

INKLINGS and IDLINGS

The Newsletter of the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association

313 East Third Street • Galesburg, Illinois 61401 • (309) 342-2361

Holiday Issue 2004

The name, "Inklings and Idlings," comes from the title of Carl Sandburg's first column, printed in the **Galesburg Evening Mail** under the pseudonym "Crimson," in 1904.

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The Holiday Has Brought New Friends

Two new members have been added to the rolls of the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association in this holiday season. They are:

Barbara Cantrell
Bert McElroy

We welcome them, and look forward to their participation in the activities of the Association. If you have joined the Association recently, and your name is not listed above, please notify **Inklings and Idlings** of the omission so it may be rectified.

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The Songbag Concerts

The Songbag Concerts have ended for the fall season. Attendance was very good and the artists were excellent. They will begin again on the third Thursday in February. To keep in touch with the concert schedule, you can check www.johnheasly.com.

The November presentation featured Mike and Amy Finders from Minneapolis. They were enthusiastically received and several members of

the audience hoped they could be brought back another time.

In 1927 **The American Songbag** was published. It contained 280 songs gathered by Carl Sandburg as he traveled around the country. In those days, songs were in the air. Everybody knew and sang them. After his recitals, people would give or teach Sandburg songs they knew and enjoyed.

Many of the songs appeal to children because of their silly lyrics and happy rhythms. If adults think about it, they can still recall songs from their childhood, sung on trips, during camp or at Sunday School.. The recollection almost always leads to pleasant thoughts.

That's the background on how the musical evenings at the Carl Sandburg Historic Site came to be named.

From the beginning the concerts have been coordinated by John Heasly. He has shown great talent in bringing first-rate performances to each of the presentations.

Many of the same faces are seen in the audiences of the concerts. Clearly, they recognize a good thing when they hear it. You ought to consider coming to the February concert to see what the regulars have discovered.

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Outta Site

My Seasonal Guy, Bert McElroy, finished his six

month stint at the end of October. Hopefully, he will be back next May. The last three or four weeks Bert was here I had him mulch the leaves as they came down. By the time he was done, it looked just like the whole lawn had been raked. Well, guess what. The darn sycamore has decided to shed some of its leaves. (I'm sure it is planning on dripsy-dropsying those huge old leaves throughout the winter and well into next spring.) Harry stopped by one day and I told him the sycamore leaves were just part of my autumn decor.

With Bert gone, I now rely on my Contractual Gals to fill in on Sundays and any other day I'm not here. So, if you're visiting on a Sunday, greet them kindly—they've done a terrific job in years past: Jeanne Struble, Pat Stevens and Kit Emery. If you need to talk to me, they'll probably know how to make the connection.

I've been attending most of the Sandburg Days Festival meetings. It looks like there's going to be plenty of stuff going on: entertainment, readings, music and more. I've been in touch with Jhon (yes, that is the way he spells his name) Akers of Wofford College in Spartanburg, South Carolina. He had contacted me several years ago about performing here, but nothing came of it at that time. Anyway, I think he will be the performer for our Kick-off for the Festival on Thursday, May 5th, at 7 p.m. (The Festival runs May 5th through May 7th, (Thursday through Saturday.) Jhon's program is classical guitar, linked to Sandburg's life and poetry. (Did you know that Andres Segovia was a friend of Sandburg and that he gave Carl a lesson or two on playing the guitar?) The Sandburg Home at Flat Rock, North Carolina, has had Jhon perform there and they have nothing but glowing reports about his work.

My immediate supervisor, Bob Coomer, has been promoted to the directorship of the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency. His previous position as Historic Sites Superintendent will be filled by Paula Cross. I'm looking forward to meeting Ms.

Cross, but this probably won't take place until the statewide managers' meeting the middle of January.

I wish you all the best and healthiest of Holiday Seasons!

— Steve Holden

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Dr. Sandburg Honored

On Friday evening, September 10, 2004, the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association held a reception for Dr. Richard Sandburg of Rockford. He is a nephew of Carl Sandburg. He will celebrate his 90th birthday next February.



Dr. Richard Sandburg

Dr. Sandburg has written many articles about his uncle Carl and always enjoys reminiscing about his own youthful days in Galesburg.

Tomas Junglander of Stockholm, Sweden, was also a visitor at the reception. He has a special interest in the writings of Carl Sandburg and is working on ways to increase knowledge of them in Sweden.

Several years ago Tomas gave the Visitors' Center

a number of photographs of the farm homes where August and Clara Sandburg were born in Sweden.



Dr. Tom Turlentes and Tomas Junglander

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Another Member Lost

Corinne E. Sherwood passed away August 20, 2004. She was a close friend of Carol Nelson, the late Site Superintendent, and had been a member of the Association for a number of years. Mrs. Sherwood and Mrs. Nelson had worked together as caseworkers for the Illinois Department of Public Aid and became good friends. Mrs. Sherwood was survived by a son, a daughter, a brother and a sister. Her husband died in 1973.

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Welcome to My Rootabaga Patch

Steve Holden designed the exhibit sponsored by the Association at this year's Scarecrow Festival. Bert McElroy did the legwork finding baled straw, cornstalks and rootabagas (otherwise known as turnips when rootabagas can't be found).

The display won first prize in the Historic Division of the contest. The prize was \$75.

More than two thousand people visited the Festival and voted for their favorite scarecrow. The other categories were traditional, whimsical, business and children.

In the Association entry, Carl Sandburg was depicted trying to scare away the crows from his rootabaga patch with his guitar. The crows are still hanging around and the guitar is still in one piece. Of course, copies of "Rootabaga Stories" are still on sale at the Museum store in the Visitors' Center.

Congratulations to Steve and Bert on a humorous and appropriate exhibit.

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Landmark Status

The Carl Sandburg Historic Site in Galesburg has been named a National Poetry Landmark by the Academy of American Poets. The designation was announced August, 5, 2004, in New York City.

The Academy was founded in 1934 as a non-profit organization to support poets in their careers and to foster an appreciation of modern poetry. To fulfill this mission, the Academy sponsors National Poetry Month and awards a number of national poetry prizes. It also administers a poetry website which receives more than half a million visits per month. The site includes biographical information about many 20th century poets, lessons for students and audio archives of poetry dating from the 1960s to the present. The web address is www.poetry.org.

The sites honored may include birthplaces of poets, inspirational locations, museums and libraries. They are located across the nation and are listed on the web site of the Academy.

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Carol Nelson's Memorial

More than \$1200 has been contributed to the memorial for Carol Nelson, former Site Superintendent. Various projects have been considered, but no decision has been made for a permanent addition to the Site.

Association President Norm Winick has expressed his appreciation to everyone who contributed to the memorial. Gifts can still be made in Carol's memory.

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Another Poet

Eugene Field has a Galesburg connection because he attended Knox College for two years as a member of the Class of 1871.

In **Always the Young Strangers** Carl Sandburg wrote that his teacher, Lottie Goldquist, insisted her students should know about Eugene Field because he had attended Knox College. She wanted her students to "feel close to him."

Later, Carl Sandburg read Eugene Field's column in the **Chicago Daily News**. The column was called "Sharps and Flats" and was the first syndicated daily column in the country. Carl wrote that he liked Field's writing when it was funny as well as when it was serious.

Eugene Field received an honorary degree from Knox College in 1893 and appeared at the Auditorium on May 22, 1894, to read a number of his poems and prose pieces.

The **Galesburg Daily Mail** reported on Field's reading "to a small and appreciative audience" in the Auditorium which was rather chilly and uncomfortable. This is how the poet was described:

"Eugene Field, poet, literateur, editor, dilettante and curio collector, read a dozen of his poetical and prose sketches at the Auditorium last night under the auspices of the Adelphi society of Knox college.

"The editor of the Record is a spare man, with a smooth shaven angular face, and he reads with considerable dramatic effect. The interest, of course, turned upon the fact that it was a well-known writer reading his own works, and elocutionary skill was not greatly expected. But the reader has expression, a well-controlled voice, and a nervous style admirably suited to the humor and pathos of his own compositions.

"He read the following well-known poems and sketches: 'Long Ago,' 'The Little Yeller Baby,' 'A Dutch Lullaby,' 'Casey's Table d' Hote,' 'Our Two Opinions,' 'The Night Wind,' 'Over the Hills and Far Away,' 'The River,' 'Booh!' 'Jus' 'fore Christmas,' 'The Wanderer.' The last selection was encored. Many considered the program too short."

Field was born in St. Louis, Missouri, September 2, 1850. His mother died when he was young and he was raised by a relative at Amherst, Massachusetts. After his father's death, he attended Knox College for two years. He graduated from the University of Missouri in 1871.

After a six-month-long tour of Europe Field became a reporter for the **Evening Journal** in St. Louis. He worked for a number of newspapers in the Midwest while writing and publishing his poetry and other writings.

Field liked to have special printings made of his poem and prose pieces. Then, he would sign them and give them to friends and business associates. He was well known for his collection of books, including many first editions.

He had a sunny disposition and a quaint sense of humor. His poems had great appeal to children.

"Little Boy Blue," "Wynkin', Blynkin' and Nod," and "The Duel" were some of the most popular of his children's poems in days gone by. In "The Duel" a gingham dog and a calico cat have a fight which is reported by the Dutch clock and the Chinese plate. Every child can just picture that fight in their mind's eye. Perhaps your children or grandchildren should be introduced to the delights of the poems of Eugene Field.

Eugene Field died November 4, 1895, in Chicago. The home where he lived in St. Louis is maintained as a museum by the city. In Amherst, Massachusetts, the home where he lived is a museum open to the public.

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The Swedish Christmas Feast

The **Galesburg Evening Mail** published a regular feature entitled "Table and Kitchen." It was written by Lida Ames Willis of Chicago and produced by the Banning Company of Chicago. Ms. Willis gave suggestions for meal planning which were useful to homemakers. She also answered questions from readers.

In the December 21, 1900, column, Ms. Willis provided a survey of Christmas food customs from different countries. After reviewing English, American and German customs, she had this to say about the Swedish Christmas feast.

"Perhaps this country celebrates Christmas with more joy and enthusiasm than any other nation. The preparations begin weeks before the day of celebration and one of the most important features is the brewing of the Christmas ale: as this is offered with generous hand to every guest or caller. No creature is forgotten on this festive occasion, even the beasts and the wild birds of the air have their Christmas feast. They have a pretty custom of fastening sheaves of grain on tall poles where it

will be accessible to the most timid of the feathered throng, sure to be found near every farm house on Christmas.

"The Swedes have a curious custom called 'dipping in the pot.' The Christmas eve dinner is taken in the kitchen. Over the fire hangs a great pot, in which meat, tongue, ham, etc., are cooked together. Each member of the family takes a piece of bread, and it must be white bread, for Christmas, and not the coarse brown cakes so universally eaten. The slice of bread must be dipped into the contents while the pot still hangs over the fire, and removed without its breaking. After each one has attempted this feat the stew is eaten, followed by rice and apple sauce.

"The great Yuletide dish is served later in the evening and is made of codfish and potatoes, followed by another dish of rice. The Swedes are famous for cooking rice and it is a very popular dish.

"Thus we might go on finding the Christmas customs of all nations a very interesting study and very characteristic of the people."

This is the Christmas menu suggested by Ms. Willis in 1898:

BREAKFAST

Fruit
Cereal and Cream
Fried Smelts Creamed Potatoes
Rolls Coffee

DINNER

Consomme with Chestnut Force meat Balls
Stuffed Olives Celery
Roasted Almonds
Roast Turkey Giblet Gravy
Cranberry Jelly
Riced Potatoes Cauliflower in Cream

Sweetbreads in Cases Green Peas
Cheese Souffle
Celery and Walnut Salad
Plum Pudding Saboyan Sauce
Stuffed Dates
Coffee

SUPPER

Lobster Farci Celery
Nut and Preserved Ginger Sandwiches
Christmas Fruit Cake
Damson Preserves

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Sousa's Band Played in Galesburg in 1898

On November 6th this year there was quite a bit of news about the 150th birthday anniversary of John Phillip Sousa. Out of curiosity Patty Moshier, Archivist of the Illinois Room in the Galesburg Public Library, was consulted. She provided information about the appearance of Sousa and his band in Galesburg February 10, 1898.

John Phillip Sousa was born in Washington, DC., and was the son of a Portuguese father and a German mother. He started studying music when he was six years old. His first solo appearance playing the violin occurred when he was eleven years old. At the age of 13 he became an apprentice musician with the United States Marine Band.

He became a skilled conductor of theatrical and operatic orchestras. In 1880 Sousa became the leader of the Marine Band. The band began giving concert tours across the country in 1891. These public performances served to acquaint people with Sousa and the Marine Band.

On July 30, 1892, Sousa resigned from the Marine

Band and started his own group. During his tenure with the Marine Band he had played for five Presidents as well as numerous official functions in Washington, DC.

Sousa's Band was composed of the best musicians available. His dramatic conducting style contributed to his celebrity and the quality of the performance appealed to the public. The Sousa Band was widely admired and enjoyed sell-out audiences wherever it appeared.

There were fifty pieces in the band along with vocal and instrumental soloists.

The band went on tour twice a year. In 1898, Sousa and his Band had played in cities in New England and parts of Canada before their appearance in Galesburg. The performance was given in the Auditorium on North Broad Street. The tickets were \$1 for the lower floor, 75 cents for the balcony and 50 cents for the gallery.

The concert was sold out and the crowd enjoyed it immensely. Sousa usually listed ten pieces on each program. After each scheduled piece an encore was played which pleased the listeners vastly. Part of the program included light classical works familiar to the audience. There were marches on the program too—"El Capitan" and "The Stars and Stripes Forever," were mentioned in the news accounts.

"The Stars and Stripes Forever" had been composed in 1897 and would become one of the most popular marches ever written. It is little wonder Sousa became known as the "March King."

John Phillip Sousa died March 6, 1932, at Reading, Pennsylvania. His body was taken to Washington, DC, for burial in the Congressional Cemetery. In 1939 the new Pennsylvania Avenue bridge over the East Branch of the Potomac River was dedicated to his memory. The Marine Band

played some of Sousa's most famous marches at the ceremony.

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The Chrysanthemum Show

The **Republican-Register** of November 17, 1898, reported on the front page about a fundraising event by the ladies of the Christian Church in the Pillsbury Greenhouses. It may seem strange to us that a musical program was presented in a greenhouse. In the days of little or no central heating, a person could be very impressed by blooming things during the winter months in central Illinois.

The show started Wednesday afternoon at the I.L. Pillsbury greenhouses on East Main Street and continued through Saturday evening. A different musical and literary program was conducted each evening. The admission charged was for the benefit of the church. Ladies of the church conducted tours of the greenhouse as well.

Mr. Pillsbury had created a fine display of chrysanthemums. One blossom was said to be six inches in diameter. Several varieties of the flowers were mentioned in **The Galesburg Evening Mail**. Some of the plants had been trained to grow in the shape of a fan. The profusion of mums must have been a very special sight to see.

Entertainment in those days frequently included music and elocution by talented individuals in the community. Before the dominance of radio and television, families entertained themselves with the means at hand, the voice and musical instruments. Almost everyone could play an instrument.

Some individuals were adept at memorizing written pieces and presenting them to others. Elocution was regarded as an art and was greatly admired. Children were expected to acquire some

ability in elocution. Even Carl Sandburg "recited" when he was in grade school. He went on to "recite" on dozens of college campuses later in life.

"A large number of flower lovers visited the chrysanthemum show at Pillsbury's yesterday afternoon and evening, and the Christian church ladies are well pleased with the success of their venture so far. The five greenhouses full of the popular flower were visions of loveliness and many words of praise were heard. The chrysanthemum room especially was a riot of color with flowers in profusion of the most beautiful and elaborate varieties. This room was the center of attraction and the combination of pretty flowers, pretty gowns and pretty girls was a bewildering and enchanting one.

"In the evening the greenhouses were crowded and the many colored banks of flowers under the flashing lights made the scene a charming one. The programme of the evening was given in the new office, which was a very bower of palms, chrysanthemums and cut flowers. In one corner almost concealed in a profusion of flowers was a piano.

"The programme was opened by a piano solo by Earl Eppsteiner. Everett Hinchliff followed with a piano solo. Miss Lena Young gave a recitation, entitled, "An Order for a Picture." Miss May Callender rendered a piano solo in a brilliant manner. A dialogue farce followed, entitled, "Under an Umbrella.." Miss May Hiftler and Earl Eppsteiner played the parts capitally and won the applause of the audience. The programme closed with a solo by Miss Marjorie Ulrich. Miss Callender presided at the piano. The music was under the direction of Prof. F.D. Thomson.

"To-day the exhibit is in charge of Mesdames C.M. Jackson, W.E. Epperson and A.B. Collins. Mrs. Dora Johnson will furnish music in the afternoon, and in the evening there will be a programme

under the direction of Mrs. Horace Arnold. The prospects for a successful show are bright."

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Cedar Street Bricks

In the 19th century the conditions of streets and roads was a constant problem. During the summer they were dusty and in the other seasons of the year the roads could be quagmires of mud. The City of Galesburg spent many years and a great deal of money to pave the streets with bricks.

By 1898 the Galesburg was proud of the twenty miles of paved streets within its borders. It was said to have more surfaced streets than any other city of the same size in the state of Illinois. Mayor Forest F. Cooke had made street-paving one of his priorities.

The following article appeared in **The Daily Republican-Register** of November 17, 1898. It isn't known why such speed was required to lay bricks at night. Perhaps the contractor was under some pressure to get the paving completed before the weather worsened. The newspaper asked more questions than it answered.

"Probably for the first time in the history of the city there was paving done by night, on Wednesday. It was a strange sight and attracted the attention of quite a company. There was no electric light where the work was being done and the illumination was by lanterns and plates filled with oil. Twenty-five or thirty men were busy, either putting down or transporting brick, or leveling the sand. Many teams were hauling in sand. There was no inspector present to see whether the work was being done properly, whether good brick were being put down, and it would have been difficult for him to have seen just how things were going even if he had been there, as the light was feeble. The excuse of the contractor was that they wanted

to get the job done before winter set in and not have the paving go over until next year.

"The men worked until 10 o'clock at night. Some of the property owners expressed indignation and thought that at least the inspector might have been present. They were of the opinion that night work on such a job could hardly be satisfactory.

"The belief is that at the rate at which paving is now being put down the laying of brick will be completed this week. Then comes the sanding and finishing up.

"It was noticed that over the top of several blocks of paving unscreened sand has been spread. This sand contains many flint and other pebbles, some of them an inch or more in diameter. Is this according to contract? Are these stones likely to do the surface of the pavement any good?

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Thanksgiving 1898

The people of Galesburg were happily looking forward to Thanksgiving Day on November 24, 1898.

The rooms in the primary schools were decorated with oak leaves, strips of corn leaves and other fall items. The art work of the little ones was to be bound in a booklet as a souvenir for their parents. Each of the students had been asked by their teachers to bring an apple or a potato to school for the poor. Some of the youngsters brought cans of fruit, pumpkins, jellies and cakes. Some of the well-to-do students asked that the food be given to the less well-off children in their class.

The poor master of the city expected to give food to about 150 families so they could enjoy a nice Thanksgiving dinner. Warm clothing was being donated for children who needed it. The City Bakery contributed fifty loaves of bread to be

distributed to poor families.

The Beloit College football team had arrived in town and the game with Knox College was expected to be an exciting one. The names and weights of the Knox team members were listed in the newspaper with the average being 154 pounds. The reporter expressed the opinion that speed would probably win the game. The game was to be played at 3:00 Thursday afternoon.

Mrs. Della V. Heaton and her daughter furnished a chicken dinner to the children at the Free Kindergarten. The teachers helped serve the food and the children of working parents had a very enjoyable time. Mrs. Heaton had followed this practice for the past five years.

A union service was held at the First Baptist Church at 11:00 on Thanksgiving morning. Other services were conducted at the First Lutheran, St. John's Episcopal, Grace Episcopal and African Methodist churches. The Swedish Mission also held a Thanksgiving service at 10:30 a.m. Perhaps members of the Sandburg family attended. The ladies society of the mission held its annual auction in the evening. St. Patrick's celebrated High Mass at 8:00 on Thanksgiving morning.

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The History of Cookies

At Christmas time many families bake a variety of cookies to eat themselves and to give to shut-ins. Almost everyone becomes a "cookie monster" during the holidays.

The small cakes were popular in European countries in the 17th and 18th centuries. Early settlers who came to these shores brought their recipes for macaroons, jumbles and gingerbread. The variety of flavorings was limited, but there was plenty of butter to make rich cakes. Dried fruits and nuts were added to make them tasty.

It is believed that the Dutch word "koekje" led to our name for the little cakes. It was hard to make cookies back in those days. The raisins had to be seeded and washed and dried, the sugar had to be pounded into a powder, the butter had to be washed, etc. The oven didn't have a temperature regulator and there wasn't an electric mixer to beat air into the dough for lightness.

Amelia Simmons wrote the first truly American cookbook at the end of the 18th century. She included a sugar cookie flavored with coriander in her little book.

Jumbles were popular cookies in Colonial days. They included lots of butter and nutmeg. The dough was rolled into logs and shaped into a circle. The name is believed to come from the Latin for a finger ring. You can buy Jumbles at Uncle Billy's Bakery on Seminary Street in Galesburg. The cookies aren't shaped into rings, but they are very rich.

Ferdinand Schumacher, an immigrant miller, founded the Quaker Company with a partner and started promoting oatmeal as a breakfast food in 1860. Oatmeal cookies appeared in 1880 and may have been inspired by Scottish Oat Cakes. In 1910 the company put the recipe for oatmeal cookies on the box and it has been there ever since.

Today, chocolate is a favorite ingredient in cookies. Brownies appeared in 1906. Chocolate bits were added to a rich cookie dough by Ruth Wakefield in 1930. It was nine years later that someone thought up the idea of chocolate chips. Peanut butter cookies first appeared in a cookbook in 1936. Some people may have been making them with the traditional criss-cross pattern before that time.

There are endless varieties of cookies today and they add a great deal to our enjoyment of the holidays. Clara Sandburg surely made cookies for her family, but none of her recipes survive.

Wrinklings & Wildthings

The poem "*Nearer Than Any Mother's Heart Wishes*" was written in 1938 by 60-year-old Carl Sandburg. According to Sandburg's biographer, Penelope Niven, the lengthy poem was set aside, considered to be unfinished by its author. The piece was not published until 11 years after Sandburg's death, in 1978 (the 100th anniversary of his birth). This is the last (14th) section of the poem. It can be found in its entirety in George and Willene Hendrick's "*Carl Sandburg Selected Poems*," pages 116-128.

Nearer Than Any Mother's Heart Wishes

14

One may speak as no prophet at all,
as a traveler taking it slow
over a mug of java with ham on rye,
as a citizen troubled over storm warnings,
over black roses, heavy roses in the sky,
and heavy heavy heavy hangs over thy head.

They are changing the maps
of Europe, Asia, Africa,
they are changing the maps like always.

Be steady now and keep your shirt on.

Be cool as death if you can.

Try to figure it out for yourself.

The lilacs of April are good to look at.
So are the oaks of gold in the fall of the year
And the whirl of snow in the winter time
 and the growing corn in summer.
They carry beautiful fables
 for those having time to look and see.

And yet—what of it? who cares?
When young men are cut down like cornstalks
and cathedrals go down like oaks under lightning
and lilacs wither from the breath of gas—
 what of it? who cares?

When shall men be hard and bitter,
open and public and incessant
in the asking of that terrible question:
“What do the people get for the wars they fight
 with each other?”

Any mother might be saying now:
“The cool music of deep hearts is on me.
The fathoms of ancient fears are on me.”

Nearer than any mother's heart wishes
now is heartbreak time.

SANTA CLAUS IN MANY LANDS.



The Museum Store

The Museum Store is located in the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Visitors' Center, 313 East Third Street, Galesburg, Illinois.

A variety of books written by and about Carl Sandburg and related subjects are for sale. They make lovely gifts. Also available are T-shirts, refrigerator magnets, mugs, postcards, etc. Please consider doing some shopping with us. If you can't visit in person the Site can be contacted at www.sandburg.org. Major credit cards are now accepted.

Happy Holidays to All

Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association
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