

A JOURNAL FOR MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN AMATEUR PRESS ASSOCIATION #7 JUNE 2019



SOME FAVORITE PHOTOS, A FEW POEMS AND STORIES, AND CARL KREMER ON CATS

AAPA Miscellany #6, July 2017 Edited and Produced by Clarence Wolfshohl

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The Return of AAPA Miscellany

It has been nearly two years since the last issue of *AAPA Miscellany*. A lack of material but more a lack of impetus on my part are to blame. But I have been gathering submissions throughout these months and thought it was time to get off my duff and publish *AAPA Miscellany* #7.

I announced a favorite photo of 2017 issue that was going to run early in 2018. I got some interesting photos with comments, but not enough for an entire issue. Thus, instead of an issue devoted to photographs, I include them here. Thanks to Gene Gates and Lawrence Peterson of Nine-18-Thousandths Press, Delores and Russell Miller, Peter Schaub, and the David Zadra family for responding back in early 2018 to my call for photos. I have also added a few more from the Chloe Adams family.

The new Official AAJ Editor Edwin Feliu contributed a short story, and Kent Clair Chamberlain sent in some of his short gems. I am also including a poem from a one-time protégé of mine, JoAnn Lindemann.

JoAnn was a student of mine at Mason High School in Mason, Texas, during the time I first joined AAPA. She showed her talent as a ninth-grade student and really flourished when she was in my senior English class. I was constantly amazed at the writing talent among my students in Mason. Peter Schaub has mentioned one, Scott Zesch, in *The Pearl*. Another, Gerald Gamel, is current editor of the *Mason County News*. Kendall Hemphill, from the same class as JoAnn, writes a humorous outdoors column run in a few newspapers in the Texas Hill Country. I am probably forgetting someone, but JoAnn has developed into a good poet and I want to share one of her poems.

My good friend and colleague for many years and coffee-drinking comrade, Carl Kremer, has appeared in *AAPA Miscellany* before, and this time he blesses us with cats. He read these essays at meetings of our well-read bookstore writers' group, and I asked him to let me use them in the next *Miscellany*.

Writers are always looking for publishers. I am confident that AAPA writers are no different. Therefore, I urge members and want-to-be members to submit your essays, poems, short fiction, photos, or artwork to *AAPA Miscellany*. I will put out new issues whenever I have received enough material to fill a few pages. In the meantime, I and the contributors to this issue hope you enjoy our efforts. Have a pleasant summer.

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The Zadra Family's Dog

David Zadra

Editor's note: This is the photo David Zadra submitted when Miscellany requested favorite photos of 2017. Cool dog!

Dear AAPA members,

I believe this picture speaks for itself on why it would be my favorite for 2017. So coming up with a 50-100 word statement may be tough, but here goes.

It was a toss up between one and a million awesome family photos with the kids, wife, and animals, but after sitting down at the round table we decided that this would be like putting all those family photos into one! So our photo pick for 2017, is this shirtless dog, wearing sunglasses, riding a lawnmower. Need we say more?

Yours truly, Dave and the Zadra family Iron Rock Printing Shop, Iron Rock USA

A Cat Tale

Carl Kremer



TOP PESTERING THAT CAT!" MY mother ordered me several times a week because I wanted to play with the cat, and she was disinclined to play, or being petted, or held, carried, teased or tickled. But Minnesota winters are long, and seem longer when you are not yet ten years old, in a warm, crowded house with three siblings near the southwest corner of Crow Wing County. We each had chores; mine mostly involved carrrying firewood in from the woodpile about 50 yards away, carting the ashes from two wood-burning stoves, and bearing buckets of water from the pump on the opposite side of the house from the kitchen door. I had to make my bed in the morning and do homework from school. Weekends were better than school days; I didn't dislike school, but preferred the days, weeks and months without it. Diversions were limited. We had a radio, and books and magazines to read, and toys to play with. Acres of pasture, brush and woods to play in. And a dog, Danny, and a cat, Snowflake, in her reproductive years. Both lived in the house, but spent a lot of time outside, even in winter.

Both animals often bunked in the barn with Booful, the cow. Hay and straw, old gunny sacks and feedsacks provided plenty of material for bedding. Snowflake often slept on Booful's back when the cow was lying down.

"Stop pestering that cat!" Her tone was sharper this time. She walked over to the door and called Snowflake, who trotted over to her and walked out into the darkness. "I swear, you make her life so miserable when you're inside, it wouldn't surprise me if she just moved out and found a place more comfortable without somebody bother-

ing her all the time; and I'm tired of it too." She turned away to resume her endless housework. I tried in the next few days at least to resist the impulses to engage with the cat, but she disappeared.

"Where's Snowflake?" I asked Mom as I came in carrying a hefty armload of firewood to the big wooden box against the wall next to the stove.

"I don't know. She came outside with me this morning, but I haven't seen her since."

As I arranged the wood, I asked, without looking at her, "She wasn't in the barn when you milked?"

"No, but I'm not that worried about her. She knows how to take care of herself, and she's gone off for a few days before, and came back all right."

I waited for a moment, but she didn't suggest that the cat probably needed a break from my incessant attentions. She didn't need to. The next morning I checked out the barn and chicken house, the outhouse and the woodpile without finding her. After school I changed out of my school clothes and into my hand-me-down chore coat and four-buckle rubber overshoes and urged Danny to help me find Snowflake. He looked at me and wagged his tail, then inspected every site I visited, calling out, "Kitty, Kitty, KITTY! Here, Snowflake..." But to no avail.

Maybe she had been injured or even killed in the street, but I found no evidence of such an event; and I asked every friend and neighbor I met if they had seen her. None had, and I prayed frequently that God would send her safely back home, vowing I would never again pester her, but treat her with respect and affection. Sharp despair

led to deeper guilt as I grieved her loss.

About a long, sad week after her disappearance, she returned while I was at school, and I could not resist rushing over to her, cooing and caressing her. Her ears were tender and the top half inch of each was pale. Mom said they had probably frozen, and her tail was so sore she cried when I touched it. She seemed thinner. Of course she had been fed, and had not moved from her spot near the heating stove in the living room since. I learned to pet her carefully, avoiding those affected areas, where the hair gradually dried and faded to greyish tan, and became paper-thin. Her weight increased and her belly gradually swelled, and by Valentine's Day she looked awful. Half her tail stiffened, the fur thinning, her belly swelled, and we all knew she was bringing another set of kittens into the family, but she disappeared again in mid- March.

A few days later on a rare, still, sunny Saturday, she was back, much to my relief and delight, sitting on the porch steps, thinner, her belly slack and her tiny nipples pink and swollen. I approached her, bending down to pick her up. She wriggled free from my hands and pulled away. Instinctively, I tightened my grip and grasped her tail as she pulled away. Snowflake emitted a small, sharp mewl of pain and disappeared under the porch.

I stood there, holding the light, brittle tail like a stick in my hand as my stomach seemed to lurch upward into my chest and my breath shortened; my limbs wobbled and the stiff, ugly object in my hand blurred as waves of silent tears and horror passed through me. I turned and lurched around the house and back to the garden, where Mom was hoeing and raking the recently turned soil preparing for spring planting, still more than a month away.

She dropped the hoe and instinctively wiped her hands on her apron as she approached. "What's wrong? Did something happen to you?"

I nodded, scrubbing at my eyes with my left fist, now in full crying mode. "Kitty came back," I

choked out. Tears and mucus running down my face. "I saw her on the porch and leaned down to pet her. When she tried to pull away, I grabbed her tail, and... and it broke off!"

Mom stepped forward, and began wiping my face, her other hand with her apron cupping the back of my head. I waited, and then lifted my gaze to her face, ready to face the words I knew I deserved—an I-told-you-so lecture reminding me not to pester the cat—the disappointment and frustration I caused and when was I going to learn... But she didn't say that. "Snowflake's tail was going to come off soon anyway. There was no blood was there?"

I shook my head and sniffled, my eyes looking into hers. "You saw how the tips of her ears are gone now, and there was no more life in that part of her tail because they were frozen. She will be fine." I managed a small shrug, my shoulders drooping. She patted my head, gave me hug and turned away to pick up the hoe and looked at me again.

"I think she had kittens under the porch, but I'm not sure. Why don't you go check them out. See how many there are, but don't try to touch them. Let me know what kind of bed she's got, see if she needs anything."

I made my way into the kitchen and took the flashlight out of the tool drawer and returned to the scene of my crime. I wriggled under the edge of the steps and turned on the light. Snowflake's eyes glowed green in the beam and I moved it to the squirming, mewling newborns feeding. There were four, their fur damp and shiny, their tails bare, their eyes shut. I apologized to Snowflake, and told her I hadn't meant to dock her, and thanked her for the babies.

The next day, Mom coaxed Snowflake up into the porch where a pile of rags inside a large cardboard box on its side were arranged into a cozy looking bed inside the porch. When I came home from school, Snowflake had moved her family into the new quarters.



Relic from Nat Turner's Rebellion

Peter Schaub

No, this is not a photo of Toledo, Missouri.

It is a photograph taken in Southampton County, Virginia, next to a peanut field. A group of history buffs were with a local historian following the route of Nat Turner's rebellion in 1831. This part of southern Virginia is little changed, with cotton and peanut fields and small towns. Nat was an educated slave steeped in Bible stories, who believed he was chosen like Moses. 51 whites were hacked to death by 75-100 slaves on August 21st. Nat and 16 other slaves were tried and hung in the town of Jerusalem. The family living in this farmhouse escaped.



Disquisition Upon My Cat

Carl Kremer

ILITH IS THE EASIEST PET I KNOW of, and my regard for her is similar to a child's affection for a toy they've had for as long as they can remember. At about 19 years of age (ancient for a feline) she hasn't so much 'lost a step' as she has retired from the activities that occupied her in her adult years: just being. She has known loss, and now I wonder if she is lonely. It's hard to tell with a cat.

She came to us a few months after we acquired Major, the largest of a litter of kittens in the neighbors' barn. As a tom, I warned him that when he twice strayed from home for over 24 hours. he would be castrated. He did not seem to hold the decision against us, and when he returned from that last overnight excursion, Lilith was with him—a shy, skittish, gray-striped little girl sporting a cheap blue collar. We asked all the neighbors if they knew her origins, advertised in the paper with a description, but no one called to claim her.

Major was affectionate, playful, and thoroughly domesticated. He followed me like a dog, playing around me outside as I worked, content to ride on my shoulders, receptive of any attention, and friendly to all—including toddlers who pulled at him, fell on him and tried to carry him around. He had great patience and a ponderous dignity. He was large, self-confident, curious and gregarious. He made himself at home in our new neighbors' house—and they called him "Fat

Boy," surprised that here, he lived in our garage. On occasion he would sneak through the door into the house and make a thorough inspection of each room, then sit in the living room until I carried him back outside. About ten years ago he simply disappeared.

Lilith was anti-social; she shared Major's bed, and would groom him, content with his occasional reciprocation, but largely intolerant of human contact. When I entered the garage and the door slammed behind me, she disappeared in a flash, as she would with any sudden sound or movement. She was quick and fast, able to race full speed across the yard and 20 feet up a tree without losing momentum. Until this winter, she would daily leave the garage, sometimes for long periods, often for only minutes, and sprint, full-speed, back inside through the pet door and into her bed. In summer, she spends warm days sleeping in cool, protected shady spots, sometimes through the night.

She mourned when Major disappeared, lying in her bed, eating minimally, neglecting her personal grooming, indifferent to our efforts to offer solace or diversion. Eventually, she came to tolerate, and then to welcome affection. She took to joining us when we sat outside—even coming up to the balcony of the barn, where she'd weave around our legs, and pause for a few strokes, but would not stay in a lap for more than a few seconds. Within a year, she would climb into my lap

and put her face to mine and lick my hands when I stroked her. Now, she lives mostly in her bed, a soft, padded kind of box, lined with small, soft flannel blankets under a heat lamp, responsive to any affectionate touch, indifferent to other pets who occasionally visit, She is persnickety about her diet, only dining on seafood flavorsminiscule amounts of dry food, and precise amounts of pate. She has never accepted table scraps or treats from our table. Until recently, she would hunt grasshoppers, small lizards and an occasional bird, eating only the choicest bits of her warm-blooded prey, and leaving the offal openly on the floor. She seems to have abandoned that sport, and will not accept any of the above from my hand.

She's a light sleeper, and never surprised awake; now she tolerates noise in the garage, and doesn't move when we drive in or out, though she's less than a yard from the grill of the pickup. She is highly responsive to any touch, and squirms and writhes in pleasure at extended petting—from anyone, at any time, and always looks

disappointed, eager for more when it stops.

Cats seem solitary by nature, but she was from the first attached to Major, and developed her need (if that is what it is) for our attention slowly after he was gone. She seems self-sufficient, though she demands her evening dinner—reminding me each time I'm present that she expects that meal promptly—though lately, on the coldest evenings, she loves her warm bed more, and her appetite is diminished, probably because she uses so little energy.

Is she bored? If she dreams, she gives no sign of it, but she seems to respond to my verbal conversations with her, with expressions ranging from yawning, to "So what?" to "Please!" with urgent soft vocalizations when her dinner is late or I'm slow in its preparation. I like to think we have a good understanding of one another. She is grateful for my ministrations, and my attention to her satisfies something in me; her responses are, if not of deep gratitude, more than just of tolerance. Or they seem so to me.

Spirit

JoAnn Lindemann

THE WEST TEXAS PRINCESS
Glides with the soft wind,
Cantering over the plains
Her hands tight on the leather reins.
Denim blue sky
Wide and free as the
Promise of a spring day.
With the sun twisting and shooting light
Over the pastures,
She hits her stride, the hooves of the fine steed
Speckling the trail with bands of
Dusty tracks.
Ribbons of radiant light lacing
Through her hair,

She rides alone in silence.
She is one with the sacred land
And forever she will be.



Working at the Nine-18-Thousandths Press

Gene Gates Distributes New Type

Lawrence Peterson



My partner in the press (and all things) distributing newly cast Bembo Italic type from Bixler Type-foundry into an empty case. Of note: when Gene redistributes type it all gets put back just as carefully. Without his efforts our press would produce about half of what we do, as I'd have to do the distribution and it would not come out so neatly. Also note the additional type (Bembo Roman & Small Caps) to be distributed behind him.

The Garden of Earthly Delights

Edwin Feliu



He wasn't like them. One could say that he had broken the mold: his dentures cracked while eating a sandwich. He almost swallowed four front teeth. They chattered and joked in their cubicles, greeting each other with their crisp, white teeth cut on romaine salad. He ate the roasted chicken, tearing it apart with claw-like hands as he sank his mouth into thick slabs of cheddar cheese sliced with the knife that hung from his neck, discretely tucked under his polo shirt. He tore off chunks from the baguette, and washed down lunch with black coffee. He smoked a few cigarettes in the parking lot, thinking about what he would write next. He poured more coffee and returned to work. It was dull work with little room for creativity.

He opened the small cork-lined notebook and wrote.

'Every Sunday in Diodira, the villagers gathered to celebrate the parrots. Silence wasn't tolerated, and the elders waddled sternly through the crowds, tearing off the flesh of dissenters or posers. Monkeys patrolled the perimeters of the temple.

The villagers weren't allowed to speak during the week, even in their homes. Loud vehicles were forbidden. Those with speech impediments used typewriters in loud colors. A lady in camo played an FDR speech, another with pink hair blasted Chairman Mao. A nun played Yoko Ono records while ululating. Those who had nothing to say read their emails out loud. The children screeched in delight as the shadows exchanged cicadas.

Those allowed to stay home for jury duty were forced to watch silent movies and eat with clipboards on their knees. Laughing or smiling wasn't allowed. Each house, limited to 300 square feet, had at least one parrot.

When it got so loud that they couldn't hear each other, they laughed uncontrollably or used ear trumpets, which were sold at the entrance, along with small bongos, whistles, radios, horns and megaphones and other noisemakers.

Parents were encouraged to spank their children, who clapped in glee with cymbals.

The festivities wound down as the day faltered and the parrots shed their colors. The monkeys closed in, smiling amicably, as they clubbed the villagers with truncheons. Those that lingered were corralled and sent to the newspapers, where they were forced to write gossip columns until they posted bail. Trials were presided by three clowns with nervous breakdowns who, in a gesture of impartiality, were rotated 360 degrees every half hour, like a disco ball.'

It was enough for one day. He closed the notebook, wrapped up the remaining office work and shut down the computer. He snapped shut the old Samsonite briefcase and lumbered to the car. He listened to an audiobook as he inched through traffic. An hour later, he arrived home. She was watching TV, as usual, and he pecked her cheek. He went into the small studio, turned on the radio and began typing on the Underwood.

MET GRIFFIN THE FIRST DAY OF summer vacation when I was ten. I had seen him a couple of times in the weeks before, back in the shade of the large live oak near the cemetery gate.

I lived two blocks south of the old, town cemetery, and I passed that gate whenever I walked to Mr. & Mrs. Jacobi's Red & White to get something mom forgot at the supermarket or some treat I could buy with the nickel she gave me.

I saw Griffin and he looked straight at me. I didn't wave or say anything. I was still afraid of the graveyard and didn't want to enter. But the first day off school felt fearless, so when I saw him on the edge of the drive that meandered among the tombstones, I waved and walked through the gate.

We played nearly eve-

ry day, exploring the cemetery to compare names on the stones to people we knew. Once we found a marker with someone with Griffin's name, and I joked about it being him and I think I hurt his feelings. But he soon was back to normal and wanted to cross the fence at the back of the graveyard and follow the path along the creek.

Once he did come to my house to watch television when my mother was gone to a library meeting. He seemed puzzled and fascinated by the tv. There wasn't much but soap operas on during the afternoon, so he left before my mother returned. I was a bit upset because Mom had asked several times about my new friend I was spending so much time with.

Griffin lived with his grandparents because his parents had died in a fire that destroyed their house. He said they lived on the other side of the creek and woods behind the cemetery. That's why he was around the cemetery so much.

Near the end of summer, about a week before school started, Griffin did not appear in the cemetery for several days. I wanted to see him, so I crossed the creek and took the trail through the woods to the road he lived on. I had never been there or even on the road, but I thought I would know the house. Griffin said it had two large spruce trees in front. There were

not many houses on the road since it was more a country road than back where I lived. I looked up and down it and saw the tops of some spruce trees in the distance. Several houses I passed as I walked toward those trees looked abandoned, but one had a big hound-dog chained to a tree in the front. The dog barked once and laid its

head back down between its front paws. I was eyeing the dog as I passed the tall row of bushes that separated the dog's yard from the one with the spruce trees, so I didn't see the house until I cleared the shrubbery. The trees were just like Griffin had described, but the house was a burned out hull with weeds and even some small trees growing in it.

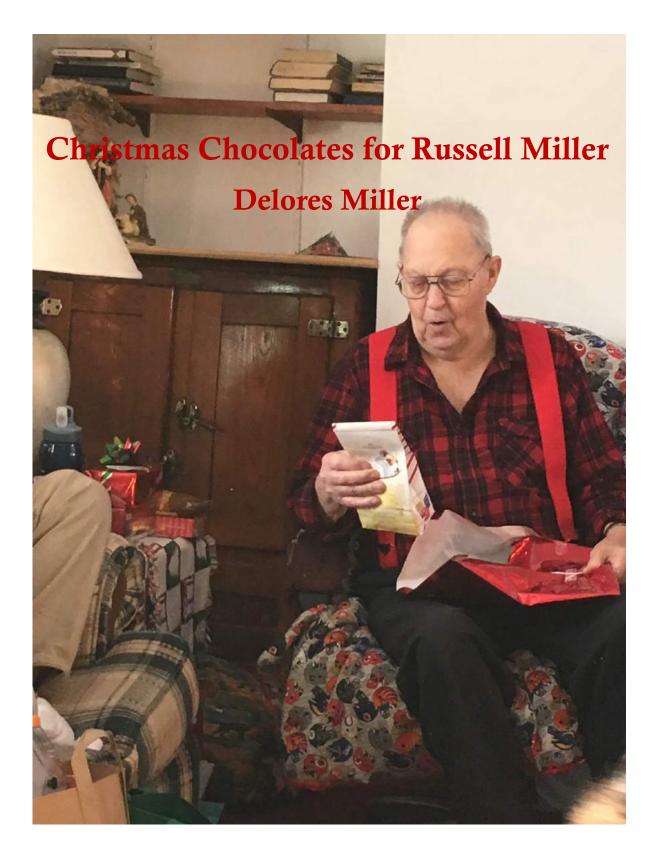
Just then an older kid I recognized from school cleared the bordering bushes . He saw me, waved, and walked toward me.

"What you doing here?" he asked.

"I was looking for Griffin. I don't know his last name."

"How do you know about him? My parents said they had just moved here about twenty years ago when that house burned. It was the kid's--Griffin was his name-- grandparents' house, and all of them died in the fire."

Clarence Wolfshohl



As requested here is a favorite photo from Christmas 2017. Russell opening a bag of the really good chocolates, his favorite. Russ is plagued with stage four prostate cancer, but still enjoys life with his wife and family, many of whom gather each weekend to help with small projects. Hot flashes and jumpy legs, side effects from the chemo. May he have more Christmas celebrations like this.

An Iconic Mouse

Carl Kremer

Icon: 1. an image in the solid. 2. A representation of some sacred personage, in painting, bas relief, or mosaic, itself regarded as sacred and honored with a relative worship or adoring. (from an old <u>Oxford English Dictionary</u>).

PERHAPS THE BEST-KNOWN, MOST familiar, widely disseminated religious icon in the western world is the Christmas Manger Scene. Ours may become an heirloom, maybe a relic. It was a gift to my wife in the early sixties from her sister in Berlin, Germany, with her husband, a captain in the U.S. Army. It consists of three white sheep, a reclining cow and an ass, three wise men, one shepherd holding a lamb, each about eight inches tall and the Holy Family, slightly smaller, all of brightly painted plaster but the holy infant. He is of pink plastic, less than two inches long, wearing a tiny Sumo loin cloth and a circular trademark on his back, a gilded plaster halo under his head in a wee custom-sized manger of quarter-inch square sticks

Mary, in a turquoise robe over a peach-colored long-sleeved gown and white heads shawl, kneels by the manger, her hands crossed over her breast. She is blonde, with blue eyes, slightly resembling Marilyn Monroe. Joseph is white haired, with a neatly trimmed beard and a purple robe over his lavender gown, on one knee, left hand over his heart. They are arranged each year under slanted roof about 12 by three inches made of fiberboard, coated with thin plaster and lightly daubed a moss-green. It is supported by the same fragile balsa wood as the manger.

stained to resemble mahogany.

The assemblage is lovingly packed away early in January wrapped in newspaper in the original cardboard box, tied with twine, with the label from Berlin still pasted on it. It resides in the attic until the following December among all the other boxes of ornaments, decorations and Christmas dishes.

Some of the attics over the years have been temporarily infested with mice, but none has bothered that box until this year. Nothing had been chewed, there were no droppings evident, but deep inside, close to the manger was a nest of marshmallow-sized balls of cat fur arranged in a small circle.

Our cat resides in the garage, directly under the attic, close to both the side door and the door into the house. From November until the Ides of March she is in her padded, softly lined boudoir, on a small table, a heat lamp overhead, her food, water and litter box ten feet away about 22.8 hours a day. Her food and water dishes are never empty, unless the neighbor's dog, a feral cat, raccoon or possum sneaks in when we are away



and steals her lunch—not often. Yes, she is pampered. Once she brought me small lizards and occasionally regurgitated mouse parts in front of the door, but she has retired from such endeavors though some insects trigger her instincts and she snacks on them. Spring until late fall, she bathes herself outside until early summer when the shedding abates. Most of the year, soft clumps of cat fur adorn the garage, the patio and much of the yard. Shedding season begins now in mid-winter, and fur balls accumulate in every crevice in the garage.

This devout little rodent, for the first time in decades found her way into the creche box, and decided it was suitable as a nursery, burrowed her way through the newspaper packing and into the heart of the Christmas Icon without leaving a trace. She laboriously fetched sufficient wisps and wads of cat fur up the walls of the garage, into the attic, and arranged them into a cozy nursery in which to rear her young.

This was no ordinary mouse. We never saw her nor heard a mousey sound in the weeks of her preparation and training and weening her young. She may have had only one, or a dozen, but they were hidden from us.

Also in the box, near the nest was her pantry, well stocked with a dozen Meow Mix morsels, either filched from the dish or the floor around them.

No ordinary mouse would have studied the cat's habits sufficiently to avoid an encounter, so bravely stock her larder, providing for her own sustenance and her baby's, the while avoiding the De-con as well as the cat.

Was she led there? Will she return? I think not. Efforts so far have kept us rodent-free; this incident suggests divine intervention. I will check the attic carefully after Christmas this year.

Henry Ford Test Drives the Quadricycle (June 4, 1896) Clarence Wolfshohl

HE DID NOT, COULD NOT UNFOLD the millions of miles of highway in his head; the families let loose across plains, up and down mountains,

and through twists of city streets. He did not see the jets of crude in Texas, Oklahoma, the Dakotas, tunneled through dangerous arteries.

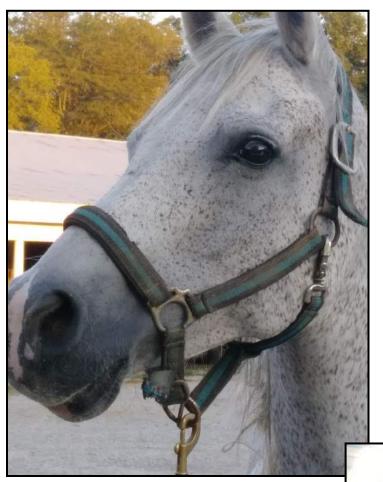
He could not envision a Sequoia hacked out to let his offsprings pose for photos in the place of bark. He did not think of the bombs

and terror launched to feed more of his engendered, these metallic husks like beetles gnawing away the leaves of our gardens.

He just had eaten his own fire that now sat on four wheels in his workshop, too wide to get through the door, and he

wanted to see what it would do on the open road, figure out how to stop it, so he took his ax from the wall and chopped a wider opening.





Headshots of Jasper

Amii Adams

And of Chloe Adams

Jasper has a nose for the camera. He looks alert above—probably food is coming—and just curious below. The photos were taken on a pleasant day of riding and tending to Jasper at the stables.



Poetry from Kent Clair Chamberlain

SNOW-CAPPED

THO'T

Over tall Sierras, When you Snow-capped See your

Lace of Nevada . . . Life going adrift, ROW!

CRESCENT-O

Cradle morn Dark red Army Rocks through Biplanes buzzed

Trailer court, circling low. Dreaming stars, Nice lady rushed out Surprising To ward off air raid! Morning.



