

WestWard Quarterly

The Magazine of Family Reading



Fall 2010

To our readers . . .

We have had a nice, balmy autumn here in Illinois, with day after day of sunshine and pleasant temperatures in which to enjoy the outdoors. The leaves are just starting to turn. Our ancient oak tree, whose branches cover the entire back yard, is turning a reddish-bronze and the leaves slowly floating down as we sit on the deck observing the busy squirrels and noting a variety of birds that we hadn't seen all summer.

Soon the cold, snowy days will be here and the deck a forlorn place visited only by the birds that come to the feeder. The Holidays will provide a color and warmth all their own, as we sit by the fireside thankful for the blessings of hearth and home.

In this issue we have some new writers, along with those who have graced our pages many times in the past. They have created some delightful autumn poems, some highly reflective pieces, three pages of humorous poems and, of course, the high school page.

Our featured writer for this issue is Cornelia Snider Yarrington of Colorado. Be sure to read her interesting article and four memorable poems.

In Richard's Workbench article he enlarges upon the idea of "writing with style" with some gleanings taken from the book: *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk and E. B. White, which he recommends as a good addition to any writer's library.

Shirley Anne Leonard, EDITOR

WestWard Quarterly

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WestWard Quarterly showcases the best work of upbeat writers and poets. Our magazine's philosophy is: "Adversity happens. Find the eternal purpose behind it." Reflect an uplifting, positive or gently humorous attitude in your submissions. Send all letters, requests for guidelines, queries or submissions to the address above. Send SASE for response.

Maximum length for poems is 40 lines. Shorter submissions have a better likelihood of being published. The Editor reserves the right to edit material. For more information on guidelines and how to send your submission, visit our web site, www.wwquarterly.com.

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Cover Image: *The Leonard Residence in Hamilton, Illinois*

Where *WestWard Quarterly* Is Produced.

Photo by Richard Leonard, Autumn 2009



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Cornelia Snider Yarrington Colorado

It is summer, sunlight on the land. Barefoot, I trot behind my sisters and brother past fields and orchards shimmering with heat Beyond the town's tin roofs and desultory shade, a lake glitters in the pines, cool and ineffably seductive.

For me these images and the scent of Mother's olive oil capture a time lost, yet forever near. We lived in the North Carolina Sandhills. Our parents were academics displaced by the Great Depression and struggling to support four children with a failing store. When I was five, Mother left with my siblings for a teaching job in a distant town. There was no kindergarten. I stayed behind. On hot days I played on our porch in a box that became one of the Seaboard Air Line Railroad trains rumbling past. In winter I sat by the stove as Daddy weighed out dried beans and meat or sliced Argentinean cheese from our storeroom's huge waxed rounds. With his guidance I read — books, comics, newspapers, and the store's trove of labels and ads. At six, I joined my siblings and mother in the tiptoed life of a partitioned house, our landlords lodged like jailors beyond the wall. School was a place of stultifying rules, Daddy the brief visitor I ran after until his car vanished down cheerless streets.

Two long years later, my parents found teaching jobs together. My sisters were gone to adult lives, but my brother and I welcomed the Piedmont hills and lakes of Daddy's birth. A scholar of ancient history, he did not care what the neighbors thought. To save money for a farm and our ultimate home, he rented a never-finished house in woods where owls hooted, and we once heard the hounds of a prison escape. If he found nothing amiss in kerosene light, outdoor pump, and walls that leaked the winter blasts. Mother was mortified. But summer came. She planted morning glories on the porch. He took up the plow he had scorned twenty years before.

In the pantry I found a bottle of olive oil, relic of our store. One whiff of the old sun ointment found me walking on the Sandhills road. I would read in college of learning by reduced cues: one recovered sensation releasing imbedded memories, an experience explored by Proust. I studied literature, having done nothing more literary as yet than draw science fiction comics and co-edit my high school year book. In the German lyric I found nature symbolism, in T. S. Elliot, social satire and my own loneliness as a foreign student in one-night cheap hotels. Most poignantly with Dylan Thomas, I grieved Daddy gone my sophomore year "into that good night."

Decades later I was teaching writing composition at C. U. I had set aside the Ph.D. I earned in German literature to accompany my biologist husband to Southeast Asia, South America, and after other stops, to Colorado. There I raised two children and sent them off to college. At night in a house emptied by divorce and children grown, the silence came alive with memories — of dead parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents, and the cocky, oldest sister who led us down the road that day. I tried to recapture the odor of olive oil. In its place came the lines of "Déjà vu," my first poem.

The essence of poetry was always there — in daydreams; in images, sounds and smells; in people and events adumbrating a larger reality. My poems are about connections — to others, living or dead; to the natural world I have known as a gardener, hiker, and traveler; and to the ordering presence under it all. I have written comic and satiric poems, children's poetry, travelogues and book reviews, but always return to the lyric. There I work as an interpreter, using elements of perception to tell the reality I have lived. At best poetry is a reflection, like Plato's shadows on the cave. Yet sometimes it draws us from our separate lives to say, "Yes. I have seen this too."

A grandmother and remarried, I have retired to write, garden, and travel. In addition to book reviews and poems for *Bibliophilos*, I have published in *Able Muse*, *The Aurorean*, *Black Bear Review*, *The Classical Outlook*, *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*, *The Lyric*, *Moments*, *Paraglide*, *Tucumcari Literary Review*, and *WestWard Quarterly*. Among others, I have won poetry awards in *The Lyric* and *WestWard Quarterly*, which features "Deja vu" online. I am currently compiling two adult poetry collections and drawing illustrations for a book of children's poems.

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Autumn's Voice

Cornelia Snider Yarrington, Colorado

On a chill October morn,
I heard the voice of autumn call.
Half insistent, half forlorn,
It cried: forsake your fortress wall.
Leave lazy comfort, walk with me.
Together let us bid goodbye
To purple ash, gold willow tree,
Scarlet oak, and cobalt sky.

The Winter King has left the North
With his blustery entourage.
Summer birds are fleeing forth
From guarded nest and paired ménage.
The leafy flames that light my stay
Will gutter in tomorrow's snow.
Come, seize the glories of this day —
My last before I'm forced to go.

Published as Guest Poet in Moments, Fall 2003

As I Step Out My Door

Cornelia Snider Yarrington, Colorado

Mourning doves erupt on wheeling wings;
while grackles in a flash of indigo
break off their squabbles by my scattered seed;
then swift as a floater in my eye, a mouse
streaks through the cat mint by my patio.

Yesterday, my stepping out evoked
the protestations of absconding jays,
displaced to trembling branches of an ash,
these raucous trapeze artists all in blue
holding forth on my intrusive ways.

Hours of dazzling summer days are marked
by duels with a squirrel acrobat,
dumping feed for finch and chickadees
on purple phlox and scarlet bee balm beds
that cloak the neighbor's ever-lurking cat.

And now, as I settle in my chair,
my day of shipshape management at close,
a blackbird's hot, indignant yellow eye
above the eave reminds me nothing here
curtsies to the laws I would impose.

Published in The Lyric, Spring 2007

Heart Talk

Cornelia Snider Yarrington, Colorado

Heart, you say you know this well:
this wet, green place, its charmed spell
of ancient trees, oppressive air,
its creeping forest — secret lair
of owl and fox and furtive deer,
sly whippoorwill, unseen yet near.

Heart, you know this mockingbird.
That distant baying hound — you've heard
its ghostly voice on moon-washed nights
when steaming earth breathed fog as lights
of sleeping farms winked out. Heart,
you say we've never been apart —
my magic, woodland home and I.
This broad-planked door where fingers pry
still holds the knob you know. Inside,
behind my tremulous smile you hide,
while whispering within my mind
of all these treasures left behind:

my room, its floor still painted rose;
the closet built for mother's clothes;
the bedroom where her spirit dwells;
this stairwell door, its smells
of wood dust sharp in memory
and just behind, Heart, you see

where Father's tools must surely sit:
planes and auger, brace and bit,
his spirit level, saws and square.
Heart, you say they're waiting there,
that all the years have dropped away.
I've never left. It's yesterday.

Published in The Lyric, Winter 2007

Season of Orion

Cornelia Snider Yarrington, Colorado

Deepening shadows, thinning air
Stir a primal wanderlust:
For there the celestial hunter pair
Kicks up the black void's starry dust
In myth's eternal chase. We too
Would break our camp and travel on,
And on primordial trails pursue
The ghostly spoor of mastodon.

Published as Guest Poet for Moments, Fall 2004

Featured Poem Study

Shirley Anne Leonard, Illinois

Autumn in the Adirondack Mountains of New York State sweeps in with an exuberance of color. Every possible shade of red, gold, yellow, and bronze bursts forth on the hills against the backdrop of pine and evergreen trees, with a brilliant display. As a girl growing up there, I remember walking through the woods collecting leaves. Only the most brilliant and colorful went into my basket, and when I got home I labeled them and carefully pressed them between pieces of waxed paper to preserve their beauty. Looking through an old album recently, I found some still quite well preserved.

Autumn Comes to Town

Autumn sweeps into our summery town
flaunting her new whimsical gown
She trips through neighborhoods of flowers
scattering leaves in blustery showers.

She brushes the river and the pond
with burnished bronze that she has found
in her boutique that carries all
the blazing furnishings for fall.

She whisks her breezes through the trees
so that their leaves float as they please
to cover grass and walk and glen
with rustling memories of when

we, as children, raked her bounty
making memories in the bouncy
mounds of orange, red and gold,
rejoicing in the wind and cold.

The Idea: The idea for the poem came to me on an autumn day as I observed my husband raking leaves into a huge pile. It reminded me of autumns in the Adirondack foothills of New York State where I grew up, and later raised my children. From my kitchen window on the fifty acres of fields surrounded by stone walls and split rail fences with a view of the mountains in the background, I had watched my children play in piles of leaves. I was reminded of my own childhood and the fun it had been to rake leaves into gigantic piles and then jump and play surrounded by the crackling, crisp foliage.

The Form: I used rhyme and assonance with lots of lively, descriptive verbs to give the poem a feeling of brisk breeziness, like the autumn air itself, and hasten it to the last stanza where the sights, sounds and smells are taking me back to my lost childhood.

Eucalyptus

Dr. Jane Stuart, Kentucky

As soft as the wind blowing through the night,
as quiet as the moon that makes no sound,
as peaceful as a river filled with light —
these golden leaves now falling to the ground:
each leaf could be a day that once was ours,
or sleepful night when all dreams drifted by,
an afternoon that filled with playful hours,
an autumn, then a winter lullaby
without the storm that comes with bitter age,
the ink that barely dries on every page,
the footprint in the hall — no longer there,
nor is the wind that once blew through your hair.
But spring and summer bring back memory,
and life that was is love that remains free.

Gentle Meadow

Mike Berger, Ph.D., Utah

Songbirds frolic, playing tag.
A meandering stream laughs
at their antics. The Sun plays
hide and seek, concealing itself
behind dark clouds. Deep
shadows dance across the
grass. The wind whistles its
way across the meadow; the
grasses shake and tremble.

Standing tall and aloof, pine
trees pay no heed. Cliffs beyond
catch the flickering Sun, reflecting
a kaleidoscope of colors. A light
rain distills from the sky; sweet
smells of wet earth hang over
this enchanted place.

Haiku

Raymond J. Flory, Indiana

Twirling and swirling
ballet in the breeze . . .
October leaves.

Foghorn echoes on
the Mississippi River . . .
drifting autumn leaves.

Autumn evening
in the mirror . . .
my father's face.

First Leaf

Leonard Tuchyner, Virginia

In morning's light a yellow leaf,
so early in season, lies at my feet,
Its hawthorn shape a flint spear point.
Spring is fallen, autumn is nigh.

In lengthening night
the moon is crescent,
its arms stretched up
to hold spring's last wine.

Poplars cradle moon glow,
whispering sweet lullabies
of soft cooling breezes.
Newborn breezes will learn to howl.

How sweet the puppy breath,
whose teeth will freeze to ice,
its cold knives cutting deep,
on soft snow of Christmas scene.

Your Warming Tread

Julie Stuckey, New York

To Erin in Sudan

This time, then, I will tell you...
it is good to feel the grass between your toes.
Sometimes I ask why you are not here —
but I see now the wonder of a different sky.
Only you can know your reasons for roaming
and snug them along in your bag . . .
but remember, too,
the potted plant travelers once carried —
keeping them rooted to home.
These days will drudge on
as we keep watch for your smile.
I want to tell you again how I am sorry
for all the unsaid words
that would have made a difference . . .
I carry those stones of regret.
Yet today the sun shines
and the chill wind hints of warmth.
This cold soil knows the dry barren clay
on which you stand so very far away . . .
waits for the warming tread
of your familiar footsteps
to offer up its stability.
Waits to embrace you home.

Late Summer Asters

Russell Rowland, New Hampshire

Mid-September, and Aster remains widespread
in the high places, dappled intervals of sunlight
through shade of scrub oak —
constellations
in the heaven that is earth, in daylight's zodiac.

Each glade keeps its garden, to which a woman
of Magdala may yet return, and there mistake
her heart's desire for the gardener —
till he calls
her by a name nobody else would think to use.

I crave vision that would intensify my memory
of Asters to a brilliance that does them justice,
so that, when the first frost comes, or my legs
are no longer equal to such distances,
I close
both cataracted eyes and say, There! And there!

I want to hop nimbly past a just-purchased plot
in our village cemetery, all the way to the picket
fence along the back —
reach over it, to Asters
assembled beyond our boundaries of grief.

Carpe Diem

Jim Rainey, Illinois

I have given up my gemstones
And relinquished all my dreams:
Brought down my expectations
like window shades;
Boxed up my resentments
And discarded old regrets;
Put all my disappointments
on a bus to Yesterday.

I want to witness an autumn sunrise
And envy no man, today.
I want to walk through a yellow woods
And splash at the leaves at my feet.
I want to smile at the man in the moon, tonight,
And pretend that he smiles at me.

Alphabet

John Grey, Rhode Island

He's at the kitchen table, practicing his letters.
 The pen moves slow, intricate around
 "A as in apple" as if he's growing that fruit
 with his fingers.
 The sound of the letter hums on his tongue.
 Likewise the B and the sweet curve of the C.
 Soon enough, he'll put those letters together,
 acquire words and, ultimately, meaning.
 But for now he's at the beginning,
 where O is round and I is straight and tall.
 What his mother says and what he puts on paper
 make no connection.
 He's struggling with this thing called the alphabet.
 Life will have to wait its turn.

Looking Backwards

By Eve Jeanette Blohm, New York

Nostalgia lives in our dreams
 Our experiences create memories
 They continue to trick or tempt us
 to wander backwards to childhood
 I hear your voice repeat and repeat
 MOVE ON AND LIFE GOES ON
 I cannot look backwards
 and discover the new, romance
 adventure and the truth
 The past will never change
 It is fixed like lists I write
 The facts do not change, but
 the details of my life do when
 I open doors and windows.

In Sympathy

Thomas Cochran, Arkansas

On the card a sunflower
 broken from its stem,
 center of a collage
 made of shadows
 and weathered wood.
 Inside nothing, a blank
 space for me to fill
 with words that say
 there are no words.

Montana

Luther C. Hanson, Washington State

Each day seems as if it were the last day
 On the prairie wheat fields of my well-being.
 On the glorious black highway through gold,
 I journey a glad traveler along the way.

Along the edge prairie grasses once held sway
 And are still remembered by a wind
 That rarely intrudes to measure time.
 I journey a glad traveler along the way.

A black and gold quilt warms the earthy sleep
 On an afternoon of cresting plateau and plains
 And a slowly falling sun toward a blue horizon
 From a world of black and gold and faith to keep.

Soft prairie, mellow plains, star of love deep
 In the night time of my unplanted wheat —
 I journey a glad traveler along the way.
 Tomorrow a day, tomorrow a faith to keep.

The Santa Fe Trail

George Moore, Colorado

Still so little down there along the route
 if you cross by yourself from Denver
 headed south, still few trails across
 the southern hills, and the lands now
 opened out into farmlands and unfenced fields,
 and the ranches that have eaten up miles.

But the springs are still flowing along the trail
 and you pass them with a flash of ruin
 and wayside station gone to desert.

It's enough to remember the names in place,
 the Cimarron, La Junta, Raton Pass,
 to see the arduous history mapped out

beneath a cool moon that forgets the dead
 and yet brings them suddenly to mind again
 as if the mark across the land were theirs

in blood, reddening the soil to the Rio Grande.
 Enough of the old to suit the new, a highway
 cannot erase the ones displaced, or the ten

week trek, nor simply say it's the same, for
 changes are the land's, not so much its residents',
 even when they share the deep ruts of travel.

Encounter

Joyce G. Bradshaw, Texas

Strange and mysterious the half-expected meeting of our minds, the confrontation of our souls, the awakening of somniaular hearts.	Subjective, psychical, yet portentous — as if all of time converged upon that single point and around it swirled the universe.
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Angels' First Assignment

Stan Galloway, Virginia

Are you still standing there east of the Garden of Eden, or
were you relieved by the flood that revised our geography?
Cherubim tasked with protecting the Tree of Life, surely you
saw when that tree was returned to us lifting our Lord on it.
Were you the same angels posted beside the new tomb with the
body of Jesus, the New Tree, provided again for us?

Notebooks

d. n. simmers, British Columbia, Canada

Smile pages and sadness
Filling notebooks
Like old scribes telling stories
In clay,
Electric changes of now and
Then, with squires on blackberries
And red colors that are computers,
Chip and swirl in the day light
As hands print new texts
And responsive fingers, reply.

Autumn Glory

Karen O'Leary, North Dakota

crisp
golden
confetti —
fragile paper
dances in October's gentle zephyr

Antioch Church

Wilda Morris, Illinois

Here is the country church
my grandfather pastored
before Mother was born.
On which of these rich mahogany pews
did grandmother sit, children in tow,
through each Sunday service?

Did my aunts and uncles play
on these old wooden teeter-totters?
Did they pump themselves up
on these antiquated swings,
overlook fields of corn
while wind swept sweat
from their warm faces
and brushed back their hair?

Who in this churchyard
did grandfather bury?
Which folk under these stones
invited him for Sunday dinner,
shared with him their dreams,
their fears, the sins haunting their hearts?
From the buried past rise no answers;
only green grass whispers in the breeze.

Influence

Vivian Bolland Schroeder, Texas

She touched my life briefly.
Yet, when I encounter familiar verses
They come to me in *her* voice, *her* nuances —
And I see her, without conscious recall,
Pacing the classroom,
Animated love for the classics
Transforming from musty pages
Sparkling renditions
Secured not only in *her* mind,
But in ours.

And I thank the Lord for two years
Under the tutelage of a gifted teacher
Whose passionate caress
Domesticated even elusive passages
And coaxed them into our souls
Forever.

Drop, Drop, Vibrant Leaves of Autumn

Margaret Adams Birth, New York

Drop, drop, vibrant leaves of autumn,
 breathless on the breeze, unable to fight
 the current, despite the power of your crackling
 cranberry and bayberry and beeswax hues;
 the flame-colored leaves lap at blades of
 grass, then quickly withdraw, as if in pain —
 like a hot Moravian ginger snap greedily pulled
 from the oven and placed on a tender tongue —
 too tender, for it smarts and retreats,
 hesitant to taste again, hesitant to fall prey
 to delicious instinct — hesitant as October's
 foliage, which seems ever so reluctant
 to touch the ground at all.

Winter Calls: Gloucester*

Thomas P. Feeny, North Carolina

Here the season is best told
 by the suddenness of an October
 wind who, one afternoon
 drops in from the north

Hacking the harbor's stark
 waters, he grabs welcome
 from sails the whip on
 rubber masts
 from great white banners that
 dance beside the blinking
 eyes of tenements

Across, in the schoolyard
 empty swings scrape and jig amid
 wild expectation
 Sidewalks awake in eddies
 of spastic leaves
 Giddy with excitement, a
 tin coke sign bobs, topples
 skids on down the street

Everywhere, wind dashes, churns
 Doors and windows slam
 Even *The Globe's* yellowing
 sports section, still
 sleeping off summer
 in an alley
 must rise to greet
 this insistent guest

**Gloucester, Massachusetts, on Cape Ann — ed.*

The Pageantry of Autumn

Susan Dale, Ohio

Tawny afternoons
 That stretch to the rings of Jupiter,
 Are they our daydreams
 Captured in cottony mazes of clouds?

And these honeyed days of bees
 Bending the fading phlox,
 Crickets chattering songs of courtship,
 All are being carried on
 Cool breezes beating wings
 Over golden sunspots splashed
 Across our autumn daydreaming days.

One mellow moment dissolves into another.

All are melting into a puddle
 Of the waning splendor of melancholy autumn.

Thankful

Debra Pardue Hollar, North Carolina

The sun's bright warmth awakes October's frosted
 morning. The world is swept with scattered sheets
 of playful red and golden leaves. Veils soar in
 Autumn's breeze like curtains of spun gold. The
 crisp leaves call out to me to feel the crush of
 them as if I were a child. I sit in the brilliance
 of autumn's gift and I remember to be thankful.

An Old Oak

Joe Frey, New York

Wrinkled, crocheted bark
 Entwines arms up to the birds.

Gunpowder gray branches,
 Dead and brittle.

Tired, timeless limbs,
 Twisting into themselves.

Behold, one lone leaf,
 Refusing to let go, stubborn.

Yet strong, like a bird
 At the apex, in formation.

Jagged, splintery twigs
 Whistle in the autumn wind.

Calling out to the birds —
 Come rest here for a while.



Drawing by Patricia Sarazen

Yesterday

Patricia Sarazen, Pennsylvania

It was yesterday
with golden bouquet,
magic lit the earth
with joy and mirth.

For the maple trees were dressed in gold,
the giant oaks were coppery red, on the knoll,
and the awesome majesty of each tree
now wore ghostly colors of fantasy,
soon to be cast on the winds — fleeting,
to the sound of raindrops — beating.

Dear elusive, divine autumn glory,
your blessed beauty is so transitory.
You rain down leaves with silver laughter,
where the divine breath hovers; thereafter,
in a realm of haunted autumn hush,
with all God's beauty, on you rush

Into yesterday,
for us to remember
your golden ember,
with life's bouquet.

Poets from the Past: Felicia Dorothea Hemans

Felicia Dorothea Hemans was born in 1793 in Liverpool, England, a granddaughter of the Venetian consul in that city. Her father's business brought the family to North Wales where she spent her youth, and it is clear that she came to regard herself as Welsh by adoption, later referring to Wales as "Land of my childhood, my home." She read at an early age from the well-stocked family library. She learned several languages, and studied music, under the direction of her mother. When she was twelve she spent two successive winters in London, where she was awed by the paintings and sculptures. Her first book of poems was published in 1808 when she was fourteen years old.

She married Captain Alfred Hemans, an Irish army officer some years older than she, in 1812. During their first six years of marriage Felicia gave birth to five sons. In 1818 Captain Hemans went to Rome, leaving his wife with her mother. There seems to have been a tacit agreement, perhaps on account of their limited means, that they should separate. Letters were exchanged, and Captain Hemans was often consulted about his children; but they never met again.

Her poetry was popular and sold well; on the basis of her work Hemans was able to support herself and her children. Frederic Rowton gives a contemporary's assessment of her work in *The Female Poets of Great Britain* (1853). In her poetry Hemans used a variety of metrical effects and narrative structures. Much of her popular appeal lay in her ability to write emotional verses expressing the sentiments of her time. Hemans responded to the concerns of women of her time by idealizing woman's role and relationships

Her strong support of family ideals was one reason why contemporaries accepted her in the roles of loving daughter and parent, and treated her separation from her husband sympathetically as an unfortunate circumstance which reflected poorly on the Captain rather than upon her. She spent her life with her family in Wales, rarely traveling. She read extensively, and sought inspiration and detail for her descriptions of Greece, Spain, and the New World in the writings of other authors. She died in Dublin in 1835 at the age of forty-one.

She is remembered most for her poem "Casabianca," and schoolchildren in the U. S. were taught "The Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers in New England." Though neglected for a time, her work has been reexamined in recent years and has reassumed a role in standard anthologies, in classrooms and seminars, and in literary studies, especially in the U. S. It is likely that further poems will be familiar to new readers, such as "The Image in Lava," "Evening Prayer at a Girls' School," "I Dream of All Things Free," "Night-Blowing Flowers," "Properzia Rossi," "A Spirit's Return," "The Bride of the Greek Isle," "The Wife of Asdrubal," "The Widow of Crescentius," "The Last Song of Sappho," and "Corinne at the Capitol."

Landing of the Pilgrims

The breaking waves dashed high,
On a stern and rock-bound coast,
And the woods against a stormy sky
Their giant branches tossed;

And the heavy night hung dark
The hills and waters o'er,
When a band of exiles moored their bark
On the wild New England shore.

Not as the conqueror comes,
They, the true-hearted came;
Not with the roll of the stirring drums,
And the trumpet that sings of fame;

Not as the flying come,
In silence and in fear; —
They shook the depths of the desert gloom
With their hymns of lofty cheer.

Amidst the storm they sang,
And the stars heard, and the sea;
And the sounding aisles of the dim woods rang
To the anthem of the free!

The ocean eagle soared
From his nest by the white wave's foam;
And the rocking pines of the forest roared —
This was their welcome home!

There were men with hoary hair
Amidst that pilgrim band:
Why had they come to wither there,
Away from their childhood's land?

There was woman's fearless eye,
Lit by her deep love's truth;
There was manhood's brow serenely high,
And the fiery heart of youth.

What sought they thus afar?
Bright jewels of the mine?
The wealth of seas, the spoils of war? —
They sought a faith's pure shrine!

Ay, call it holy ground,
The soil where first they trod.
They have left unstained what there they found —
Freedom to worship God.

Home Not Alone

Joan McAuley, Virginia

Our house is bursting at the seams
 With objects, man and beast.
 The kids and dogs run loud and free —
 A chaos lover's feast.

Our clutter splashes colorful
 And spills through every room;
 The mess is like a living thing,
 Immune to thought or broom.

Our attitude of laissez-faire
 Advances active minds,
 But disarray combined with noise
 Leaves sanity behind.

So when the rush of life subsides,
 And lively souls sleep tight,
 Surrendering to quietude
 Completes the day's delight.

Don't Go Beyond

James Webb Wilson, Connecticut

I walked up the knoll behind the pasture
 I stood up on a boulder inside the gate.
 I looked over at the hill beyond
 Where Father said, "Don't go beyond!"
 We all always obeyed, but wondered.
 He never told our childish ears,
 We never dared to even ask.
 He had his reasons, so we supposed;
 He chained the gate and kept it closed.
 He strictly watched and kept us away,
 Then made a ball field where we could play
 Way round the other side of the farm.

So we kept busy at work and play;
 It kept us and our friends away
 From the secret on the windy hill.
 As Dad sleeps under a mighty oak
 A stone marker on his grave holds him down,
 But we all suspect he has one eye open
 For his last wish was hoping
 We would never go beyond the gate,
 To save us from a perilous fate.

Good Headlines

J. Alvin Speers, Alberta, Canada

Bad news makes the headlines in the papers that we see,
 While good news gets hidden in small space on page three.
 Why are we preoccupied with the baser things?
 Do we not even notice when we hear angel wings?

Helping hands are reaching out as people try to share
 Their good fortune with others to prove that they do care.
 But when newspapers are printed the headlines have to shout
 With horrible event accounts that crowd the good news out.

Is this habit so entrenched that it cannot be changed?
 Or can we be uplifted, priorities rearranged?
 Can we take a moral stand and hesitate to mention
 Acts to reward the criminal with national attention?

Make the headlines tell of good,
 Man's progress to proclaim,
 Instead of reports of awful deeds
 Which bad folk take as fame.

Printed in the Calgary Herald "Neighbors" weekly, June 17, 2010

November Muse

Maureen Kingston, Nebraska

Me and Jameson's
 in the backyard
 burning brush.
 The UPS man honks.

I sign, unevenly,
 for three boxes
 of books,
 my cord of words
 for the winter.

And I wonder if
 it will be enough,
 if it ever will be
 enough.

Perhaps

Nancy Ann Schaefer, Illinois

I fancied I'd be a poet, so I took out paper and ink,
and prepared my hand for a torrent of words,
but for some reason, I just couldn't think.

I assumed it was the atmosphere, all I needed was change of place,
but when I found the perfect hide-away,
all I could do was erase.

I next thought my lexis was lacking, so I studied my Webster's with care,
but I continued to fail miserably,
I noted with growing despair.

I had to face the obvious, I'd never be more than apprentice,
so I weighed my alternatives carefully...
perhaps I should be a dentist!

Moondrops

Belle Homsj, Missouri

The stars have set in the evening sky
Glittering stardust sprinkles down
The night vibrates
As the stars come to life
The moon has risen high
Held in the soft blanket of night
The crossbeams shudder under its weight
Its face is washed clean and bright
The trees whisper secrets
Silently
Their leaves catching moondrops
Because the night is crying
The lake's surface shivers
At the touch of the cold air
But it breaks
As moonlight slides into its
Dark
Purple depths
The grass glistens, studded with dew
Pinning the ground down
One drop for every star above
Pinning the sky up
The sky is monochrome
The air stagnant
The earth's Heartbeat has slowed to near
Still
But the lone cricket is chirping
Breaking the gentle silence

math homework is NOT a night-time activiTY

E. M. Johnson, Washington State

it's 1:19 am and i'm still awake
i'm exhausted and my brain is like
an over-heated computeR
(functioning, but wonkY)
frank zappa's singing about disco boys in the radio and I'm thinking, no thank yoU,
i'd rather noT
just past the reaches of rationality and sanity, i'm determininG
the coefficient (codependent?) ofX,
thinking i should be sleepinG,
and maybe i should stop putting things off until the last seconD
(my g.p.a would thank mE)
i've got 13 more problems to do in 2 hourS
and i'm gettinG
punch-drunk philosophical;
i'm liable to drop off to sleep at any moment buT
osmosis won't help me study, my thoughts are going off on 15 tangentS,
but still touching the parabolic functioning of my minD
i put down my pencil anD
rub my eyeS.
why do i do this to myself?

Reminiscing Summer

Kendra Slater, Washington State

I'm sitting inside
Looking out my window.
The rain is pouring from the clouds above.
I wish the sun would come back out.
There is so much more to do
When the sun is high up in the sky.
I could have a picnic . . .
I could go to the beach . . .
I could ride my bike . . .
Or I could walk around downtown Poulsbo.
Summer is what I miss the most.
The sizzling sun.
The fun flip flops.
The silk blue sky.
Jumping into the cold Indianola water,
But right now I'm sitting inside
Watching the rain pour from the clouds above.
Summer is what I miss the most.

HIGH
SCHOOL
POEMS

HIGH
SCHOOL
POEMS

A 29-Cent Banana
Larry Granger, Minnesota

Grocery store checkout
lines move quicker when
customers have one item.
Always an exception.

“29¢ for your one
banana,”
said the clerk to an
old regular customer.
“Four nickels and nine
pennies on the way.”
Slow coin counting
with arthritic hands
caused
the checkout line
to stagnate.

“See you tomorrow,” said
banana guy with a wink.
“Don’t want to waste a
whole bunch in case I
expire overnight.”
Waiters in line nodded.

So was the morning routine.
Variance was when a banana
was 27¢, or 31¢, depending
on the international banana
market and currency ex-
change.

Didn’t matter much.
It evened out over time.
29¢ was what he had
budgeted for breakfast.

Wimpy

Raymond Gallucci, Maryland

Is the ocean really colder,
Or am I just growing older,
Less immune to temperature than what I used to be?
Though more fat cells now I’m wearing,
Seems my cranium’s de-hairing
Such that heat I once retained’s escaping vertically.

Years ago I swam in Maine without
The least bit of complaining,
Caring not if icebergs might float by majestically.
Now I only splash in waters
Warmed along our southern borders
Where the ocean rarely cools to less than seventy.

But when faced with such occasion,
Doesn’t take too much persuasion
For me to submerge myself in less than balmy seas.
I just squeeze into my wet suit,
Wrists to ankles all Gore-Texed to
Keep my wimpy body at most comfortable degrees.

Given

Robert Black, United Kingdom
(Inspired by the Spielberg epic *Taken*)

Just as I was settling down, ready to sleep,
Something with a thumping b-b-beat swept across
And landed on the road outside my home with a screech!
A blue light then clicked on and a strange shadow appeared
Followed by alien conversations about badges and B.H.P.*
(and torque about other things car spotters think a treat)
Then the auto pilot clicked in and something glowed
And it took off at the speed of light ale**
Accompanied by a beep!

*Brake horsepower
** Lager, in the U.S.

On Second Thought

Vernon Waring, Pennsylvania

To overeat is human.
To diet is divine.
To count your every calorie
is a precious use of time.
To pass up fattening goodies
shows your admirable restraint,
a noble cause you’ve championed
with nary a complaint.
But who could nix banana splits
or pasta, piping hot?
Your diet is well balanced.
Your mind is surely not.

New Lincoln Metal Detector Penny

Jim Brearton, New York

The new Abe Lincoln penny
introduced in 2010
appears to feature Abe
with a metal detector.

I was so amazed by this
I wondered what
they would come out with next.
In this new SteamPunk
copper currency smackdown

will George Washington
be shown chopping down
a cherry tree with
a chainsaw?

Or will Herbert Hoover
stand next to a
chart showing the
Dow Jones crashing?

Let’s hope
we don’t have to make change
with Harry Truman
and a nuclear bomb
mushroom cloud.

There Was to Be a Meeting

Thomas V. Lysaght, New York

There was to be a meeting.
It was scheduled "on the fly."
Its announcement had been rumored
for a day or two ahead
by a few close insiders
to increase the sense of dread.

It would be about the present set
of uncontrollable events;
and would use the special kind of talk
that resembled normal, formal speech
but never quite made sense.

Since just a few were fluent
in the speech the meetings used,
the rest were left with silence
and the making of occasional displays
with their faces,
consistent with their places in the group.

Attendance would be taken
and all would be required to be properly attired
and pretend to pay attention
while all reason is forsaken.

In-Laws or Outlaws

Martin McMahon, Illinois

We're in-laws, but fortunately
We're glad we are not out-laws.
We thank God each morning and night
To keep us on the narrow path!

Certainly we are both in-laws;
But wrongly we're now called outlaws
Though we can't change being in-laws:
We may change that outlaw status.

Don't grill our status as in-laws,
Nor seek to alter our fine stand:
Confusion piled — you know all that —
Peace, by piece, is our own motto.

As we're noble in-laws indeed;
Surely we can't be called outlaws:
Just a contradiction in terms —
Though there's hope for all within reach.

The brave shine bright: the sullen pale!

October

Linda Fuchs, Ohio

Days of shortened sun
Cool wind blows
with a hint of white

I walk along the cliffs
of southern Ohio parks —
trees put on a show

Soon enough the wind
will pull off all the colors
and throw them to the ground

The trees have been altered
until another season
when the buds of new leaves
finally arrive

Firefly Lake

Cory Meyer, Wisconsin

A slight breeze blew through the air
that day at Firefly Lake.

Lucy was stealing hot dogs
and running down the beach.
My sister and niece were there
watching Lucy from the bank.
Pete was splitting up some logs.
Dad was fishing with a leech.

A beautiful autumn day,
not a cloud was in the sky.

The six of us together
having a gay old time.
Our worries were far away
as we walked with watchful eye.
Lures, rocks and eagle feathers
waiting for us to find.

A Snapshot

Nancy A. Caldwell, Pennsylvania

Melted marshmallow swirls cut
cocoa in an old Revere pot on mother's
range. I tipped, up on my toes, one
December night, and ladled,
that warm white and gray into
cups on saucers
that tinkled and rattled, for my family.

Behind our house, apples grew on a
gnarled trunk with branches of
delicate leaves and green

worms,
sour
apples
that
pursed
my
lips
like
a fish's.

Sweet and sour
moments follow me — tiny
bubbles in cocoa, fruit, knocked down by the wind

The Autumn

Janet Goven, Pennsylvania

I thought of Autumn, nothing more —
 seemed it all had been said before.
 I read its songs of praise in poetry
 but when my eyes saw all the leaves
 falling fast from off the trees,
 I wondered to myself, how could this be?
 The blazing bronze of sun
 was gently warming every one
 as they turned orange and gold
 then red, no longer green.
 Against the endless skies of blue,
 round white clouds were rolling through
 painting misty, gossamer hues
 into the scene.
 The cooler evening breeze
 rustling through the disrobed trees
 lifting branches, doing dances
 on the moon.
 Autumn is the final splendor
 before reaching cold December
 when barren days of Winter
 descend too soon.

The Song

Benita Olsen, Illinois

The breath of a bird
 Is a word that is heard
 In a song
 That is learned
 From the Master.
 It lifts on the air
 And travels from there
 To skies of blue
 Alabaster.
 If the heart has a voice
 It needs must have a choice
 To sing to the Lord God
 Who made it —
 With nothing of pain
 Or hurt to remain
 To darken, to dim
 Or to shade it.
 The Song —
 Is Jesus.

Church

Cathy Porter, Nebraska

The pews are
 covered in leaves,
 and the altar stretches
 past trees and deer
 hidden in private sanctuaries.
 Each gust of wind
 a festive prayer;
 every bird a choir soloist,
 as the sun lights its candle
 over the congregation.
 The day slides
 into darkness; the moon
 dares my pen into action,
 while the wind prays
 the paper away.

First published in Write On Poetry Magazine, 2009

Refrain

Carol Hamilton, Oklahoma

“Take me with you. Take me with you.
 Take me with you.”
 Scarecrow begged Dorothy
 every weekday as 6-7-8-year-old heads
 bent over their art work
 and the old LP my own children
 had worn out stuck there
 again and again.
 We worked and listened
 to Johnny Appleseed
 or Aesop’s Fables or songs
 from Shakespeare’s day.
 But the Wizard was their favorite.
 Last night Ray Bolger
 renewed his appeal on my radio.
 His voice skipped right ahead,
 ready to go on to the Emerald City,
 but I was pleading, pleading,
 stuck with this entreaty
 and those windows behind the children’s heads,
 windows full of afternoon haze or winter gray.
 Do they, now grown, share
 with their children?
 How many find this cadence
 chanting, chanting
 as the newest ones hear the song
 and wonder why their elders
 have this sudden stutter,
 this hallowed look
 as if absorbed in some unbidden prayer.

Leaves

John F. Gruber, New York

My rake is rusty,
 the wind has become gusty,
 my neat pile has been
 scattered all around.
 some are heaven bound,
 others are just resting
 on the ground
 waiting for me to
 make a mound.
 Shadows are starting to creep.
 I’ll wait till morning
 hoping the wind will
 be fast asleep.

Just Like the Ones I Used to Know

Brian C. Felder, Delaware

In a place where it rarely snows,
 it is snowing
 and on Christmas Eve, too.
 I kid you not, non-believer, I kid you not.
 It is not, perhaps, the stuff of miracles,
 as no blind man saw,
 no crippled child walked,
 but it is still a blessing,
 a reminder that all things are possible
 and everything beautiful
 when embraced with a grateful heart.
 It is Christmas Eve and it is snowing,
 in a place where it rarely snows.

Christmas in a Nutshell

Les Johnson, British Columbia Canada

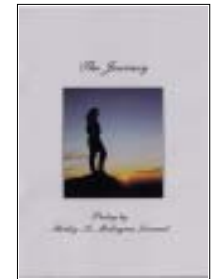
From the viewpoints of fantasy, tradition and sacred scripture:
 Christmas is the jolly old saint
 who comes down the chimney
 with a sack of toys,
 hauled in a sled
 pulled by flying reindeer.

Christmas is decorating the evergreen tree,
 singing carols, exchanging cards and gifts
 and enjoying turkey dinner.

Christmas is the Christ Child,
 born in a manger in Bethlehem
 on the night when angels
 appeared to shepherds,
 bringing tidings of great joy.

*“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior,
 which is Christ the Lord.” — Luke 2:11*

WestWard Quarterly's Editor, Shirley Anne Leonard, has published five poetry chapbooks. *The Compass* meditates on the voyage through the seas of doctrinal dispute into the secure port of God's Kingdom. *The Promise* celebrates God's historic work to bring about the restoration of His creation. *The Journey* includes poems about the perils and joys of the journey from the Kingdom of Darkness to the Kingdom of Light. *Creation's Song* (not shown below) brings together poems celebrating the beauty God has created in nature for our enjoyment. *Remembering Eden* (not shown below) is a collection of poems honoring Christ and recounting God's plan for the restoration of all things.



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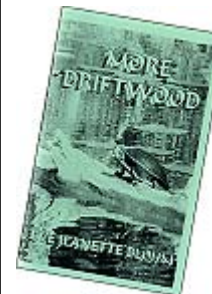
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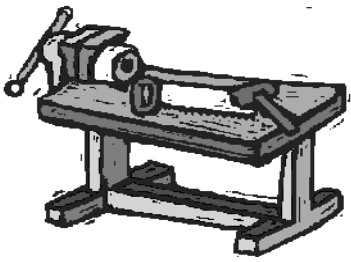
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Writer's Workbench

The Elements of Style

The plot of 1950s movie classic *Singin' in the Rain* centers on the 1920s introduction of talking motion pictures. In one scene the characters are discussing the first sound movie, in which the actors talk. The would-be heroine of a new film pipes up: "Of course they talk. Don't everybody?" But her remark underscores that her way of talking — her tone of voice and word choice — are unsuitable for a "talkies" role.

Much the same could be said of writing: "Of course they write. Doesn't everybody?" Yes, everyone writes something, somehow, if only a grocery list scribbled on a Post-it. But just because someone writes doesn't mean his writing can be published and appreciated as good writing.

That's where the matter of style, or one's way of writing, comes into question. And here, a valuable resource is *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk, originally published in 1919 and revised several decades later by Strunk's former Cornell student, author E. B. White. (We have the fourth edition, ©2000 Allyn & Bacon).

In this pocket-sized volume Strunk and White discuss rules of English usage, elementary principles of composition, some matters of form, commonly misused expressions and words, and an approach to style itself. Here are a few gleanings.

On the use of a dash (—) the authors state, "Use a dash to set off an abrupt break or interruption and to announce a long appositive or summary." Two examples they give are: *His first thought on getting out of bed—if he had any thought at all—was to get back in again*, and *The rear axle began to make a noise—a grinding, chattering, teeth-gritting rasp*. In our opinion, writers often ignore the dash where it can be effective, so the Strunk/White reminder is a useful one, with the caution that the dash can be overused.

Another reminder is that "a participial phrase at the beginning of a sentence must refer to the grammatical subject." Violating this rule can yield laughable results, such as *Being in a dilapidated condition, I was able to buy the house very cheap*.

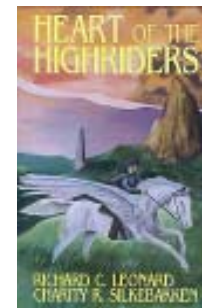
Included in the authors' list of some 120 misused words are *currently* and *literally*. The first is redundant, as in *We are currently reviewing your application*. Whatever is being done *currently* is being done *now*, so if the sentence is in the present tense the word is unnecessary. The word *literally* is often misused to express exaggeration, as in *literally dead with fatigue*. If a person is tired, he obviously isn't dead; he might feel he's *almost* dead, but he isn't *literally* so.

Style is harder to pin down, because differing writing styles can all be grammatically correct. The Strunk/White volume discusses style partly in terms of what we might call the "flair" of a writer. Thomas Paine's *These are the times that try men's souls* could have been written *Times like these try men's souls*. Or one could exclaim *How trying it is to live in these times!* Other options are *These*

are trying times for men's souls or *Soulwise, these are trying times*. But none of these alternatives have the enduring, ringing quality of Paine's words; their style is unremarkable, or even trite.

The above are just a few samples from the riches contained in *The Elements of Style*. While the book is principally concerned with prose writing, we believe poets will also gain from a survey of this modest volume. We commend it to our readers.

Happy Writing,
THE PUBLISHER



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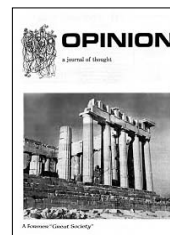
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