

THE EMPTY NEST NEWSLETTER

VOL XI NO 4 JUNE 1993

"The time of the singing of birds has come."
-- Song of Solomon

THE BOOK'S A GO!

NORTHWESTERN U. PRESS WILL BRING OUT MAGNUM OPUS

Spfld. What book? If you have to ask, you either haven't been reading Empty Nest for long, or known the editor long. THE book is The Round Barn, about the farm, conceived when I was 14 or 15; I started collecting materials back in '67 (I think it was) when Dad was in the hospital for three months and there was a possibility he wouldn't make it, and I realized I better get his stories and knowledge down on paper--and then I went on taping people who'd known the farm, and finally in 1979, my first sabbatical, found the form that would unify the material and let me say whatever there was to be said about the farm. And wrote a whole lot, that year, and then it tapered off till my second sabbatical in '86 when I got more written but not as much as hoped, for Dad had his hip operation, and I was there, handy, to tend Mom--which I in no way regret-- and then it's had attention at the Lake, some summers, but there's not been time with SSU's demanding schedule to give it the sustained attention it's needed [which is partly my fault, since I always give my students lots of written feedback, keep inventing new classes, taking classes to England, getting involved in things, but a job has to be kept interesting for one's survival]. And then, when is it finished? The material grows; I keep finding things. These have been rich years, of course--I learned from people, especially from Eloise about Esther,



ROUND BARN — A drawing of the round barn on the former Dougan farm on Colley Road, done by Megan Jackson, daughter of Jacqueline Dougan Jackson.

things that Mom and Dad had never known, and the more I learned about everything, the more a bit that I'd find would fit in--I knew its referents--and I met a lot of people and travelled a lot and it always gave focus to my visits to the farm, and Mom and Dad thoroughly enjoyed the stories and research. Had I not been writing the book I'd never have discovered the Lovingly Ron letters, nor the Your Loving Father letters and documents, and those are spinoffs that have given much pleasure and interest (Dad says over the phone, often, "I'm reading my favorite book") and will provide family history and insights for generations to come. You may recall that the book was "taken" (but not to point of contract) quite a few years ago by Northwords Press, a regional Wisconsin press, but then the press was sold and the new owners didn't want the manuscript--yet they pirated a section and published it in a book called About Cows.

Anyway--I've used parts of the book here and there, it was published weekly in the Beloit Daily News for Dad and Mom's and the community's benefit, and to draw more stories (which it did), I gave a reading at Beloit College under the auspices of Marion and Dave Stocking; years later when Elle was at Beloit John Rosenwald wanted me to do another, but I never got it organized, etc. Then a year ago October I gave an hour's reading at a writer's conference in Oklahoma where I was faculty. Later another of the faculty, Reg Gibbons, who's editor of the Tri-Quar-



BOOK, cont from p. 1

terly, a fine literary journal out of Northwestern, asked to see the stories I'd read. I thought he was interested in helping me find a publisher, since we'd talked about the problem--the book is so long and such a melange no ordinary press would ever look at it. But the semester and the upcoming England trip and other things were drowning me, and then at the Lake I found I had left half the ms. home, and I never got back to responding to him (feeling guilty the while) till over a year later. Whereupon he called me and said Northwestern U. Press, which I had no idea he was part of, wanted to print the entire thing. Talk about being flabbergasted! He said all sorts of nice things, which I jotted down as rapidly as I could, but then the slips of paper got lost in the paper-mess on my kitchen table (see Shoe cartoons) and the table got cleared for a class,

which means everything swept off and put in a pile somewhere, and I hope they'll surface some day. He did write a letter later, for my school (sometimes promotions or raises hinge on such letters, he's sensitive enough to know, and I'll reproduce that letter somewhere in this issue.) What they'll do is, print some of the stories in the Tri-Quarterly, and then bring out the book in its entirety, hard cover, from NWU Press, which has recently made a branch called, I think, Tri-Quarterly publications, and then also bring out a paperback containing just the (best) stories, that should sell more cheaply and be of more general interest. I promised Reg a manuscript by Christmas. He's a neat and sensitive guy, and will be an editor I'll greatly enjoy working with. It still seems unbelievable. Three in one! And I wasn't even (actively) trying to market it. *Wahoo!*



PHOTO NOTES
The photos on this page, + 364, 90 with the articles on p. 364, & are from Dougan Christmas cards. This page: 1938-1941; p. 3, 1958; p. 4, 1933 & 1935. W.J. "Daddy" Dougan is on p. 1,

ENNL ED GETS SABBATICAL #3!

A school can't be all bad when it gives you a third sabbatical. Actually, I may have written previously that I didn't get one but was first alternate and that meant no sabbatical--but *mirabile dictu*, someone declined his and I was next in line! Just found out. So I'm taking it fall semester, have had to adjust my classes into spring, and if you've been wondering how I could promise a finished manuscript to Northwestern U. Press when it's already taken me 14 years and I'm not yet finished, this is how--although I didn't know when I promised, I just gave a date and prayed. Of course I said I'd do something else on the sabbatical when I applied; no committee would give a third for the same project--but if I'd got it I intended to ignore my intent, and work on the book. And I can manage to do a little of what I applied to do--fix the Reading and Writing and Radio tapes for classroom use without radio--in the interstices. The school'd rather have a NUPress book, anyway. And I'll do the radio job eventually.

West Bend, WI Josh Karl Schmidt, Madison, & Elle Jackson, Beloit, journeyed May 23 to W. Bend to hear Souja Yde (alm. 13) Josh (alm. 11) & Ben (8?9?) perform in a piano recital. This was Ben's first recital. Souja, a veteran, ended the program playing a duet w/ her teacher that her teacher wrote. All three played very well! The kids decorated the program. There was lunch at Yde's, and Elle was especially taken with Souja's 1943 doll, Molly McCraven, & her piano.





Mommy's Birthday Party - July 7, 1958

This spring, "Performance Today" over NPR ran a contest inviting listeners to write in about a musical hero. I didn't have time to do it, though I thought about it a lot, but on due date got up at 5 a.m. and wrote my essay, cutting and cutting, and even then didn't get it pared to the required 350 words, which might have eliminated it. I had to leave out so much, so many wonderful illustrations, and Craig and the Shriners band got omitted entirely. I faxed it in but was not one of the five chosen to be read over the air--three of which I heard, and they were good, but no better than mine, and one not as. There were 200 some entries. Anyway, here it is for ENNL readers, most of whom can supply dozens more pages of wonderful examples.

On Sunday afternoons my mother lay on the couch with her eyes shut, listening to the symphony on the radio. It made me uneasy. The domestic ship might run aground with no one at the tiller. There was surely a power here, to make her behave like this.

Mother did more than listen. No violin teachers lived in this town to which marriage brought her, so she imported one from a nearby city and rounded up pupils to fill her day. My oldest sister was the first Beloit fiddler. Wild was the night my father sat on her little instrument. But it was replaced, and Jo eventually attended Julliard.

My second sister also fiddled, and taught violin in her home. For lessons, her own children gathered coats and instruments, came around to the front door, and rang. Pat added her pupils to the increasing pool of string players, and she and her husband founded the Beloit-Janesville Symphony, now in its thirty-ninth year. Lewis Dalvit went on to conduct elsewhere; he and Pat now lead a summer music festival in New Brunswick. Both my sisters had attended the University of Wisconsin's high school Music Clinic and fallen in love with the master teacher, "Teach." After

that, Mother drove us to Madison every week. We had our lessons, later joining thirty others under Teach's baton for String Sinfonia. Mom was audience, devoting her Saturdays to the music we lived for. Music's power and discipline filled my years with focus, and saved all of us from adolescent aimlessness. I was a cellist; Mother and sisters decided the family had great need for a bass instrument. It was a thrill to play for the first time in an ensemble, my deep voice the foundation for the entire Humperdinck Prayer!

Mom had studied dance and piano at the American Conservatory and gave herself wholeheartedly to the local music club, Treble Clef. Once a year she performed. I loved to lie under the piano and listen to her practice. She also practiced our accompaniments, up into the major concertos. She never refused when I'd beg, "Play with me." We'd go through my current Bach or Chopin till I was satisfied.

From Treble Clef, a Federated club, Mother rose to Wisconsin president, then president of the National Federation of Music Clubs. She was indefatigable in promoting American composers, providing significant scholarships for young musicians such as John Browning and Ralph Evans, and extending music to all areas of life. Her children still play, the grandchildren play, now the great-grands are taking their place with fiddle, keyboard, horn. I can't measure Mother's ever-widening influence. I mentioned her to an airport acquaintance recently. "She's your mother?" exclaimed the stranger. "She's the reason my daughter's at Curtis!"

So **Vera Wardner Dougan** is my musical hero--from the days I lay blissful under the piano, to my last evening with her, when we sang "Abide With Me," and she reminded me that she wanted that at her funeral, along with the Mendelssohn and Handel. It was some concert.

I sent Pat the writeup of Mom--she agreed you couldn't squeeze Mom into 350 words!--and she sent back this article she wrote for a column in (I think) the Nat. Fed. of Music Clubs Magazine, quite awhile ago.

String Crusade Zip Talks

By Patricia Dougan Dalvit

Christmas Holidays I spent in Atlanta with my husband who was conducting seven performances of The Atlanta Symphony's and Atlanta Ballet's elaborate production of Tchaikowsky's *Sleeping Beauty*. It was an exciting week, and a significant part of my pleasure was derived from seeing the large number of young and vital string players in The Atlanta Symphony.

So many beginning string students, who would rather be anywhere else than all alone in a room daily sawing out endless scales, probably think to themselves many times, "Why am I doing this? What use will it be? What will I ever do with this piece of wood?"

As a child, I know this is how I felt. I was not a "natural" player . . . I did not leap joyfully to my violin at practice time, or tuck it lovingly under my chin at every opportunity. Only my mother's determination kept me scraping away. I had no choice in the matter.

A number of times I threatened to quit. I would stomp out on the lawn and cry loud and long into the spirea bushes, hoping my mother would note my abject misery and let me give up my music. She never appeared to hear me — just went cheerfully on with her own affairs, and the next day I would find myself practicing again, my round gold-rimmed glasses steamy with tears.

I remember once in a violin lesson that I was trying to play a piece called "Brendisi" by memory. It is a terrible piece musically, but a marvelous piece for solving problems of technique.

My teacher, who was very patient, had told me to memorize it, and I had made a half hearted attempt that past week. All of a sudden, in a fit of frustrated rage, I turned back to the music stand, grabbed Brendisi, crumpled it up and threw it on the floor. (I'm not proud of this episode, incidentally.) My teacher's voice became steely, and she said, "Dougan, pick that up, take it home and iron it, and it had better be memorized at your next lesson." With that, I was dismissed.

I'm happy to report that I did 'iron' Brendisi, memorize it, and that I never had another such temperamental outburst. Deep in my heart I knew I was grateful to my mother and my teacher for not letting me be a quitter and for not giving in to my adolescent temper tantrums.

I wonder how many young people today are being failed by parents who cannot seem to take a firm positive stand with them during their formative years? Recalling my inner relief when my parents would not cater to my laziness, — would not admit that I knew "better" than they, I can't help but think that many young people who are aimlessly searching for "something meaningful" in their lives today and are rebelling against almost everything, are really expressing a basic anger with their parents for not guiding them with more foresight, consistency and determination.

My original copy of Brendisi is still with me — and whenever I have a student who is a foot stomper, a teeth-gnasher, a hair puller-outer — I tell my story and show all the faint "crumple" lines which still remain on the music which I attempted to iron out so many years ago.

Gradually I learned that what my teacher said was true: "The hardest part of practicing is to open your violin case and take your fiddle out." After mastering that initial art, practicing finally became tolerable — even absorbing, and eventually I forgot to be a clockwatcher. Slowly my fiddle became an inseparable part of me and one of the most rewarding facets in my life.

This week as I watched the young adults rehearsing and performing in The Atlanta Symphony, it wasn't hard to see by their fervor and enthusiasm that they are in a profession they love. I found myself wondering how many of them as children had occasionally wanted to smash their fiddles against a wall; — at how many of them had parents like mine, who through sheer will-power and grit had guided them relentlessly through the earliest, most frustrating years on their instruments; — and at how many of them feel for their parents the gratitude I feel for mine for teaching me that rewarding, wonderful experiences in life don't usually come easily or without diligent work; — that the responsibility of passing our cultural heritage from one generation to the next is embodied in the dedicated handful of those who survive the rigors and disciplines so essential in acquiring aesthetic concepts and artistic skills.

Stories that got omitted (or truncated) in my Mom article that ought to be written up: After Dad sat on Jo's little fiddle she'd left on the maroon couch, he was so angry he snatched it up by the neck and smashed it on the floor. Jo was 3rd grade which makes me pre-school, but the whole drama is vivid in my memory. Also Jo in her late teens wandering on the lawn in the summer at Chez Nous, practicing, and the night she left her (incredibly valuable) fiddle outside and it rained. I was witness to Pat seizing and crumpling up Brendisi and flinging it in the wastebasket and saying she'd never touch it again — she was practicing in the little bath room off the Corn room — or in the entryway anyway — and I also remember her creeping home, chastened, ironing the music, and practicing it. It wasn't just a lesson for her. I recall Paul Campagna playing and playing Chopin and MacDowell and other pieces during his noon break from working on remodeling Chez Nous, while the other men were stretched out — and I was stretched out under the piano, listening. I remember my horror when a sailor running down State St. in Madison ran into my cello (it was in a cloth case) and put a knee-sized hole in it. Horror also when I balanced a cello of my teacher's on a chair, sideways, which cellists do (but I've NEVER done, since), and it fell over and got a crack in it. I recall Jo calling me into the corn room when she was practicing for the first time a Bach unaccompanied suite, and making me listen — she had to share her thrill — and I did, and it's one of the thrills of MY life. I would get a lump in my throat when Jo and Pat and Mom played the Bach Double Concerto, the slow movement, and the section with the double stops. There was other music they played that always got to me. The Handel sonatas. Kreisler's Praeludium and Allegro. I didn't make enough in the article of Mom playing and singing — "Who is Sylvia" (Craig singing along in the background, "Oh, is she that old, that old, that old"), and her own compositions, and practicing her two-piano-four-hands pieces that we never heard the other piano to. At any music Craig couldn't resist singing along, in his terrible voice, and all the time I'd be practicing and he'd be playing with his cars or whatever on the rug, his voice would soar out the familiar measures louder than me — and he'd be utterly unconscious of it. We'd go to the Community Concerts and sit in the front row with other kids whose parents saw to it they got culture, and Albert Spalding the violinist once stopped in the middle of a piece and shook his bow at all of us — we were whispering — and Mother was mortified. I have always loved listening to practicing, even 4-tone scales, and interminable Sevcik variations. I've slighted Mom and our music in The Round Barn; it was such a central part of our lives. But I can't write everything.



BOOK'S OUT!
 Spfld. Our women's writing collective, "Brain Child", has been in existence about 20 yrs., & in that time we've published 5, now 6 books: and this is the longest & most ambitious. If you'd like a copy, send me \$5.00 + \$1.00 for postage, & I'll mail you one. If I promised you one for X-mas, remind me & I'll send one. It has two stories in it from Round Barn, "Milk Routes" & "Detasseling".

NEWS BYTES

India Carol Dell's been there, but we'll have to wait for summer for details!

Beloit 75% of Ron D's children were present for his 91st birthday May 20: Jo, Jack & Craig, although Jo'd left before Jack arrived. However only 5% of his grandchildren were there: Elle. Cramp blew out representative candles on his cake, but thou we all ate rhubarb-pie instead.

Beaver Creek, Or. Uncle Craig, commenting on Jeremy Schmitt & Wendy Baylor's baby born last May: "If Kestrel comes, can Ouzel be far behind?"

Reno. Guess who was

CITIZEN OF THE MONTH AT AGNES RISLEY SCHOOL again? That's right, Cressie! This time she

was elected by her classmates, last time it was by her music teacher. Way to go, Cressie! As I said, I've been working on Round Barn on and off since 1967. After Northwestern took it, Dad (then 90) said to me, "When did you say this book is coming out?" "Well, it'll be out, some stories, in the Tri Quarterly probably in a year," I said, "but the book itself will be another year, maybe even two." Dad sighed. "I guess it's going to be a posthumous book." I said, "Oh, Dad, you can manage to live for another two or three years!" Quick as a flash he shot back, "I didn't mean ME!"

Beaver Creek, OR Craig & Barbara Dougans dog Starbuck had to stay at a Kennels for several days. At his departure he received a report card. He got top grades (A's) in every thing except "Attitude." That was a 2.
Spfld. All the plants went outside for summer camp, mid-May, and I heard nothing but complaints since. "Too cold!" as they huddle together. They want to go to Megan's in California. I tell them to blame Pinetuba



OF OUR



AT THE EDGES



COMFORT



BRAINCHILD 6



NEW GREAT-GRANDCHILD ARRIVES
Oregon His name is CARSON TREVER DOUGAN, and he's the son of Trever and Jacki Dougan. He was born on his great-aunt Jo's birthday, March 6, & weighed in at 5' & ? oz. All are doing fine!

NEW GREAT-GRANDCHILD ABOUT TO ARRIVE!
Aptos, CA. I bet some of you didn't even know Megan was pregnant again! The baby is due around June 22, so we'll have an announcement in the next newsletter. Megan says it's a boy. Mark Allen Ryan was 1 on Feb. 19. Michael Ryan had a birthday May 18. He's the papa.

Perran porth, Cornwall. Winnie Taylor, 91? 92? broke a hip this winter, but is recovering well. How'd she do it? Typical Winnie: She climbed upon a chair to reach s' thing on a high shelf - & fell.
Spfld. On May 3, ENNL Ed hit the big SIX-FIVE, but has no intention of retiring. There were neat celebrations. She is retiring her weekly radio show, Reading & Writing & Radio, after 19 seasons. Bill Ortman's 6th gr. at Jefferson School, Spfld, had a bake sale & presented her with \$50 to keep RWR on the air!! And she attended a 6th grade "lock in" at Palmgrove had a ball - stayed till 2 AM!



MYSTERY TRIP, ANYONE?

April 13 1993 from Jackie Jackson. Printed at own expense.



IMPORTANT NOTICE!
TO ALL ENNL READERS

Dear Students, Staff, Faculty, Administration:

I've had requests for another **Mystery Book Tour to England** (some who went last time have said positively they'd go again, and bring a friend!), and while I love these trips, the biggest job is getting a class--until the very last minute when lots want to go and it's too late.

THIS NOTE IS TO TEST INTEREST, NOT COMMITMENT. (I NEED A SHOW OF SUFFICIENT INTEREST FOR ME TO PLUNK DOWN \$1500 OF MY OWN MONEY TO RESERVE THE HOSTELS, BY LATE SUMMER. I'M WILLING TO GAMBLE.)

--We need 10 to sign on as a class: regular, audit, or Sr. Learner. (Some of you get classes as perks.) We need 20 to get a decent \$ rate. The other 10 wouldn't have to come as signed-up class members, so a non-SSU friend, spouse, child or grandchild would work (and has). (My dad was 87 and is still talking about it.

--It'd be a Spring '94 class, with a few meetings for everyone, and more for those who've signed up for credit. Second 8 wk. class times arranged. Booklists with books you'll all want to read. The travel would be right after term, mid May. I'd teach it alone, or with a helper who's been on 3 of my 4 trips, or with a Community College teacher who'd also bring students.

--The cost for 20 days would be under \$2000 (unless the pound changes radically, or our lodgings boost rates dramatically). That includes almost everything. Plane fare, overland, lodging, all breakfasts, all dinners except in London, a number of lunches. We'd stay at youth hostels: one is a medieval castle, another a former cheese factory. Most are grand old houses, with neat wardens, good mattresses & food (FULL ENGLISH BREAKFASTS!), in lovely settings. It's dorm living, so don't plan a honeymoon, though we did have one on our last trip!

--We'd again visit sites: Miss Marple's village, Oxford of Peter Wimsey and Harriet Vane, etc. And activities: change (bell) ringing in Cambridge, to go with Sayers's Nine Tailors. A walking tour following Brother Caedfel's sandals, in Shrewsbury. *and others!*

--We'd again meet authors, and probably have our Welsh pathologist with his great, gory lectures on 1. fictional and 2. real pathology, with slides.

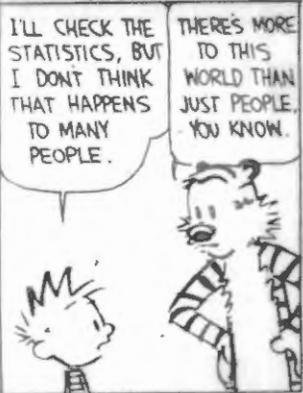
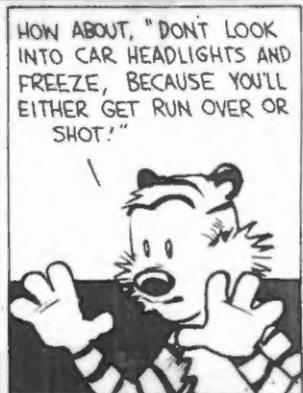
--AND, we'd have Cecil, our coach driver of 4 trips, who is pining for us to come back. The Germans and Japanese stay in the best hotels, but I'd much rather stay in hostels and have picnics and go to the pub with you blokes!

IF YOU'RE INTERESTED, OR KNOW SOMEONE WHO IS, CALL ME AT 786-6778 (give the message to Julie Atwell if I'm gadding around campus); CALL ME AT HOME, 544-2916; OR SEND A NOTE VIA CAMPUS MAIL, Brookens 389. (Why do I do this mad thing? Because it's so great I want to SHARE. For affidavits, try Rosie Roach or Jeanette Skaar or Elizabeth Weir.)

What's killed the semester for time (besides Wollstonecraft, see elsewhere in ENNL) is that the English Program is hiring two people to partially take the places of those we've lost. I won't bore you with details, but the process has been interminable (we have to do everything exactly legally for fear of lawsuits); we had about 800 applicants; and we couldn't even get to look at their files till March. After that, when we finally narrowed our candidates down to 3 for one position, 4 for the other, we found we'd already lost 3 topnotchers to other jobs, so we've had to move on down our lists. And we weren't able to start calling them in for interviews till after

800 CANDIDATES

school was out--which means no classes going on, and students around. I've managed to round up a few for each candidate to meet. It's a terrible process and far too legalistic and won't necessarily result in good hires, in spite of the number to chose from! I'm sick of eating out, sometimes at my own expense (the U. pays for 3 faculty with a candidate, no students, so I've been subsidizing students) and I'm angry to be giving up 3 unpaid weeks of my precious summer to something we should have finished long before school was out. Not only that, it meant that during the semester many things had to be shortchanged, classes not as well prepared, sleep shortened, stress heightened, etc.



Recommended vital, fascinating & disturbing reading (by Hobbes & mg): The Diversity of Life by Nobel prize winner (2x) Edmund Wilson.

cation of The Round Barn in two different editions: a complete one, clothbound, and a smaller version emphasizing the stories you have to tell. Another alternative has occurred to me, though, because maybe the storytelling can't be so easily separated from the historical content of the book: we can think about publishing it in more than one volume, shaping each volume to be a satisfying whole, in itself, but in two or three volumes making up a set that will indeed be memorable.

Perhaps these ideas may help a bit as you proceed to shape the manuscript as a whole. Call me anytime, or send me a note, whenever you'd like, and I'll call you. I'll be happy to talk about the book at any time, and of course I'd be happy to look at sections of it anytime, starting now, if you want me to see them.

Congratulations on achieving something we think is genuinely original and very memorable. We are very happy that we will have the pleasure of working with this book, a few fragments of which have already made a great impression on us.

In haste—and with best wishes,

Reg
Reginald Gibbons

Please sign my name to vote for the slate of the Nominating Committee:

- Please ~~It wasn't Brendisi, it was~~
1. Pres. ~~The Canebreak!~~ YOU'RE
2. Vice ~~WRONG!~~ IT WAS BRENDISI!!
3. Treasurer
4. Recording Secy. I'VE GOT THE MUSK
5. Corresponding Secy. TO PROVE IT!

I like CANEBREAK, BUT HATED BRENDISI.
Please reserve Wednesday, October 15, 1975,
for first luncheon (The Annual Meeting).

Why do you recollect CANEBREAK?
It was sort of easy, but had double steps.

Now this harks back to Pat's article on p. 4. I wrote her (on this ancient post card salvaged from the Dairy office) that she was wrong, it wasn't Brendisi. She took over the address, crossed out my message, and wrote on the same card the message above. I also clearly remember the rage and crumpling happening at home, as I wrote on p. 4. Pat, call me up & sing Brindisi over the phone & let sing you Canebreak, & let decide who's right. Maybe Teach can settle the other?

TriQuarterly
AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF WRITING,
ART AND CULTURAL INQUIRY

11 February 1993

Jackie Jackson
Dept. of English
Sangamon State University
Springfield IL 62714

Dear Jackie,

I am very glad I found you at home when I called earlier today. I'm writing to confirm that Susan Hahn will shortly send you a contract for the publication of some excerpts from The Round Barn in the issue of TriQuarterly that will come out in February of next year. We are really delighted to be able to publish some of this work, which we both admire for its clarity of style, depth of feeling, and superb storytelling.

Further, as I mentioned on the telephone, we would like to work with you toward publishing The Round Barn in book form. Although I am not in a position to issue a contract for the book, I am confident that we will be able to publish it. The procedure is as follows: after we have the final draft of the book, we will present it to the Northwestern University Press Board. After their approval, the director of the Northwestern University Press will send you a contract, and the book will go into production. It takes about one year from the completion of the final manuscript to publication. We will publish the book as part of our series TriQuarterly Books, which is our new imprint at Northwestern University Press.

We are very much looking forward to receiving from you a complete draft of the book. We will both read it carefully, and then will give you our reactions regarding the structure and length of the book. You might want to come up to Evanston so that we can spend an afternoon together talking about it. (We could put you up one night in the Orrington Hotel in Evanston, if you want to do that.) In the meantime, I am really pleased to hear that you will have some writing time between May and the end of this year.

I have some ideas about the publication of the book that I might as well pass on to you now, for they might be of some help as you work on the book as a whole. If I understand the book correctly, it has both a wealth of historical information in it, and a wealth of storytelling. (What we are going to publish in TriQuarterly, I think of as part of the storytelling side, but I see how much sheer information is in it, too.) You have mentioned that the manuscript when finished is likely to be quite long. Because a single volume of, say, 500 pages, can be prohibitively expensive for those who want to buy it, I have been thinking, just since you and I talked today, about other ways the whole work could be published. One of these I mentioned to you on the phone—the publi-

This is the letter I got from Reg Gibbons after his initial telephone call. Thought you might like to see it. ☺

THE EMPTY NEST NEWSLETTER VOL XI NO 4 P 7

MARY'S COMING!

There were two massive TIME/ENERGY EATERS beyond my usual activities (that manage to fill all my time) this year; one I got myself into. Last June on the Fantasy Trip we had only one day at the end in London. I called Anna Davin hoping to see her, but her day was filled with grading papers and her evening with an Event: a Readers Theater celebrating the 200th anniversary of the publication of Mary Wollstonecraft's A Vindication of the Rights of Woman. She invited me to join her, and it was possible to sand-

wich it in between our activities. The hall was literally packed to the gills--not even standing room and stairway space. My white hair (hah!) got me a front row seat on the balcony, reserved for an usher, but I couldn't locate Anna from the top of her head; later I found she was in my section where I couldn't have spotted her. Anyway there were 7 or 8 famous stars (incl. Lily Langtree, Harriet Vane, I discovered later) on a bare stage at a bare table, and they read from MW's works, letters and what others wrote about her. It--was--thrilling!!! I had to leave before the

BROADSIDE NO. 1

(All the Broad sides were 8 1/2 x 11", and had a splash of color on the major printing)



WOULD YOU SPEND A NIGHT WITH THIS WOMAN?

ANONYMOUS RHYME IN RESPONSE TO WILLIAM GODWIN'S 1798 MEMOIR OF HIS WIFE MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT:

William has penned a wagon load of stuff

And Mary's life at last he needs must write

Thinking her whoredoms were not known enough

Till fairly printed off in black and white.

MARY'S COMING! APRIL 23 & 24

SSU's Women's Studies Scholarship Fundraiser: A Readers Theater: FULL OF GRACE

A Celebration of the 200th+1 Anniversary of the Publication of A Vindication of the Rights of Woman by Mary Wollstonecraft.

First U.S. production after sellout London Premiere! Regan Smith, Director
A classy event in Brookens Auditorium, 8 p.m., followed by dessert in the PAC Restaurant. \$15, 2/\$25; students \$7.50, group rates. Call 786-6738 for info.



THEATER PREVIEW/William Furry

Return of Frankenstein's grandma

Full of Grace: A Celebration of the Life and Work of Mary Wollstonecraft
8 p.m., April 23-24
Brookens Auditorium

Few men about her would and could do more, hence she was labeled harpy, shrew, and whore.

—Adrian Rich on Mary Wollstonecraft



Mary Wollstonecraft

If you're tired of dime-store heroes, meet Frankenstein's grandma. To call eighteenth-century journalist, novelist, and social critic Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797) a woman ahead of her time would be patronizing, not to mention incorrect. A product of The Enlightenment, Wollstonecraft was a rational, critical-thinking intellectual who dared to be revolutionary in an age of revolutions. The author of A Vindication of the Rights of Woman (1792), the first major work in English to address women's rights, thought her sex irrelevant, and dined and debated with the male architects of the American and French revolutions. It wasn't so much that she was ahead of her time as the rest of the world was—and for the most part remains—

behind the times. This weekend Sangamon State University presents Full of Grace, a readers' theater on the life and writings of Wollstonecraft. The production, directed by retiring university professor Regan Smith, is a benefit fund-raiser for the Women's Studies Scholarship Fund, and includes readings from Wollstonecraft's works and letters, as well as commentaries by her contemporaries and twentieth-century critics. Musical selections will also be performed. The SSU production is the American premiere of A Dangerous Reputation, which opened in London on June 7, 1992 to commemorate the two-hundredth anniversary of

the Vindication's publication. SSU English professor Jackie Jackson was in London with a group of SSU students and happened to attend the opening.

"It was electrifying," says Jackson. "There were so many people trying to get in the theater they had to stop charging admission and ask the audience to pay on the way out." When it came time for SSU to choose a play, Jackson thought of the production. A letter and a phone call later, she had the script in her hand, but not the play's title. The producers came up with Full of Grace, as in the rosary, Jackson says.

The 1970s brought a resurgence of interest in Wollstonecraft, Jackson says, primarily because of the feminist movement. Wollstonecraft was featured in biographies and Judy Chicago's "Dinner Party," a now-famous piece of installation art with personalized place settings for significant women throughout history. "Wollstonecraft was the first feminist to publish anything," Jackson says. "She is seminal to the women's movement."

Wollstonecraft's life was both heroic and tragic. An abused child, Wollstonecraft was an outspoken critic of marriage. She conceived two children out of wedlock, but decided to marry William Godwin, the father of Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin (the author of Frankenstein). Five days after her second child was born, Wollstonecraft died of an infection. The next year Godwin published a memoir of his wife's brief but productive life, a book which raised a storm of denision from a society eager to snuff out all the fires of revolution. The infant women's movement, in essence, died with Wollstonecraft.

Full of Grace cast members include SSU students Mary Lewatherwood, Marian Levin, and Deborah Roese; and community actors Julie Blomberg, Doug Callin, Mercedes Hale, Deb King, and Shirley McConnaughay. Tickets are fifteen dollars per person, twenty-five dollars per couple, and \$7.50 for students. Dessert will be served after the show. For more information, call 786-6738.

end to sprint to our last Fantasy activity--a "Ghost Walk" a tube stop away, in the St. Paul area--but back at SSU when our Womens Studies Committee was pondering this year's fundraiser, I suggested we try to get the script and permission. They agreed, and I managed, and then worked very hard on all aspects but the production itself, for I felt responsible and was determined it should succeed. It was a smash hit! But people had to be made aware of MW ("Who's she? Why should we pay so much to come?"), and tickets sold, and a thousand details, and we lost our 2 student helpers so all the nitty gritty fell to Suzi Langellier and me. We made our program a primer, and I'll print it all. I made all the Broad sides" and we put up one a week. Great credit goes to Regan Smith our director, and his cast. (I was even in it--introduced the show by telling

what life was like for women in England in 1792 drawing on Fay Weldon's words from Letters to Alice on First Reading Jane Austen: which book I HIGHLY recommend) I think ours was as good as London's--no, we didn't have famous actors, but we had young and old, black and white, our stage was varied with greenery and seating arrangements (even two actors seated down the aisles), we had splendid huge sepia slides for backdrop, our songs were great, and the audience ended up singing. 'Twas terrific! And then the elegant desserts in the posh school restaurant. It was one classy event, and just the sort of thing Women's Studies should do for its own integrity, for educating the public, and for showing the school how really to put on an event. I was proud of us. And, since I'm blowing my own horn, it wouldn't have happened if I hadn't started it, pushed it (Suzi and me), and sold half the tickets!



BROADSIDE NO. 2



WOULD YOU SPEND A NIGHT WITH THE GRANDMOTHER OF FRANKENSTEIN?

--Mary Wollstonecraft, 38, died giving birth to her daughter Mary, in 1797.

--Percy Bysshe Shelley and young Mary met in secret--read poetry and her mother's works--conversed--and fell in love--on her mother's grave in St. Pancras churchyard.

--Mary Shelley conceived Frankenstein at the age of eighteen, and gave birth at twenty.

MARY'S COMING ! APRIL 23 & 24



Mary Wollstonecraft attacks a gerund and some peaceful pronouns

WOULD YOU SPEND A NIGHT WITH A WOMAN WHO OFFENDS AGAINST GRAMMAR?

Says William Godwin, renowned author, philosopher, anarchist:
 "It was in November 1791 that I was first in company with Mary Wollstonecraft. We dined at a friend's, together with Mr. Thomas Paine. . . .The interview was not fortunate. Mary and myself parted mutually displeased with each other. I had not read her Rights of Woman. I had barely looked into her Answer to Burke, and had been displeased . . . with a few offenses against grammar and other minute points of composition. I had therefore little curiosity to see Mary Wollstonecraft and a very great curiosity to see Thomas Paine. . . . We met two or three times in the course of the following year but made a very small degree of progress towards a cordial acquaintance."

(AND THEN HE MARRIED HER !)

MARY'S COMING ! April 23 & 24



SSU's Women's Studies Scholarship Fundraiser: A Readers Theater:
FULL OF GRACE

A Celebration of the 200th+1 Anniversary of the Publication of A Vindication of the Rights of Woman by Mary Wollstonecraft.

First U.S. production after sellout London Premiere! Regan Smith, Director
 A classy event in Brookens Auditorium, 8 p.m., followed by dessert in the PAC Restaurant. \$15, 2/\$25, students \$7.50, group rates. Call 786-6778 for info.



WOULD YOU SPEND A NIGHT WITH A HYENA IN PETTICOATS?

"I am resolved never to read A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, written by that philosophizing serpent, that hyena in petticoats, Mary Wollstonecraft."

--Horace Walpole, 1792

MARY'S COMING ! APRIL 23 & 24



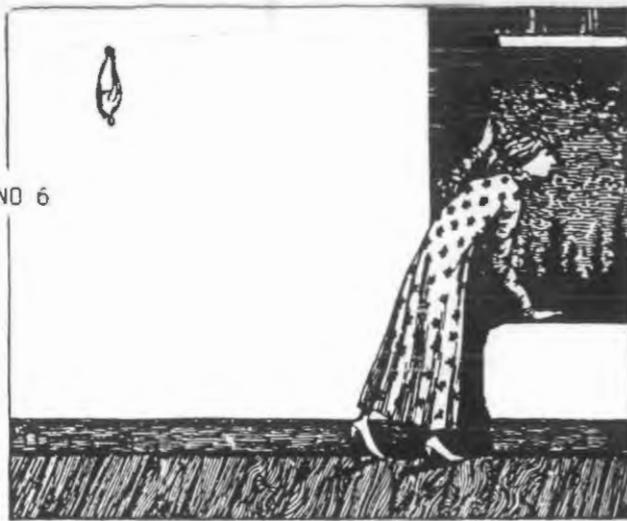
SSU's Women's Studies Scholarship Fundraiser: A Readers Theater:
FULL OF GRACE

A Celebration of the 200th+1 Anniversary of the Publication of A Vindication of the Rights of Woman by Mary Wollstonecraft.

First U.S. production after sellout London Premiere! Regan Smith, Director
 A classy event in Brookens Auditorium, 8 p.m., followed by dessert in the PAC Restaurant. \$15, 2/\$25, students \$7.50, group rates. Call 786-6738 for info.

THE EMPTY NEST NEWSLETTER VOL XI NO 4 P 10

BROADSIDE NO 6



WOULD YOU SPEND A NIGHT WITH A
WOMAN WHO THINKS
FREEDOM
WOULD IMPROVE THE RELATIONSHIP
OF THE SEXES?



Mary Wollstonecraft

"Would men generously snap our chains, and be content with rational fellowship instead of slavish obedience, they would find us more faithful wives, more reasonable mothers--in a word, better citizens. We should then love them with true affection, because we should learn to respect ourselves."

MARY'S COMING! APRIL 23 & 24

SSU's Women's Studies Scholarship Fundraiser: A Readers Theater:
FULL OF GRACE

A Celebration of the 200th+1 Anniversary of the Publication of
A Vindication of the Rights of Woman by Mary Wollstonecraft.

First U.S. production after sellout London Premiere! Regan Smith, Director
A classy event in Brookens Auditorium, 8 p.m., followed by dessert in the PAC
Restaurant. \$15, 2/\$25, students \$7.50, group rates. Call 786-6738 for info.



EPOADSIDE NO 5



WOULD YOU SPEND
A NIGHT WITH
A WOMAN WHO
COMMITTED THE
UNPARDONABLE
SEXUAL BLUNDER
OF DEPRIVING THE MALE OF THE
INITIATIVE?

"That Mary Wollstonecraft was an extreme neurotic of a compulsive type there can be no doubt. Out of her illness arose the ideology of feminism, which was to express the feelings of so many women in years to come. . . . Underneath her aggressive writings Mary was a masochist like her mother, as indeed all the leading feminist theorists were in fact. Aggressively Mary flung herself at men, only to be repeatedly repulsed. For her actions invited repulse. Overeager for what she desired. . . . Mary discovered what she sought where it did not exist and then took the initiative, committing the unpardonable sexual blunder of depriving the male of the initiative. The feminists were always doing this, thereby either driving men away from them or capturing psychologically impaired males."

--MODERN WOMAN: THE LOST SEX by Marynia Farnham and Ferdinand Lundberg, 1947

MARY'S COMING ! APRIL 23 & 24



SSU's Women's Studies Scholarship Fundraiser: A Readers Theater:
FULL OF GRACE

A Celebration of the 200th+1 Anniversary of the Publication of
A Vindication of the Rights of Woman by Mary Wollstonecraft.

First U.S. production after sellout London Premiere! Regan Smith, Director
A classy event in Brookens Auditorium, 8 p.m., followed by dessert in the PAC
Restaurant. \$15, 2/\$25, students \$7.50, group rates. Call 786-6738 for info.

THE EMPTY NEST NEWSLETTER VOL XI NO 4 P11

WOULD YOU
SPEND A NIGHT
WITH A
WOMAN



WHOSE INFLUENCE WE
TRACE EVEN NOW
AMONG THE LIVING?

Virginia Woolf said, "She is alive and active, she argues and experiments, we hear her voice and trace her influence even now among the living."

MARY'S HERE !

THIS FRIDAY AND SATURDAY !

SSU's Women's Studies Scholarship Fundraiser: A Readers Theater:
FULL OF GRACE

A Celebration of the 200th+1 Anniversary of the Publication of
A Vindication of the Rights of Woman by Mary Wollstonecraft.

First U.S. production after sellout London Premiere! Regan Smith, Director
A classy event in Brookens Auditorium, 8 p.m., followed by dessert in the PAC
Restaurant. \$15, 2/\$25, students \$7.50, group rates. Call 786-6738 for info.



WOULD YOU SPEND
A NIGHT WITH A
WOMAN WHO
BELIEVES



LOVE IS NOT TO BE BOUGHT?

"From the tyrannies of man, I firmly believe the greater number of female follies proceed. It is vain to expect virtue from women till they are, in some degree, independent of men. Whilst they are absolutely dependent on their husbands they will be cunning, mean and selfish, and the men who can be gratified by the fawning fondness of spaniel-like affection have not much delicacy, for love is not to be bought. In any sense of the words, the silken wings are instantly shrivelled up when anything beside a return in kind is sought."



Mary Wollstonecraft

MARY'S COMING! APRIL 23 & 24



SSU's Women's Studies Scholarship Fundraiser: A Readers Theater:
FULL OF GRACE

A Celebration of the 200th+1 Anniversary of the Publication of
A Vindication of the Rights of Woman by Mary Wollstonecraft.

First U.S. production after sellout London Premiere! Regan Smith, Director
A classy event in Brookens Auditorium, 8 p.m., followed by dessert in the PAC
Restaurant. \$15, 2/\$25, students \$7.50, group rates. Call 786-6738 for info.