

The World's A Stage

By JAY ST. LEDGER
(Special Writer)

THE OLD MAN

A young boy lives in a world painted in bold, broad strokes. The simple measurements of a hero receive eager acceptance in this world.

I want to tell you a story about such a hero. However, it isn't a story in the real sense of the word. Stories are made of imagination and printers' ink. This is made of the soul, bone and flesh of a man.

He was a very old man and his name was Gurg. The last time I was with him were on the main street of a small town in southern Illinois. It was April and a number of relatives and friends had gathered. These people had come to wish him a Bon Voyage. Gurg was a town celebrity and legend.

ONE of his friends recalled the great depression that followed in the turbulent wake of the Civil War. He told of a small boy walking down a dirt country road on his way into town.

It was February. It was cold. The boy was bare-foot. The Old Man happened to come upon the boy in his carriage and gave him a ride into town. When they arrived the Old Man took the astonished boy and bought him a brand new pair of shiny shoes.

It happened some 14 years later. The Old Man was working his farm at harvest time. A man came and said that he was to deliver a team of quarter horses. He handed the Old Man a note.

IT READ: "I hope you will accept this team of horses, although I know they can never be as valuable to you as the shoes were to me."

It was signed, "The Barefoot lad." The Old Man was, in my young mind, as tall and ageless as the big oak in front of our house. His crazy, angular features were more interesting than pleasing. He always wore his hat pulled down on one side to hide a cancerous disfigurement. The Old Man would come to our house for Mom's biscuits. These he would pack away by the hatful garnished with catsup.

AS A BOY I would sit at his feet by the hour listening to his tales of the Civil War. At 16 he ran away from home and joined up. When he spoke, I saw through acid smoke, the Grey tide exploding on the beach of the Blue, only to lose a portion of itself and recede. The Blue tide in turn would hurl against the beach of the Grey, only to meet the same fate. I felt as though I knew every rock and swirlfall on the fields of those fateful days of Chicasawuga, Lookout Mountain and Bloody

Shiloh. The mind of a boy of 15 is like soft limestone under a torrent of water.

ON THAT April day in that southern Illinois town, I was only 15. I will never forget the sights and sounds of that day. I can feel the rain beating my face as I climbed into Dad's car. Through the rain-streaked windshield I watched the reluctant procession move out.

At the cemetery, bowed heads under umbrellas contrasted with the Guard Unit standing rigid. I stood there caring not if someone noticed that other than rain coursed down my cheek. The history books could tell me nothing of Chicasawuga, Lookout Mountain and Bloody Shiloh. I had been there. What more could a boy ask of his Great Uncle.

IT WAS QUIET, except for the rustling noise of the rain splattering on the grass. The priest made the Sign of the Cross. Then the pulleys began creaking as they lowered their burden. The squad leader barked an order.

A lone trumpet emitted soft strains of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." The drums thundered out a hollow roll. It was the sound of nothing.

The Guardsmen raised their weapons as one. The fat crack of the volleys was a militant salute to one of the last of a Day, already a skeleton in the vault of history.

Then it was quiet again. The puffs of smoke hesitated in the damp air, then drifted upward. Triumph. Yesterday had had its eternal

Research Paper Among Honor Group
Donald Schubert, D.S.C., Birmingham foot specialist, has been notified that a research paper submitted by him for the William Stickie award in podiatry research, at the American Podiatry association annual convention in Chicago Aug. 25-30 is among the honor group. From this group will be selected the winner of the annual award.

Dr. Schubert is a graduate of the Illinois college of Chiropody and also attended Wayne university and Michigan State university. He is married and has three children. They reside at 100 Denbar, Bloomfield Hills.

What's More Rare Than August Days?

By RUTH VOGT
Special Writer

Wasn't it Edna St. Vincent Millay who opened one of her loveliest poems with the line, "O world, I cannot hold thee close enough? Thy winds, thy wide grey skies!"

Well, today, right in the middle of the month of August what should turn up, on a Monday when a sensible person should tend to household business, but the situation she described.

I've never been known to allow a basement full of laundry (as long as there's still clothes to wear in drawers) to deter the desire to "room around" on a beautiful day. But to give the feeling of being on the job I readied a bucket of lukewarm water with a few drops of vinegar and lugged it outside to wash windows. A person can easily wipe away on the panes and still be aware of the sky above, the clouds and breeze.

AFTER A GOOD half-hour was spent polishing panes, I thought sure I would have courage to go

back-indoors. But no. What should start up, in the branches of a near by tree but a sudden concert. Who could turn their back on music made maybe just for them? I couldn't. And didn't.

A lawn chair was handy and for no admission charge it was used in order to enjoy what the birds were singing. They have a knack for bringing smiles out; they aren't probably aware of this gift; they just give everything they've got.

SURELY, it would be a simple thing to rise after their performance and march inside. It wasn't just at the end of notes what should race across the lawn but a couple of cats.

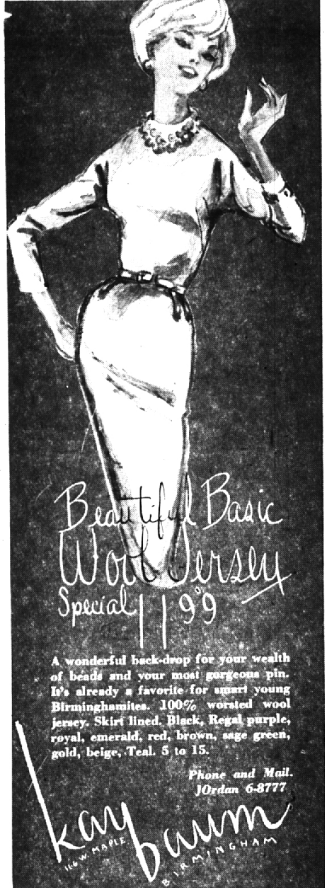
Two cats chasing each other can see a lot just washing a car; I did. The clouds had changed now. They were together more. The breeze was calmer. The sun was higher. The green greener.

Just when there seemed to be not another thing to do to justify my stay outdoors, what should race around the corner of the house but a couple of offspring who had the wonderful idea of someone taking them for a swim.

"How about it, huh?" they wondered. Need it be added that all was said was: "Get your stuff; we are on our way."

AFTER ALL, isn't a person rather wise if he recognizes a really gorgeous August day? Soon, the fall will come, then winter. And inside we'll be. For a long, long time.

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