



*Bill Fitch*

**Literary**



# All is Not Gold that Glitters

*First Prize Story*

RUTH FULLER 12A

ALAVERAS county is filled with reminders of the days of "forty-nine." Each cave, stone hut, wine cellar, grave yard, and mound has a place in the "gossip" of the small mining communities. Even the commonest wine cellar is glorified by the rumor that it contains gold; however, not long ago, there was a widespread story that in a certain section of the county near my home there was a lost cave that contained the loot of the famous bandit, Black Bart. Over the spot where the riches lay, so ran the story, there was painted a life-size skeleton. This story was of interest to me, but I was not greatly aroused, because all my life I had lived in that part of the country and had never found anything more exciting than a half-keg of old wine.

One half-gray, half-blue February noon I decided that it was an ideal time for a brisk after-lunch walk. When I was perhaps two miles away from civilization, it began to rain. The faster I walked, the harder it rained until I finally decided to look for shelter. I was on a small grassy plateau about half way down a very overgrown and inaccessible slope. There seemed to be nothing to do but to crawl under the bushes and keep dry as best I could. As I started under a large manzanita shrub, I noticed, not more than ten feet away, a large opening that I had never seen in the hillside before. I saw immediately that it would be an ideal shelter from the torrent-like sheets that were now descending. (Still, I could not figure how, in my almost daily walks, I had failed to find it sooner) so I stepped back into the path. The four-foot opening was lost from view behind a tangled mass of vines and shrubbery. Better satisfied, I went back and crawled into the mouth of what proved to be an old cellar.

Because I had nothing else to do, I began to fit the story of the lost cave to this cellar. My interest became aroused, but my knowledge of the danger of being trapped by the loose, damp soil kept me from venturing inward. Finally, however, the steady fall of the rain made me so drowsy that I decided to take the chance of exploring the cave rather than fall asleep. Almost before I realized what I was doing, I found myself walking into the cellar. I could see that it was unusually large and that it had a great many alcoves branching from the main corridor, but I could not get a definite idea of its appearance. Before I had gone more than a few yards inward, I discovered that I was not alone; for a bony white hand appeared just inside the niche to my right. Before I could get a second glance, it had disappeared. I took a step backward, and the hand appeared again. Perhaps, I thought, the rain has stopped and I had better go, but when I tried to run toward the entrance, which seemed surprisingly far away, my feet refused to function. Again I turned and was confronted with the hand. My heart was filled with a sickening fear; my knees shook; I tried to think, but it was no use. For what seemed hours, I stood rooted with the fascination of a snake-charmed bird.

As the minutes passed and the body belonging to the hand did not come forward, my muscles relaxed, and I began to reason. The moment I took



a step forward or backward the strange object disappeared. Was it, then, just a reflection? With this thought in mind I advanced until I could look into the alcove. There was nothing there. The next step I took threw my shadow across the wall of the recess, and a sparkling white skeleton stood directly in front of me! For an instant my heart stood in my throat and I had half a mind to flee, but the skeleton disappeared as soon as I moved. I stepped back into my former position, and the creature again stood before me. This time my curiosity got the better of my fear, and I reached out to touch a finger of the bony hand. A phosphorescent material remained on my fingers. The entire skeleton seemed to be made and placed so that it would show only when a shadow was put directly between it and the light from the mouth of the cellar.

Again I remembered the story of Black Bart's loot. I ran my hand around the skeleton, but my touch was met only by the damp earth. When I reached down and rubbed my hand across the surface under the creature's feet, a material like sand-paper scraped my skin. I dropped to my knees, but the whole surface of the wall looked the same. After hunting for quite a time, I found a little notch that opened a rectangular place about a foot-and-a-half by a foot. There was a bag, an old, time-worn, leather bag, in the small vault. It must contain gold, I thought. What would my family say when I told them how rich I was? I tried to recall how I had found the cave and just where it was, but it was useless—my thoughts were very hazy. As I picked up the rotten bag, its contents fell on the dirt floor before me. The golden glitter of the metal filled the recess; the glare blinded me; I could not see—I awoke with a start. The storm was over and the afternoon sun was shining full in my face.



## After the Storm

MABEL CHIPMAN 12A

The storm has broken:  
Here and there a glimpse of sky I see  
A turquoise set in pearly grey,  
A calm, ethereal sea.

The sun shines out:  
Its rays edge all the clouds with golden lace,  
Like soft rose puffs, so clean, so pure,  
Above our dripping place.

The earth shines black;  
The rain has cleansed each leaf, each glist'ning branch,  
And flowers bright smile out anew,  
And answering smiles enhance.

The rain is gone:  
The earth is clean, the sun through clouds doth strive,  
The whole world smiles and seems to say,  
"It's great to be alive!"



—Daryl Watts



# Little Jim

*Second Prize Story*

LUCILLE ELLIS 12A.

The hot, dust-laden air permeated the rude log cabin, which stood in the midst of a clearing about which were trees, but in which was not even a bush. The door and two windows were open in a vain endeavor to catch a wayward breeze. Inside the cabin were two bunks, a table, three stools, a packing box, a fireplace, and a cupboard, all covered with red dust. There was no table cloth on the rough pine table, nor any curtain in front of the cupboard of rough boards nailed to the wall. A long rifle rested on two pegs over the door, and a powder horn was slung from the barrel. The entire room was in masculine disorder except for one corner. Here there had been an attempt at cleanliness and tidiness. On the stool stood a bucket of water covered with a red bandana handkerchief in a fairly clean condition. On the bunk lay a boy whose frail form, wasted by fever, lay panting for breath.

There was no sound. Not even the woods creatures dared defy that heavenly ball of fire. The silence was oppressive. At last it was broken! Some one was approaching the cabin! Out of the woods came a miner. He was dressed in the usual manner: soiled, yellow neckerchief, brownish shirt and trousers, muddy boots, and a large hat. He approached the cabin joyously, and a happy smile on his blackbearded face. But when he reached the door, the smile became wistful and sympathetic. He creaked cautiously to the side of the bunk and gazed down at the wan, thin face of the boy. The eyelids fluttered open to disclose an enormous pair of dark blue eyes. The boy's parched lips smiled faintly in recognition.

"How ye feelin', Jimmy?" queried the miner solicitously.

"Purty wal," answered Little Jim, his weak voice trying to sound cheerful.

The miner frowned, then said triumphantly, "Ye'll be feeling' right peart purty soon. An' I'll tell ye why, the boys has each put in 'cording tuh his condition, an' we got 'nough tuh send ol' Doc Wilson!"

"Gee," the boy's eyes were full of hope, "he'd shore make me wal, wouldn't he, Pete?"

"Yuh bet," responded the miner heartily.

"But," the boy's face saddened "tain't fair tuh all o' ye. This yere ain't been no good season fer none; an' yuh got better uses for yuhr dust thin carin fer me. Why, some of 'em got folks back home!" A trace of wistfulness had crept into the boy's voice despite his manly attempt to be brave.

"Aw, what's a matter with ye?" growled the miner to hide his perturbation. "We needs a kid tuh do chores. 'Sides we've spent too much on ye tuh want tuh lose out naow."

The boy smiled happily. He knew that there had been little pay dirt taken from the claims, but the miners had given enough money to have Dr. Wilson come all the way from Challenge to care for him, an orphan. How he would slave to pay back to these men in deeds the debt which their generosity would not allow him to repay in any other way!



"Wal, hel—lo, ef 'taint Pete Black!" cried the stage-driver, jumping down nimbly, despite his rotundity, to shake hands with the miner. "An' what kin I do fer ye naow?"

"How much is the rate tuh Challenge?" asked Pete anxiously.

"Hum. Didn't know ye was a travelin' man." The driver had begun to figure rapidly. "Twelve dollars from hyah to Challenge. How's Little Jim?"

"Not so peart," Pete was thinking hard. "Thet makes twenty-four both ways?"

"Yep—Figgered yuh fellers was havin' a hard time of it. Didn't know ye was so all-fired rich ye could go to Challenge fer yer summer wardrobe." The driver spat vigorously.

"Oh, I ain't goin! Hyar's twelve dollars wuth o' dust. Yu git Doc Wilson an' bring him back with ye."

The stage driver started, "Is th' kid as sick as thet?"

"Yep," nodded Pete miserably. "He's failin' fast. Th' boys put up 'nough tuh git Doc ef ye'll bring him."

"Shore 'nough," the stage-driver leaped to his seat. "I'll bring 'im er my name ain't Old Blunt." He waved his hand, cracked his long whip and was swallowed in a cloud of dust.

The stage wallowed in the dust of the road winding through the trees. At last the dust became less and the stage rattled over the rocks in the bed of the road. On his seat Old Blunt whistled cheerily. He had placed the miner's gold dust in his pocket. There was nothing else important on this journey; no passengers, no important letters, no money, save Pete's.

The big coach had arrived at the top of the Crooked Man Grade. Now it lumbered down the grade, around the turns, faster and faster. Suddenly Old Blunt, waking from his day dreams, realized that there was something wrong. He grabbed the reins, pulled in on them, and with all his strength pressed on the brake with his foot. The horses were already running too fast, however, and they continued to race down the road. It took all of Old Blunt's strength to hold them down to a gallop, a gallop too fast for that curving road. They were halfway down the grade, but the sharpest turn was still ahead. Old Blunt took out his knife, fastened the miner's money securely in his pocket, and waited. The team was wild now with fear. As they neared the turn, they ran faster to escape that lumbering thing at their heels. Old Blunt dropped on the back of the horse at the right. With a few deft slashes of his knife he severed the reins, hame straps, and belly-band, and the horse was free just as he reached the turn. Despite the fact that he was no longer fastened to the others, the horse was following them to destruction. It required all of Old Blunt's horsemanship and strength to turn the horse into the bank as the rest of the team and the coach went over. The horse was frightened, but he seemed to realize that Old Blunt had saved him; consequently he allowed himself to be controlled and guided by this man.

Guiding the horse by his mane, Old Blunt managed to reach the bottom safely. He galloped into Challenge a few hours later, reported the catastrophe to the stage, and sought the doctor.

"Why, hello, Blunt, what's the rush?" queried Dr. Wilson with a pleasant smile.



# Careers I Have Hoped to Follow

*Second Prize Essay*

NORMA HARRIS, Midyear Graduate

**A** DANCER, a pianist, a violinist, an elocutionist, an interior decorator, an actress—all these I have at different times determined to be. The longest period of existence for any of these was from the time I was seven until I reached the age of twelve. I had a sense of rhythm, and, in the earliest stages of this dancing malady, whenever no one was near, I would clamber up to the phonograph, start a record, and then execute steps around the room. Those occasions ended in a state of embarrassment, however, for I was caught poised on the dining table, a bit of gauzy material grasped in my hand, my lips parted, and a rapt expression on my face. I was firmly convinced that I made an inspiring picture there. The door suddenly flew open, and I beheld in dismay two of my uncles with their wives. My own parents completed my all too obviously amused audience. I retired rapidly and did my best to keep out of the way for the remainder of the afternoon and the entire evening.

My career as a pianist ended after my first lesson on that instrument. To my horror I discovered that one had to practice hours every day to attain any degree of success. From then on I diligently endeavored to find excuses for not following my ambitions along that line. A short while later my parents took me to a recital given by a famous violinist. He received so much applause, so many flowers, and such honors during his stay in our city that I decided that I wanted to be a great violinist. That ended as did my pianistic ambition. My aircastles built on foundations of musical careers were stormed and completely demolished.

One day while I was in school, my teacher went around the room asking each one what he was going to be. Someone said an elocutionist and another one said an interior decorator. I liked those words. Consequently I replied in answer to the question, when it came my turn, that I had not quite decided whether I would be an elocutionist or an interior decorator. I actually remained of that mind for several weeks. By that time I'd forgotten how to pronounce one and what they both meant.

Then came my ambitions for the stage. I would sit for hours before one of our mirrors posing. In a short while I was able to assume the roles of villain, hero, heroine, vampire, witch, mother, six-year old youngster, grey-headed father, or bespectacled old school ma'am at a minute's notice. Nothing could have jolted one as stage-struck as I from his pedestal. I had to simply outgrow that ambition.

Now after passing through those varied stages in regard to ambitions, I have determined that I can do nothing more nor less in this world than teach Latin. To such an end I have been devoting myself. In the few months to elapse before college convenes I may have several other ambitions in view. So far, however, nothing has been allowed to stand in the way of my desire for a career as a Latin teacher. I may end yet by acting, in real life, in the capacity of a bespectacled school ma'am.

## To Winter

EDNA THOMPSON 9A

Come, play, Mr. Winter, with me awhile,  
Our playtime will not be long;  
Soon spring will come gaily  
Dancing and daily  
Singing her wake-up song.

And little grey pussies that sleep content,  
And little flower-babies that dream.  
Shall bark to her cooing  
And calling and wooing.  
Down by the meadow stream.

But now, Mr. Winter, we're best of pals,  
I love every prank you play;  
And though you are teasing  
And blustering and freezing,  
Hurrah for a game today!

So line up your men—North Wind, Jack Frost—  
Our play shall be what you will;  
And blowing and racing  
And snowing and chasing,  
We'll frolic over the hill.



## Sky-Pilot

INEZ McNEIL 12A

Nothing in the spaciousness of sky  
Withholds its turbulence or angry strength,  
Assuring that brave pilots shall not die.

Instead, the motor's din is muffled under  
The strident gale that splits the pinion's length,  
To mingle with reverberating thunder.

The craft cannot defy the storm's assail,  
But, as an errant leaf to fibres worn,  
Surrenders to the battery of hail.

What of the dead, the men who fall, storm-driven?  
They shall not rise on frail wings, tempest-torn,  
But reascend on lighter wings, God given.



# Jenny Lind

MABEL CHIPMAN

It's a hot, dusty, ride to the Jenny Lind Pool,  
But the swim at the end is refreshing and cool,

And the place is so green and so pretty to see  
That it's frequented lots by my classmates and me.

The willows hang over, approving our swim,  
And riffing the pool with occasional limb;

The poplars stand back and so lazily sway  
As they watch all us frolicking youngsters at play;

The birds form a symphony up in the leaves  
That rustle and sway in the warm summer breeze;

There's grass—a green ocean, with flowers for foam,  
And above the sweet blossoms the honey bees drone;

The pool mirrors all the green beauty once more,  
But paints them all darker than those on the shore;

The bright sun shines down from its heaven so high,  
It seems like a diamond in the azure sky;

The soft, fleecy, clouds now and then cross the blue  
And the sun turns their edges a warm, golden hue;

The mountains, some far and some nearer at hand,  
Make of Jenny Lind pool a remote fairyland.



Swimming Pool at Jenny Lind





## SUNSET

MABEL CHIPMAN 12A

The eastern sky grows darker,  
For evening's drawing nigh,  
And noble, kind Apollo  
Bids all the world goodbye.  
Behind, a livid streamer, floats  
His red and golden gown;  
Then o'er the bridge of eve he goes  
And dark wafts slowly down.

