

the
Scimitar



1959-60

the Scimitar

STAUNTON MILITARY ACADEMY
Staunton, Virginia

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FOREWORD

In keeping with the spirit of the cadet corps, **The Scimitar** is an example of a mere idea's producing an original and authentic contribution to the nurture and encouragement of talent. The success of this magazine, or any function of S.M.A., is almost entirely dependent upon the students who constitute the Academy.

The school newspaper, which is almost half as old as the Staunton Military Academy itself, has expressed a bold and continuing interest in current activities of the school. **The Scimitar**, on the other hand, goes one step further, in that it is a demonstration of potential and active creative talent within this educational community.

We of the staff are well assured that **The Scimitar** will continue to fill its purposeful role as long as it receives the active support and interest of the Corps. May the name **Scimitar** endure as long as the Staunton Military Academy.

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A Cadet Publication from the Staunton
Military Academy

PRIZE WINNERS:

- 1st Prize—Robert E. Landis
- 2nd Prize—Willis W. Simpson
- 3rd Prize—George Miller
- 4th Prize—Edward Cotter, Jr.

HALF PAST MIDNIGHT

ROBERT E. LANDIS

sitting,
 staring into oblivion,
 staring at the yellow flicker
 of jumping candlelight
hopping all over the darkness
 like a frog
 with an over-dose of adrenaline,
seeming to die
 then live again
almost still
 then surging to left
 to right
shimmying
 grasping
 bending
loving
 hating,
stirred up in the heat
 that it is,
frightened
 of the menacing shadows it casts,
mating the air that feeds it
 in a lewd
 alien
 DANCE
a fiery hand
 gone wild
 in a frenzy
 of passion
burning boldly
 and cowering
 from its brightness...
don't blow
 O wind of fate,
or I shall perish
 and lose my glow
 forever.

THE CLOCK

CHARLES G. DICKEY

My father had been to Switzerland many times in his life, but he had never brought home a clock. On his last visit he promised to purchase a cuckoo clock.

Upon his return, father presented me with a beautifully carved Swiss clock. I cannot even begin to describe the workmanship that must have gone into the making of that clock. The clock was made of a highly polished dark wood. The bird that voiced his shrill challenge to the silence of my household was carved in a most unique manner. It was painted so beautifully that I had to touch it and look very closely to tell that it was not alive.

The clock was my greatest possession for many years. It never lost a minute or failed to eject the small bird at the proper time. Then one day I noticed that the finish was beginning to get dull and cracked. The paint on the bird which I had been so amazed by, fell to the floor in chips each time the cuckoo called the hour.

One night as I lay awake in my bed, I heard the inside of the clock revolve and the door at the top open. Each night before I had heard this sound and each night I had listened for the melancholy sound of the cuckoo. But on this particular evening, instead of the clear call that I had begun to love, a shrill scratchy screech filled the room.

On the morning after I called the clock maker and asked for his assistance. He informed me that the bellows, which produced the sound, had become worn out.

On the following day I watched as the door opened and the tiny bird rolled out on its trolley. I expected nothing more than a mere croak from my small friend, but exactly at four o'clock the small apartment was filled with the beautiful cuckoo which had brought me many hours of enjoyment. At the same moment as I stared at the small bird, it toppled from its perch and crashed upon the floor at my feet. The clock stopped ticking and the door snapped shut for eternity.

I felt a great hollowness inside. The clock had been my source of enjoyment for so many years. It had brought me many happy memories and now, as I stared at the broken bird on the floor, I realized that all of those memories were shattered.

I immediately called my father who was living in New York at the time. The phone rang and a husky voice answered.

"Is Mr. Robson there? Yes, yes that's right; Daniel Robson. I believe he is staying in room 328."

"I'm sorry sir," answered the voice at the other end of the phone, "Mr. Robson died of throat cancer this afternoon at four o'clock. Would you like to speak with his doctor?"

MORE THAN ANYTHING

GEORGE MILLER

When I was a child, I was asked what I would rather have than anything else in the whole world. I said, "a wishing ring," because if I had that, I could get anything.

But now that I am older, I would say that if there were some magical power which could give me what I wanted most, I would ask for an understanding mind, for that would be, in truth, a wishing ring. It is the secret of youth in old age, and it must surely be the source of happiness.

By an understanding mind I mean two things: first, to know that nothing remains the same from day to day, and second, that there is a reason for everything if only we can find it.

No matter how absurd and mysterious life may be, nothing is inexplicable. There is sense in it even when it seems to be senseless if we have the insight to see it.

But where can we get this special gift? It cannot be gotten in school or even in college. No, understanding cannot be taught. It can be learned, but not quickly. Wisdom comes slowly. It is an essence that soaks in through all types of experience, happy and sad. One may gain knowledge from solitude, but understanding is found in the stream of life. The secret of understanding is love.

THE TIGER



By M. Irving Demarest

TABLE MANNERS--REVISED

JAMES R. CAIN

Private Joseph Bootlicky Putoutski stirred happily in his bed when the first musical ringing of the melodious bells echoed through the clear, crisp morning air. He yawned and sprang lightly onto the cold tile floor. He quickly slipped into his clothes and trudged to the first military formation of the day at Gung-Ho Military Institute. Joe was happy this morning, as in every morning. His key to happiness was the knowledge that the day contained many countless opportunities to display his peculiar tendencies.

These tendencies are an outgrowth of a malignant disease which seems to flourish in centers of military activity. It is known in medical centers as a Getus Rankus complex, and is characterized by an acute discoloration of the nose.

Joseph walked into the school dining room and stood beside his chair in expectancy of the enjoyment that the application of his affliction might give him. After a short while another person entered the dining room and took his place at the end of the table beside Joe. This person was Joe's victim. He is the most important factor in the spread of the disease and is technically called the Rankus Superious factor.

Joseph begins his work cautiously. He

passes food with lightning speed. He displays his great sense of humor by displaying unrestrained laughter at every uproariously funny remark said by the Rankus Superious, such as "Pass the mustard," and other similarly hilarious witticisms.

Then begins the macabre game. This stage is begun by remarks directed towards the Rankus Superious elaborating on the infinite grace, intellect, might, and superiority of the Rankus Superious, or dirty --- -- - ----, as he is commonly called. This stage of the game is subtly terminated by bowing down and kissing the divine being's feet.

The third stage of the game has no set pattern, but it usually consists of buttering the Rankus Superious' toast, pouring his coffee, sweetening his coffee, and, if it is too hot, drinking his coffee.

The disease has a definite cycle. The afflicted individual evolves into a Rankus Superious himself, which is a pleasant side effect of the disease, and propagates it unwittingly by flashing a number of shiny objects on his collar at struggling privates. The disease is known to be spreading rapidly through military institutions throughout the country and is known to have already spread into the business world.

TO A RIFLE

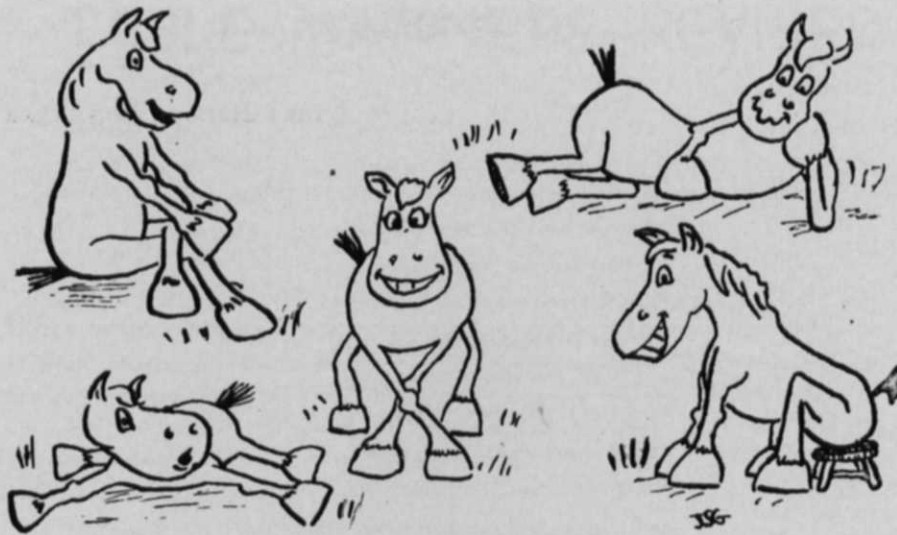
BARRY BROOKS LONGYEAR

*Oh! Rifle rifle in the rack
I look at you from my soft sack
The day has not started yet
But I'll carry you at drill, my pet
The sun is hot, the field I'll tread
and you'll feel like a ton of lead
Butt right! butt left! you won't stay put
Order arms! right on my foot
From my warm bed I think these things
and shudder and cringe at what drill brings
The soldier's best friend they say you are
But I'm a cadet and a poor one by far.*

HIP IN CADENCE

BARRY BROOKS LONGYEAR

*Elvis is a cool gone cat
Switched his guitar for a gat
Flashy rags-----real mean
Traded for a suit of green
'Stead of singing with the band
Was peeling spuds and scrubbing pans
He cooled it with his German dates
And then came back into the states
And now he's out and back to teach
The art of practicing "Free Right of Screech."*



HORSES, HORSES, HORSES

CHARLES G. DICKEY

I know absolutely nothing about horses. The closest I have ever been to a horse was when a policeman in New York gave me a ticket for going five miles an hour on Broadway. He had claimed that I was a reckless driver and that I was lucky that he didn't have my license revoked. You know the type, I'm sure. The big bad policeman in his nice new uniform. It's his second week on the beat, but he thinks he's J. Edgar Hoover. Anyway the episode cost me fourteen dollars and a new straw hat. His horse was hungry.

As I was saying I know nothing of horses, but yet the other day I was cornered at a luncheon by an avid horseman. This character wasn't just the usual run

of the mill horseman. He could even tell the horse's personality by looking at the animal's left ear. At least that's what he told me. He explained that he had won a whole box of ribbons and trophies and things from different shows all over the world. When I looked at him in a rather curious manner he informed me that it wasn't a very large box. I could imagine it to be the size that exactly nothing could be put in.

I do a little bragging once in a while myself, but this man had more to say about nothing than any person I have ever met. He explained to me that he had won Triple something or other in this and that, and Double this and Double that

somewhere else. His horses had won this prize and that prize at some show out West. He had the most expensive pair of spurs, what ever they are, sounds like something that get caught on your clothing when taking a walk in the woods, in this part of the country. This I could believe very readily. We were on Coney Island at the time and I didn't see anyone who even looked like a horse other than the guy who was talking to me. Jackass would better describe his type.

After about ten to twenty minutes of his horse talk on horse sense and horse carts and horse this and horse that, I finally asked him if he would like to meet my uncle. My uncle is a very fine man and he owns just about all of the horses on the Famous Horse Ranch of the South. My uncle's Famous Horse Ranch of the South includes one acre of land in the middle of Atlanta, Georgia. He found the Famous Horse Ranch of the South sign and nailed it to his gate. My uncle has a full grown pony—which I imagine is a cross between a dog and a cow—and a horse by the name of Brutus. Uncle loves horses and he takes Brutus out every morning to help pull the rag-wagon around town.

Well the man who was talking to me said that he would love to, but he just didn't have the time to go to Georgia. He was leaving for Texas where they breed very fine quarter horses. Those I

conceived to be another breed of horse that was part goat, horse, cow, and dog. A form of pony with a little goat and horse mixed in for general principles.

I asked him when he would be back and he politely informed me that he would be back as soon as possible and that he would love to meet my uncle and his remuda of horses. A remuda, in case you didn't know, is a broken down barn with a fancy name. I told the man that I would be expecting him in Atlanta and to feel free to come anytime that he wished.

As he walked away I noticed that he had a slight limp. I called to him and asked him how that had happened. That day I was my usually noseey self. He told me that he had broken it a few years before while riding a wild bronco. A bronco is a small town gas station owner who goes into television and plays in west-erns for Warner Brothers. Take, for instance, Ty Hardin. He's a big star who plays Laine. He used to call himself a gas station attendant before people got wise to him and started calling him Bronco.

I excused myself for being so curious and he went out the front door after letting out a wild yippee iiee ayye. For a moment I thought about the man's face and instantly it came to me. He was the same cop who had given me the ticket on Broadway.

CHAGRIN



By M. Irving Demarest

FUTILITY

JAMES CAIN

*We worship —
Not to God, but to a cold image of Him
Formed to be convenient to the comfort
Of our own souls.*

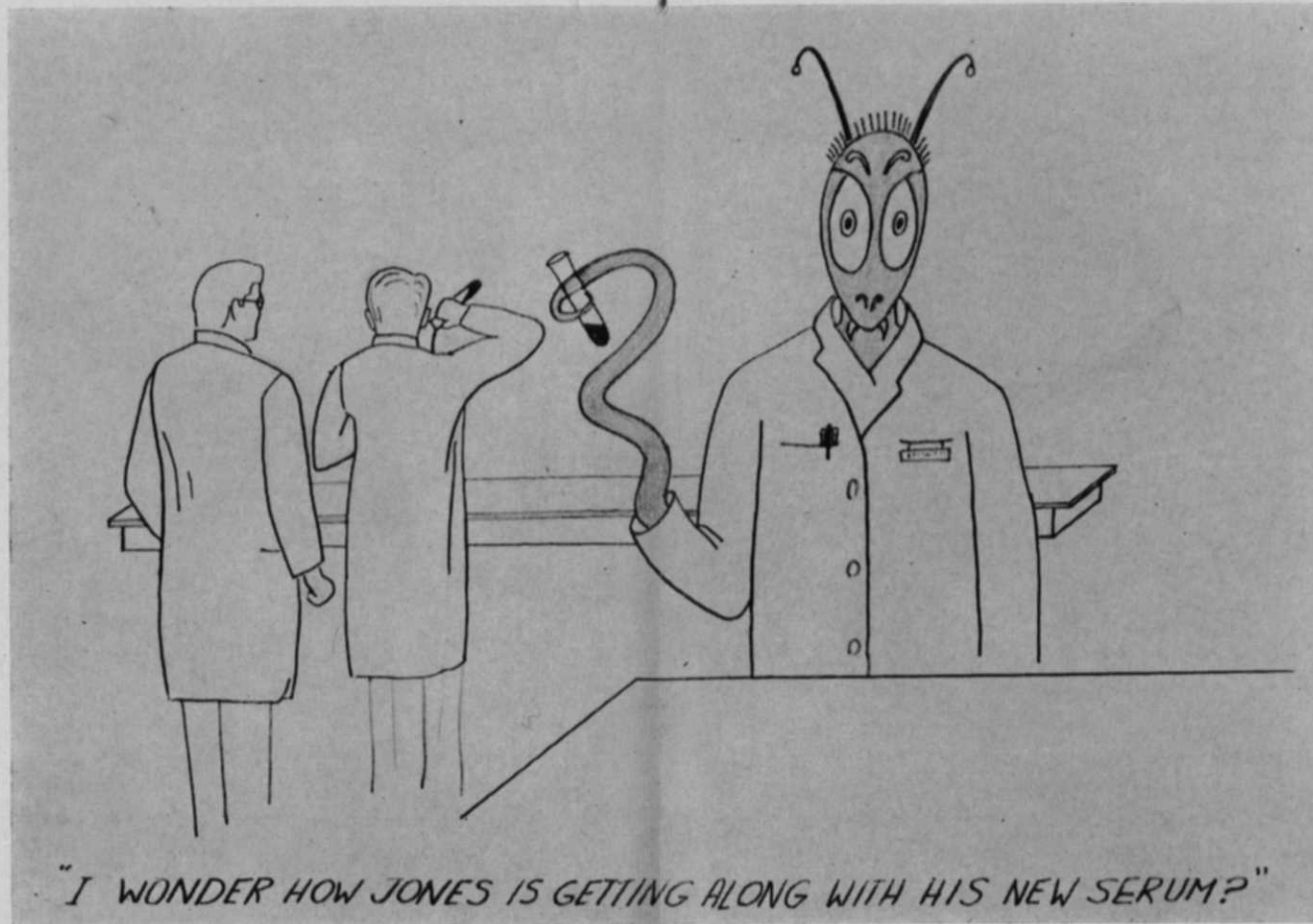
*We work —
Not for the warm satisfaction of honest sweat,
But for a chance of advancing ourselves,
Not caring whose future
Is being trampled
During our upward climb.*

*We live —
Not for the joy and beauty of life,
But out of fear for the apex of life —
Death.*

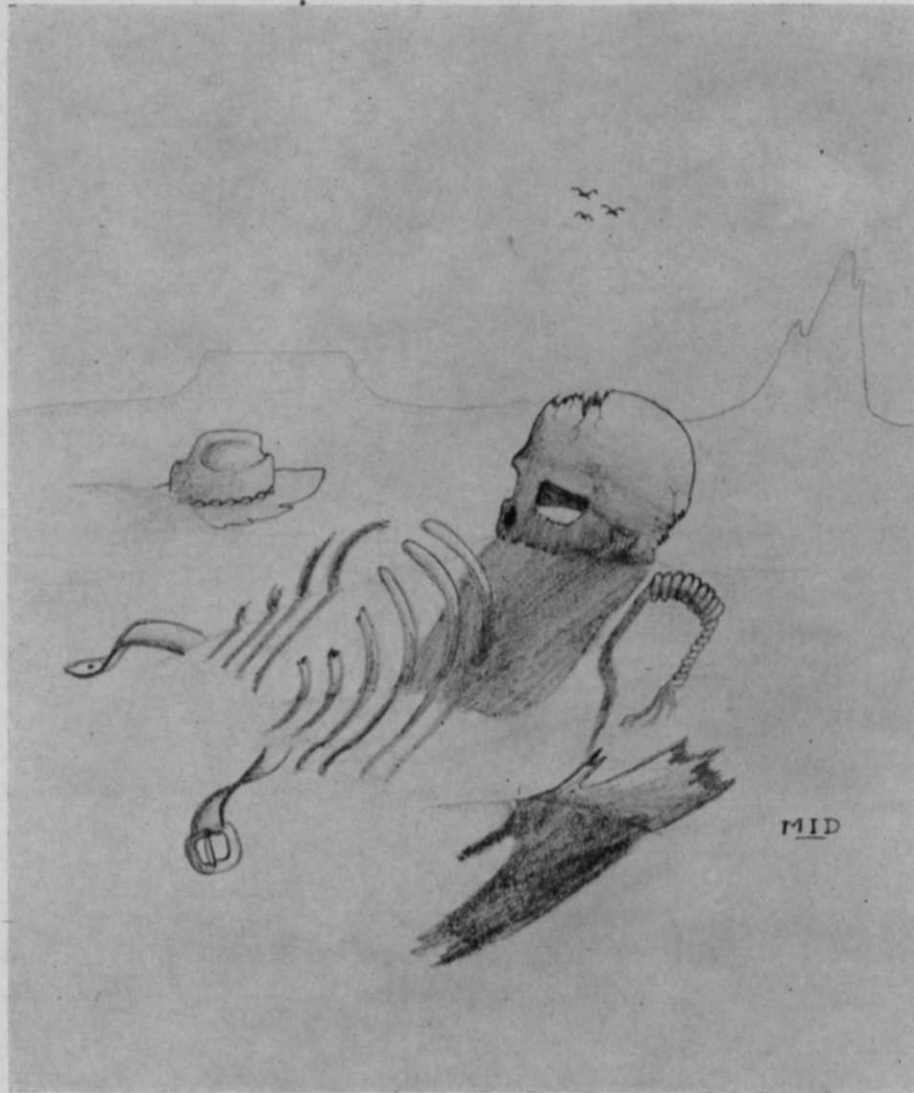
*Life for us
Has turned into a continual struggle
To ward off that eventual meeting
With the grim spectre.*

*Death is the zenith of life
Set up by God
As the savior from the pain
And the sorrow
Of earthly existence.*

*It is shunned;
It is feared;
It is held in wonder,
But it is always there —
Waiting.*



By M. Irving Demarest



THE SPIRITS OF DEATH

M. IRVING DEMAREST

*The moon never rose that night
When Johnny had to die;
The winds, blowing 'round the trees,
Did nothing at all but sigh.*

*The elements of nature, shrieking
Onward into the sky,
Told how wrong the people were
In condemning John to die.*

*Hold on you whirling masses,
You evils of all strife,
Be not impatient for his death,
Nay, not even for his life.*

*You God-forsaken spirits,
Who make the night so cold,
Why must you rush through this unearthly place,
For it looks like a dungeon of old?*

THE MOLE

JEFFREY BERMAN

*The world all knows about the "Mole"
Who lives secluded in his hole,
Surrounded with the wealth that claims
His noted post. He only reigns —
Way down under!*

*His black cassock all torn and grey,
His only shroud as of today.
Upon his head he wears a shade
To help his sight, which seems to fade —
Way down under!*

*So big a vault, so long, so wide,
All filled with books on every side.
Yet he does know the very place
Of every book of every race —
Way down under!*

*What type of man for many a year
Can devote his time to remain but there?
He is a priest, so full of bliss,
He is the "Mole" who lives like this —
Way down under!*

THE GOAL

JAMES CAIN

*We yearn for what is not,
it cannot be denied.
The tasks of life grind out
our goals that go untried.
We hope and pray for peace,
peace of mind and soul,
and yet such peace conflicts
against our social goal.
We cannot bend, we cannot err,
we cannot drop our bond,
that holds us to our pointless climb
from what life holds beyond.*

AN EVENING SHOWER

MICHAEL HOMAN

*An evening shower when spring's in bloom
Has the scent of sweet perfume.
The cool, sweet drops of rain that fall
Bring peacefulness and rest to all.
The rain and clouds soon disappear,
And stars come forth, sparkling clear;
As though they too, before they came,
Had been gently washed by rain.
As the silent night grows deep,
The moistened world drops off to sleep.
The frogs and crickets loudly sing
Their thanks to heaven for the spring.
The rain that came foretold a mood;
'Twas just an unexpected interlude
That by small chance had come this way
To gently end another day.*

A JOKE????

CHARLES G. DICKEY

"Well, it all begun around three weeks ago. Yeh, I guess it was about that long ago. I was walkin' home with a bunch of the guys I usually hang around with, when this kid comes up to me. I could tell by his size that he wasn't no junior high kid. He looked more like a senior high sort of fella.

"Anyway he says to me that Dirk Johnson wants to see me in the parkin' lot across the way from where we were. Now don't get me wrong; I wasn't chicken, but I began to figure. I had run into this guy Johnson and his girl in the hall that mornin'. Almost knocked them both over.

"But just the same I went with this kid to see what Johnson wanted with me. When we got to the parkin' lot there were a mess of guys standin' around smokin' cigarettes and all. When they saw me comin' they all shut up like I was the plague or somethin'.

"Johnson told me that he'd been lookin' for me all mornin' and most of the afternoon. Said he'd had somethin' real important to tell me. Now I wasn't scared or nothin', but I thought I'd 'pologize for crashin' into him just the same. He was real nice about the whole thing. Slapped me on the back, offered me a cigarette, and said that he'd forgot about the whole thing.

"Well when I took that cigarette I begun to wonder what I was going to do. I'd never smoked before and it sorta made me choke when I lit it. I decided just to hold it and look important.

"Johnson finally says to me that he and the other guys needed me to play a little trick on this friend of theirs. He said we were going to scare life out of him by playin' like we were stickin' up his gas station.

"Now I just love to play jokes on people and I said I'd help. Johnson said all I had to do was walk into the office and tell the

guy that my bike had a flat tire. This would get him out of the office and out of the way.

"Well I didn't like the idea at all. I wanted to carry a gun and look important. Johnson and all those guys looked so surprised that I thought I'd carry it a little further. I told them I'd like to help cover the guy while they put the money into a sack.

"When the day came, I just couldn't wait to get out of school. All day I liked to die thinkin' about the 'spression on that guy's face when me and Johnson walked out with all that dough in a paper sack. 'Course the guy would really be surprised when he got in his car and found that sack of money on the front seat.

"After school we went to the gas station as planned. I had a real gun with blanks in it. At least that's what I thought until I pulled the trigger and a can of oil blew up. To cover up for my surprise I told the guy that if he made a funny move the same thing would happen to him.

"Johnson got the money and we split up. Honest Judge, I thought he was going to put the money in the guy's car."



THE SCIMITAR

MY DESTINATION

TYLER CAMPBELL

*This place is deep, dark, and black
Covered with holes from battles' flak.
Now I'm thinking of my home;
And about the woods I used to roam.
My past is near, but yet so far
Which leaves in mind a blackening scar.
My life is past, I did my best;
For now I take my final rest.*

*This hole is deep, dark, and black;
Where now I gently settle back
To welcome darkness growing near.
I shake with wonder or maybe fear.
"War is hell," great Sherman said.
Now, my dear, I'm nearly dead.
One last thought to bid thee well,
My final destination—"fiery hell".*

THE MS CLASS

BRINTON MILLER

*The MS class, the MS class
Here one learns from all the brass,
That we may someday have to lead
Some men someday so they may bleed,
To keep the others safe and sound
While we keep firing all the rounds.*

*So nice is it to sit and listen
To all the ways to keep them missin'
To hide and fire for one another
While each one seeks a better cover;
Tell me then, what happened when
Reports came back of four dead men?
The mission's the thing, remember that
For we haven't time to see who's flat;
We must go on and play our part
No time to spare our counterpart.
The days will come when all is ended,
But who of us cannot be mended?*

OUT OF SEASON

ROBERT E. LANDIS

*Snow,
Go buy yourself a calendar!*

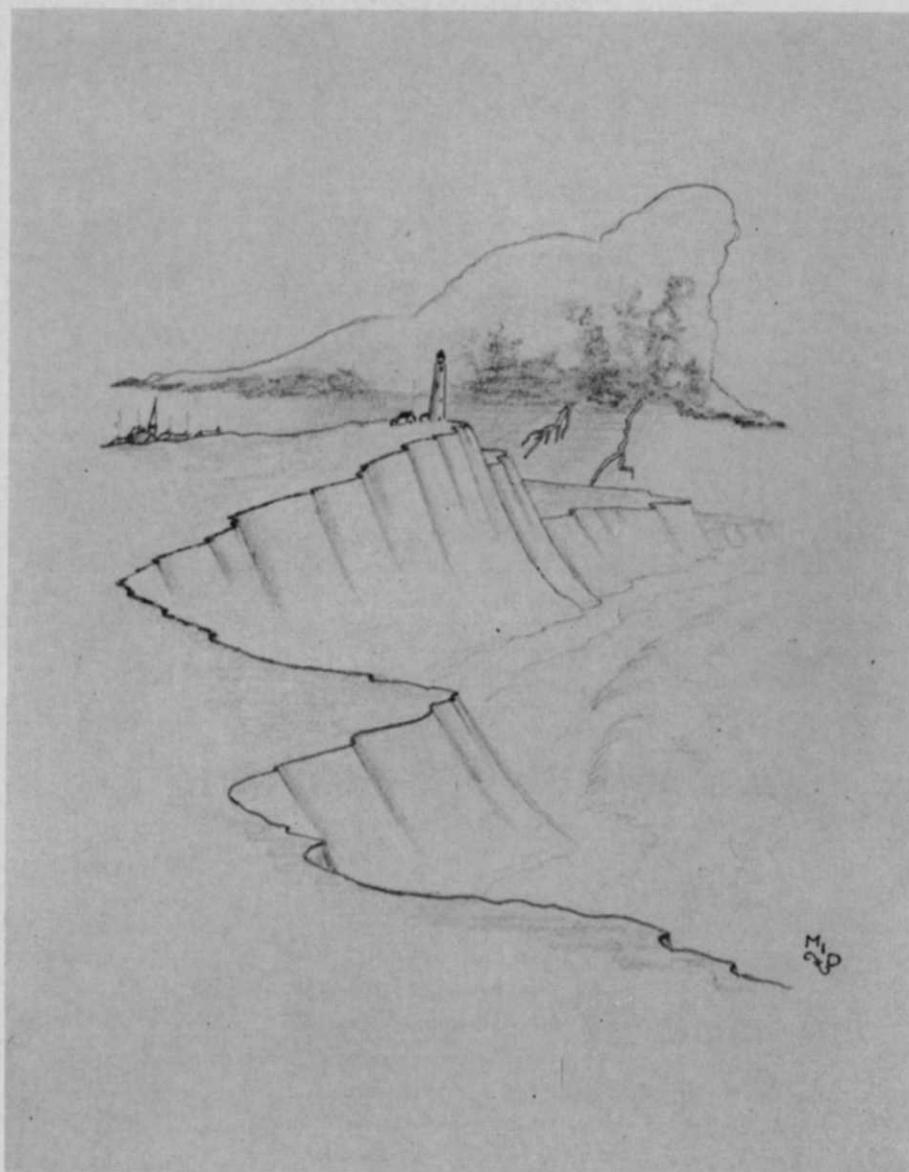
*As early as September
And as late as November
Snowballs fly hi and lo.
But, come the night
Of old St. Nick's ride
The ground is bare of snow.*

*Yet one warm, sunny day,
Right in the heart of May,
In a lawn chair I'm relaxing.
A polo shirt and shorts I'm wearing.
Beer in a can
Almost too cold
For me to hold
Rests in my hand.
A cloud floats by
The face of the sun.
I'm content with life
I think it's fun.*

Then.....

*I wonder who's burning what, where,
As the ashes fall from the sky.
All of a sudden I shiver,
As an ash melts on my thigh.*

LAND'S END



By M. Irving Demarest

ODE TO A FIRE HYDRANT

CASIMIR SOBIE

*See the fire hydrant,
All glistening and red,
With beads of shiny dew
Upon its knobby head.*

*In the early morning
I see it standing there
Warning fires day and night
To be cautious and beware.*

*For it protects the people,
Sleeping in the night,
And saves the little children
From a hot and fiery plight.*

*Oh, fire hydrant,
You have importance, so they say,
But to me you lost your meaning
When the doggie walked away.*

A GOLFER'S PRAYER

RALPH STICH

*Now I lay me down to sleep
With my golf clubs at my feet,
And I pray with all my heart
In tomorrow's match I'll do my part.
I pray my opponent's luck will stink
And every putt I shoot I sink.
That he will play it from the rough;
For me the fairway's good enough.
And now to you I say, "Good night."
Tomorrow's match will be alright.*

Hearty congratulations

to the Editors and Staff of

THE SCIMITAR

May you always

cleave to the line

and uphold the

proud tradition of

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New York, N. Y.

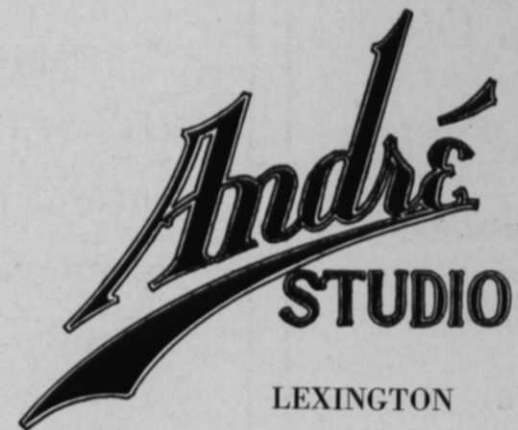
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