning long before the birds awake,
Climbing up the dusky mountain ere the sunbeams tint the lake
In the valley with the radiance of Aurora's gleaming hair,
Follow we the pathway upward through the silver mountain air,
Wend our way between the bushes, stir the leaflets with our tread,
Pause to marvel at the beauty of a mountain flower-bed;
Then ascending to a level, breathless from the rugged climb,
Rest and gaze upon the wonders chiseled by the hand of time,
Free as mountain-deer we travel, onward, upward to our goal
Unpursued and unpursuing; naught but pleasure in our soul.
Filled with triumph and rejoicing we achieve the mountain's crown
Like the gods of Mount Olympus on the mortals looking down,
Turn our faces to the eastward where our joyous eyes behold
All the glory of Apollo in his chariot of gold.
Up he soars on wings of fire from the waters of the sea
Flooding all with brilliant splendor, making darkness turn and flee,
Raining on the happy valley such a pure, effulgent light
That with its iridescent sheen it banishes the night.

UNKNOWN

OWEN NETTLE. '26

(Honorable Mention)



ANY people noticed him as he sat on the curbstone at the corner, his head in his hands. He wore a coat of wolf skins, a bearskin cap, buckskin breeches; and his grizzly hair hung down on his shoulders in a tangled mass. He had drifted east from the wild frontier, and he had fallen sick. No one knew for a long time what was the matter with him, as he would not reply to questions, but finally when a policeman shook his arm and repeated the inquiry, the man slowly lifted his head and replied, "I'm played."

His face was pale and haggard, and it was plain that he was going to have an attack of fever. Asking no questions and making no inquiries he was sent to the hospital. He had his personal effects in a sort of a sack. There was a breech loading rifle, a hatchet, a knife, and several other articles. and when he had been placed in bed in one of the wards, he insisted that the sack be placed under his head. They offered him medicine, but he turned away his face, and no argument could induce him to swallow any.

"But you are a sick man," said the doctor as he held the medicine up.

"Cuss sickness!" replied the old man.

"But you may die!"

"Cuss death!"

He grew worse and worse as the days went by and was sometimes out of his head and telling of strange experiences in the Alaskan gold fields and in the Salmon fisheries of the Columbia, strange tales of rough and ready men who accepted the hard knocks which life gave them with a grim determination to give "measure for measure." During many hours of these weird accounts did the nurses listen for some means of identifying this aged disciple of the rough and ready West. When in his normal mind he appeared willing enough to talk about anything except his own life; when that was mentioned, the wan face hardened until it became lined with taut muscles. He would not let them undress him, comb his hair, or show him any attention beyond leaving his food upon the stand. A raging fever was burning up his system, and when the doctors found that the old man would not take their medicine, they knew that death was only a matter of days.

He had an iron constitution and a heart like a warrior, for he held Death at arm's length for many days which were filled with suffering and pain. When it became apparent that his life could last but a few hours longer, the nurse asked him if a clergyman should be called.

"Cuss clergymen!" replied the old man, those being the only words he had spoken for three days. Two hours afterwards his mind wandered, and he sat up in bed and called out, "I tell ye, the Lord isn't going to be hard on a fellow who has done what I have." He was quiet again until an hour before his death, when the nurse made one more effort and asked, "Will you give me your name?"

"Cuss my name!"

"Haven't you any friends?"

"Cuss friends!"

"Do you wish to have your things sent to anyone?"

"No! Cuss them all—all but——," and here the dying man's voice sank so low that it was unintelligible.

"Do you realize," continued the nurse, "that you are very near the grave?"

"Cuss the grave," was the monotonous reply.

No further questions were asked, and during the next hour the strange old man dropped quietly asleep in death, uttering no word and making no sign. When they came to remove the clothing and prepare the body for the grave, a package was found upon his breast. Upon opening this small packet it was found to contain a daguerreotype of a little girl. It looked as if it had been taken years and years ago, and the child appeared to be five or six years old. The face of the little one was fair to look upon, and the case which held it had been scarred by bullets. There were many scars upon the old man's body to prove that he had lived a wild life, but there was not a line among his effects to reveal his name or the name of the child whose picture he had worn on his breast for years and years. Who was she? His own darling, perhaps. He would not have treasured the picture so carefully unless there was love in his heart.

No one would believe that the wolf skin coat covered a heart which could feel love and tenderness, but it did. He might have left the frontier to be sure of a Christian burial, hoping that no unsympathetic eye would fall upon the picture.

Some said keep it, hoping to identify the old man, but others laid it back on the battle scarred breast which had preserved it so long, and it was there when they buried him—an unknown man in an unknown grave.

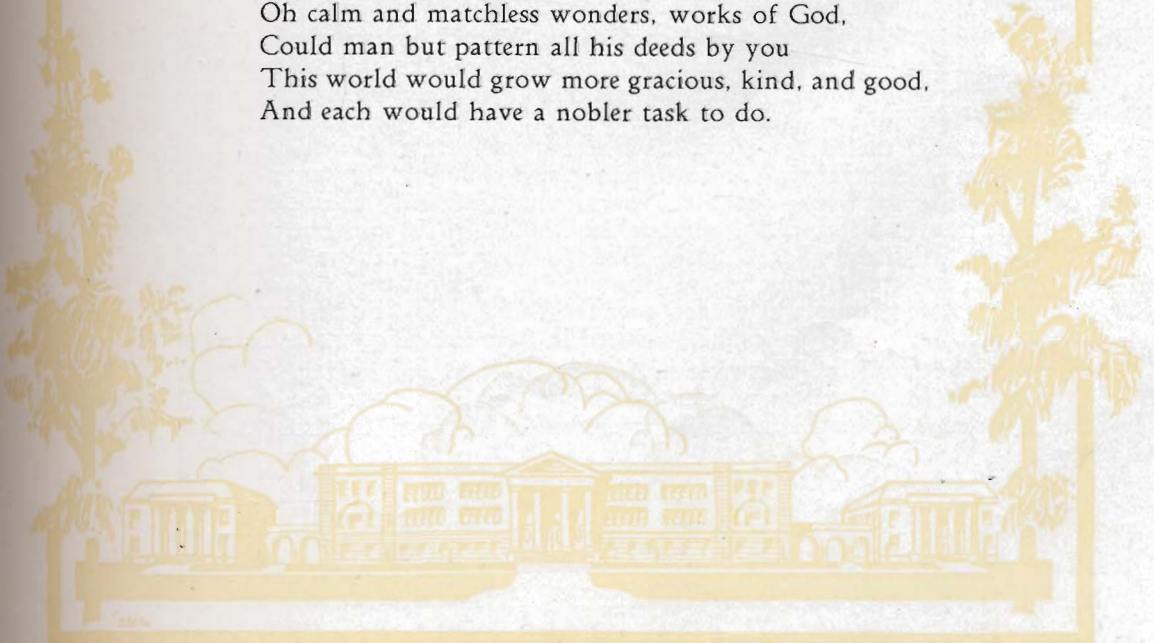
THE MOUNTAINS

EMILY WHITE, '25

(Honorable Mention)

Oh, lofty peaks of snow,
Who raise your hoary heads in proud disdain
Above the struggles of the race below
With cloud encircled brows of storm and rain,
How grandly do you rule in glory there.
Your heads are pillowed on the softest, filmy air,
While gay Aurora in all her splendor bathes
Your frozen tops with golden hues of light
And crowns you with her diadem of rays
With which she drives away the shades of night.
The torrents of your rushing mountain streams,
As swirling through deep rugged chasms, seem
To wake the lazy echoes in their wild career;
And roaring onward they pursue their way;
In rapids and in falls do they appear
Until they flow into the calm and peaceful bay.

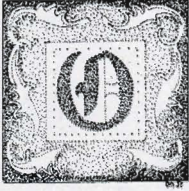
Yet you, with all your strength and might
Have more than all the world in your calm heights,
For you, unhampered by the ways of man,
Does Nature bless with all that she sees fit.
The things for which each mortal has demand
With lavish hand does she to you remit.
Oh calm and matchless wonders, works of God,
Could man but pattern all his deeds by you
This world would grow more gracious, kind, and good,
And each would have a nobler task to do.



SILAS WARWICK - TINKERER

JESSE THOMPSON, '25

(Honorable Mention)



ON the hill that overlooked the rambling shacks of Bear Landing lived an old bachelor named Silas Warwick. A crooked road ran in front of his house and disappeared from view around the crown of the hill. From his establishment Silas could look over the village and out to sea. The clean ocean breezes blew unhindered through his shop. On the warm summer days Silas would bask in the sun upon his door sill. Overhead was placed a simple sign that let people know that a tinkerer practiced his trade there. When business was slack, Silas would turn to other jobs. He kept a few pigs and chickens which, with the garden in the rear, supplied his table. Warwick was a veteran of the Civil War and received a pension for his services. When the morning chores were done and all his small jobs finished, he would turn to something that filled his thoughts constantly.

A stranger to Bear Landing would find a village that did not lend itself to the general beauty of the country. He would see the inevitable main street with its mud holes, children, scraggly stores and houses. This street wound through the village and included almost every house that the hamlet boasted. After finishing its crooked course through the village, it took to the hills and left all behind. There it became a beautiful lane freed from all the papers and cans that only a town can provide. The stranger who ascended the road as far as the tinkerer's shop would invariably stop to rest and secure a cool drink. Perhaps he could enjoy a friendly chat with the old man. We would see a likable personage whose cheer twinkled through two merry blue eyes. The face was lined with furrows of age and care. The old man was slightly lame due to some old wound received in battle. He was a pleasant talker and enjoyed telling others of the Civil War and his experiences. The stranger would be impressed, not by his words, but by his manner and sincerity. Perhaps the conversation would lead to Abe Lincoln. The old man's eyes would light up and his face brighten as he discussed a subject dear to his heart. He had seen and known the great American in the Civil War and worshiped his memory.

When Silas Warwick was a youngster, he delighted in playing in his father's shop. For years before his time, in the old country, the Warwicks had been wood carvers. Silas's father had given up the trade when he came to America. He opened up a modest shop in Maryland and prospered. While his son was yet young, the father began his training in the art of carving wood. Silas's fingers became very adept at chiseling and chipping the sweet swelling wood. When the war broke out, Silas was among the first to volunteer. He served in the army in Virginia throughout the conflict. His regiment was often visited by the President of the United States. When the war was over, young Warwick was left without means of support. His father had died the preceding year, and the shop was turned over to other hands. For a number of years he roamed the country and finally settled in Bear Landing, where he remained.

One day Silas Warwick picked up a paper and read it thoroughly. He lingered for a long time over the announcement of the coming exhibition at Boston. "Perhaps I can finish it in time if I hurry," he thought.

For many days the passersby did not enjoy the chats with the old man. His continued absence from the sunny sill caused the people of Bear Landing to indulge in gossip. Someone suggested that he might have unexpectedly left the country; but still his garden and live stock were taken care of. It was a well known fact that Warwick had a pet hobby that was the center of his thoughts.

The tinkerer worked feverishly for a week's duration. He scarcely would stop to eat or sleep. Toward the end of the week he became haggard and weary from loss of sleep and long hours of work. On Friday a small truck labored up the lane and parked in front of the shop. The owner was the village expressman. With the help of Silas an oblong box was loaded upon the truck. The driver was accompanied by Silas to the railroad station. When the daily Boston train arrived, Silas boarded, but not until his baggage and crate were safely loaded. The train puffed slowly out of the station and was soon speeding over the singing rails.

Every ten years Boston held an exhibition for arousing interest in art and to present the latest work in the realm of fine arts. This was the mecca of rich collectors and connoisseurs. It received many beautiful things from all over the United States. There were very many different prizes awarded for each division of art. For the best entry a grand prize was presented to the artist with great honor.

This year the fair had opened with a grand display of pictures, statuary, furniture, and many other beautiful pieces. The exhibition was very successful from the opening. Perhaps the most wonderful entry was a beautiful picture by a noted New York portrait painter, who had studied the old masters abroad and had returned with the best education Europe could offer. He had immediately created a sensation in New York, where he set up his studio. He specialized in portrait painting, especially of beautiful women. This painter entered many pictures in the Boston Art Exhibit and felt confident of winning the first prize. His entry was a full length picture of a pretty, gay, young "flapper." She was very beautiful and appealed to all who saw her. It immediately created a sensation at the exhibition. The artist was showered with complimentary letters and basked in his popularity.

The exhibition was scheduled for a week's duration. On the last day the minor prizes would be awarded to the individual winners. On the closing evening the people gathered and the final exercises were held. The crowning event of the evening was the announcement of the winner of the prize magnificent.

It was Saturday evening and the auditorium was filled with some two thousand five hundred interested spectators. Art critics, buyers, connoisseurs, and contributors formed a large part of the assemblage. The preliminary prizes were presented amid the applause of the spectators. As each prize was announced, the winner walked up to the stage and received his reward. The air was charged with the expectancy of the announcement of the winner of the grand prize. This announcement was reserved until the last and was a fitting climax for the exhibition. There was a space reserved near the front for the most important of the members. The back part of the hall was thrown open to the general public.

The massive curtains arose upon the last act of the Boston Art Exhibit, namely, the awarding of the main prize for the best entry. In the center of the stage stood a large easel covered with a beautiful drapery. Beside it stood a veiled statue. The chairman first uncovered the picture and revealed a beautiful

work of art. It was a picture of a very pretty young lady. The canvas showed the technique of a master hand and was easily the best painting entered in many years. The people applauded loudly and a buzz of conversation filled the air. Every one recognized the work of the New York portrait painter.

It was the custom to allow the audience to judge the best work by their applause. After the showing of the two best entries the chairman announced the winner. The actual winner was decided upon by a group of picked critics. The audience usually picked the same winner as the judges. When the picture of the girl was undraped, the people were very enthusiastic in their recognition of the painting.

The chairman regained silence and prepared to unveil the statue. There was an air of mystery about this entry because of its recent arrival. No one knew what to expect. When the veil was suddenly pulled from the statue, a profound silence settled over the assembly. There stood before the audience a wonderful life-size statue of Abraham Lincoln. It portrayed him as he was, a sorrowful figure in his fight for freedom of the slaves. There was a wistfulness about his homely face that moved the people to sombre contemplation. The picture of the gay "flapper" was completely overshadowed by this wonderfully human statue. The work was crude, (being made of countless small blocks glued together) but it had a soul and the love and admiration of one man behind it. The polished painting seemed crude because of its lack of depth.

In the rear of the hall a little old man sat with bowed head; a tear streamed down his wrinkled cheek. He thought that his carving was not liked because of the silence. Suddenly his despondency was broken by the voice of the announcer. "Silas Warwick, come forward, and receive the prize for one of the most remarkable entries ever judged by the critics." All expected to see someone arise from the dress-circle and move forward. Instead they saw a little old man limp down the aisle. He was old and grayed, but his face was very bright. It was then that the people broke into applause that showed their approval. Foremost among the admirers was the New York painter, who had had his fondest hopes unrealized and destroyed. He saw an old man who was very joyful as he received his reward.

Silas Warwick had shown his love and admiration for the Great Emancipator.

BABY BLUE EYES

MARJORIE RATHBUN

Green and leafy foliage,
Slight and hairy stems,
Pretty blossoms blowing,
Little sky blue gems.

Placed here for baby fingers,
They gather them with glee.
The fields of dancing blossoms
They nod and glance at me.

Little bit of heaven,
Fallen from the sky,
Signs of happy springtime,
Showers from on high.

TREE FANCIES

CLINTON HENNING. '26

I have two friends in my garden
Who live there day and night;
They act out all my fancies
For my pleasure and delight.

When I cannot be playing
On dark and stormy days,
'Tis then my friends amuse me
In many pleasant ways.

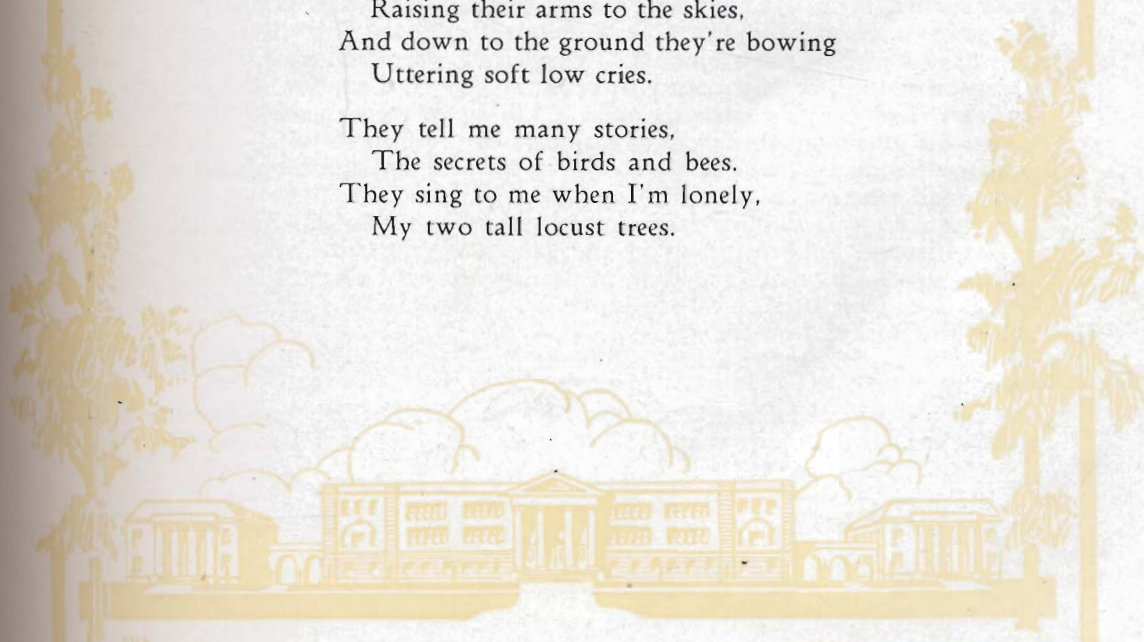
Some times they play at Indians,
And wrestle with each other.
And oh, I find it thrilling
When the tall one scalps his brother.

Once they were two ladies
Who laughed and whispered together,
And while their tea they were sipping
They talked of more than the weather.

Now they dance so gayly
And turn and bow quite low,
And on again they're gliding
So lightly to and fro.

Often they're praying Hindus
Raising their arms to the skies,
And down to the ground they're bowing
Uttering soft low cries.

They tell me many stories,
The secrets of birds and bees.
They sing to me when I'm lonely,
My two tall locust trees.



FOR SERVICES RENDERED

GERARD MYERS. '26

(Senior Story)

The autumn leaves fell in little flurries and made a soft rustle as they carpeted the floor of the grove of cottonwood and oak trees that bordered the river. A high north wind with its moans of eerie forlornness drove the leaves down in little gusts and left the naked branches of the trees raised to the heavens as if in a plea for mercy. Dark clouds sailing overhead raced and mingled together, each trying to outdo its fellows in its mad dash across the heavens. Even the mighty Sacramento River with its swiftly flowing current seemed to be joining in the frolic with its swirling eddies and treacherous undercurrents playing hide and seek with one another.

Buck Weaver brought his axe down with a mighty thud; the knotty, cross-grained log split squarely in two near the middle.

"There," he growled, "I guess they don't grow too tough for me. I'd like to hit the Inland Transportation Company a lick like that." He wiped his sweaty brow with the back of his hand and sat down on part of the freshly split log. He gazed through the trees at the glittering river about a hundred yards distant. Removing a late edition of the Sacramento Bee from the rear pocket of his sadly torn overalls, he scanned the front page absent-mindedly.

Buck had read that front page many times. His eyes fell on the glaring headline, "Local Transportation Company Plans to Take Over Many Wealthy Farms."

"Well, they won't take mine," thought Buck. "I paid my grain rate if it did take my last cent."

He clenched his fists, and the blood mounted to his face in the sudden flood of anger that enveloped him. He sprang to his feet and crashed through the brush, regardless of the thorny bushes and spiked branches that scratched his face and hands and tore at his clothing. As he came out on the bank of the river, there was still an angry glitter in his eyes.

Buck had a right to be indignant. He and his neighbors had struggled many years to make a good living on their farms. Everything seemed to have gone against them. This year a bumper crop had rewarded their efforts, and the price of grain had gone up. Simultaneously, the Inland Transportation Company had been left a monopoly when the Sacramento-San Joaquin Transportation Company had ceased to operate. D. B. Langdon, the Sacramento manager, had seen a chance to make a killing at the expense of the farmers. Under his influence other crooked members of the firm soon fell into line, and grain rates soared. Some of the bankrupt farmers had already abandoned their farms, and others would soon follow.

The river was swollen from recent storms in the hills. Small trees, logs, and driftwood bobbed along on the bosom of the seething current. Buck glanced upstream. The river ran in nearly a straight line through the valley; he could see the glittering ribbon for miles. He rubbed his eyes. A large black object had appeared on the water.

"That's too big for a log," thought Buck. "It looks like it might be a boat."

Then Buck remembered. He ran back to where he had been cutting wood and picked up the paper that had been the cause of his sudden outburst. He

scanned the pages. There it was, "Langdon Makes a Trip to Willows in His Yacht." Under the bold headline was a description of the party aboard. There were about a dozen in all, mostly hired men. The purpose of the trip was to establish possession of some of his "stolen" lands. He would return on Friday and bring with him his daughter, who had been visiting friends in Willows.

Buck looked up. This was Friday.

"—him, I'd like to see him sink if his daughter wasn't with him," growled Buck as he returned to the river bank.

Buck's jaw bulged as he looked upstream. The boat was reeling from side to side. He could see the forms of the crew on the deck. They seemed to be acting in a panic-stricken manner.

Buck pondered, "They look like they might need help. Drowning would be too good for Langdon."

He looked around him. His eyes fell on his rowboat, which was anchored by an iron stake a few yards downstream. He looked at the yacht again. A man was hurled against the railing by the violent lurching of the boat. The railing gave away and the man fell overboard in a limp heap and dropped out of sight, never to be seen again.

After a moment's indecision Buck ran to the rowboat, tore up the stake with a violent tug, and threw it into the boat. He leaped in and with mighty strokes of the oars headed in the direction of the fast approaching yacht. As he glanced around to get his direction, he saw a young girl standing on the deck with her arms stretched toward him. That was enough. Buck's strong arms pulled the boat into the current. It caught him and spun him around, but he rowed desperately. The boat was tossed about as though it had been a twig. He looked around. The yacht was still a hundred yards away. He bent to the oars in a supreme effort. Now he was gaining. The sweat poured down his face. His wrists were weakening and his back ached.

One of the men on the yacht shouted. Buck could just hear him above the roar of the wind and water.

"Y' better come up behind and throw us your rope," he yelled.

Buck glanced down. He would have to cut the stake from the rope. Could he do it without losing control of the boat? He hesitated. Both boats were racing along in the middle of the current. Could he muster strength enough to throw the iron stake with the rope attached onto the deck of the yacht? The men on the deck were shouting to him to throw the rope. Buck decided it was too hazardous to try to cut the iron stake from the rope. He quickly reached down and as he came up threw the stake with all his strength. It was seized in midair by a frantic hand, and the rowboat was quickly drawn up and tied.

The girl looked at Buck with shining eyes. The men crowded forward and endeavored to get into the rowboat, although it was a dangerous undertaking with the boats rocking violently. Langdon was in front with a terror-stricken countenance. He pushed his daughter roughly aside. Buck's anger flared.

"Stand back!" he said coldly as he gave Langdon a shove. "Ladies first."

The men were a rough, uncouth set, who, with much cursing and arguing, helped the girl into the boat.

"How many of you are there?" asked Buck. "I only have room for nine besides myself."

"There are ten of us," the girl replied, after taking a quick count.

"One too many," said Buck. "Langdon, you scoundrel, you can stay, and I'll send the boat back after you."

Langdon's face blanched. He glanced around him in terror. Water was pouring over the deck into the hold. He knew that to stay was to face a grave danger of being drowned. He could not swim.

Buck leaned over to untie the rope from the yacht. He was tired, and his worst struggle was yet to come. Langdon's eyes gleamed as they fell on the stake. He glanced at Buck, whose back was turned. He was still untying the rope. With a quick motion Langdon stooped and picked up the stake. Without hesitation he brought it down with a stunning blow on Buck's head; he pitched overboard in a limp heap. The dark, treacherous waters closed over his head with a light sucking sound and became tinged with a dark crimson as it intermingled with his blood.

