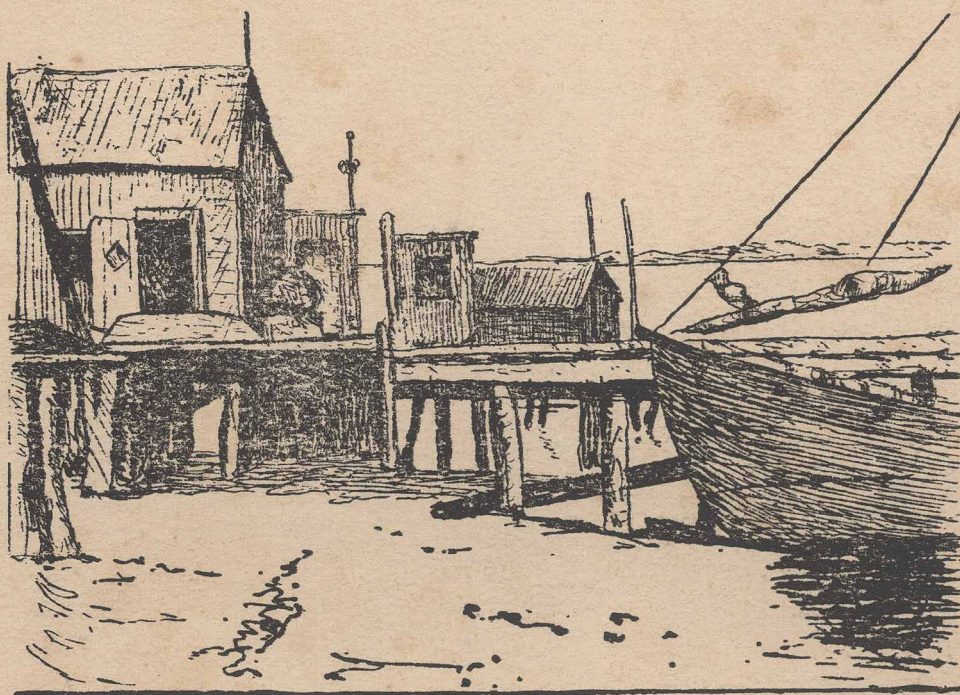


THE CRACKERBARREL



MARCH
1937
VOL. 1 NO. 2

PROVINCETOWN MASS.
15 CENTS

A Red Satin Dress

By
Ellen Vorse

My Aunt and Uncle sat around the front room. My Aunt rocking in her chair, giving a push, letting her feet swing free a moment, then a smart tap and she pushed again.

Uncle Henry sat sideways by the window, looking out, watching it get night. They talked in bits, not moving to turn on the light until it was quite dark in the room.

Suddenly my Aunt said, "No, I wouldn't—" folding her arms across her tight bunched bosom. She pursed her lips and went on, "No, I wouldn't have my teeth out for a million dollars."

Uncle Henry didn't say anything the first time she said it, just sat quieter looking out at the sea gulls.

Aunt Madelon said again, "No, not for a million dollars would I have my teeth out!"

Uncle Henry shrugged a shoulder irritably.

"Well I wouldn't," Aunt Madelon repeated.

Uncle Henry suddenly came to life. He swung around in his chair and shouted, "What! You wouldn't have your teeth out for a million dollars?"

Aunt Madelon glared at Uncle Henry and stopped rocking a moment, "No," she said, "not for a whole million dollars." Then she went on rocking.

Uncle Henry shouted again, his eyes bulging out, "What! You mean to sit there and tell me that you wouldn't have your teeth out for a million dollars? You would be that selfish?"

Aunt Madelon settled herself more deeply in her chair. She said stubbornly, "No. No. Not even for a million." She added bitterly, "I do believe you'd actually let me have all my good sound teeth out for a mean material gain."

Uncle Henry's face began to get red. "Do you realize what a million dollars would do to this family?" He leaned over the arm of his chair craning his neck out at Aunt Madelon. "Do you?" He shouted. "Do you?"

He started in a low tense voice which ended up in a squeak, "Do you realize we could have the whole house painted and a new carpet for the dining room floor and all the plumbing new, all new, throughout the whole house?"

Aunt Madelon went on rocking. She seemed not to be listening to Uncle Henry at all. She had that hard, day-dreamy look. She stared into the empty fireplace, and tapped her teeth with her forefinger, lifting her lips up off her gums.

They didn't say anything for a short while. Then Uncle Henry started again in a more ordinary voice, "Well, that just shows how much you care for the family. That just shows how much you feel about us. Just let us starve in our tracks. Let the clothes rot off our backs, before you'd lift a finger." He looked at her with sad tragic eyes.

"And that just shows," Aunt Madelon flared up, "how much you care for me. Let me go around for the rest of my days drinking milk, and soft foods, and wasting away and having to *lisp!*"

Uncle Henry went on as if he hadn't heard, "Yes, let us starve by God, all for a simple little thing like

having your teeth out." He looked desperately around the room as if neglect and decay were already settling down over their heads.

"And why?" He popped out of his chair, waltzing up and down the room. "Because of vanity. Vanity! Because you don't know that 'Beauty is only skin deep.' Because you think your teeth are so pretty! When," he finished crushingly, "the chances are that the dentist could *make* you a pair that not only would be better to chew with, but would be a long sight prettier *than the ones you got!*" He shouted.

Aunt Madelon sat very straight in her chair staring frigidly at Uncle Henry. They glared a moment, then Uncle Henry sat down, looking out the window to hide that secret good feeling he had from having got a good one home that time—for once.

There was a long silence, not fraught with anything in particular. It was comfortable and serene. Aunt Madelon got up and with a very genteel manner turned on the lights. Then she went back and sat down rocking, pushing her feet free a second and tapping down again.

She said in a soft voice: "But I'd go down the street without my clothes on for a million dollars."

Uncle Henry flew out of his chair before she had even finished her sentence.

"I knew you'd say that! I knew you'd say that! You'd actually walk down the street without your clothes for a measley million dollars! You'd actually disgrace—"

Aunt Madelon smiled without any boldness or timidity and said, "Yes, I would—" through my Uncle Henry's roaring over her head.

"—the family. So that's all the decency you have. You'd ruin me by your common behavior. Keep your children from any decent future by having such a common mother. You'd—"

Aunt Madelon looked at Uncle Henry standing on the other side of the library table. "What a lot of fuss you're making, Henry," she said mildly. "What about Lady Godiva?"

Uncle Henry snorted, "Lady Godiva—" He didn't have anything to say for a moment then he roared. "Besides Lady Godiva had long golden hair that *covered* her and everybody closed their shutters."

Aunt Madelon patted her thin brown, greying hair and said, "Well, you ought to be able to arrange that. You said yourself that with a million dollars we could have new plumb—"

Uncle Henry stood over her, "If I ever catch you even so much as going out without your *gloves* on I'll—"

"I'd a good deal rather go out without my gloves on than without my teeth," Aunt Madelon said, her head tilted back to see Uncle Henry.

"Teeth! Teeth! What's teeth got to do with Lady Godiva?" He waved his arms. "Do you realize what your common behavior would do to your son? Do you? This house that we've worked over for so long, would go. We'd have to sell it and move away to another town and start all over." Uncle Henry turned away from

Continued on Page 2, Column one

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CHIPS, THE OTHER CHEEK, WHAT THE HELL and DOWN THE HATCH are not, as they might appear, titles of stories. They will appear each month as the editors' respective columns.

I SHALL GIVE NO REASON

Diantha Crisp

Upon the winds I fling the cloak
Of Earth that some have thrust upon me
And from my ears I tear the rings
Of speech that cloud my Song
And from my vision drops
The film of those who do not know
And from my lips henceforth
Shall come no reason for the things I do.

And in the darkest places as I go
I shall always make a song or two.

A RED SATIN DRESS

Aunt Madelon, walking up and down the room. "And even then we could never live it down. What ever college your son went to he'd be followed by the horrible story of his mother's shameless behavior." Uncle Henry stood broken and wearied. The hunted years of dodging were in the slump of his shoulders.

Aunt Madelon said with a trace of coyness, "But with a million dollars, Henry, we—"

"So, a million dollars is all you're worried about. What about your son! What about your good name?"

"Well! Well!" Aunt Madelon leaned forward, "What about my good sound teeth?"

"Teeth!" Uncle Henry stood at the door. "You don't know the first thing about argument." He bobbed his head emphatically and went out.

Aunt Madelon looked at the fireplace with a superior air.

That evening Aunt Madelon wore her red satin dress. The only time she ever got to wear it was when they fought about the teeth. Uncle Henry said it was too low in the neck like a movie actress. But she loved it. It was a real Paris dress bought on their twentieth wedding anniversary.

CHIPS

Neptune craned his neck around the end of Long Point, gave the shore-line of the town a quick once-over, noticed the two red flags whipping in the breeze beside the Tower, and let out a laugh that cracked the bell in the buoy to his right.

"The kid ought to take this in three minutes flat," he said, thinking he was unheard.

But the kid himself, the big wind from the south-east, had sneaked up behind him: "You made me wait long enough for a return bout!" he said. "I would have knocked this over last fall if you'd come across with the nine feet I asked for!"

Neptune curled his lip and said: "Nuts! Cut the alibis and give me results. There's twelve feet of water—let's see you go to town."

The kid went, knocking the old boy's crown for a loop as he passed. He doubled up both fists, stuck out his chin, and blew a mile wide crest of water three feet ahead of him as a feeler.

Neptune rested his chin on the light on the Point and watched the show. The kid looked good. He'd feint to the west, and deliver the goods to the east. Then he'd jab to the same spot, and follow through to the mid section. As seen from the Point it was terrific!

The kid slapped MacMillan's place down in the first two minutes. He sprayed the windows, kicked a dozen tons of sand away from the cement bulkhead, and sent it for the count before it knew what was happening. He didn't bother to count the pieces, just cut sharply to the east and sent the Cold Storage wharf spinning in eight directions.

Neptune stopped biting his nails long enough to breath: "Gawd!" He reached down and pushed a half foot more water around the Point.

That was all the kid needed. He flexed his muscles a couple of times and started up to the westward. Just off Nelson's Store he changed his mind, and doubled back on his track.

Neptune cursed: "Stalling!" he snarled. "That's the trouble with these muggs—give them half a foot and they think they can get a fathom!"

But the kid wasn't stalling. He just remembered something in the East end he'd planned to get for the last four years. Doc Eaton's place! Boy! The time had come!

He picked up his trunks and started off at a lope. The big stucco place gathered itself for the assault. It watched the kid take Dos Passos wharf, the Hapgood studio, and the Bissell sea wall without breaking his stride.

The kid knew he was expected, so he didn't fool around. He just closed his eyes when he reached the place, and let go with both fists.

Even the kid was surprised when he peeked out to see what damage he'd done. The house wasn't there any more—nor was that part of Commercial Street! Pulver's house was an island in a raging sea!

"If I wasn't seeing it with my own eyes, I'd never think I had it in me!" The kid said, wide-eyed now. He was about to say more, but Neptune came up and tapped him on the shoulder.

"Come on, kid," the old boy said, "don't waste your time on this tramp. I've got you signed to meet Nantucket, and boy! I hear they've got some jetties down there that'll keep you stepping!"

Bill Steele

WORLD TRAVELER RETURNS

Mr. Adoniram Ghen, after 17 months, has come back to us in Provincetown. "I been down to London. Been down to Rome," he says. "Been down to Paris, Berlin, Athens, Moscow, Singapore and Timbuctoo. But Provincetown," he adds, "has them skun a mile.

"Now—you take London. Nice folks, and kind of kind. But, sure are sort of silent.

"One day, in London, I stood on my hotel-roof, looking out upon the town, when my foot suddenly slipped and I went over the edge. I clutched at the cornice and I caught it. And there I dangled—200 feet up in the air—knowing that the moment I tired and I let go of the cornice, I would go down to my doom.

"I said all my prayers. I never knew that I knew so many prayers. Then, when I felt my fingers would hold on for only a second or two more, I closed my eyes and started to compose myself for death. An Englishman, just then, happened to stroll up on the roof. He gripped my wrists and he tried to haul me back. But—I always was a heavy man—and, instead of him pulling me up, I pulled him down, and, in a while, there he was, hanging—one hand on my wrist, and the other on the roof.

"I gave up all hope again—when another Englishman happened to stroll up on the roof. He saw our plight and he tried to haul us back. Well, the three of us soon were dangling from that edge. And, now—again—I resigned myself to death.

"This—I thought—this is finally the end. It would be too much if another one strolled by. But, sure enough, a third Englishman popped up. And, sure enough, he tried to help us. And, soon enough, the four of us were dangling off the roof.

"And so it went. Time after time, I thought that all of us would fall. Another one could not appear. No, it was improbable. It was impossible. Yet, each time, another Englishman showed up. Five, six, seven, eight. Of all stations and conditions. Every time, he tried to help. But, every time, he was pulled down, and we all hung and waited for our doom. And then—by God—another Englishman appeared.

"And there I hung. I dangled on a human rope. 20 feet. 50. 90. 140. I could not see what transpired on the roof. But, at intervals, I felt that the rope had grown longer; a new man had been added to the chain.

"And still I thought another one would not appear. Even until the very end, I thought the human line would break, a human link would snap, and all of us would tumble down. And, since we were all of us about to die, I felt that I should say a word to the man who held me, or even to the man who held the Englishman who held me. We should know each other. Maybe we'd give messages if one of us survived. But, they dangled there without a word. Not a peep and not a sound.

"After what seemed a century, after an endless number of respites from what seemed to be a certain death, the human chain grew long enough for my feet to touch the ground.

"I was physically tired. I was nervously exhausted. I thought that I would go to bed. Then I remembered. I could not betray them, I could not leave them—those poor devils who were dangling from the edge. I rushed

up on the roof and I grabbed at an Englishman just at the moment when he was ready to let go. I grabbed him and I tugged. But, sure enough, they pulled me off the brim again, and once again, as I went over, I clutched at the cornice, and I caught it.

"Everyone of us who reached the ground ran up again and took his place. And—all the while—everyone was like a clam.

"This went on for hours. This went on for days. A few more people happened to stroll by on the roof, and they were kind enough to take their places in the line. Now, when we touched the ground, it was possible to take a couple of minutes off—for a catnap or some food—before we rushed back to the roof.

"No, I do not know how it finally ended. I stayed as long as I possibly could. But, after nine days, I had to take the boat back to the States.

"Good-bye," I said. After nine days in one another's company, after nine days of continuous peril, I thought I might address a word to the Englishman who held me. After nine days, he might—I thought—permit himself to say, 'Good-bye.' But, instead, he fixed me with a frigid eye.

"I have been in many towns. Yes," says Mr. Adoniram Ghen, "London and Cairo, Oslo, Peiping and New York. But Provincetown," he adds, "has 'em skun at least a mile."

ARTIST'S LAMENT

McKain writing this poem was a sight to see. His six feet four was bent by worry, his usual grin erased by care. His studio, large normally, grew in this his hour of need, to amazing proportions. Bruce paced: he walked up, he walked down. He clasped his hands behind his back, and he ran his hands through his hair. Easel, brushes, tubes of paint, went before his rage. Nothing in his mail box, nothing in his cupboard, in his jeans. "The hell with checks!" Bruce cursed. "I'll give myself to words!"

Did you ever spend days end upon end
Watching the mails
Walking all around the floor
Pacing up and down the floor
Gnawing your nails
Waiting for a check that no one's sending
Hoping for a check—you go on spending
Mopping your brow in desperation
And finding death by starvation
Impending
To your great consternation the situation
Has no other visible way of ending

You imagine a fate that is not so cruel
That would give you at least your
Plate of Gruel
And maybe a drink or a little fuel
But what the hell is the use pretending
You can't even have a thin slice of
Black bread
And you see yourself riding along in a
Hack, dead
Stiff and cold—looking very silly
A box of bones—clutching a lily.

NEW YORK LETTER

Provincetown has ever been a spot dear to the heart of the nation's editors as a source of strange and wondrous news stories. Whenever the press tickers of the various news services tap out a Provincetown date-line, telegraph editors stand at attention, awaiting the first lead with an interest that surpasses the usual hulabaloo that goes on when the tickers begin doing an imitation of an alarm clock to inform the boys to "release president's message."

Whether it be the saga of our own little Marjorie Stahl's epic battle with the principal of Provincetown High School over the principle of ski-pants, or the cat crusade of a Provincetown animal lover, it is sure to get very special attention.

Unfortunately, not all the yarns that have come out of the little village at the tip of Cape Cod have been in such humorous vein as those which have broken in the past few months.

There have been grim tales, too. Sitting across from us each day is Whitney Bolton, dramatic critic for several daily and weekly publications. Before he turned to appraising the drama, Whitney was a reporter for the *Herald-Tribune*, and as such covered the S-4 disaster. Some day we may prevail upon him to do a short piece about his experience at the time for this publication.

Two Provincetowners, Richard Whorf and Bretaigne Windust, are on tour with "Idiot's Delight," in which they appeared in leading roles in support of the Lunts on Broadway. The troupe did not play Cincinnati because of the flood danger. The company had enough of floods last year at Pittsburgh.

Down on Sullivan street, about a block and a half below Washington Square, is the Grand Torino Restaurant. Despite the rococo title, the place is a simple and swell dive (advt.), the chief mark of physical distinction being a billiard table in the front of the room. The place seems to be a favorite with Provincetowners and other visiting firemen.

On one night the following ran into each other there: Mary Ellen Vorse Beauchamps (pronounced Beecham), Joseph Heaton O'Brien, Mr. and Mrs. Ray Avella, Mrs. Saul Yalkert, Mr. and Mrs. Harl (sp???) Cook, Miss (what's Hutchin's daughter's name) Hapgood, Bobby Burns, Betsy Duval and a couple of others whose names we have forgotten. (Say, I'm doing good to remember the ones I did!)

Delayed Letter

New York Feb. 13
Marjorie Stahl, 577 Commercial St.

NEW YORK LIBERALS ENRAGED OVER LA-
TEST THREAT TO CIVIL LIBERTIES OF
AMERICAN STUDENTS STOP MASS MEET-
ING AT MECCA TEMPLE DENOUNCES RAM-
EY'S ACTION AS FASCIST THREAT TO IN-
DIVIDUAL FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY
STOP TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION MOBI-
LIZING TO BOMBARD RAMEY WITH PING
PONG BALLS STOP YOU HAVE REPLACED
TOM MOONEY AND SCOTTSBORO BOYS AS
CAUSE CELEBRE OF INTELLIGENTSIA

THE OTHER CHEEK

March comes in like a horse-mackerel, but goes out like a tinker. The frost still blows from the north-west and the north. A south-east wind hurls its head against the bulkheads. Yet—already—buds, fragile and yellow, (like the Paul Smiths' Austin), rise in Bob Nicholson's churchyard.

Windows shed their shutters. The fishermen set their weirs. Malicoat whets his razor. Bock-beer is in the vats. There are more loungers idling by the New York store.

Days get longer . . . Boys get bolder . . . In the twilight, bull-frogs bellow in the ponds . . .

Two thousand years ago, Horace gazed upon the Spring. Horace thought thoughts which he might have thought today. In his fourth Ode to Sestius, his friend, he wrote about the breath of Spring:

The voice of West Wind and the Spring
Have stilled the louder Winter-call.
The sailors wheel dry keels to sea again.
The ploughman leaves his wintering.
The sheltered oxen leave the stall.
For Spring is calling to the lea again.

Now Venus bids the budding girl
To skim the May on slender feet.
She bids a thousand Graces lend her grace.
And see a thousand dreams unfurl,
While Vulcan glows, and kindles heat
To blaze into the Summertime's embrace.

So, pluck you wreathes of myrtle-leaves.
For Spring is growing in the earth.
Spring is trembling in the skylark's throat.
Our laughter, in the cloudless eyes,
Will mingle with the cricket's mirth—
Then, sacrifice a white, unblemished goat!

Yet, think you—It thinks not to die.
So, maybe, Death will knock for you.
Ah, Sestius—when Life is short,
How far may expectation fly?
Then, haste! Nor watch the clock! For, you,
Too soon, the avid ghosts of Pluto's court

Will hail unto his Shadow-Seat!
There, will you toss the dice no more
To see which fop will be the bottle's first.
And no more will your pulses beat
When Lydia unlocks her door
And makes you thirst—until she slakes your Thirst.
Nat Halper

Speaking of art, shouting about it, in fact,
the cover of this issue of **THE CRACKERBAR-
REL** was done by Jack Beauchamp.

STOP SPECIAL BUSLOAD OF PICKETS LEAV-
ING FOR PROVINCETOWN TONIGHT WITH
SIGNS QUOTE DON'T LET RAMEY TAKE OFF
MARJORIE'S SKI PANTS UNQUOTE
HANK SENBER

Ganders at the Great :--

Richard Miller

He looked all over the house for a bottle of whiskey that wasn't there so we finally settled for a drink of Bacardi. It was almost dusk by then. We sat in the half light and Mr. Miller gazed philosophically at his glass. "You may quote me as saying, he said, "that the changes in the country are due to the change in the quality of the beer. As the breweries go so goes the nation."

He also said, "The Anheuser-Busch company made me an artist. That explains why I was always definitely opposed to prohibition. The report that I was born in 1875 is pure hearsay since I neglected to check up on the date that first year"

They didn't call it a blessed event in Missouri in the 1870's but it meant the same thing, and there were certain obligations connected with a happening like that. All the neighbors down on Third Street between Troudeau and Douchequet in the Frenchtown district of St. Louis broke out with cigars and white collars, and Mr. and Mrs. Miller were pretty proud of a brand new boy. There were two important facts attendant to the event. The first was that the Germans were rapidly taking over Frenchtown, and the second was that Third Street was close to a brewery. That little matter of location had a profound effect on Mr. Miller's career. Being born in or near a brewery is bound to have some sort of an effect on anybody.

He grew up the way boys grow up in Missouri which may be a hell of a way to grow up if you live in New England or New York City, but it was considered all right in St. Louis. For a matter of some sixteen years he did the usual things, although if you shoot billiards with him some time you become convinced that he must have spent at least fourteen of those sixteen years in a pool hall.

We had a drink of the Bacardi and talked about art.

He became a painter purely by accident, although some credit for that goes to Anheuser-Busch. When he was sixteen he went to work for a man named Otto Schroeder, who was a small, mustached German whose profession was sign painting, but whose social activities were such that they allowed him but little time for the pursuance of his life's work. The combination of Miller and Schroeder was fortuitous. Otto sang Dutch songs and drank beer and Richard did the work.

Their specialty consisted of painting eagles on the beer signs for the brewery and it was a tough business at the time. St. Louis was overrun with eagle painters and competition was pretty keen. They had their moments of despondency and there were some days the money didn't come in, but Otto solved that. He came home one evening in a more or less dilapidated condition, carrying something wrapped in a dirty newspaper under his arm, and with a triumphant gleam in his eye. He broke the string and unwrapped the bundle with something like reverence in his expression and then exhibited his prize. It was slightly moth eaten around the edges, but there it was. A fine stuffed eagle.

Business boomed from then on. They had a model to paint from and there wasn't a firm in St. Louis that

could touch them for realism. They did a job on the outside of Schultz' Wine and Beer Saloon and the future was assured. Frenchtown could appreciate true art. After that they had more jobs than they could handle. They would sit up on a scaffold painting the portrait of that elegant eagle while throngs of admirers stood below drinking beer and applauding. After a while the saloon keeper would break out a barrel of brew and everybody would have another drink and congratulate him on the fine eagle he had on his building. It was a fine business.

"A very inspiring thing," Mr. Miller said. "Perhaps it was the association with eagles, or maybe it was the beer, but I could feel myself soaring to great heights of accomplishments. It was a fortunate thing for me that I had a person like Otto for an instructor."

In between jobs they had time for a little fine art. Otto would roar about elasticity and freedom being necessary to creative painting. Then he would expound on color.

"Otto taught me all I know about color," Mr. Miller said. "He had a picture that he used to paint all the time. It was a picture of a fire department fighting a fire. Otto always intended selling it. He would paint it and go out in the morning with it under his arm intending to sell it, but by nighttime he would have traded it for a few drinks someplace so he would come home and paint it all over again. When he painted it he would show me the difference between hot and cold color. He had hot red color in the fire, and cold blue color in the reflections. It was the first time I ever knew there was any difference."

We had another sip of Bacardi and thought about the stuffed eagle, and Otto Schroeder, and the splendid opportunities a young man had in those days when they had good beer, and Anheuser-Busch was going strong, and the public was eagle conscious

"I went to Paris in 1900," Mr. Miller said.

He went over in that year and spent the greater part of the next fifteen years abroad. During that time he taught, and painted, and succeeded in establishing himself as one of the best known American painters of the period. He was a familiar and well known figure in Paris but he is extremely reticent and modest concerning that point in his career. He has paintings in several foreign galleries including the Luxembourg, and you talk to him about those and he won't say anything at all. You go on talking about art and inspiration and finally he will say, "The important thing in painting is having the right man for an instructor. You take Otto now"

He will sigh remembering Otto, and then you will understand his indifference to France and the French Academy, and the Luxembourg and international reputation. That foreign recognition was anti-climactic. There are no further honors that any European gallery could bestow on the man who was the best eagle painter in all St. Louis.

Bud Beauchamp

CHATS AT DUSK

"SWIFTY"

IT was getting dark when I overtook the small bent figure sauntering along one of those narrow lanes with which the Cape abounds.

Good evening, I said, can you tell me the way back to Provincetown. I seem to have lost my way.

Good evenin to yer, he answered, we . . . ell let me see this here is North Truro Wellfleet must be some-where near I dunno I'm sure I allust get these darn places mixed, I ain't so sure but what that there turnin would take you to Provincetown, I never was there myself.

What, I exclaimed incredulous, don't you live in these parts.

Well yes I were born right here and I've bin livin here for a while now, but I never did hit Provincetown. O'course I bin around a bit in my day, I was to China I remember, didn't make much o'that fool country though, the West Indies was much better; Japan was kind o'pernickity but Ceelon: now there was a place for yer, good country, nice folks, they liked my boat too, and I will say she were a beauty she were, took the water like a lady she did, Yes sir it were Swifty they called me in them days and I sure did get around a bit, but no I never did hit Provincetown somehow they say its a good lookin town maybe some day I'll get a lift there.

Well good night to yer stranger try that ther turn to the left it goes to the westerd. Thank you, I said, I will. Looking after the small retreating figure I added "Well I'll be darned."

D. C.

CRUMBS

As was the case with the Palaeolithic rock-painter, and with the picture-writing Amerindian and Bushman, today's artist must, before he gets very far with his art, find a suitable answer to the inevitable: "Oh! I'd just love to see some of your work! May I?"

As a boon to the blushing artist, then, and as an aid to the well-meaning inquirer, the CRACKERBARREL intends to present each month a listing of where local artist's works will be on view, where and when local writer's stories will be appearing, and any other news of interest to the art lover.

Let us know when you, or any other Cape Ender crashes through the deep fog of public and editorial indifference.

Invited to the Corcoran Show in Washington D. C.:

Ross Moffett, Charles Kaeslau, Edwin Dickenson, Carl Knaths, Jerry Farnsworth, Floyd Clymer, Niles Spencer, Richard Miller, Henry Hensche, Jack Beauchamp.

To Colliers: Bud Beauchamp, short story. Sold March 2nd.

To Pictorial Review: Harry Sylvester, short story. Sold Feb. 23d.

Announced for: Saturday Evening Post. Bud Beauchamp, short story. April 2nd issue.

New Publication: The Book Sampler: Paul Smith's contribution to the book trade. First issue March 1st. In at the birth. Ted Rowley, Mayme Claxton, Bunny Smith, Nat Halper.

WHAT THE HELL !

It seems I have to write a column. Of course I love it. What writer wouldn't? Just to rattle off words without worrying about an editor's blue pencil or an editorial notation "Not for us."—it's a writer's paradise. I don't even have to worry about what I shall write. All I have to do is sit down and think of anything. Say, for instance, the strike situation, the Supreme Court or well, cats!

Now *there's* a problem of international scope. It's really very serious. Witness the furor caused by our furry friends in Provincetown.

Until now, these independent creatures have been left strictly to their own devices. There has been no attempt at regimentation. On the contrary they have been given the key to our little city and allowed the run of the town. Considerate people even allowed rats to infest their old sail lofts and fish houses for the cats' amusement. Fish have been dumped into the harbor so that the incoming tide would distribute them along the shore for their evening banquet. In fact, everything was done to make our tabby's lives happier and longer.

But now all this has changed. The independence of our cats, who have inherited freedom from the forefathers down through the ages, is at stake. Their very existence is in danger. To our harrassed friends even nine lives seem inadequate to cope with this merciless purge.

Pity the poor cat that can no longer streak down the alley after a nocturnal conquest without fear of a treacherous trap . . . and death. Pity the poor cat that dare not attack an unsuspecting rat for fear that the rat is the bait in a trap. Pity, indeed, these poor creatures that start and jump at every creaking gate and slamming door. The mortality from nervous exhaustion alone will soon jump to an unprecedented high.

But what is far worse than death are the lon lonesome nights spent behind wired doors of cages in the local jail. Think of Tom who gazes with yearning eyes into the soulful orbs of Minnie while they think of past nights spent underneath the stars in the open fields and dunes or on newly painted fences. Such thoughts loom worse than death to our feline friends. They strike deeply into their frail, sensitive nervous systems, inhibiting their natural tendencies until they become confirmed neurotics. And that, my friends, is the real danger. Can you imagine, for one moment, Provincetown filled with neurotic cats, too?

Yes, it is a serious situation indeed. So serious that one cat, at least, has taken the only way out. "Mike", a tiger of enormous size who has covered Provincetown's water front and by-ways for the past two years an undisputed master and leader of them all, has made the supreme sacrifice. In a gesture of protest against the regimentation of his kind, "Mike" leapt into the icy waters of the bay, And "Mike", alas, could not swim.

His master will tell you he found "Mike" on the beach, apparently the victim of natural causes. But I am determined that "Mike's" gesture shall not have been made in vain.

"Mike" was a martyr to the cause.

Francis Dears

DOWN THE HATCH

For the past three months I've been sitting around feeling like the farmer who ordered a bobsled from a mail order house in November, and got delivery on it the following June. He just didn't seem to know what to do with it by that time. Come last December I started anticipating winter with some woolen clothes and long underwear, and nothing happened. Things like that leave you up in the air a little bit. Here I was all fixed for cold, and then it kept on being warm through January and February, and by that time I was hoping that winter would come on Sunday so I could have the day off and go skating or skiing. And then winter came on Friday.

A stray cat came into my bedroom at four in the morning to get out of the storm, and three little girls held me up for fifteen cents at breakfast for cleaning the snow off the walks. That made me think a little bit it's this cheap coolie labor that is ruining the country. It seems to me that when I was a kid I got at least two bits for the job, but maybe we had tougher winters then, and more snow.

Anyway winter came on Friday. There were four inches of snow on the ground that day, and the wind got around into the northwest and started blowing, and after the sun went down you needed a coat. You have to take advantage of things like that. When it's cold that way you start downtown and halfway there you have a good legitimate excuse for dropping into Mac's to warm your ears, and maybe having a quick one before you go out again. Or you sit by the fire down at Taylor's over a crock of ale and hear all the dirt that's gone on in the last twelve hours, or two days, or six months, depending on how long it's been since you were downtown the last time.

If you drink enough beer it's probably dusk when you come out, and the light is almost gone, and you could shoot a gun up Commercial Street and never touch a soul. It may seem pretty lonely to you just then. You amble up the street and look at the houses closed tight and shuttered and you start thinking about the way it is in the summer. You see the sign of the place where you did most of your drinking, and that makes you remember things. You remember the time you got stiffer than a wedge in that joint on the waterfront and fell in the harbor afterwards because you thought the back door led into the street. You remember the mobs of people on the street and that makes it seem lonelier than ever. You pass an empty lot and see the boats pulled up for painting, and a pile of weir poles stacked 'till spring, and that makes you remember the time you went fishing, and you sat up all the night before drinking gin and waiting for four o'clock to come around, and after that you were sicker than hell over around Wood End someplace and missed it completely when the fisherman caught a horse mackerel in the nets and that was really the thing you came out to see.

Remembering it that way you think of it as being pretty gay at the time, but sometimes I wonder about this summer stuff. It seems a little far away these days. We get some sunshine and quiet and a little rest. You don't see any old ladies in flopprimsed hats and eight yards of pastel-tinted smocks sitting up on that pet hill on Bradford Street painting that same old scene. You don't see a bunch of youngsters on the beaches using up a thousand dollars worth of paint on a can-

vas that won't be worth fifteen cents when they get through with it. You don't see three thousand people getting off the boats everyday and dashing up the streets with a picnic lunch and a dollar and quarter camera looking for something quaint. And you can park a car on Commercial Street at any time during the day or night, providing you have a car and can afford to run it.

Maybe it's dead in winter. Enough people will tell you that, but I wouldn't know. There's always something to do. You catch a movie once in a while, and on Wednesday and Saturday nights you might wander up to the Beachcomber's and knock over a few frames of billiards, and on odd nights you can promote a penny ante poker game and spend all night losing seventy-five cents and drinking a gallon of beer. On good days you can walk in the dunes, or hike up the beach after a storm looking at the uprooted piling, and talking to somebody out looking for a set of steps that left unexpectedly during the night.

Pretty dull, maybe. We've had a couple of good fires, and some guy went nuts the other night and that will give us a topic of conversation for a week.

Maybe I like this winter stuff.

Bud Beauchamp

WHERE?

By Francois Villon, Nat Halper and Paul Smith.

O! Where are the floozies of yesteryear?
 Ou sont les neiges d'antan?
 Where is Matilda, the gay little dear?
 Where is the baby I used to skip rope with?
 Where is that honey I was a dope with
 And always discovered there was no soap with?
 Gone! Gone!
 Gone!

Where are the floozies of yesteryear?
 O! Ou sont les neiges d'antan?
 Speak of them gently, speak with a tear.
 Where are the mammas who used to deceive us?
 Where are the bimbos who'd love us and
 leave us?
 Gone—to make way for a batch of new Evas.
 Gone! Gone!
 Gone!

We couldn't very well frame the first dollar that came over our counter, but we could, and hereby do, present the letter that came *with* the first subscription:
 February 2, 1937

Gentleman:

God knows there are enough magazines on the market now but if you can take a chance I guess I can. It sounds like a worthy cause anyway. A dollar is enclosed for as many issues as it is worth—judge from the reader's point of view, please

I dislike to see budding genius nipped by material success but I wish you luck.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) George H. Pflug

P. S. I read about the mag. in the New Bedford Standard-Times so the ballyhoo did do some good. I don't work for the N.B.S.-T. I'm just gullible I guess.

The Editors Burn a Candle

How long will THE CRACKERBARREL continue publication? That question was probably asked the four members of the editorial board, individually and collectively, more often than — How do you feel about President Roosevelt's stand on the Supreme Court? As we stated in our last issue, THE CRACKERBARREL guarantees nothing. BUT, the editorial staff has ideas. One thing is certain, THE CRACKERBARREL will not continue publication unless you as a reader dig down in your files and help us out with copy. Copy about Provincetown. Copy about anywhere.

Short, very short stories, poetry, anecdotes or anything you feel will make this a more interesting and valuable sheet. One thing we do want understood.

THE CRACKERBARREL is not a medium for the literary talents or ambitions of any limited few. If we find it developing into that kind of a publication we'll stop the presses immediately and refund your subscription on a pro rata basis. That's both a threat and a promise. What we want is

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