

Hoosier Folklore

Indiana

Folder #4

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A QUARTERLY OF FOLKLORE
From Indiana and Neighboring States

Volume VII

June, 1948

Number 2

MEMBERSHIP IN THE HOOSIER FOLKLORE SOCIETY

Membership in the Hoosier Folklore Society is two dollars a calendar year. This is open to individuals, schools, and libraries anywhere in the United States. Members receive HOOSIER FOLKLORE, a quarterly for the publication of folklore of Indiana and neighboring states. Single copies may be purchased for fifty cents each.

JOINT MEMBERSHIP IN HOOSIER FOLKLORE SOCIETY AND AMERICAN FOLKLORE SOCIETY

Joint membership in the Hoosier Folklore Society and the American Folklore Society is available at a special rate of five dollars a year to Indiana residents. Members receive HOOSIER FOLKLORE, THE JOURNAL OF AMERICAN FOLKLORE and MEMOIRS OF THE AMERICAN FOLKLORE SOCIETY as issued.

Applications for membership and membership dues for 1948 should be mailed promptly to Mrs. William Hugh Jansen, Treasurer, Hoosier Folklore Society, 729 E. Hunter, Bloomington, Indiana.

Members are urged to secure new members for the society and to contribute manuscripts for publication.

STANDARD ABBREVIATIONS OF TITLES REFERRED TO IN NOTES AND ARTICLES

CFQ	—CALIFORNIA FOLKLORE QUARTERLY
HF	—HOOSIER FOLKLORE
HFB	—HOOSIER FOLKLORE BULLETIN
JAFL	—JOURNAL OF AMERICAN FOLKLORE
MAFS	—MEMOIRS OF THE AMERICAN FOLKLORE SOCIETY
NYFQ	—NEW YORK FOLKLORE QUARTERLY
SFQ	—SOUTHERN FOLKLORE QUARTERLY
Type Index	—Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson, THE TYPES OF THE FOLK-TALE, Helsinki, 1928.
Motif Index	—Stith Thompson, MOTIF-INDEX OF FOLK-LITERATURE, Bloomington, Indiana, Indiana University Studies, 1932-36.
The Folktale	—Stith Thompson, THE FOLKTALE, New York, The Dryden Press, 1947.

HOOSIER FOLKLORE

Vol. VII

JUNE, 1948

No. 2

OLD MAN EDMONDS

By RUBY STAINBROOK BUTLER

This fine collection of stories told by and about "Old Man Edmonds," with the note in an earlier number of *HF* (6:151-152, December, 1947), gives ample evidence that Mrs. Butler has discovered a folk character of real importance and interest. It is my hope that Mrs. Butler will find more Edmonds stories and that other readers from his part of the country will dust off the stories they know and send them in to be published.—The Editor.

William Easterly Edmonds, well known Johnson County relator of tall stories, was born in England during the first half of the nineteenth century. He died about 1908 and was buried in Greenlawn Cemetery at Franklin, Indiana. Although it has been years since his passing, a large circle of acquaintances and friends remember warmly Mr. Edmonds' spontaneous gaiety and ludicrous wit.

One of Mr. Edmonds' many acquaintances was Lewis B. Richardson of Franklin, Indiana. Mr. Richardson says Mr. Edmonds was small and stooped and that he limped when he walked. His hair and beard were long and he usually wore a disreputable old cap. His countenance was sober and innocent and lent strong conviction to his wildest yarns. Much to Mr. Edmonds' advantage and delight, many who listened to his tales were quite gullible and believed every word he said.

The history of Johnson County is one of Mr. Richardson's many hobbies and he is well informed on the subject. He credits Mr. Edmonds with the following stories:

1. *Big Pumpkin*

Mr. Edmonds said he once had a brood sow that got lost in the spring. He hunted for her all through the summer. In the fall he found her with a litter of pigs that were almost grown. When asked where he found her, Mr. Edmonds declared:

"Inside a punkin in my corn field."

2. *Hog Shelter*

Mr. Edmonds owned one hundred hogs. He modestly admitted the hogs were "mighty doggone smart." The only shelter in their pen was a hollow log. There was only room in the log for ninety-nine hogs. When winter came on the hogs went in the hollow log single file, pushing one hog at a time out of the end of the log. The hog would go around to the other end and crowd back in again, pushing out another hog and so on. In that manner all of the hogs got exercise, fresh air, and shelter and kept from freezing to death all winter.

3. *Bent Gun*

While hunting one fall day, Mr. Edmonds told interested listeners, he saw thirteen wild turkeys feeding in a semi-circle. Mr. Edmonds wanted as many of the turkeys as he could shoot. He got behind a tree, bent the barrel of his gun around the trunk, fired, and shot twelve birds with one bullet.

4. *Remarkable Memory*

While loafing in a taven Mr. Edmonds astonished a group of men by stating he had one hundred hounds. He proceeded to call each dog by name, in rapid succession. Unknown to Mr. Edmonds, a young man was present who had taken the names down in shorthand. A bystander bet Mr. Edmonds he couldn't name the hounds again in exactly the same way. Mr. Edmonds accepted the challenge. The young man again took the names. The elderly gentleman had named the hounds exactly as he did the first time. He accepted the stake—a jug of whiskey—and left the group to marvel over his remarkable feat of memory.

5. *Preventing A Bad Fall*

During a varied career Mr. Edmonds was, he claimed, a carpenter working on a tall building. He fell from the roof with a hammer and spike nail in his hands. With one hard blow of the hammer he drove the nail into the wall as he was falling and hung there until carpenters on the roof let a rope down so he could slide to the ground. (This story and variations of it are credited to another Johnson County tale-teller who was really a carpenter.)

Dan Patterson, Franklin, Indiana, whose aunt married Mr. Edmonds' son, states that on a number of occasions he has been called "Edmonds" because he likes to tell a good story.

Mr. Patterson is an interesting story-teller, and I am greatly indebted to him for his kindness and cooperation in making the following contributions:

6. *Trickster Gets Free Ride*

Mr. Edmonds made frequent trips to Indianapolis to have a good time. He often spent all he had with him and was without the price of a streetcar ticket home. On one such occasion, Mr. Edmonds went to the proprietor of a fur shop on the South Side and claimed he had some fine pelts for sale at his farm home in Johnson County. The dealer was interested in the furs and asked Mr. Edmonds to bring them to Indianapolis at the earliest possible date. Mr. Edmonds declined, saying that he'd made the trip to Indianapolis to find a dealer interested enough in the furs to purchase them that day. He started to leave. The dealer called him back and waxed cordial. He asked Mr. Edmonds to make himself comfortable while he called a livery stable and hired a horse and carriage. He said they'd drive to Franklin right away and if Mr. Edmonds' furs were as fine as he claimed, he'd be glad to buy them.

In a short time they were on their way to Franklin. On reaching the farmhouse, Mr. Edmonds excused himself for a few moments to go inside. Mr. Edmonds went through the house, out the back door, and was soon lost in the woods. The fur dealer waited and waited. At last he grew impatient, went to the house and knocked on the door. Mrs. Edmonds opened it and asked the dealer what he wanted. He said he'd come to look at her husband's furs. Tight-lipped, Mrs. Edmonds led him out to the woodshed and pointed to a lone muskrat skin stretched on the door:

"That's all the furs he's got," she said calmly and went back into the house.

Abashed, the fur dealer drove back to Indianapolis.

(Mr. Edmonds is said to have returned home from Indianapolis many times in the same manner, using hogs, cattle, sheep or poultry as the lure.)

7. *Lying Contest*

The livery barns at Franklin were favorite loafing places to Mr. Edmonds. He looked forward eagerly to rainy days when he could go into town and regale the "boys" at the stables with his finest creations.

After a particularly lively session one day at a Franklin

livery barn, Mr. Edmonds got out of his chair to go home, preparing, as he always did, to wind up the liars' contest with a masterpiece.

"Wal, boys," he said. "It's stopped rainin'. Guess I'd better git home an' hoe m' turnips. Them turnip seeds war imported. I sent clean to New York for 'em. T'other day I planted 'em. 'Long 'bout dark, that evenin', me an' m' wife was a-eatin' our suppers an' we heard the derndest noise! It sounded jest like a hurry-cane! We got right up from table. We wanted to git the stock out of the storm. But afore we could git to the door we heard a turrible crackin' and poppin' an' we was plumb scared to death. We went outside anyhow and 'twasn't no storm a-tall. Them doggone turnips was a-growin so fast they wuz pushin' my barn right afore 'em."

The livery stable habitues knew that the one thing Old Man Edmonds couldn't endure was to be bested at story telling. So they waited for the next rainy day and were ready for him. In the middle of the customary discussion a bricklayer walked in and announced that he was mighty tired. Mr. Edmonds asked him what he'd been doing.

"Building a kiln," the bricklayer answered soberly. "It's the biggest kiln I ever worked on. Why, we dug a hole so deep for it that one of our men dropped a hammer in it when he went to lunch and it hadn't hit the bottom when he got back."

Mr. Edmonds laughed. Full of the pleasure of the moment he was caught off guard.

"What are ye buildin' a kiln that big fer?" he asked.

"To cook one of your turnips in," his tormentor quipped.

The boys laughed raucously. Red-faced, Mr. Edmonds got on his horse and started home without a word.

8. *Carried by Birds*

Mr. Edmonds once told an interested group that he'd bought a bunch of cattle and the more he fed them "th' skinnier they got." He knew that if the cattle got much leaner he'd lose his entire investment; so he made up his mind to find out what was happening to them. One evening he fed the cattle several baskets of corn, then hid and watched them begin to eat it. As soon as he was out of sight a flock of wild turkeys swooped down and began gobbling the corn. Mr. Edmonds was so mad that he rushed into the lot and swept the turkeys up in his arms. He grabbed so many they flew away with him, and he

went higher and higher into the sky. The wind was so strong he lost his grip on them and started falling down—down. He was “plumb scared to death.”

Luckily, he lit in a hollow tree stump but he went in so deep he couldn't climb out. He tried and tried to reach the top but couldn't make it. He didn't know what to do. No one at the house knew where he was and night was coming on. Then he saw an old brown bear at the top of the stump. He was more afraid than ever until he saw the bear turn around and start backing into the stump. Mr. Edmonds had a shucking peg in his pocket. He got it out and waited until the bear was about to sit down on him. He grabbed the bear's tail in one hand, gave him a powerful jab on the rump with the shucking peg. The bear lunged out of the stump with Mr. Edmonds holding on to his tail and, the old man concluded, “In no time a-tall, I wuz home in bed.”

(Mr. Richardson has contributed a variant of this story. Mr. Edmonds was out in a boat. A flock of wild ducks were on the water. He got a rope from the boat, dived beneath the ducks and tied their feet together and they flew away with him. The denouement is the same as above.)

9. *Resourceful Hogs*

Mr. Edmonds had a sow and pigs which caused him considerable trouble. They were continually getting out of their pen. He stopped up all the cracks in the fence and put more rails on top. Still the hogs got out. Mr. Edmonds decided to watch and see how they did it. He said later it was simple enough. The old sow made a stile of herself and the pigs walked over her. Then she stuck her snout in a knothole of the top rail of the fence and forced the rail to roll her over.

10. *Wonderful Hunt and Pop Corn Frost*

Mr. Edmonds told a neighbor about the time he went bird hunting. He wanted to reach the marshes as early as possible; so he saddled up and rode his best horse. Reaching the spot he wanted to hunt, he tied up his horse, loaded his gun, and waded into the marshes. He hadn't been there a minute until a large flock of geese settled on the water at his left and a large flock of ducks settled on his right. He was “plum dum-founded.” He didn't know which to shoot first. While he was debating he heard a rattle and saw a snake coiling to strike

right in front of him; he heard a thundering noise. Looking up he saw a herd of buffalo stampeding toward him. He was so "scared" he dropped his gun, got dirt in the barrel; but he "upped and shot" anyway.

"An' don't you know," he concluded to his neighbor, "that there gun blew all to smithereens. The ramrod hit the snake plumb center; the left barrel hit the geese and killed several dozen; the stock of the gun kilt a bull buffalo and scared the rest off—an' there I wuz with all that game and had to walk home."

"Why did you have to walk home?" the neighbor laughed. "You just told me you rode your best horse that morning."

"I did," Mr. Edmonds nodded. "But I tied him up in a popcorn field. The right barrel of my gun lit in that there field. It was so red hot it started the corn to poppin! My pore ole hoss thought it was snowin' an' froze to death."

Frankln, Indiana

JO STAFFORD FOLKLORE PRIZE

Through the generosity of Miss Jo Stafford, popular radio star, there has been established an annual prize of \$250, to be known as "The Jo Stafford Prize in American Folklore." This prize is open to *bona fide* students, undergraduate or graduate, enrolled in American universities and colleges during the calendar year in which the award is made. The prize will be awarded to the student presenting the best collection of folklore, or folksongs, gathered from primary sources, written in publishable form, and submitted as a piece of original research. Every manuscript must be accompanied by a letter setting forth when, where, and how the material was collected, together with a listing of scholarly assistance—suggestions, bibliographical assistance, etc., supplied by others. All manuscripts must be submitted on good quality paper, double-spaced. Return postage should be included for the return of manuscripts. Entries will be judged by a special committee of the American Folklore Society, and an announcement of the winning collection will be published in the *Journal of American Folklore*.

Manuscripts entered in competition for the 1948 prize must be in the hands of the Secretary of the Society by December 16, 1948. Further information can be had from the Secretary, MacEdward Leach, Bennett Hall, 34 and Walnut Streets, Philadelphia 4, Pennsylvania.

BROADCASTING A FOLKLORE PROJECT

By MARGARET MONTGOMERY

Last semester in my advanced junior English class at Shortridge High School I found that the folklore approach to the study of world literature was a successful way to (1) interest students in the cause of intercultural understanding, (2) increase competence in language communication, and (3) give children a broader concept of community life. The collecting of folk customs, the many opportunities for reading, speaking, listening, taking notes, and writing, and the interviews with leaders of various civic organizations all proved stimulating. Of greatest value was the utilization of traditional material for a radio program.

A discussion of representative tales and narratives of long ago (William L. Richardson, *World Writers*, Section I) served to introduce traditions of different nations. After a preliminary survey of global patterns of living, the class started an investigation to see how many foreign customs are being perpetuated in this country, especially in Indianapolis. Among the people who accepted invitations to speak to students on folk life of their countries were a Polish musician; the leader of the Camp Fire Girls, who is of Scandanavian ancestry; some of the foreign children in school; and a teacher from Chile. Through the director of the Christamore Settlement interviews were arranged with several Yugoslavians. The head of the Children's Museum, an authority on Poland and Rumania, talked to a group of pupils and exhibited peasant handicraft. Spurred on by their success in collecting, the class scheduled for May 1 a fifteen-minute radio program over WIBC, a local station, to broadcast results of the project.

Preparation of the script provided vitalizing material for themes and oral reports. Because of the short time on the air the subject was limited to spring customs. For the same reason we decided not to include the well-known folklore of the English, French, and Germans. Everyone chose the country in which he was most interested. The class was divided into groups corresponding to the number of countries. Each student took part in his group discussions and moreover submitted written reports. Students became very much interested

in the technique of radio-writing. They worked on arrangement of material that would hold the interest of an invisible audience and tried to think of challenging introductions. The best parts of their contributions were edited and then compiled to make a composite class script. Two talented members volunteered to supply appropriate folk music for the program. The script shows the scope of oral research.

More rehearsals than originally planned were held in order to teach the twenty-six untrained pupils the mechanics of radio speech. This extra practice was particularly necessary since everyone wanted some part in the program. We were fortunate in having the speech teacher, who is radio coordinator of the school, direct several meetings and give valuable suggestions in posture, timing, and inflection. Approximately ten weeks were spent from the beginning of the project to the final presentation. Although the performance was far from professional, it was unique in that the entire class participated both in the writing of the script and in the broadcasting.

A recording of the program, which we ordered, proved helpful for later drills in speech improvement. Several days after the radio debut we had an informal afternoon meeting to hear the transcript. Students chuckled quietly when they recognized their parts and were critical of any faulty enunciation or too rapid delivery. This was by far the most effective means of demonstrating the importance of pitch, volume, inflection, and timing. This record is now on permanent file in the English office and therefore available to the department for future use.

The radio project is a testimonial to the effectiveness of folklore for motivating language activities. As the script suggests, a study of the culture and traditions of other nations, particularly of minorities, stimulated an interest in a wide supplementary reading program. During the semester students read from four to six books, mostly by contemporary authors, in addition to textbook material and periodicals. There were two special class programs, to which guests were invited. A talented pianist, who is also an excellent student, illustrated her review of Elliot Arnold's *Finlandia* by playing various selections and themes from Sibelius' works. In his report of Leo Lerman's *Michelangelo*, one of the boys, a student art assistant, brought pictures of some of the artist's sculpture

and explained the three dimensional features. These examples illustrate the correlation of literature with music and art, an original objective of the course (*English Journal*, November 1945). In addition to these features there were oral reports and panel discussions which emphasized the necessity of a study of customs and beliefs, tolerance and sympathy if we are ever to expect a peaceful world federation.

FOLKLORE AND WORLD LITERATURE

- THE HIGH SCHOOL HOUR May 1, 1947
 STATION ANNOUNCER . . . The High School Hour
 MUSIC . . . Fanfare
 STATION ANNOUNCER . . . The High School Hour is
 being presented by Shortridge High School.
 MUSIC . . . (Patty Joy)—fade under.
 Ed. . . . Do you know what foreign customs are being per-
 petuated right here in Indianapolis?
 Betsy . . . Who are celebrating Labor Day on May 1?
 Bob . . . Have you ever eaten *poticas*?
 Ann D. . . . Among what people is the gift of a hardboiled
 egg a hint for a proposal?*
- Herbert . . . Are there any churches in our city that give an
 old-world atmosphere?
 Ann K. . . . What country celebrates its Independence Day
 on May 17?
 Charles . . . In what country do they burn the effigy of
 Judas?*
- MUSIC . . . CHOPIN'S *POLONAISE*—(Patty Joy)
 Student Announcer . . . (Larry Noling): Good afternoon,
 everyone. You have just been listening to our theme
 questions on folklore and to the folk music of Chopin's
Polonaise, played by Patty Joy. It's spring around the
 world! It's May Day, the time that folks everywhere
 get together as they have done from time immemorial
 to celebrate the coming of spring. In Miss Margaret
 Montgomery's advanced English VI class in world liter-
 ature at Shortridge High School, we started out this
 term to get better acquainted with different nations by
 investigating their global patterns of living. We bring
 you now the results of our first class project. You will

*All material followed by asterisks is taken from literary rather than oral sources.—M. M.

hear the answers to our opening questions concerning foreign customs of the spring season that are being perpetuated in our country and particularly in our city. Marilyn . . . Chopin's *Polonaise* that Patty Joy just played recalls to me the polka that I enjoyed during the Easter vacation when I was a guest of Mrs. Rak and her husband at their home in the large Czechoslovakian community in southwestern Chicago. They probably are getting ready for another lively dance this evening, for it is the Czechs who celebrate May 1 as we celebrate Labor Day. The women will don their peasant costumes and will wear their lovely lace caps which have been handed down from mother to daughter. The men's costumes are decorated with braid and they will wear pillbox hats. Of course, they will have their famous Bohemian food. I especially like their bread dumplings covered with sweet-sour cabbage and their *kolaschies*, which are butter tarts baked with fruit and nuts.

Delane . . . That's very interesting, Marilyn, but you don't have to go to Chicago to get a glimpse of the old world. Only the other day, Luba Stoicheff, my Yugoslavian friend at Shortridge, told me about some of their interesting celebrations which are carried on here in Indianapolis. Instead of celebrating his own birthday, her father—like other Yugoslavians who have the same name as one of the saints—celebrates his Saint's Day. Friends come to visit, and they are served wine and small cakes or cookies. He doesn't receive gifts because the Yugoslavians do not generally give presents on any of their holidays.

David . . . Yes, and do you remember what we learned about the Yugoslavians at the beautiful buildings of the Christamore Settlement where Mrs. Edwards, the director, had invited some of the Slovenes to tell about their customs? On Holy Saturday evening the Slovenes go to church with their baskets of food for the priest to bless. The baskets, all covered with their best embroidered towels and linen, contain their favorite food for Easter and all holidays—the *potica*. It is a yeast bread requiring, among other things, three or four pounds of nuts and three or four pounds of flour. It is so large that it has to be baked in a dishpan. One of

the women said her mother never put the *potica* into the oven without making the sign of the cross.

Wally . . . I am hoping some day to get an invitation to a Slovenian wedding, for they often bake as many as twenty-five *poticas* for these bridal parties. The wedding celebrations are at least two days long and usually are held on Saturday and Sunday. Sometimes money is pinned to the bride's dress, and sometimes it is dropped into a glass and given to the bride; everyone is always generous. Dancing is very popular with the Yugoslavians, and the musician who plays the accordion for a wedding often brings home between seventy and ninety dollars. The bride and groom lead the polka, which is one of the gayest events of the party. During the dancing there is a great deal of yodeling and stamping of feet.

Monica . . . The polka is also the favorite dance of the Poles, Wally. When I was a guest of my Polish friends the other evening, I learned how to dance the polka and also learned something far more difficult—how to pronounce the names of some of the traditional Polish food we had. I especially remember the *kelbasa*,¹ a smoked sausage link that seemed long enough to go around the house, the *gowamki*,¹ meat and trimmings rolled up in cabbage leaves, and *ponskis*,¹ which are something like fried doughnuts.

Johanna . . . How many of you went to the gala opening of the Children's Museum, and talked to the director, Mrs. Grace Golden? She can tell you about Poland because she studied there. I particularly enjoyed seeing examples from her personal collection of the gay paper decorations, decorations the Polish people put on their walls and rafters. As I understand it, shepherds cut these with huge sheep shears into symmetrical shapes of birds and flowers. To us, Easter wouldn't be Easter without colored eggs, and the Polish people feel the same way. But they thriftily remove the contents for use as food before decorating the shells. The result is a very lovely Easter token, but a very fragile one.

¹Phonetic spelling.

Daniel . . . Those beautiful decorations on the eggs, Johanna, are often traditional, having been handed down from mother to daughter. Back in Poland, the girl used to give the egg, which she had so beautifully decorated to her boy friend—a very good hint that she was willing for him to pop the question. Take a hint, girls, and help us out today.*

Joan . . . Dan, that sounds like one of the folklore stories about the Finns. They switch each other with pussy-willow twigs until one of them receives an Easter egg as a gift. Those branches also prove very useful and artistic, because on Palm Sunday the Finns gather the pussywillow which they later use as Easter decorations by fastening paper flowers and gay feathers on them.*

Natalie . . . I think the folk songs as well as some of the legends bring out these customs. I'll sing you a Russian song, reminiscent of the days of long ago.

MUSIC . . . *RUSSIAN PICNIC*—(Natalie Graham).

Charlotte. . . That song, Natalie, certainly does tell of the days of long ago. Now there is little spirit of friendliness, for many of the small nations around Russia are feeling the force of the iron curtain. The letters the Rumanians in our city receive from their relatives in the old country show heavy censorship. Although they have been unable to visit the homeland and are unable to replenish their supply of native costumes, through their church the Rumanians keep alive many of their cherished customs. The Rumanian church here in the city has the old-world atmosphere with its beautiful icon tables illuminated with many candles and the large scriptural paintings on the walls and ceiling.

John . . . Like the Rumanians the Greeks also belong to the Eastern Orthodox Church. Their Easter is a week later than ours. If you were lucky enough to get into the service on their Good Friday evening, you would have seen the effigy of Christ placed in the flower-decked sepulchre, decorated with yellow daffodils, red roses; in fact, with all kinds and colors of flowers. Every member held his tall lighted orange taper during the entire service.

Virginia . . . The replica of the flower-decked sepulchre, John, reminds me of the Mexican Easter custom on the

Saturday of Glory, for on this day the effigy of Judas Iscariot, the Betrayer, is hanged and burned with great rejoicing. Street vendors sell papier-mâché effigies of him which are hung from roofs, balconies, lampposts, trees, and in shop windows. The effigies for children are stuffed with candy, but the others are just filled with straw and rags.*

Jim . . . In a conversation I had this morning over my amateur radio station with a man living in northern Italy, I heard directly how the Italians celebrate Easter. From the old Pompeii three friars make a pilgrimage to the still active Mount Vesuvius. They arrive at dawn on Easter, hold services, and return to the church "Our Lady of Pompeii," a cathedral second only to St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome. At the break of dawn the priests ring the bells in the chapels, and they are rung continuously throughout the day. In Napoli on the eve of Easter the people build large fires, around which they dance and cook all kinds of fish. Fish is the only food eaten on Easter Sunday. There is no special time for eating on Easter and when the people become hungry, they simply eat some fish.

Isabel . . . Speaking of fish, Jim, you can enjoy a real Scandinavian smorgasbord at the Swedish Club in Indianapolis. A snack of sardines, pickled herring, herring in wine, sliced smoked salmon, ham and turkey, lobster salad, head cheese, stuffed prunes, caviar, and four or five kinds of bread are only a part of the many foods, for this meal varies according to the inventive genius of the cook.*

Ruth . . . Don't you wish we could attend the party to be given at the Norway Club on May 17? They will have a celebration, such as we have on our Fourth of July, in honor of their independence from Sweden. They will have a smorgasbord and later songs and dances, and the unfurling of the clean flags, clean from the yellow diagonal stripes of the Swedish emblem.

Joan . . . You remember Miss Bangsburg, Director of the Camp Fire Girls, told us about the four and a half day national holiday that the Norwegians have. In parts of the United States where the weather permits, our friends of Norwegian birth take Easter ski trips as they

did in Norway. In Wisconsin and Minnesota, where there are Norwegian settlements, even such customs as having Good Friday services only in the morning are being observed. Perhaps the Easter season made it easy to find customs that are still being perpetuated; for, as we have seen each country has its traditional service for this great event.

Larry . . . The reports you have just heard from the junior class in advanced English at Shortridge High School give the answers to our introductory questions and indicate our investigation of oral sources. Our script is of composite class authorship, and all members of the class have participated in this radio program. Piano numbers were by Patty Joy and the song by Natalie Graham, both members of the class. This project not only has been fun, but also it has helped us to become better acquainted with the different local organizations dealing with foreign groups such as Christamore Settlement, the Camp Fire Girls, the Children's Museum and various church groups. During the past few weeks we have been fortunate in having several well-informed speakers as our guests, and members of the class have met and talked with interesting people of nearly every foreign country. The information we have gathered has been a stimulus to our further study of the cultural contributions and social problems of these people. Now may we for Shortridge High School remind you in the words of Caleb Mills, "A disciplined mind and cultivated heart are elements of power."

MUSIC . . . Alma Mater—up and under

Station Announcer . . . You have been listening to the High School Hour presented today by Shortridge High School.

Alma Mater until signal

Shortridge High School

Indianapolis, Indiana

THE KLESH-MAKER

By WILLIAM HUGH JANSEN

In the spring of 1947, I collected rather idly a tale which I suspected to be of recent professional origin, perhaps from the stage or radio, for it has some of the earmarks of the more elaborate club story. However, how mistaken such a judgment can be will soon be evident. The tale as I collected it went like this:

The Klesh-Maker

Now I wasn't in the navy, and so I may have the terms wrong, but this is the story. One day during the war a new ensign, who had been rushed through officers' training, reported aboard a destroyer for his first assignment. His captain, among other things, gave him the job of keeping roll, personnel you know. And so the next morning he was calling off the roll of the ship's company:

"Adams, seaman, first class."

"Aye, sir."

Baker, yeoman, second class."

"Aye, sir."

"Davis, gunner's mate." And so on, until he hesitated, but then said:

"Smith, klesh-maker."

"Aye, sir," came the answer, and the poor ensign looked unhappy but went on through "Zimmerman, bosun." Then he dismissed the crew, asking Klesh-maker Smith to stay behind. When the crew had gone to their quarters, there was Smith.

The ensign said, "What is your rating, Smith?"

"Klesh-maker, sir."

"What is that, now?"

"Oh, sir, you an officer and don't know what a klesh-maker is? Oh, sir."

"Oh, *klesh-maker*, you said *klesh-maker*. Of course; the records aren't very legible. But, of course, a klesh-maker. Why sure." And the ensign went off resolved never to bring that up. Why sure, he knew what a klesh-maker was.

And so it went; day after day, he'd call the roll and come to "Smith, klesh-maker," and Smith would answer, "Aye, sir," which seemed to be about the extent of his duties. Day after day, while the bakers were baking, and the cooks were cooking,

and the gunners cleaning their guns, and so on, Klesh-maker Smith would answer the roll and then go down to his bunk and read comic books. But that ensign wasn't going to stick out his neck again.

But one day the captain was standing by, just to see how his new officer was doing, when the ensign called roll, and, of course, he came to "Smith, klesh-maker."

Well, the captain did a double-take, and as soon as possible he called the ensign aside and said, "Ensign, *what* is a *klesh-maker*?"

"What, you a captain for all these years, and don't know what a klesh-maker is?"

"Oh, oh, *klesh-maker, klesh-maker*. Of course, it was windy out there and I didn't hear you."

But just a few days later the admiral was aboard, inspecting, and stood by with the captain as the ensign called the roll down to "Smith, klesh-maker."

The admiral turned right to the captain and said, "And what's that?"

"An admiral and you don't know what a *klesh-maker* is? Oh, now."

"*Klesh-maker*, oh, sure. Your ensign doesn't speak very clearly, does he?"

You know, this might have gone on forever with Klesh-maker Smith reporting to roll, eating, and sleeping all day, except the ensign took his personnel job seriously and thought it was bad for the morale of the rest of the crew. So one day he got up his courage and asked to see the captain.

He said, "Captain, I'm not a regular navy man. Now I don't know what a klesh-maker is. I don't know how to put Klesh-maker Smith to work. It's not good for the crew to see him gold-bricking all the time.

Well the captain looked uneasy and squirmed a bit, but he finally said, "I don't know either. But we can't tell *him* that. If you can figure it out, you put him to work."

Well, the ensign had an inspiration. So he went below decks to Smith's berth, where—sure enough—he was eating and reading a comic book. The ensign said, "It's time to make a klesh, Smith."

"Oh, no, sir."

"Captain's orders."

"All right, but you've got to get me a square iron rod, four

inches square and twelve feet long. And let me have the ship's foundry all to myself."

Well, the ensign was in it, now. So, finally he was able to get the twelve-foot rod from another ship, and Smith locked himself in the foundry. Well, finally the outside walls of the foundry got hot and the dam'dest pounding you ever heard of come out of that place—for six hours, for twelve hours, for twenty-four hours without stopping.

Pretty soon the captain could stand it no longer and he called the ensign and said, "Discipline or no, this has got to stop. We don't know what we're doing. It may be dangerous. That Smith'll kill himself."

But just then, way down in the ship, they could hear the foundry door slam open and "Gangway" came the shout of the men. "Gangway," came Smith holding out full in front of him the iron rod—the whitest-hot metal you ever saw and beaten into a giant pretzel. "Gangway," up came Smith through the hatchways. "Gangway," [this is told with great animation and noise] through a pathway made by the men. "Gangway," across the deck. "Gangway," to the railing where he tossed the white hot metal into the sea—KAL-LESH! [twisted into a loud hissing sound.]

Such was the story as I heard it—almost a sell. It has a little more modern history. I told it to an industrialist acquaintance of mine who now uses it as the theme of a popular, moralizing speech, entitled, "Are You a Klesh-Maker?"

But that the story had an older parallel I did not know until I stumbled upon it one day in John S. C. Abbott's *David Crockett* (New York: Dodd, Mead, & Company, 1874), where it occupies pp. 201-2. Although the Abbott work is slavishly close to Crockett's *Autobiography*, this story is not in the editions of the *Autobiography* available to me. Although not exclusively parallel, the "Crockett" tale and the one of my collection are surprisingly similar in these ways: they both approach the "sell" or the "shaggy dog" technique; they both depend upon a repetitive pattern; they both are capable of a moral twist, though I am sure the moral twist is indigenous to neither; and they, of course, have the same punch-line using the same sound effects.

According to Abbott, Crockett's story was given in a speech to Congress to oppose a bill obnoxious to the Tennessean in this wise (the title is naturally neither Abbott's nor Crockett's):

The Skow-Maker

Mr. Speaker: Do you know what that man's bill reminds me of? Well, I s'pose you don't; so I'll tell you. Well, Mr. Speaker, when I first came to this country a blacksmith was a rare thing. But there happened to be one in my neighborhood. He had no striker; and whenever one of the neighbors wanted any work done, he had to go over and strike until his work was finished. These were hard times, Mr. Speaker, but we had to do the best we could.

It happened that one of my neighbors wanted an axe. So he took along with him a piece of iron, and went over to the blacksmith's to strike till his axe was done. The iron was heated, and my neighbor fell to the work, and was striking there nearly all day; when the blacksmith concluded that the iron wouldn't make an axe, but 'twould make a fine mattock.

So my neighbor, wanting a mattock, concluded that he would go over and strike till the mattock was done. Accordingly he went over the next day, and worked faithfully. But toward night the blacksmith concluded his iron wouldn't make a mattock, but 'twould make a fine ploughshare.

So my neighbor, wanting a ploughshare, agreed that he would go over the next day and strike till that was done. Accordingly he went over, and fell hard at work. But toward night the blacksmith concluded his iron wouldn't make a ploughshare, but 'twould make a fine *skow*. So my neighbor, tired of working, cried, "A *skow* let it be!" and the blacksmith, taking up the red-hot iron, threw it into a trough of hot water near him, and as it fell in it sung out *skow*. And this, Mr. Speaker, will be the way of that man's bill for a county. He'll keep you all here, doing nothing, and finally his bill will turn up a *skow*; now mind if it don't.

Indiana University

Bloomington, Indiana

NOTES

Readers are invited to participate in this department by using it as a clearing house for folklore information of all kinds, to report variants of stories or songs or other material given in preceding issues, or to discover from other readers variants of unpublished lore that has been collected or remembered.

LINES ON THE DEATH OF POLLY WILLIAMS

By PHILIP D. JORDAN

The Cumberland Road, that first great federally supported highway running from Cumberland, Maryland, to Vandalia, Illinois, was more than a highway for Uncle Sam which carried mail, freight, and scores of emigrants into the golden harvest lands of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. The road also was the source of countless yarns, legends, tall tales, and ballads. A people's culture that flowed over it impressed the highway with folk arts and literature. Recently, while gathering material for my historical volume on the National Road, I located a faded ballad broadside printed in Uniontown, Pennsylvania. Uniontown was one of the great termini on the road during the early nineteenth century. It also was the center of one of the great stage companies. The broadside was printed after 1810 and probably before 1815, although of this I am not sure. It is entitled "Lines on the Death of Polly Williams, Who Was Murdered Near the White Rocks in George Township, Fayette County, Pa., By Her Pretended Lover, August, 1810."

At the bottom of the eighteenth verse appears the following explanation: "Miss Polly Williams, the subject of the above lines, lived on the water of Dunlap's Creek, Fayette County. She was in the bloom of youth, handsome and respected. She had been a long time courted by a certain Philip Rogers, a young man in good standing. Having come to a conclusion to break his promise of marriage, he (as is generally believed) decoyed her under pretence of going to a Preacher for that purpose, to the cliff in the mountain above described; then taking advantage of her confidence, suddenly precipitated her to the bottom, a distance of about thirty feet; finding that she was not instantly killed by the fall, he descended, and with a large stone, completed his work. This was the opinion of the inquest held on her body. Some little lack of testimony

resulted in his acquital. The writer of the above verses was present when she was taken from the scene of death, and partook largely of the general indignation felt at his liberation."

Unfortunately, the author of the ballad identifies himself no further. The original broadside, from which the following text is taken, is in the Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul. A holographic notation indicates that the verses were sung, but fails to indicate a tune. *Lines on the Death of Polly Williams* certainly possesses the characteristics of the ballad form and, like many ballads, is drawn from an actual incident.

I.

Young men and young maidens, come hear a sad story—
A sorrowful deed has been done in these lands;
A sweet blooming maiden was slain by her lover,
While waiting for transports in Hymen's soft bands.

II.

Long rains swell'd the rivers—black clouds hid the mountains;
The vales lay enveloped in misty array,
I climb'd the wet hills, and with heart-rending horror,
At length saw the spot, where all mangled she lay.

III.

Grim rose the huge rocks, and deep sunk were the caverns,
With thorns and keen briars the place was o'ergrown,
Above the dark brow of the mountains hung frowning—
In the alleys sad midnight had built her black throne.

IV.

Sweet girl! 'twas too rude for thy nuptial chamber.
Was it meet that a bride on the cold ground should lay?
That the howling of Wolves and the yelling of Panthers
Should furnish the song of thy nuptial day?

V.

How long didst thou toil up the steep, rugged mountains?
How weary! How fainting thy delicate frame?—
But fond *hope* still cheered thee—the moment approaching,
To crown thy best pleasure, and banish all shame.

VI.

Oh! sad was that moment when smiles and caresses,
Were changed to black curses, and murderous blows—
Oh! *how could* the lover at once be a demon—
His purpose infernal, how could he disclose?

VII.

I see thee all pale and all trembling before him,
 I hear thy entreaties—they heart-rending cries—
 But poor lonely victim, no helper was near thee—
 No Father, no Mother, to answer thy sighs.

VIII.

Those fair eyes so lately with tenderness blooming,
 Now roll with wild horror, and start with keen pain,
 And soon very soon, will be seal'd up forever—
 No sun of to-morrow shall greet them again.

IX.

At thy wide gaping wounds, thy poor spirit waits fluttering,
 A path all unknown, it must shortly pursue,
 A faint, a *last* sigh from thy bursting heart whispered:
 "Poor *traitor*—poor *murd'rer*, I bid thee adieu!"

X.

Ye rocks, ye were marble, or sure you'd have melted,
 But with the curs't traitor, ye too were combin'd.
 Though stain'd with her heart's blood, ye still stand relentless;
 Betray'd and deserted—no friend could she find.

XI.

Ye caverns that groaned while her heart-strings were breaking,
 Could not ye concealed the poor tortured fair?
 Or your grim jaws expanding, have seized her tormentor,
 And whelm'd his black soul to eternal despair!

XII.

Still groan ye deep caverns, still shriek ye dark alleys,
 Let the lost wand'rer witness, who near you shall stray.
 The long lengthen'd anguish, the soul rending tortures,
 That closed the sad eve of her nuptial day.

XIII.

Poor injured spirit, thy *murd'rer* is living,
 For justice, well bribed, forbore to pursue;
 By lawyers defended, by jurors acquitted,
 His presence detested, still tortures our view.

XIV.

If justice on earth is too often perverted—
 If lawyers can rescue the worst of mankind—
 The great court of Heaven, is not to be bribed,
There, poor injur'd innocence, refuge shall find.

XV.

'Twas piteous, fair maiden, that strangers' rude shoulders,

Thro' thickets, should bear thee down to thy long home—
 Rough pines of the mountains thy soft limbs supporting,
 And no gentle relative weep at thy tomb.

XVI.

'Twas the cold hand of strangers that plac'd thy death pillow,
 That closed thy sunk eyes, and thy winding sheet gave,
 No friend stood around to sing thee a requiem—
 No tear of a parent has soft'ned thy grave.

XVII.

Ye spirits who sit round the graves of the murd'red,
 Each evening chant forth her unparalleled woes!
 Ye cold clouds that hide her, lie light on her bosom—
 Once torn by rough rocks, that soft flesh needs repose.

XVIII.

Sweet suff'rer, sleep on, and may heaven protect thee,
 May Angels sit watching thy innocent clay,
 Till the last trumpet sounds, and thy soft slumbers breaking,
 Calls thee home, to the realms of ineffable day.

The University of Minnesota Minneapolis, Minnesota

CADENCE COUNT

By EVA H. MCINTOSH

The following was obtained from a friend in Equality,
 Illinois.

Left ——
 Left ——
 Left my wife and
 Fifty-nine kids in the
 Middle of the kitchen in a
 Starving condition with
 Nothing but gingerbread
 Left ——.
 Did I do right,
 —— right by my
 Country but wrong by my
 Family. By gosh I
 Had a good job but I
 Left ——
 Left —— (repeat)

(For other forms of cadence Counts see *HF* 6:109-110.—The Editor.)
 Carbondale, Illinois

TWO TALL TALES

By ERNEST W. BAUGHMAN

The following stories were told by Mrs. Louis Winkler of Friendswood, Indiana. Mrs. Winkler is a great-granddaughter of "Oregon" Smith, Indiana and Illinois folk-character; but she remembers these stories told by her grandfather from the other side of the house, George Washington Swearingen.

1. *Fighting Snakes*

I was walking along one day, saw two snakes in a fight. I stopped to watch. All at once they swallowed each other—nothing left but a blue flame.

2. *Letting out the Cold Air*

One time I was sleeping in an attic. There was a window out at one end and I about froze. I thought and thought about what I could do. Finally I got up, broke a window out in the other end, let it (the cold) out.

Indiana University

Bloomington, Indiana

TWO STORIES FROM PROVIDENCE

By MARTHA HEFLIN

In our immediate neighborhood there is a small village called Providence. It does not have a post office, but it is on the Bargersville Rural Route. The predominant feature of the town is the general store. It is the custom for some of the men of the neighborhood to gather there each evening. Many windy stories are related during these evening gatherings. These are two which my father recounted after an evening at the store.

1. *Smart 'Coon Dog*

A certain man had a 'coon dog. The dog was so good that all the owner had to do was to put the stretcher board out where the dog could see it and the dog would go tree a 'coon just the proper size. All went well with this system until one day the man's wife happened to put the ironing board in the woodshed. And do you know, that dog has been gone ever since.

2. *Rich Cream*

Told by Mr. Denzil Deer.

Another man had the best cow in the county. The cow gave such rich milk that after the milk had set overnight the cream was so thick that all he had to do was to run his finger around the top of the crock, pick up the cream, and hang it on a nail.

Franklin, Indiana

TWO BALLAD FRAGMENTS

By EDNA H. SINCLAIR

If anyone can cite me complete copies of the following ballad fragments, I shall be grateful.

My grandfather, Barton Hitchcock, moved from Kentucky to Owen County, Indiana in 1828. He was a resident of Owen County the rest of his life, dying in 1911 at the age of eighty-five. Singing ballads was one of his favorite pastimes. As a child I enjoyed his singing, and I still recall some of his favorites, especially "Claudia Banks." I have listened for this ballad to be sung by Burl Ives or other ballad enthusiasts but have not yet heard it. It appeals to me as being worthy of recognition; and if it is not already recorded among Indiana ballads, you may want to preserve it.

These are the words as I recall them. I have no written copy.

Claudia Banks

'Twas on a pleasant evening all in the month of May
Down by those flowery gardens I chanced for to stray.
I overheard a damsel in sorrow did complain,
"All on the banks of Claudia my lover doth¹ remain."

I stepped up to her; I took her by surprise.
She did not know me for I was in disguise.
I said, "My loyal² true love and cause of all your pain
But now we've met on Claudia we'll never meet again."

Another fragment (from another ballad) told the story of a lover wooing a maiden against her parents' wishes. Part of it ran:

They locked her in a room
And they kept her so severe
That I never got but one
More sight of my dear.

Westport, Indiana

¹ My grandfather pronounced this "dōth," but it must have been "doth."

² He sang this "my *royal* true love." The line may have been "I am your loyal true love."

MORE CADENCE COUNTS

By GRACE PARTRIDGE SMITH AND JANE MILLER

Since the publication of several cadence counts in *HF* 6:109-10, September, 1947, two more variants have been submitted, from Indiana and Iowa.

Iowa

Contributed by Grace Partridge Smith who says, "My daughter, Ilse Smith Addicks, of Washington, D. C., remembers the following count from her school days in Iowa City, Iowa. She dates it from about 1912-1914 when she was in the grades. Coming home from school four or five girls would link arms, stomp along the sidewalk, singing the cadence as indicated."

Left, left—
 I had to be home
 When I left!—
 I left my wife
 And seventeen children
 All in a starving condition
 With nothing but brown—bread—
 Left, left—
 I had to be home
 When I left!—

Indiana

Contributed by Jane Miller, Kokomo, Indiana, who learned the following count near West Middleton, in Howard County.

Left, left—
 Left my wife and forty-five kids
 The old gray mare and the peanut stand.
 Did I do Right? Right!
 Right from the country
 Where I came from.
 Haystack, Strawstack!
 Skip by jingo.
 Left, left—

BOOK REVIEWS

Folk Song: U. S. A., John and Alan Lomax, musical arrangements by Charles and Ruth Seeger. New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1947, 407 pages. \$6.00.

Shortly less than a year ago, John A. Lomax published the *Adventures of a Ballad Hunter*, a modest, whimsical, and amusing autobiography of nearly half a century spent in the collection of American folk songs. At the beginning of that period, American folk songs appeared to most scholars to be the degenerate and illiterate children of the English and Scottish popular ballads, unwanted and unimportant; at the end of that period, today, American folk songs have taken their accepted place among the great folk songs of the world. And though he was too modest to say so, John A. Lomax and his son Alan are the persons largely responsible for this acceptance. This fact is attested to by the archive of over ten thousand American folk songs in the Library of Congress for which they are primarily responsible, by such published collections as *Songs of the Cow Camp and Cattle Trail*, *American Ballads and Folk Songs*, *Cowboy Songs*, *Our Singing Country*, and *Negro Songs as Sung by Leadbelly* to which their names are either jointly or singly linked, and finally by *Folk Song: U. S. A.*, the culmination of them all. John and Alan Lomax have, in fact, done for the American folk songs what Francis James Child did for the English and Scottish popular ballad and Svend Grundtvig for the popular songs of Denmark; and like both of these men, John Lomax died before the completion of his work. Had he lived, he would have seen published what will undoubtedly be known as the basis for all future collections of American folk songs.

Folk Song: U. S. A. stands on its own feet; it does everything which it sets out to do; it fulfills all of the claims which its authors make for it. Thus, to criticize such a work from the pens of the two men who know more than anyone else in the world about American folk songs would indeed be presumptuous. It would be well, however, to examine the claims which are made for the book; for these claims tell more about the aspirations and methods of the editors and the contents of

the book than the words of any reviewer ever can. In the words of the editors:

This treasury is the first attempt to set up a canon for American folk song, defining this world of people's music in terms of examples, and placing the songs in their historical, social, and psychological backgrounds. Alongside the songs themselves, we have set down our impressions of various types of singers and song-making communities. This continuity, with its illustrative folk-tales and anecdotes will we hope, serve to make the American folk singer more real and understandable to those who have not been privileged to know him. When you come to know him, you will be well prepared to meet his kinfolk in Russia, China, Spain, Ireland, or wherever oral song lives, for in song and folklore one encounters ancient bonds that link the races and the nations into the big family of humanity.

In a subsequent passage the authors explain their omissions: songs in languages other than English were omitted because they have not yet been sufficiently explored; children's games and songs require a book of their own; British ballads are not expressly the creation of the American folk; contemporary topical and progressive songs have already been well examined in *The People's Songbook* (New York: Boni and Gaer, 1948). After these arbitrary but certainly justifiable exclusions, John and Alan Lomax chose for this book what in their judgment appeared to be the 111 best and most representative American folk songs.

Quite aside from the primary purpose of the book, however, the actual presentation of the best American folk songs, three other elements make the book an invaluable addition to the library of any student of American folk song: (1) the introductory chapters to each section which in an informal but scholarly manner discuss each song presented; (2) the musical settings created by Charles and Ruth Seeger and the careful explanation of folk music and their attitude toward it which they give in the "Musical Foreword"; (3) the three Appendices, the first of which carefully notes the sources for tunes, lyrics, continuity and other volumes in which the songs have been published; the second of which consists of a carefully selected list of books for the general reader; and the third of

which consists of a select and carefully annotated list of record albums.

It is evident that *Folk Song: U. S. A.*, is the most scholarly of the recent collections of American and world folk songs, even though the book is obviously intended for the layman—perhaps even primarily for the layman—as well as the scholar. This double appeal, however, does not result from any superficiality. The editorial notes are presented in separate chapters which are meant to be read as a whole, though each chapter is so organized that there is a note for each song. Replete with anecdotes and tall tales, these chapters are based less upon research than upon the personal experiences of the editors; these chapters represent less original scholarship than summary of previous investigations by other scholars. The notes to “Jesse James” (pp. 283-84), “The Streets of Laredo” (pp. 194-95), and “Frankie and Albert” (p. 290) are especially informative and valuable.

To only one editorial precept will most scholars take exception. “In this volume,” say the editors, “we have created our own versions of the songs, combining all the best stanzas we could find, in some cases creating portmanteau melodies and, in every instance, singing the songs smooth of stylistic features difficult to reproduce in print.” Since it is not clear whether such emendations or “improvements” have been clearly indicated in every case, those of us who hold that the texts and tunes are sacred must be somewhat perturbed to find that although nearly a century and a half has passed since Ritson first recriminated against Bishop Percy’s attitude toward his Folio MS., the old quarrel still continues. If Bishop Percy, however, appears to be the Lomaxes’ spiritual and scholarly predecessor, they are redeemed by their obvious love for their materials and their absorption in them, a love and absorption which Bishop Percy never shared.

Indiana University

W. Edson Richmond

Legends of Paul Bunyan, compiled and edited by Harold W. Felton, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948, 418 pages. \$5.00.

Legends of Paul Bunyan is a beautifully printed and bound compendium of Paul Bunyan material. There are over one hundred contributions from Bunyan writers and collectors.

There is a foreword by James Stevens and an introduction by the editor. Then there is a descriptive bibliography that is worth the price of the book to a Bunyan or tall-tale specialist. This bibliography, based on that of Gladys Haney (*JAF* 55:155-168) and others, plus additions by Mr. Felton, is the most exhaustive in print; it includes sections devoted to tales, poetry, drama, music, art, and criticism; and it includes a list of books and articles on the tall tale and about lumbering.

The stories are reprinted from the works of about forty authors or collectors; and the book has both the virtues and the vices of such a collection. About forty per cent of the material is from the familiar works of such collectors and writers as E. C. Beck, Esther Shephard, James Stevens, Wallace Wadsworth, and Dell J. McCormick. The remaining contributions are from less known and more inaccessible sources; and it is fine to have them made available under one cover.

The problem of what is folk material in the Bunyan corpus still remains, of course; and, as Stevens suggests in his foreword, the problem is likely to be with us for some time. Stevens admits, as some others do, that he has invented much of his material; other writers conveniently neglect to give sources for their materials or to document them in any way. By now the authentic folk material that was attributed to Bunyan and the invented materials have become so intermixed that it is doubtful that any real analysis of the corpus can profitably be made. Perhaps some scholar with infinite patience can some day make an analysis of the distribution of single motifs and compare those in the documented collections with those in the collections known to contain invented materials. However, with the borrowing that has gone on, even this method of using recurrence of motifs could lead one astray. The cavalier disregard of presenting folk sources and "unimproved" texts of the Bunyan legends by Bunyan writers is too well known to need further elaboration here, but the lack becomes increasingly painful to anyone who attempts any kind of systematic study of the Bunyan tales. Folklorists for years have been studying folktales centuries old and have found out a great deal about them; and now we are faced with a folk-hero who has emerged within memory of many folklorists—probably within our own century—and we don't know how he came about or what stories about him are authentic and what are invented. Furthermore, we don't know what was made up by writers out of whole cloth

and what was adapted from older folklore. To quote from the newly-instituted "Editors' Page" of the *Journal of American Folklore* (61:82), Wayland Hand speaking: "As the leading coordinating agency in American folklore, the American Folklore Society will abdicate one of its most important duties if it does not take positive action to combat the many negative forces at work in the folk arts by insisting on greater fidelity to source materials, and by encouraging resort to them wherever found." The same thing can be said of much of the use of tale material today, although country-wide the situation is much better than that of the folk arts. About all the folklorist can do is to admit that the Bunyan corpus is a strange hybrid of literary and folk materials and let it go at that. What the difficulty is likely to mean is that the folklorist will give up in despair and leave Paul Bunyan to the same kind of popularizer and literary inventor who has had the primary place in making him what he is today.

Still, the Bunyan stories—and there are hundreds of them in this book—have a fascination and a charm if not taken in too large doses. The quality and the styles of telling are as varied as the number of writers. There are about fifteen poems included. Versifying the Bunyan exploits seems to me to be the height of superfluous effort. Real tall-tale telling comes about as close to poetry as any folklore needs to get. This criticism does not apply to Carl Sandburg's contributions, nor to Louis C. Jones' "Paul Bunyan Is Back." Sandburg doesn't versify, and Jones is not retelling a prose story in verse. Strangely enough, some of the earliest Bunyan items to attract attention were in verse form, and several of the verses printed here were recited by real loggers.

As far as I am concerned, the art work by Richard Bennett is uniformly interesting and effective except for his depiction of the giants: Paul himself and Babe the Blue Ox. As pictured, both lack character—a trait both have a surplus of, if one can judge from the narratives.

Indiana University

Ernest W. Baughman

DICTIONARY OF THE MEXICAN RURAL POPULATION

The editors are happy to include the following communication from Leovigildo Islas Escarcega about his new book, *The Dictionary of the Mexican Rural Population*.—The Editors.

Apartado Postal 1953
Mexico, D. F.
March, 1948

My Dear Sirs:

Upon advice of the prominent professor in folklore, Mr. R. Boggs, of Chapel Hill-North Carolina, I address this to you with the aim to offer for sale my dictionary "*Vocabulario Campesino Nacional (Dictionary of the Mexican Rural Population)*", which I consider, from the folklore standpoint, of great importance for your institution. Enclosed please find an advertisement leaflet of the above mentioned volume—on condition that the stipulated price does not include mailing expenses. Deliveries will be made immediately upon receipt of money.

Expecting some favorable news about this matter, I remain very cordially yours,

(Signed) Leovigildo Islas Escarcega

[A translation of the leaflet follows]

"If you are interested in learning about the typical rural life of Mexico, you must buy the *Vocabulario Campesino Nacional (Dictionary of the Mexican Rural Population)* by Leovigildo Islas Escarcega. This dictionary contains the characteristic and typical terminology of different regions of Mexico, as well as the etymology of the Aztec language; complete definition of the common terms used by the Mexican cowboys, terminology of the cattle-raising business, and terminology of agriculture, etc. . . . A description of the colors of horse and cow breeds; common names of many wild plants and animals of the nation; technical terms of cockfights, of horse racing after the rural fashion, and some other favorite sports of the rural communities, etc., etc.

Price—2.50 Mexican Pesos"
(.50 in American money)

(Thanks to Miss Josepha Claudio for the translation—The Editors.)

HAIL AND FAREWELL!

By ERNEST W. BAUGHMAN

When this number is in the mail and on its way to the readers, *Hoosier Folklore* will have a new editor. Editing *HF* from the University of New Mexico is hardly feasible; so as my parting gesture I want to extend sincere thanks to the people who have given assistance to me in the pleasant and rewarding task of editorship.

First, I wish to thank William Hugh Jansen (who, by the way, will be the acting editor) not only for teaching me about magazine make-up, but also for doing the major portion of the work himself. Besides, he has done valuable service as associate editor in selecting manuscripts, in revising material, and in solving a multitude of knotty problems.

To William B. Bain I am deeply indebted for reading copy and proof for almost every number of *HF* since it has been appearing in printed form. Bill has been responsible for detecting countless errors in spelling, in punctuation, in my own particular brand of typing, and for spotting the mistakes that copy and proof are heir to.

Eileen and Clayton Holaday, Betty Richmond, and John L. Hicks have read copy or proof at various times. W. Edson Richmond and Paul G. Brewster have been my folk song consultants. Sue Lena Hickam gave splendid aid of many kinds when *The Hoosier Folklore Bulletin* was a mimeographed pamphlet of indefinite number of pages and an uncertain publication schedule.

I should like also to express my personal gratitude to Howard H. Peckham and the Indiana Historical Bureau for making the printed form of the quarterly possible. Miss Dorothy Riker of the Historical Bureau Staff has done the addressing of the envelopes for mailing.

To Dean Stith Thompson I am indebted for helpful advice and kind encouragement.

And finally to all contributors I am deeply grateful, for your materials have given our quarterly an enviable stature among folklore periodicals.

Oh yes, my wife, Frances Jensen Baughman, has done countless chores of many kinds in the preparation of each number.

Indiana University

Bloomington, Indiana

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HOOSIER FOLKLORE

published quarterly for

The Hoosier Folklore Society

by

The Indiana Historical Bureau

Indianapolis, Indiana

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Entered as second-class matter June 15, 1946, at the post office at INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA, under the Act of August 24, 1912.

Subscription price \$2.00 per year. Single numbers fifty cents. The membership fee of the Hoosier Folklore Society includes a subscription to HOOSIER FOLKLORE and each member of the Society receives the quarterly.