An Experiment in Developing in Fourth Grade Children the Ability to Use English Through Experiences with Folklore Materials

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AN EXPERIMENT IN DEVELOPING IN FOURTH GRADE CHILDREN

THE ABILITY TO USE ENGLISH THROUGH EXPERIENCES

WITH

FOLKLORE MATERIALS

BY

BESSIE JENNINGS ANSELL
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS
OF
THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY
FOR THE DEGREE
OF
MASTER OF ARTS
1945
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The teacher of the children in the fourth grade at R. E. Lee School of Norfolk, Virginia, sets forth this effort, remembering the cheer and joy that each brought to the experiment.

The student is appreciative of the continued help of Dr. Inga Olla Helseth, whose deep insight into human thought, perceived the possibility of using American Tales and old materials for the enrichment of language opportunity for the young child. Her masterly technique of teacher guidance is a gift, which she shared with me, who came for instruction.

The far vision of Mr. G. Glenwood Clark into the future needs of youth in English instruction inspired the writer to see the characteristics of the folklore materials as being the expression of early American people in a given locale. I am especially grateful to Mr. Clark for his particular instruction in the mechanics of the English language.

The writer appreciates the advice given by Dr. George H. Armacost.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the early education of the child, folklore materials enliven the creative imagination. The response of self-expression provides the occasion for teaching the correct language vehicle. Annie E. Moore in her book on Literature, when discussing folklore for children, says:

"The best of these stories are full of romance and poetry. There are scenes of simple rural beauty as well as those of princely splendor. Description is usually brief as befits a short, dramatic tale, but it is often highly pictorial with touches of poetic imagery which children can grasp."¹

Folklore material of this nature was found in the environment of Norfolk. Stories which had come to the writer as tales from great-grandparents appeared to have the qualities mentioned in the quotation. A manuscript, Recollections, which belonged to a member of the writer's family, was a source of supplementary data. The writer shared the materials with children in the public schools of Norfolk because of the beauty and richness of the content

PROBLEM

In this thesis, the problem was to prepare and to try out with a fourth grade class two Old Tales and Recollections which comprised the folklore materials, found in the environment of Norfolk. The teacher's aims in the use of the materials with the children were:

¹Anne E. Moore, Literature Old and New for Children, (New York, 1934) p. 105.
1. To get oral expression on the part of the children
2. To get response in creative writing
3. To develop the power to use correct language forms

PLAN OF STUDY USED IN THIS THESIS

During vacation, the teacher wrote Old Tales from her source materials. After the Old Tales were written, the teacher arranged to use them in her classroom through oral presentation. Later, the teacher placed typed bits of Recollections in the room library. The children used these at will. The teacher recorded, daily, the children's oral creative responses, and filed any original writings that came as a result of experience with Old Tales, and folklore materials found in Recollections.

When the children attempted to write, the teacher began to teach any language forms needed for full satisfaction in self-expression. The demand for language forms increased, as growth in writing occurred. Individual instruction met this demand.

The teacher also gave each member of the class the Metropolitan Achievement Test at the beginning and end of the year in order to have a measure of achievement in English. A comparative record was made to show growth in the skills measured by this test. These skills were Reading, Vocabulary, Arithmetic Fundamentals, Arithmetic Problems, Language Usage, and Spelling. At the beginning of the year, the test revealed the children's mastery of these skills. At the end of the year the teacher gave the equivalent form B of the
Metropolitan Achievement Test to show further growth in the above skills.

During the year, thirty-five children participated in the Metropolitan Achievement Test; however, there were comparative records for only twenty-nine children—six of the children either entered in time for form A and left before the term expired, or entered late and were present only to participate in the equivalent from B. Several of the twenty-nine children lost from two to three months with scarlet fever or pneumonia. But normal growth was maintained. Two children, who showed slow growth, but who had attended regularly, possessed low intelligence quotients. The range of intelligence quotients was as follows:

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Total 29
In Chapter II of this thesis, the two Old Tales and Recollections used are recorded as told to the children.

Chapter III describes and analyzes the classroom experiences, when using the tales as stimulation for creative writing. Chapter IV describes the growth in the children during the period of experimentation. In Chapter V the conclusions are recorded.
CHAPTER II
PREPARATION OF MATERIALS FOR THE CHILDREN'S USE IN
THE CLASSROOM

The teacher wrote the Old Tales for the children as part of her preparation for the opening of school. With these she presented Recollections, which, with Old Tales, comprised the folklore materials. They appeared in the form in which the children later found them in typewritten booklets. These folklore materials revealed historical events and geographical settings in eastern Virginia and North Carolina.

The Old Tales gave the first stimulation to interest. Since these Old Tales apparently had never been written before, the style was, indeed, a venture for the writer. In evaluating the content and oral structure of Old Tales, simplicity appeared a striking quality. The writer preserved these qualities in written form. After experimentation in the writing, the writer cast Old Tales simply, yet strongly. There was no weakening of the strong, bold elements. There were strong plots. Action moved in tempo with the mood of the Old Tales and Recollections. Domestic scenes appeared, carefully set. There was preservation of touches of environment, which revealed the labors and skills involved in life of both Old Tales and Recollections.

Old Tales and Recollections were in the same setting. This locale yielded Old Tales and that part of Byrd's Dividing Line so faithfully delineated by the author of Recollections. This setting belonged to nature in its display of Great Marsh, one of the greatest on the Atlantic Seaboard. The backdrop of Great Marsh emphasizes wild fowl life.
Fish were in great abundance; especially chub, perch and mullets, in Currituck Sound, Back Bay and many inlets. Fish was a source of livelihood, along with the tonging of succulent oysters, until the great storms of March and September 1846 destroyed, for a time, the chub and perch.

The reddened glow of passing day lighted the coppertops of browning cattails, ribboned in shallowed waters. The sound of swishing water growth was heard. The water growth brought hosts of wildfowl to rest and to feed during the heart of winter. These were swan, wild geese, and many kinds of wild ducks; the common ducks, that is, bald-pates, creeks, blacks, mallards, sprig-tails, blue-winged teal, and the like. There were hosts of canvas-backs and red-heads in the deeper waters of Bellow's Bay, which washed a muddy bed, grown thickly with wild celery and water grass.

There was interesting plant growth, much of it long since disappeared. In the deep woods of oak and walnut, over-hung with heavy gray moss, was the underbrush. In this, cow vines, grape vines, myrtle, paw-paw and prickly pear pads grew densely.

Some of the wild growth took its place in home remedies. There was the skill of herbery. The remedy for boils was a poultice of low-life-ever-lasting and, after a certain stage of painful development, an application of sweet-scented salve composed of sweet gum, beeswax, and the buds of the balm-of-gilead, brought relief.

In the folklore materials, there were references to historical
incident, and this was made much of, because its information lay also in the Social Science Area. Historical elements and Social Science beginnings blended with the curriculum, which at the fourth grade level offers the study of Virginia history.

The geographical setting of *Old Tales and Recollections*, which comprise the folklore materials, provided the perfect condition for retrogression of a people. As soon as waterways turned into swamps, and shipping terminated because the larger sea craft required greater depth of water, there came a depressing change in the economic state of the people. The tobacco wharves of Colonial days sagged and finally disappeared; for many a year their pilings stood like water ghosts on moonlighted nights! The people lost prosperity and settled into the living conditions at which they had arrived, and preserved those ways of life long after those modes had disappeared on the nearby mainlands.

"The Old Inlet sanded up in 1826. Prior to that time, perhaps for a century or more, many small vessels traded in and out of this inlet, carrying staves, shingles, lumber, corn, wheat and the like to Baltimore, Northern markets and bringing back sugar, molasses, clothes, calico and other dry goods and notions. Many of these vessels were built and manned in Currituck and many more were from the North with Yankee crews."

After the drifting sand had obliterated the Inlet in 1836, sea traffic stopped, and the Island’s economic and social ideas began to slow down. People were increasing, and acreage diminishing in family

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1Henry B. Ansell, *Recollections*, p. 41.
division, so that stunted times lay ahead. Money grew less, and with this condition only sparse reading materials were available.

In the Tales there was interesting, active characterization, through which to stimulate the children:

"Colonel Jones was a large, tall man, a man of leisure, a politician of the first water, who always kept the Island informed upon the political issues of the day. The Colonel had large and intelligent family connection in another part of Virginia, whither he traveled repeatedly and gathered much of the news of the day and many anecdotes as well. This mode of gathering news, coupled with his newspapers, kept him well stored with a knowledge of current events.

He would almost always begin by spinning a laughable yarn on some friend of his, accompanied by the injunction: 'Boys, say nothing about this, not a word.' In truth, the Colonel wanted to tell these funny yarns to everyone himself, hence the injunction."

Colonel Jones was a high-class teller of tall tales. He had the characteristics of the frontier teller of tales, even though he "was the quality" and his father had fought in the Revolutionary War. We owe Devil's Work to a daughter of the elder Colonel.

Part of the manor house, to which Jeams went so blithely and returned to his mother's cottage chased by a monstrous devil, yet stands on the Island. The once characteristic and substantial old place is now hideously distorted and out of atmosphere. Long after the Colonel had died, the Union soldiers burned half of the old house to the ground. The present owner erected a new wing, only to spoil the lines of the entire house.

From the abundant detail of the folklore material, found in Recollections and oral sources, the teacher developed seven tales.

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Ibid., p. 19.
Two of the Old Tales appear in this chapter and are illustrative of the content of the other five. The titles of the two Old Tales are "Black Cats" and "Devil's Works".

**Black Cats.** Old man Jerome Lichfield was on his way home from 'Norfolk Towne'. He jerked himself out of a nod and looked ahead. Yes, it was Dry Swamp Road, and right glad he was; for while he drowsed the horse could have turned down Black Gum Swamp Road, and this would have carried him miles out of his way. But this horse! Through the darkest night, when given rein, he could find the way.

The cart jolted over the puncheon bridge, and in a few minutes Old man Jerome Lichfield rode nearer the heart of Dry Swamp. It was round and black ahead, and lay like a dark world set in moonlighted space. Through its heart twisted a road, which was full of moonlight too, except where the branches of great trees darkened it with trembling shadows. And in the nearby woods spread only the darkest dark!

Old man Jerome tautened the reins. Sensitive to such feeling, the horse lifted his head and looked on either side of the lighted road and into the deep woods. All travellers dreaded this road; they had always dreaded this road since the days when the country was very young.

Once Dry Swamp had been filled with water. English vessels had docked not far from the edge of the road. These ships had brought people to Virginia. They had come from England. Some came with health and strength and purpose. Others came with sadness in their hearts, or even deep anger about things happening in their far away home. It is said that some came from the English ships sobbing aloud. During late
years people dreaded travelling alone through Dry Swamp, because it was
said that weird, strange noises could be heard. It was as if a man's
cry rang out into the night; such as might be heard when a pirate would
beat and rob him in the long ago. Others had heard a woman's voice that
moaned, "Cromwell, Cromwell has imprisoned my father!"

Other people told of hearing hundreds and hundreds of cat squalls.
Old man Jerome, trying not to be afeared, decided that was because so
many people dropped cats in the Swamp on their way to Norfolk, just
because they wanted to get rid of them. Maybe the cats had gone wild.
That would naturally make their squalls more alarming. But no one had
ever seen the cats although they had been often heard.

But tonight was different. The horse gave a sudden movement to
one side of the road, only to jerk as quickly to the other side. Old
man Jerome peered ahead and on either side of the faithful animal he saw
a sight that made his hat rise and his hair stand on its ends. The
horse swerved.

On either side of the horse stood a large, black cat on its hind
legs. Two more glided out of the woods and stood upright behind the first
pair. Then, came two more, taking position, one on one side and one on
the other. They kept on coming, these huge black cats, whose lighted
eyes looked like lanterns. On they came, until both sides of the road
were lined with enormous cats.

Suddenly, old man Jerome thought it a very warm night, even though
it was nearing the end of October. He pulled at his collar, then un-
buttoned his waistcoat. He called "Gee-up" to his horse, expecting it
to go forward in a nimble trot. But no! The horse stood as if the
fore feet were braced against going forward.
Old man Jerome could do nothing but sit there and look at the long, black rows of cats. He could hear one great cat, angry with his neighbor, spit and spark at him. After awhile, the black heads began to turn. They no longer looked at him but at another great cat that was approaching the cart. The long tails curled and rested contentedly. Just the sound of purring could be heard when this cat suddenly stood on her hind legs and began to walk towards the cart. It walked on its hind legs all the way and placed a black paw on the cart shafts. Then, the cat looked directly into the eyes of old man Jerome and said,

"Old man Jerome
When you go home,
You tell Ann Cann
That Peg Runt is dead!"

When she had finished, the cats dropped back as softly as black curtains against the black trees. The road being clear, the horse leaped forward into a rapid trot. Down the swamp roads, over the hard surface of open road, through grinding sandy stretches, the horse trotted on.

By dawn old man Jerome could see the great oak gate, over which hung the name Lichfield. How glad he was to see it and to look beyond towards the pretty hip-roof house. It was a very old hip-roof house; one of the oldest in the country, but old man Jerome loved it. Around the house grew a lovely garden filled with late-blooming flowers. They just grew to suit themselves, some stretching out to touch the door steps, or standing stiffly against the paling fence.

It did not take his wife long to spread the breakfast. There was cold, baked wild duck and delicious hot corn pone. But old man Jerome hardly tasted anything that he swallowed. He thought and thought and thought. He reached towards an empty plate, then remembered that he
had eaten all the pone.

His wife sat by the fireplace with a strange light in her dark eyes, watching every move that old man Jerome made. But when he had eaten, she cleared the table with a few sweeps of her hand. Come to think of it, she was a quick, little, black-haired woman. Naturally, she was quick because she was so tiny and light. The black hair was sleeked away from her forehead. The black eyes were large and lighted. This morning they seemed to be searching for something.

All day old man Jerome moved about the plantation as if he were in a dream. Yet, he was not walking in his sleep. It was vexation that was bearing down on his usual good spirits. How could he find out what he wanted to know. Finally, after supper, he decided to go ahead, and say what he wanted to. It would be no harm. If there were nothing to it, then nothing would come of it. He say quietly by the fireplace very peacefully. On purpose, he opened his eyes quickly and said to his wife,

"Ann Cann
Peg Runt is dead!"

His wife jumped, then stiffened, and turned her great, lighted eyes on him and drawled,

"Peg Runt is dead,
And lies in the Dry Swamp."

The spinning wheel whirred and whirred and whirrrrrrrrrrr ed! And old man Jerome thought and thought and thooouuuught!

When they went to bed, old man Jerome lay awake. Then, a plan occurred to him. He pretended to be asleep. He even breathed like a sleeping person. After a while his wife began to ease herself off the
bed. She slipped very, very slowly to the floor and out of the room. He heard her open the kitchen door, and he waited for the latch to drop. He punched the pillow into a lump so that he could see out of the window without sitting up.

In those days, when people had only fireplaces for heat, women often slept in their long, thick, black stockings. Ann had left her shoes on the floor and had gone out into the chilly night with only her stockings for foot covering. Old man Jerome, wide-eyed and amazed, watched her run to the stable and reach up for the bridle.

Then, she opened the stable door and went in. She stayed in there just long enough to get the bridle in the horse's mouth. Then, the stable door squeaked open. The horse's hoof struck the door facing. Into the bright moonlight he stepped. On his back sat a great, black cat.

The next day old man Jerome's horse neighed at the great oak gate. He went out to let him in. The foam had dried on the faithful animal, and he careened a little when old man Jerome began to curry him with a currycomb. For days the faithful animal had to be treated for swollen legs. This Ann, this witch wife had used him so illy. And thought old man Jerome, "I'd just like to give her a piece of my mind!"

But he never did. For "naere" a person ever "heard" tell of her again.

Devil's Work. Jeams Bowden could not make up his mind about a certain wish. Should he or should he not? He held his breath when he tried really to make up his mind. Then, he panted deeply. What harm could it possibly be? Just to go to Colonel Jones' and fiddle a few tunes for the dance. Jeams extended his long arm, then let it fall suddenly. Then, he
lifted the arm again and this time the hand almost grasped the eager prize. But at that moment he changed his mind again and sat down.

What he should have done was to have left the smoke house instantly, but there he slouched on an old flag-bottom chair. For he made 'uppen' his mind that he would sit right there and have 'a argufyin' with himself. He was not 'slubber' just because he loved to play the fiddle! But that is what his Ma said about him. Well, he could not 'holp' himself. He loved the fiddle and that was that.

His Ma said it was the 'Devil's work'. 'Cording to her, he could not go to 'aere' a 'break-down' tonight, for tomorrow was the Lord's Day and he had to stay home and learn his Bible lesson, get to bed early and get to church early too. His Pa, and his Pa, and his Pa afore him had been prayer leaders, and 'gude' ones they 'waere' too, and he had to walk in 'theer' foot-steps. They used to sit in the 'amen' corner, just where his Ma waes aplannin' for him to sit in a 'moughty few yeers'.

Jeams thought his Ma was right. But she would have to wait until a 'moughty few yeers' slipped away. There was the dance at Colonel Jones' old manor house tonight. This was the first consideration, now. The 'quality' with all its fine wimmen folks would be 'theer' too. He liked the 'quality' and he had more reason than one to think that the 'quality' liked him. For some of the 'quality' had told Jeams that he looked exactly 'lik en a lord' when he walked down the road, with his head raised ever so high. And, too, the 'quality' depended on him for fiddling. He 'waes' much better'n any fillder they mought get in Norfolk Towne. H'd just have to get theer, by 'fair means or foul'.
And that was his decision.

Yet, 'theer waes' Ma! Jeams cast his 'quering' eyes sidewise and then upwards towards the blackened rafter, where she had hidden the old fiddle. But Jeams had found it. Not even the rich, grease-dripping hams could appeal to his senses now. He smelled rather than saw the looped and linked sausages. Up and beyond lay the deserted and denounced old fiddle. But come what may, Jeams was in tune for fiddlin' and a fiddling it must be.

But he made a positive resolution. He would not fiddle one minute after twelve o'clock. He should leave at eleven-thirty, if he would get to bed in time to go to church. Yes, he would leave in time no matter how much the 'quality' prevailed on him to stay.

Jeams pulled his long body from the crouching position, and stretched the cramp from his leg. Yes, he would take the fiddle from the smoke-house, where his Ma thought he would never find it. As he pulled it from behind the cobwebs and spiders, Jeams smiled and thought of how fine it would be at the Colonel's. The slaves would budge around in the 'quarter' kitchens with enough 'wittals' to feed the County. And the find ladies of the best 'quality' in these beer parts would rustle themselves around in stiff silks. They were so mysterious garbed in rich colors with bustles and hair puffs!

Jeams tautened his long fingers about the fiddle. Hurriedly, he gathered himself out of the door and gingerly crossed the yard to the little hip-roof house. Cautiously, he pushed open the door and let himself in the 'settin' room. The fire crackled and spat at him. Rumaging in his Ma's basket, Jeams found a piece of red flannel and sat down
emtedly to clean the dust and dirt from the fiddle. He polished; the more he polished, the more pleased he looked. The light in his gray eyes grew and spread wider and wider. Then, he lifted the old fiddle and rested his chin snugly upon it. Jeam's long arms, his long fingers, his long body, the light in his eyes, all went into his fiddling tune.

Jeam was so happy that he did not see his Ma as she came into the room. She was mad as a 'hornet'. She glared at him as she said.

"You slubberin thing! Gude-for-nothing. A lazy-ne'er-do-well!"

But he had made 'uppen' his mind, so he put on his best home-spun suit. He tucked the old fiddle case under his arm and went out saying 'aere' a word to his Ma. He walked hurriedly down the lane and on towards Colonel Jones' manor house. There were the four great chimneys streaking their paths of smoke across the twilit sky. The last gleams of daylight deepened the red of the 'yaupon' berries. Through the pine thicket, already a new moon glowed faintly.

But Jeams could not forget his Ma. He heard the figures called for the dances, and began his fiddling. But every now and then, Ma got a word in edge-ways. 'Devil's work' came to Jeams' thought over and over again. The 'gude wittals' did not taste so good. Morsels of this and morsels of that were tasted by Jeams. Swallows of wine, and swallows of cider, and gulps of grape juice; he didn't 'pear to enjoy any of it until Lavindy Simmons came over.

Her hair was red and her face ever so 'purty'. Her dress was of golden-green taffeta. My, but she 'waes' real 'quality' and he enjoyed her company so much that time began to take wings. They were laughing and talking, when suddenly Jeams looked out yonder window. He looked
towards the east. The night sky was thinning. Jeams jumped up and slipped into the hall and out of the door. The roosters were crowing for day. Into the dark woods he darted. Walking and running, he stumbled on.

When he came to the opening that led down the long lane, which was a mile long, Jeams noticed that the sky had a watery glow. The trees thinned. A lone pine with tremendous trunk stood sturdily in the opening. Near it, on the lighted side, leaning against the down of the Sabbath, stood a shadow. It was solid. And it rested on a dark object, hard as the back of an ancient turtle. Yet, it was not shaped like a turtle. It was a hoof, a cloven hoof, and its leg joined the dark mass on the lighted side of the huge tree.

Jeams' eyes trailed upward, and upward to the top of the tree, and a little beyond. The object had a shaped crown with horns. It had eyes of fire. Its countenance wrinkled recognition when Jeams' eyes took in its being. The cloven hoof moved. And from above came from the object of leathery hide, and fiery eyes, a winded sound, a movement. And then, a great shaking sound came from it. And there were words:

"You donkey-headed boy, how late you are! You sap! You nit-witted creature! A block-head and his fiddle!"

Jeams was running. Jeams was racing down that lane towards his Ma's house. He felt that he 'waas a-goin' wild, he 'waas so afeard'. For that devil 'waas' over-taking him every time he needed to take a breath. The devil was winded and had sputtering eyes and the cloven hoof kept time with the sparks that came from them. Jeams was about to fall, when he heard that hoof clumping at him. He must go on. Instead of striking him down at once, it clumped at him as a cat plays with a mouse.
The fiddle suddenly weighed a ton. Jeams threw it into the marsh. And when the Devil stopped to pick it up, Jeams gained a little. But now the horrible object was gaining on Jeams, and it lifted the fiddle and crashed it. Jeams was so frightened that it felt as light as a chip of wood falling on his head. He was able to race onward. He gathered so much speed that he felt as though he was flying. He rolled and moved in the air towards his Ma's door.

His arms were waving wildly as he crashed into the door. He called out loudly — "Ma, Ma!" She came and bent over him.

Finally, he opened his eyes and spoke. His eyes were sunken. He spoke hoarsely — "Ma, Ma!" breathed Jeams, "The Devil took the fiddle!"
CHAPTER III
DESCRIPTIONS AND ANALYSES OF CLASSROOM EXPERIENCES IN USING THE FOLKLORE MATERIALS

In the fall, there was the usual organizing of a classroom. The children selected committees and leaders to help in caring for the library and all materials. The children and teacher set up a crowded little room as best they could for writing, and began. The teacher's desk was pushed in one corner, and on it appeared the beginning of a miniature Virginia museum. By utilizing the teacher's desk, the children gained the second of two sea-green tables for their writing centers. Often, they worked until the sun sent lowering shafts of wintry light into the room. That shaft of wintry light was the sign, "all home until tomorrow!" But they returned early. There were varied types of creative work to be finished; paintings, colonial figures, pieces of interesting writing.

As the writing lagged, the teacher sought interesting parts of the folklore materials for stimulation. The geography of the locale contained striking detail for the interest of the children.

"The west portion of this island map is the Great Marsh, three and one-half miles across to Morse's Point. This marsh, its knolls, and Mackey's Island help to make up this apparently square island. Knotts Island proper, though, only covers the east portion of this square and averages scarcely a mile in width from the Bay on the east to this Great Marsh on the west.

This island has always been called seven and one-half miles long and its area cannot cover more than that many square miles. From one and a half to
two miles of the Island lie in the State of Virginia. (All of the Island had lain in Virginia until the last survey for an accurate line between North Carolina and Virginia by William Byrd in 1728).

The space between this Island and the Atlantic Ocean, about two miles is made up of bays, marshes and creeks, with a channel paralleling the whole length of the Island and connecting Long Island Sound to Virginia on the north with Currituck Sound on the south. So the boundaries of this island would north, Long Island Sound; east, said bays and channel; south, Currituck Sound, west, the aforesaid Great Marsh. 1

Colonel William Byrd turned a night light on the setting of these folklore materials. His descriptive record of this part of the Dividing Line was stimulating to the children.

"The day being now come, on which we had agreed to meet the Commissioners of North Carolina, we embarked very early, which we could the easier do, having no Temptation to stay where we were. We shapt our course along the South End of Knotts Island, there being no passage open on the North." 2

"We also saw a small New England sloop riding in the Sound, a little to the South of our Course. She had come in at the New Inlet, as all other vessels have done since the opening of it. This navigation is a little difficult, and fit only for vessels that draw no more than ten feet of water." 3

"We also surveyed part of the Adjacent High Land, which had scarcely any trees growing upon it, but Cedars. Among the shrubs, we were shewed here and there a Bush of Carolina Tea called japon, which is a species of the phylarrea. This is an evergreen, the Leaves whereof have some resemblance to Tea, differ very widely both in taste and flavor." 4

1 Henry B. Ansell, Recollections, p. 1.
2 William Byrd, Histories of the Dividing Line and Other Tracts, (Richmond, 1866) p. 23.
3 Ibid. p. 24.
"It is a Plentiful Place for Stock, by reason of the wide marshes adjacent to it and because they are never pincht by cold or Hunger. The Principal Freeholder here is Mr. White, who keeps house for all Travellers, that either Debt or Shipwreck happens to cast in his way."\(^1\)

The children soon understood that the peculiar ways of life, therein described, while basically alike in tradition and environment, varied according to the opportunities of folks that "waere the quality" and those who "waere not the quality". Class distinction existed in relation to financial state of the individual, rather than to basic quality in humanity.

The children found it understandable that the Tales, which were told, differed in build-up and ornamentation arising from the experience, opportunity, and background of the teller. Such circumstances tended to influence the tales told about a famous old Colonel, who had served in the American Revolution. The Colonel was, in local color characterization, such as one finds in fiction. He was, in truth, a substantial figure, who really lived and sired a family. The Colonel told his tale with a grandeur of manner, emphasizing the pleasing as it would occur to one of his experience and taste.

The sailor who lounged on the tobacco wharves on those inland waterways told the same tales as the Colonel, but used language abounding in lewd, ribald expressions. It is true that many tales took on revealing characteristics in accordance with the experiences of the teller.

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1 Ibid. p. 25
Old Tales and Recollections revealed descriptions of the way the people lived. The folks lived in types of houses, differing in kind and condition, from log cabins to old manor houses. In such an abode as the latter, the old Colonel John B. Jones lived. He had fought in the North Carolina Partisan Rangers against George III of England.

The old manor house was one of the finest on the Island. There were four great chimneys. The rooms were enormous. The stairway was wide and gave an ascent from a square, large hall. Slaves moved about in orderly service, bearing huge trays of "victuals," morsels of delicacies and "swallows" of tempting drink. There was much space for the fiddlers. There was space, too, in the faint distance of a dimly lighted stair, for the ghost of the Colonel's wife to glide in and visit her husband and to cast an eye on their son.

In sharp contrast, we find straggling wanderers, slouching tax dodgers, telling their tales in the squalors of a shack. From such an environment as the latter, came tales of witches who smothered folks to death.

When autumn came, the teacher and children entered into conversation about the season. The City market smelled of apples, sweetened and flavored by the full, heated suns of late summer and early autumn. The season provided an idea for the introduction of the folklore materials to the children. But from where did these gifts of the season come? Who brought them to the market?

"From the country", came the child's answer to the first question. "The farmers brought them to market. They came from Norfolk County. They came from Princess Anne. They came from North Carolina."
The teacher presented the first of the Tales during a time in which child-planning is often alarmingly energetic; that of Halloween. Every child was ready to listen to the bizarre and intriguing, the devil-chased Jeams, and the witch-met Jerome. Devil's Work was the first Tale told to the children. As it began to unfold, the children sat motionless. Their eyes widened and their mouths took on a full-lipped expression, as though they would speak outright at any moment. When the Tale was finally unwound, heads began to shake, turning slowly to let wondering eyes discover if there were others who felt as that individual did. Being satisfied about a common state of experience, the children sounded a slow release of breath. Pairs of lighted eyes peered into the eyes of others. Fingers were pressed to lips, which soon gave forth floods of ideas, questions and explanations. Two boys sat half-bent peering at each other as they said:

"Now, what-in-the-sam-hill was that thing chasing Jeams?"

"The story told you what it was - a devil!"

"Mmmmm", decided a skeptical girl, "all that devil sight was in Jeams' mind, that's that!"

"But there must have been a reason for it. Maybe, he had the stomach ache from eating so much. That is it. He was sick. He had a temperature."

"No", declared another, "He was worried about the way he had treated his Ma!"

"No, I think he had a nightmare and fell off his high old four-poster bed", came the reply.

An aggressive boy stepped up to the group of girls, and declared. "Ah, you're all wrong. Didn't the tale say that he went
through the door? Now, he went through the door from the outside. The bed was not on the outside. It was the real devil chasing him. Why don't you use your heads?" He shrugged his shoulders and said no more.

Following this oral response came a series of questions concerning words and expressions which the children did not understand. It was delightful to perceive that the children had no intention of sitting quietly and allowing their minds to rest in a fog of vague words. Their questions led right into the teacher's opportunity to explain old articles, customs characteristic of a certain section of the country, and even into the need of explaining old language meanings. The teacher explained words concerning skills and crafts of another day. The child who believed in the "literal devil" wanted to know what a smoke-house was. "Why didn't the hams and sausages and the house itself burn up?"

This child and others needed to know how our ancestors once preserved meat by hanging it over a smothered fire from which trailed hot puffs of smoke. The ham was given a special preparation and smoked for many days. This was smoked-cured ham just as your mother buys it today. Those hams had an excellent flavor.

"Hmmm", came the reply. "I know that kind of ham wasn't as good as Smithfield hams. They keep those good Smithfield hams in sacks."

The children of the fourth grade at R. E. Lee School met skills and customs of the olden days, and sought meaning in their experience with Old Tales and folklore materials. Carol wanted to know an "amen" corner was. No one but the teacher could help. It was not difficult to understand that, since even in modern days, the church leaders often sit together, that in the olden times they sat in the corner nearest the minister on the right hand side of the pulpit and cried "amen"
to everything that pleased them. They led in prayer services. When young members did not keep their vows, the church leaders investigated the culprits and often severely reprimanded them. If the disobedience continued, their names were dropped from the church roll.

"Now, I think Jeams was thinking about the men who sat in the 'amen' corner. He knew that if he went to the dance and fiddled for it, those men would have 'him up' for breaking church rules, because in those days people who belonged to Jeams' church were not allowed to dance. It was considered a sin", explained the teacher.

Soon the questions on the tale, Devil's Work, led to the definite need of explanation of unusual and sometimes obsolete words. No one in the room knew the meaning of "wittals". One boy did question, "Is 'wittals' the same as grub?"

The teacher began. "A long time ago, when the Roanoke Island settlement was being lost, the English people, in England and on the Island, used 'victuals' for the word 'food'. In the days of Sir Walter Raleigh and Queen Elizabeth, 'victuals' was a very polite and correct word!"

The teacher wrote on the blackboard, V-i-c-t-u-a-l-s, which was pronounced "wittals". The children looked first at the word and then at the teacher.

"Now, Miss Ansell", declared John. "You taught us that 'v' and 'w' have different sounds!"

Miss A. smiled and agreed. But she had a surprise for John. "Do you remember the Vikings?"

"Certainly, I do", he snapped, revealing a very small portion of a very high temper. "There's my Viking ship sitting in the window."
"Now, it was about the time of the Vikings. Yes, it was just about the time the Vikings began to leave their home, shaped like a dragon's head, here on the map. People lived in England at that time too. They called their home 'Angle-land' in those days. That was long ago, so many things changed about their language. In that long ago, the Angles pronounced 'v' like 'w', in so far as any of the scholars are able to learn about old languages. The scholars think that the style of pronouncing 'v' like 'w' had not passed away when Sir Walter Raleigh sent his Colony to the New World. In fact, the style lasted for a long time after the Colony disappeared, for the people who went to Colonel Jones' manor house ate 'gud wittals'. We can remember words changed in style and pronunciation just as clothes changed", concluded the teacher.

The class was ready for another literary interpretation of *Devil's Work*. It was decided that it would do well in a picture. From this decision came rich illustrations of a very small Jeans and a very large devil. The illustrations revealed definite understanding of the tale on the part of the illustrator for the devil and the tree were entwined. They were one and the same.

There was no emotional strife or state of alarm within the children's expressions at such a story. It was a tall tale, and accepted in ludicrous vein. It was a delightful venture into the realm of the fictitious.

As the children painted, new questions arose. What is "yaupon"? The teacher sent the children to their dictionaries. This was the beginning of elementary research. After the word and the illustration had been investigated, the teacher explained the meaning
of "yaupon nursery". "Yaupon" was a very beautiful growth in winter. People planted many bushes together, that is, in a nursery. Some liked to make a tea of yaupon leaves and drink it. This coincides with statements in Colonel William Byrd's writings. Yaupon had a beautiful growth all year, more beautiful than English box, especially in winter, because then it produced the loveliest red berries. These berries were jelly-like and sparkling clear.

The children had shown a lively interest in this new type of story, the tale, and, being in good mood for listening, they overlooked nothing. They questioned until everything they needed to know was understood. As they painted, they continued in enjoyment.

"Tell us another Old Tale, please", was the request of all.

The next tale was Black Cats. The questions came in the same order as they did in Devil's Work. First, the entire story was investigated; then followed questions about words. The modern sophisticates began to explain away the unnatural by declaring that Jerome was just dreaming! He had had a long ride through a lonely stretch of country. He was tired, so he dropped off and dreamed a dream. But the believers retorted:

"That doesn't account for his going home and eating food. You don't eat food when you are asleep. No, he wasn't dreaming. But, maybe, he thought it all up because he was lonely in the Dry Swamp."

"I bet you don't know what a dry swamp is!" snapped John.

"I don't and I bet you don't!"

Dry swamp required an explanation by the teacher on the change of land forms that have occurred along the Atlantic coast in the last one-hundred and fifty years. Inlets sanded up. Tiny harbors, in which
small sail vessels used to come, filled up. Vegetation began to creep to the edge of the water. Swamps grew up on sodden water-drenched bog. Trees grew and were drowned. Then, after many years, the swamps dried out; deep woodlands took their places. Only the declivity sinks remained of the waterholes and ponds. Yes, many things changed about a country besides the language of its Old Tales and folklore.

The conversations stimulated by Black Cats continued. Another speculative child exclaimed that she did not understand what became of the woman. Another replied, "Well, that is plain enough. She turned into a cat, that's what happened. Since it is just a story, that made it right. She turned into a cat, and I think, too, she was a talking cat!"

Half of the thirty-seven children asked at one time, "What became of the horse?"

The teacher was called upon for the solution. Not far away in the Great Marsh, and on the shores and woods of Currituck Beach, there were once wild horses. How they got there, people can only guess. Perhaps, they were the horses of very early settlers, who had been killed by the Indians. After their owners died, the horses went loose to graze in the marshes. Without mah, the horses went wild. Maybe, Jerome's horse was turned loose by his wife, and, instead of coming home right away, went to graze in the marshes.

"What is 'punccheon'?' suddenly inquired Franklin. No one knew. Everyone opened his dictionary. No one could spell it. The teacher wrote it on the board. "Holp?" inquired the same child in native, brusque manner.

Some one made an attempt to find it in the dictionary. "I
can't find it", came the reply.

"But you can find it in the Bible!" said the teacher; she was always interested in old words. "A long time ago there was a word 'holpen'. It changed to help. Now, if you don't know the meaning look up 'help'.' No one did.

"What is a 'hip-roof' house?" inquired a child.

The teacher replied, "Long, long ago the French built houses in England, after they invaded it. One style of house that they built was the mansard. The English soon called it hip-roof, pronounced r-u-f in olden days, and, when they came to Virginia, they built the same kind of house, again."

The children waited for further explanation.

"Do you know what a Dutch Colonial house looks like?"

They all knew that.

"The hip-roof house is very much like a Dutch Colonial. The roof is plainer, without ledges."

Carol wanted to know what a spinning wheel was. The teacher owned a spinning wheel, and the children might enjoy it, if they cared to come to see it. Several of them rang the door bell, the following Saturday, before the teacher was out of bed. The "curry-comb" explanation was supplied by the dictionary.

Pictures of Williamsburg gave evidence as to the meaning of paling fence. The pictures of the more simple gardens, those with blooming plants, gave them ideas of what Jerome's garden might have looked like.

As with the other tale, Black Cats led into a series of paintings. The pictures were cool with shadowy formations, and overhanging trees. The cats lined up by the roadside. Greenish lights gleamed
from their eyes. The wagon was drawn by a vigorous horse. Jerome sat on the seat-board in period costume. In the pictures which displayed the cats in the rear of the rear of the wagon, Jerome appeared much happier. Upon reaching the lane leading to his house, there stood a colonial cottage settled in a flower garden. The paintings, which revealed the interior of the cottage, set forth early American furniture. On one side of the fireplace stood a spinning wheel. By its side sat a black-haired woman whose hair was pulled straight back. She was tiny, very tiny.

During the painting development, the class was full of conversation. Oral expression, the beginning of the written, was everywhere about the room. It was just what the teacher had tried to get. Carol suggested a written story, "Why not turn all the squirrels into little witches!" The writing was underway.

The children became interested and often-times used every minute of free time writing and tearing up the first efforts. Every child had his "make-up" book and was trying to write something, which in his eyes was satisfactory enough to be copied and kept. There was freedom, too. One could write about anything he desired. If the first effort did not yield satisfying results, the writer could try another idea. It was interesting to see the writing output. The attempts on the old-time ideas were more numerous than on any other subject.

The teacher deprived no one of rambling, but always provided fortification for stimulation. Always, there were Old Tales and Recollections for reference. The writing was offered fully enough to provide opportunity for the teacher to collect for her class make-up book.

Emphasis was laid on the idea that the teacher wanted a
collection which included the work of all the children. The children soon felt that the teacher sought work of artistic quality. In order to offset this understanding and to save the individual who was weak, the teacher began to collect all, and later made her choice for the APPENDIX.

Finally, the children were ready for discrimination. Good judgment supported discrimination. The writings were read aloud, and every one was free to designate what he thought was the best. The children were led to see improvement in those efforts which at first had interested no one. In truth, that was the spirit of the writing venture; find something to praise.

Developed judgment, finer leads to criticism, unselfish approbation of the good work of others, let loose a flood of evaluation which aided the creative written expression. Then the silence of the actual writing was upon the class. The more the children grew, the more they wanted to succeed. The teacher, with a keen delight, almost to the extent of being a "gay deceiver", enticed and intrigued those children, before school and after school, for re-working and proof-reading.

"Do you want this interesting story to appear well?"

"Oh, yes, Miss A."

"That can be done by setting it into parts or paragraphs!"

That interview, then, was taken up with the teacher explaining how and where that particular story could be divided into paragraphs. In the same procedure, topic sentences were developed. Indeed, instruction on the meaning of sentences, and their different punctuations, was continuous.
The need to maintain margins was stressed daily over a long period of time. As the children gathered a mastery of language mechanics, they were led into the use of self-checking material, which included a kind of review of points to remember before beginning to write, such as:

1. A sentence is a group of words that expresses a complete thought.

2. Kinds and samples of sentences (on bulletin board).
   Think about these when you write; they make your story interesting.

3. Kinds of words (fourth grade)
   Name, action, describing, how, when, where, connecting.

4. Look at the sentences that have and in them. Notice the comma.

5. Several sentences telling about the same thing are a paragraph. The first word is always indented. That is, set away from the margin ------- When we were leaving the house, John.

6. Stories are made up of paragraphs.

7. All stories have names, or titles. Every important word in the title begins with a capital letter.

8. Poems swing their words as though they were parts of tunes. You can keep time to them.

The way to write a story:

1. The story has a place or setting. We can find out what that place looked like.

2. The story tells about people or animals. It describes them. It tells what they do and why they act as they do.
3. The story moves until it comes to the most exciting part.

4. The story has an interesting ending. Sometimes it is a surprise.

Gradually, the response of the children came in growth of understanding correct forms. The understanding of the mechanics was acquired through a feeling of need, which brought more adequate results than textbook material does. The examples of self-checking reminders expanded as the needs demanded. Further direct teaching came forth gradually as the children grew in power to handle the former instruction. For example, dialogue led to the need of teaching quotations and the proper punctuations. There was a pause for practice work on quotations. Many, many quotations must be written before children arrive at a free use of them. The scientific method of teaching, the scientific handling of subject matter, gave the teacher leeway. She had the knowledge to use everything available for the good of the children, whether it came from what is often termed "out-moded" literary form or from progressive education procedures. The children used quotations correctly, the content of which came from life, the practice of which came from meaningful repetition. The folks in the folklore talked; that much had to be accounted for in some of the children's writings.

Handwriting was practiced daily. Writing deficiencies and corrections were accepted as part of the effort of getting good ideas in proper shape for the "make-up" book. Spelling was investigated and the words required of the children were those that stood out in their writing needs. It was all an intermingled experience of learning as one wrote. The psychology of the integrated thought pattern in the learning process stood out.
Oral expression led to written expression of the most meager results, but as growth continued, the meager was lifted to satisfactory attainment; both in emotional development and correct language forms. Growth continued. Throughout the year, as the writing continued, the children slowly wandered away from the subjects of their first stimulation. Save for an occasional tell us "so and so" or the request for another of the Old Tales, there was no outward sign for a continued need of a stimulating prop, so necessary in beginning writing.

The knowledge of the period of Old Tales and Recollections had been assimilated with the study of Colonial Virginia. Then, stirred, their own creative thoughts; they began to take off on flights of creative effort. The children's native expressions, revealing varied personalities and individual qualities, sustained them.

The experiences arising from expressions stimulated by Old Tales and Recollections sent the children into their own research. If this trend were followed, what might it not accomplish for the rest of each child's educative period? Donald recognized the wild horse explanation. He associated it with what he had heard at home. One morning he came early and going to his seat, pulled from his bag a neatly written paper.

"Look what I wrote last night. My father told me about this"

The teacher read:

"How Wild Ponies Were Raised

In Currituck County on the sand banks, several families owned a drove of wild horses. These horses were small and most people called them ponies. These ponies were never fed in stalls or green pastures like most animals on the farm. They ate wild grass, leaves from trees and bushes; also water grass and marsh sage. The ponies were never harnessed or cared for by man. Once each year the owners would
pen the ponies. They would either sell or brand the colts.

They branded them by burning the owner's initials on the side of the colt. This was painful for a short while, but the stamp stayed there as long as the pony lived.

People on the mainlands usually raised good horses from the colts, which they bought from the owners. When they were fed and herded by kind people, they became pretty and very gentle. Everyone loved and took pride in his pony.

Donald.

All enjoyed Donald's first enriching contribution to the background of our writing. One day he wrote another article for us.

"Signs of Indians"

"In Currituck County, North Carolina, lived my great-grandfather Edward W. Baum. He owned a plantation at Narrow Shore. If you take a trip to Narrow Shore today, you would see an old shell hill. Near this hill top are parts of my great-grandfather's old wind mill. The shells are in heaps and piles now, as they were in the long ago. Because of the deep layers of shells the land was no good for farming. So my great-grandfather built the mill for grinding corn.

The people in the community could come and grind corn for meal. The boys often came on horseback with a sack of corn to get meal for early cooking. In those days all the plantation women served corn pone daily.

Often, the boys, who came on horseback with corn for grinding, would hitch the horses while they waited. Then they would dig around in the shells just to see what they could find. They would often find Indian arrow heads and parts of tomahawks and other old Indian things.

They liked the arrowheads and tomahawks. Everyone at school liked them. The boys donated their treasures to the school museum. The Currituck Indians were a branch of the Algonquins and were among the last to disappear from the surroundings of Norfolk.

Donald."
Another child desired information on the butterfly:

"The little butterfly has a beautiful coat. It is made of many colors. The butterfly flutters about in the warm sunshine. He sucks the nectar from the flowers. The butterfly's life is very short. (But I think he has a happy life).

Gene."

"I looked this up in some books that Mother bought for me", said Gene, happily.

Leo began, "Long ago my great-great-grandfather lived in Currituck. I wanted to find out more about it, after my Mother told me that."

"Currituck Sound

Currituck Sound is a large body of water. Many ducks and geese feed there in the winter. Men who like to hunt go there and shoot them. They shoot them from blinds and batteries. In summer it is a nice place to go swimming and boat riding. People also go fishing and crabbing there.

Leo."

Diane delighted the class by saying, "I wasn't just sure whether a duck looked something like a chicken or not. So I thought I'd get Mother to help me look it up."

"Ducks

A duck is a web-footed bird. They have long flat bills and right long necks. A duck is a female and a drake is a male. When the mother bird hatches eggs, she sits on them until the little ducks come out. The mother duck watches her babies carefully to protect them from snapping turtles and other enemies for several weeks until the little ducks can fly.

Diane."
More real substance came from the effort of preparing the background for writing than the teacher expected. Other children asked their mothers for good books out of which they could find interesting information. The index and the dictionary were indicated as tools of learning. Mothers planned to buy reference books.

A spirit of helpfulness grew among the children. A few yet lingered in the doldrums of mechanical difficulties. Those who found mechanical type of learning easy led out to help those who found such learning difficult. The imaginative rich with idea and word, aided those who were weighted with accomplishment of the mechanical. Finally, the teacher decided to relinquish mechanics for a season, and to set free individual writing. Then, the best quality emerged.

Sparks of lyric creation crept into the written expression. The children caught the idea of building word pictures, and sought more than one word to suggest varied meaning. Surprise came in the rich, sudden form of child verse. In the child verse, fresh lines, rhythm, cadence; all moved to tone patterns.

The compilation of the children's efforts showed a beginning, a period of growth, and a final accomplishment of total self-release from fear of mechanics to full self-expression. This venture of writing upon stimulus, and finally the growth of written self-expression because of inner urge, brought contentment. Emotional release occurred. Social adjustment was developed, aided by democratic experiencing in the classroom. The accomplishment of creative writing slowly grew as a result of relinquishing the prodding method, and in its place the setting of integrated learning situations.
CHAPTER IV
GROWTH IN CHILDREN

In October, the children were given the Metropolitan Achievement Test, Battery A. Along with this battery, the teacher gave the California Intelligence Test. All results were placed on the Class Analysis Sheet. This record served as the achievement check in the teaching of English through experiences with folklore materials. Battery A of the Metropolitan Achievement Test was followed in May by Battery B. The results of the latter battery were also recorded for comparison, along with the results of Battery A, the first in red ink, the latter in black, on a Class Analysis Sheet.

The separate and comparative findings were available for understanding growth in English and other skills in this particular group of fourth grade children. There was a loss of a few weeks in the school year in relation to the usual testing program schedule. The tests were late in reaching the school. The usual time for giving tests in the Norfolk City School System was in the early part of September and the latter part of May. But the children in the fourth grade at R. E. Lee School received the Metropolitan Achievement Tests, Battery A in October and Battery B in May. The psychologist in the Norfolk City System declared at least a growth of one year for every child in total achievement. The period of time which expired between the performance of Form A and Form B was seven months, instead of eight months. This shorter period may or may not have affected final scores.

Martha was selected because she was of normal intelligence and her performance in the group was that of a normal individual.
Martha grew to certain attainment, then paused, to lift her effort to the accomplishment of writing, intermittently, with finer quality. The stages of growth as portrayed in Martha appeared characteristic of other children also.

Martha's first stage of writing was illustrated by her attempt to write about Halloween.

"A Little Boy and His Imagination"

Long, long ago old people believed in witchcraft one night he imagined that he saw a witch. But when Gerald was in bed he really didn't see a witch it was just eyelashes he screamed for his father. His father said if there had been any goblins, cats witches, ghosts that he might have heard them to. the next it happened again but this time he ran in his fathers room and said, 'Father ghosts witches goblins and cats are chasing me but he said that his mother brother and baby sister had all turned to witches cats ghosts and goblins because they had dressed up for Halloween so Gerald was never scared no more.'

The teacher did not try to teach away all the errors in one conference. The teaching had to be gradual or else the fount of joy in writing would soon run dry. In this sample of Martha's writing, obvious needs were evident in spelling, margins, use of capital letters, quotation marks, understanding sentence structure, and use of the apostrophe. This first effort, even though meager at first, gave the promise of plot development. Also, Martha was willing to write further.

Martha's second stage of writing was illustrated by her attempt to write on duck-hunting.

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"Appendix pp. 53-54, for corresponding level of growth in children."
"Duck Hunting

In their creaking little carts the hunters are going down to the swamp land. They are going to shoot some wild ducks. Now, the hunters are at the swamps. Oh, they are in luck, there is a flock of ducks on the water. One duck is flying away. Bang bang one of the hunters shot her. Now the sun is going down the hunters are going home now. When they get home they will eat the wild ducks that they shot."

This sample of Martha's writing showed plan as to economy of words. She became conscious of the mechanics of written stories, and shortened this effort. There was the sign of growth in the understanding of the use of mechanics. But Martha needed much practice. There was possibility of Martha's dispelling interest in creative expression because of lack of control over language forms. But the terse economy of her words aided her, apparently, in feeling for plot.

Martha's third state of writing was illustrated by her attempt to write a witch tale.

"The Witch and Her Husband

Once upon a time there lived an old man, who lived in a big castle his name was William Drake and his wife's name was Gloria.

Now Gloria Drake was a witch and at times she could appear horrible. One night she slipped out of the house, while her husband was away at his friend's castle, with his black boots on. She went to the edge of swamp lands there out of a deep woods crept a large black cat. The witch had come to meet the cat.

The witch and the cat made plans about who would be the leader of the witches. But their plans turned into arguments. Then, all of

1Appendix, pp. 54-55, for corresponding level of growth in other children.
a sudden, the witch said that she would give the cat her black boots, if the cat would let her be the leader of the witches. Then the witch Gloria remembered that the boots belonged to her husband. The cat would not let her take back her word. The two quarreled, then they had a fight. They fought so hard that they came close to a deep marsh.

Right into the black sticky mud they fell. Down, down they went. They sank very deep. They never came up again."

In this sample of Martha’s writing, there was a return to the willingness to undertake longer writing, regardless of the felt need for control of mechanics. The use of the apostrophe was difficult for Martha. But there was outstanding possibility in her attempts to continue writing stories. She displayed definite growth in formulating plots. The ending of the story was very satisfactory. The action of the tale moved in pleasing tempo.

Martha’s fourth stage of writing was a combination of witch and magic story.

"Which Was Which"

Once upon a time in a little house there lived an old man and his wife. His wife was a very strange witchy woman, named Emma. In fact she was a witch but her husband did not know it.

One evening when he came home his wife wasn’t there. On the fireplace was a note. By the light of the big fire, the old man read, ‘I have gone some place to spend the night. I’ll be home in the morning. Emma’.

Charles, that was the old man’s name, sat up all night waiting for his wife. He was worried and tormented. Sure enough, Emma came home when the early sun was big and red.

Charles just gave her a hard look. Then, he picked up something behind an arm chair. It was black, and felt cool and light. He looked first at Emma and then at the black cape.

1Appendix pp. 56-59, for corresponding level of growth in other children.
Here is your witch's cape, that you dropped last night when you went in the stable to get the horse. Now, you go, but let my horse alone.

Emma went away. The years passed and everyone thought she was dead. Until Charles married again. Then, she came back and turned the wife into a lizard and Charles into stone. Old folks always said that on Halloween nights, especially when the wind blew, you could hear Emma laughing and chuckling over her mean doings."

Now, Martha's sample of writing revealed creative imagination. But, as the story pattern grew and became more intricate, even further need of mechanics came into evidence. There was definite growth in emotional appreciation and the tale was an excellent effort.

Martha's fifth stage in writing began with a three-fold subject.

"The Chair, Broadcloth Coat, And Spinning Wheel

Once upon a time there was a spinning wheel that was two hundred years old. The spinning wheel lived in a big white house. And in that same house was an old broadcloth coat. The spinning wheel was still in the attic. Near it was a closet. And in the closet, the blue broadcloth coat hung.

One day an old friend came over to spend the day. It was the chair. The chair and the spinning wheel rolled themselves over to the closet door and knocked. 'Rap, rap, rap, went the noise on the closet door'. 'Who is it?' asked the blue broadcloth coat. 'It is the spinning wheel and the chair,' said the spinning wheel. 'Oh, it is only you and the chair', said the blue broadcloth coat. 'Do come in'. 'We came to see if you will tell us a story', they both said at the same time.

The broadcloth coat began, 'Well once upon a time, when a man named Smith got captured by the Indians, Pocahontas said, 'Father, please spare this man's life'. At first he said 'No', but after awhile he said, 'yes'. Then what happened?' asked the chair. 

Appendix pp. 59-63, for corresponding level of growth in other children.
"Well -- listen, I hear footsteps," said the broadcloth coat.

The chair opened the closet door and peeped out. Sure enough there was the maid coming up.

"She said, 'Land sakes', I thought I heard noises up here."

After the maid went down, the broadcloth coat finished the story. After that, almost every day the blue broadcloth coat tells the chair and the spinning wheel a different story. And the broadcloth coat, the chair and the spinning wheel lived happily ever after.\(^1\)

This sample of Martha's writing showed the problem of quotations that arose in her story. She was willing, and worked hard. After a few days passed in practice of quotations, she said, "Now, I understand direct quotations. I never did before." There was striking power for the creative expressed in this attempt.

In the next sample of writing, Martha turned to written self-expression for emotional release.

"This Country of Ours

This country of ours has rich resources. President Roosevelt would want us to obey our laws and to follow our principles, and most of all to obey our parents. He would want us to be happy and thoughtful of one another. So I think that we should do what he wants."\(^2\)

This sample of Martha's work revealed a difficulty, probably experienced by older writers, that of tense adherence. There, too, was a mixture of thought in the same paragraph. Martha was growing, but growth in power to think demanded more control of mechanics. The teacher provided for this type of expressed need in individual conferences.

\(^1\)Appendix pp. 64-67, for corresponding level of growth in other children.

\(^2\)Ibid.
The beginning of characterization indicated a strong possibility for further development in composition.

Martha began poetry by using a theme for which stimulation had been given in the class work.

"Our Virginia

How did early Virginia get its start?  
Making candy and making tarts?  
No, it shipped tobacco  
To have it sold.  
And the men were very bold!

Sir Walter Raleigh was the first Englishman to Smoke!  
Do you suppose they carried tobacco around in a poke?  
They had neat tobacco fields,  
Even though their ancestors  
Had fought many a war which shields!"¹

In this sample Martha just tried her hand at poetry. After writing this poem, fatigue came over her and she did not do any more creative writing until several weeks later. Then she wrote the following poem:

"Luck

The hunters with caps on their heads,  
Fill their big guns full of lead,  
Now they are getting into their boats,  
And on the big river will slowly float.  
One man already has shot a wild duck,  
Oh, he is having such luck."²

During the second lapse from creative writing the building and equipping of a Virginia museum kept Martha busy. There was provision, too, in this activity, for writing and the development of the power to use the language tool. But the wild duck element interested Martha and she wrote a second poem on the subject. It was a stronger

¹Appendix p. 68, for same level of expression in other children.
²Ibid.
structure than the first.

"Wild Duck"

I know a man who has killed over ten ducks
One man said, 'You are having too much luck'.
Oh, there goes a mother duck,
Don't you dare shoot her up,
Or you will have bad luck.
There goes a flock of ducks up ahead,
And the hunters have their guns full of lead,
Now up go their big guns,
Oh, there comes down one,
And now my poem is done."

Towards the end of the school year, Martha gave a poem, which indicated full use of freedom in expression. She offered an expression of "personal writing".

"The Right Thought"

Running through the fields
And up into the mill,
And to smell the sweet flowers,
To let the days go by in hours,
To let the days go past,
They don't seem so very fast."

When you go to bed at night,
Your mother tells you it is right!
Don't say, I don't want to go to bed,
I'm not a sleepy head,
Just stop to think a thought so sweet.
And remember all the grand people
that we meet."²

In this sample of child poetry, Martha was able to integrate her thinking, and to lift her sense of value to creative expression. In the poem, Martha offered an adjustment to a personal problem, that of retiring at an early bedtime hour.

The experiment had under observation the entire class, whose growth in writing persisted. This persistence was due to interest in

¹Appendix p. 69, for like expression among other children
²Ibid. pp. 69-87
the materials chosen as a background for enrichment and stimulation.
Close upon this came the willingness to write of one's own interests.
Finally, growth and response reached their height in the imaginative realm, wherein the young writers offered more than the commonplace.

Here is the record of individual growth in one pupil, Martha. Martha's case is set forth as being that of a normal individual with an intelligence quotient of 106. Martha's growth was recorded along with similar growth in other children. The following results show Martha's standing in relation to that of class median, high and low scores.
### TABLE I

**INDIVIDUAL GROWTH**

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**Key to letters:**
- C.A.: Chronological Age
- IQ: Intelligence Quotient
- M.A.: Mental Age
- M.L.: Mental Level as to age

1. These found once a session.
2. Martha needed an upper grade test instead of primary test. She made top score for primary grades.
3. Miss Linda Carter, Psychologist in the Norfolk City Schools, considered a growth of nine months which occurred within a test period of seven months as adequate to that of one year.
CHAPTER V
CONCLUSIONS

Old Tales and Recollections which comprised the folklore materials proved vital and challenging. Because of interesting stimulation experienced with the folklore and its subsequent investigation, emotional response and mental sensitivity of the individual child sought adequate words for story and poem accomplishment. The folklore materials became concrete substances in the provision for writing.

Old Tales and Recollections served the children's needs as source materials. The content of Old Tales and Recollections excelled any content in available texts. The children learned language forms, through actual writing experiences, that were permeated with life and all its activities. A higher level of learning was attained in three areas; oral expression, written creative expression, and correct language forms.

I. **Oral expression** came as a response to a rich, new field of interesting fact. The children explored this field, pleasureably, and assimilated historical and nature study information in that rich new realm. The children felt the creative impulse which moved slowly to the surface, where it took form in conversations. The ideas of the folklore materials became individual property. The subconscious self assimilated the experiences set forth in the folklore and this reappeared later as self-expression. This self-expression brought vigor to the thought-experiencing of the children. They thought. They spoke.

II. **Written creative expression** came hand in hand with oral expression. Written creations were built on oral expressions. From witch to duck, trailed the pencils. From wild duck tales to witches' haunts surged
another layer of effort. The folklore, upon continuous investigation, provided opportunity for growth in writing.

The experiment succeeded in that each child had a personal meaning to be expressed on the written page. The children felt the urge to write. They wrote stories and poems. They caught at the implications built up by the teacher and accomplished child verse. Later, without stimulation prop, they wrote of their own live thoughts. The fruits of their works were plentiful. These works fill the APPENDIX of this thesis.

The times of the long ago were interesting. Children wanted to know more about those olden days. They began a simple research. The children learned how to use the index; how to get the main thought from a paragraph for quick expression. Every child wrote his findings.

The interesting backdrop of life in Old Tales and Recollections gave opportunity for writing as interesting as for conversation. The children sensed that writing could be an outlet for their warm feelings.

At first, the writing was poor. The children delved, but it took time in which to fashion something that was truly good in their eyes. A few of the children were able to get only a beginning of written self-expression. Others wrote voluminously on levels, such as is attained by children.

III. Correct Language forms evolved as the writing continued throughout the school year. As the children moved from one stage of development in oral response and written expression to a higher level, they felt a sharp need. That need was to use the tool that would enable them to get their thoughts on paper. The prodigious speller, who had poor sense of sound, little ear for "parts" or syllables, but who had a never-failing eye for striking differentiations and similarities in
words, was exercised in his own strength. The children became efficient in the recognition of long and short vowels. Word elements, initial sounds and blends came to the children through experiencing the folklore content. A complete analysis of opportunity in words revealed much latitude for spelling and writing, along with correct language forms. Many of the words were on the Ayers Spelling List.

The need of language techniques gradually became obvious to the children. They discovered that a control of certain skills would set their stories in strong structure. The following language forms were mastered.

1. The functions of words in relation to a sentence
2. The four kinds of sentences and their punctuations
3. Dialogue and the quotation with proper punctuations
4. The meaning of the paragraph and the topic sentence
5. Proper margin spaces
6. The rule of writing a title
7. Correct spelling.

The results were measured by the Metropolitan Achievement Test. The following table shows the results of that test, Form A and Form B, the former given in October and the latter in May, to all the children in the fourth grade at R. E. Lee School in Norfolk, Virginia.
TABLE II

METROPOLITAN ACHIEVEMENT TEST

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Form A – October 7 Months
Form B – May 10 Months

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<th>Average</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oct.</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>5.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5.3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The table proves the following:

First: That, although the expiration of time between the textings of Forms A and B was but seven months, the results, according to Miss Linda Carter, School Psychologist, indicated a normal full year's growth in the children.

Second: That each child who participated in the experiment showed marked and measurable growth in all the skills - Reading, Vocabulary, Arithmetic Fundamentals, Arithmetic Problems, Language Usage, and Spelling. The range of growth in English from October to May was high 4.7 to 5.9, median 4.2 to 5.9 and low 2.7 to 3.4. Supporting evidence of each individual's growth in creative writing is proved by the various specimens of each child's writing, which form an Appendix attached to this thesis.

Third: That children develop oral expression, creative writing, and the power to use correct language forms, when presented with folklore materials gathered from the geographic environment in which they live.
CHAPTER VI

APPENDIX

THE NAUGHTY HUNTER

(by a duck)

One night when all was quiet, I heard a bang! bang! 'Hmmm!' there goes that hunter again! Why doesn't he stop that bang! bang! bang! There goes one of us. Whirling, whirling to the water below. It will be all that I can do to save the flock. (I am the leader) Ducks don't have much fun when those duck-hunters are around.

Last summer, I had a close call. One day when all the flock was feeding, I saw something. So boy! I gave the call, 'quack, quack!' We swam with our heads under water. We were tired, when we could raise our heads. We were safe, close to the edge of a great marsh.

Leonard Slack

THE SLEEPY DUCK

Once there was a duck who was always sleepy. One day when the sun was just going down, the sleepy little duck was to be the right guard. So he sat up and waited for something to happen, while the other ducks were feeding.

But nothing happened so he fell asleep on duty! Just about dawn, a hunter was coming through the weeds. All at once the sleepy duck heard the crackling of the weeds. He knew what the noise was. Quick as lightning, he 'quacked' than qua-qua-quaewed'. The flock was awaks then. They flew in formation, one division after another.

You see the sleepy duck had slept with one eye open!

Billy Stephenson
ON THE WHARVES OF EARLY VIRGINIA

On the wharves of long ago the people unloaded and loaded tobacco to send to England. One day I was sitting on an old wharf. It was an old, old one and it was gray as the water. The water was gray as the sky. The sky was gray as the clouds. One little lampkin cloud floated over to me and showed me a picture that it had seen long long ago.

"Once upon a time", it showed. "Two Cavaliers were talking very happily. One of them said, 'I am very glad that Yeardley was able to get permission from the king to make our own laws. We must hurry or we will be late for the General Assembly'."

The cloud did not know what all this meant. But I did. I hurried home to Mother and called to her.

"Mother, Mother, I know what the cloud meant. The cloud that is hanging yonder over the wharf saw the Cavaliers who started self-government in Virginia.

Carol.

THE SILK WORM

The silk worm said: "I was sold to a Cavalier in Virginia. But the settler did not know what kind of mulberry tree that I needed on which to live and to eat. I told my other worm friends that we would surely die. I wanted them to crawl off before it was too late. But they would not. So I had to go it alone.

Early one day, I dropped off the sickening tree and crawled all day. But it was a lucky day for me. There at the old river wharf was a ship that smelled like India.
The gang-plank was down, but it was no use to me. People were moving up and down carrying trunks of trees aboard. But I thought it out. I crawled on the underside of the plank and went aboard.

Sure enough the old ship went to India. I shall never let them catch me again. I was a silk worm and did not like the climate and the food of Virginia."

Booker Anderson

THE CLEVER DUCK

There was once a little duck who was as smart as smart could be. One night the ducks were flying around. The clever duck saw a man hidden behind a bush. Now, the clever duck knew that honest men stand up and walk straight. And he knew that the long black thing in his hand would suddenly throw fire and death in any flock of ducks.

Now, there came a terrible noise. Fire came from the long, black rod in the hand of the man who crouched behind a bush. The clever duck knew that soon the red fire would come his way. Below him lay many of his comrades suffering and dying. A thought struck the clever duck.

The clever duck let himself go in a spin, down, down and down. The man did not throw red fire at him. He lay close to the water, almost floating, but steering his course towards deeper water. Then, he made a great decision. He was far away now from the man hiding behind the bush. The clever duck took off quickly in flight, upward, upward and outward, toward the great Atlantic. And as he sped away in the clouds of the late day, he quacked attention to other ducks, coming inward for rest and feeding. They changed their course and and followed the leader.
Below them lay the ocean. They could not rest. They could not feed. But down there, there was no long, black object, which sent red fire into flocks of ducks.

Billy Stephenson

THE MISERABLE DUCK

I am an old, old duck! Just a miserable old duck who has no friends. Once when the ducks had settled to feed, I caused the death of so many of them, I can never, never forget! It all happened this way, and ever since, I've been just a miserable old duck.

It was my turn to be the leader. And when a duck is a leader he stays on guard so that he can see any moving thing that might be an enemy to the flock. I was trying to be a good leader and to watch for man. He was always the one enemy in Great Marsh. He sometimes carried a strange, long, black object. From this object, that man called a gun, came red death for ducks.

As I was flying low above the marsh and over the water, I heard a whistle. I thought it was the warning whistle of another duck. Quickly, I flew closer to the flock, until my breast touched the brown-tipped cattails. The ducks had come in from a long, cold flight. They needed to feed and to rest. But I circled the flock and called 'qua, qua, qua-qua-', which was the warning signal.

Instantly, all the ducks brought their heads out of the water. Some began to fly low over the water. Their beautiful feathers gleamed in the late sunlight.

But the whistle of danger had not come from another duck. It had come from man and he wanted to trick us. I did not know this. Man
lifted a large, dark gun. Red death flew all around us. In a second about half of the flock lay dead and others were wounded. A few sped upward, outward and onward. These would not feed with me. They would fly for hours when tired rather than rest with me. I was left alone.

That was a long, long time ago. But to this day, I am still a hermit duck. I am just an old, old miserable duck!

Carol W.

THE WITCH COACH

Once there lived a witch in a deep, dark woods. Every Hallowe'en night, the witch would leave the dark woods and creep out on the road. Each year she grew more hateful and so on this Hallowe'en the witch planned to do as much harm as she could.

"Ahhhhh", she mumbled when she heard horse's hoofs and a coach rumbling down the Swamp Road. "Let me see! Yes, the driver is going to stop. Hmmmm, he is leading the horse to water at the spring. Now, is my change!"

The driver had gotten down from the driver's seat to loosen the check-rein so that the tired and sweaty horse could drink. When the witch saw this, she slipped into the driver's seat.

When the horse had quenched his thirst, the driver began to climb up on the seat again. But, the black-hooded witch snatched the reins from his hand. The poor man fell back on the road, and the witch drove on.

All through the night sped the tired horse, on and on and on! When the morning came, the coach, the horse and the witch were nowhere to be seen. They were never heard of until the next Hallowe'en when
through the dark, down the Swamp Road, the roll of the wheels and
the play of horse's hoofs could be heard. At mid-night on Hallowe'en
it is said that the same horse and the same coach can be seen, with
a black witch for a driver.

Dean Goodman

THE WITCHES' CAVES

Once there were two children, Betty and Dickie. They were
sitting under an oak tree. Soon they began to grow tired. They
shut their eyes. When they opened them they were in a tree, and they
were going down, down, down. It seemed like hours before they
stopped.

When they did stop they saw a cave. They went into it.
It was piled high with diamonds, rubies, jewels, and the riches one
saw. They kept on going and came to a door. They went through this.
Now, they were in someone's hands but they did not know the owner.
Whoever it was took them through another little door. She pinned
them to a little cushion. Then they saw that the person was a witch.
Betty happened to have her shears with her. She cut herself loose
from the cushion. Then, she cut Dickie loose and they both ran just
as the witch returned. They ran right into a mirror, but they could
run right through it. And they did. Before them was their own front
door.

A few days later they decided to go back and try to kill the
witch. They went back to the same tree and sat down. They shut their
eyes, and soon they were moving down, down.

Sure enough the witch was not at home. They crept inside
and looked about them very carefully. Dickie found a gold sword lying beneath the black bed that belonged to the witch. It was a magic sword.

Just as Dickie stood up, the witch was there before them. Dickie ran at her with the sword. He swung his arms this way, and that way. He struck high and struck low. He twirled his arms round and round.

They took the jewels home and gave them to the police. They got a big reward. No one has ever seen or heard of the witch since. But when the wind blows you can hear someone moaning. Nobody knows who it is.

Jackie

THE MOUSE AND THE DROP-LEAF TABLE

Here we are seated at the table. It is two hundred years old. Every time I sit beside it, a little old mouse creeps to the edge of the old drop-leaf and squeaks me an old, old story. It was heard hundreds of years ago. And now you shall read this old, old story. Here comes mousie again. He begins to squeak.

"Now Bobby, tonight, I see you have several children with you to listen to drop-leaf and me. Well here goes!"

THE OLD, OLD HOUSE

"The old, old house was very old. It was four hundred and two years old. It was creepy and it creaked and often it even shook. But it had no dust and spider webs because it was kept clean by care takers.

One night a lonely little boy slipped in the old house. He was very hungry. So he began to eat the flowers from an old blue bowl. There were not enough to satisfy his hunger in the bowl, so he went outside and pulled some of the flower plants from the earth. While he was cleaning the roots, he saw something shining. Right before his eyes, mixed among the gold, was a bunch of jewels.

He held the beautiful gems close to himself and went back to the house. He sat down again in the great and ancient chair to wait
until the care takers returned.

When the old man and his wife came home, the lonely little boy realized that they were very kind. He gave the jewels to the old pair. The two old folks rejoiced and thought he was a very honest boy. The jewels had once belonged to a very great, great, great woman. For a long time a very great, great, great judge had been looking for a certain lonely, hungry little boy. It seemed that he was the owner of the jewels after all. For the great, great, great woman was the little boy's great, great, great-grandmother."

Jackie Hect wrote the above story because she was thinking of a little boy who had no home and was poor and hungry. But after awhile he became rich and gave poor children the things they needed. The story tells how he grew rich.

THE ANTIQUE MOUSE

Once, as I sat in an old chair about three-hundred years old, I heard a squeak, a very little one. Right before me stood a squeaky little mouse, and he said.

"Would you like to hear an old, old tale?"

Of course I said, "Yes!"

"Well, he replied, "My great, great, great, great-grandfather was a very lucky mouse. He lived about the time of George Washington. He ran all around Mount Vernon and helped himself to all the food that he wanted.

He often slept in Martha Washington's great brass pot. And would run about in it as freely as if he owned it. But one night either George Washington or Martha Washington (he could not find out which one) left a great monster of a cat in the kitchen. You can never tell how frightened my fore-father was.

He finally made his escape. The night was cold and the poor thing had no place to go for sleep. How he missed his brass pot. It seemed that he had travelled over most of the earth, when he came to the Mount Vernon vegetable garden. Here nearly frozen, he lost consciousness. When he came to, there was a great crowd of mice gathered about him,
trying to revive him.

They held parsley under his nose until he could tell them what happened. He learned from the humble poor mice that he was what was called a 'house mouse'. From now on he would be a field mouse and wear 'jeans'. He must work with garden tools if he would be any kind of a mouse."

"Yes", said the little mouse. "Once my family was of the 'quality' and I am 'right smart proud' of my George Washington mouse ancestry."

Thomas Jordan

IN GRANDMOTHER'S ATTIC

(An old drop-leaf table talks to an old ladder-back chair on wishes)

The old drop-leaf table says sadly: I am very lonely as the years go by. There is nothing on me but dust. The kind hands that used to polish me come no more. The ladies with falling lace and wide skirts have left me alone. Once they piled good food on me. I long for the feeling of a warm plate of corn pone or perhaps a cherry cobbler.

The propped up old ladder-back chair replied: I wish I had lovely ladies to sit on me as I did in the long, long ago. The modern ladies broke me and tossed me up here in this darkened attic. My, how I should like to feel a long dress that would drape itself about me.

A little girl, sitting before the fireplace, stirred. A clock chimed ten o'clock. Her mother stood before her in a long, full dressing gown.

"Sit down", mother. "Please sit over there on the old ladder-back chair."
Mother answered "What are you saying child? Wake up and go to bed to finish your dreaming!"

Louise D.

THE CASTLE AND THE POT OF GOLD

Once there was a little boy named Joe. He lived in a little red brick home near a sand hill. Once his grandfather told him that somewhere around that swamp there was a pot of gold. Every day after school he would start looking for the gold.

He dug and dug for weeks, but he could not find the gold. So one day he went down for a swim. He knew how to swim under water, and liked it very much. So he jumped in.

Meanwhile, in an underwater castle, which had once belonged to his great-grandfather, before the water had covered it, fretted an ugly old King. He kept the pot of gold under guard of many slaves.

Joe swam until he came to the castle. Then, when he passed a window the wicked old King reached out and snatched him. That night one of his guards whispered to Joe, and said,

"Come, I will show you the pot of gold."

Then, the guard and Joe went around the castle and unlocked all the doors and set everybody and everything free. Joe took the pot of gold and swam upward until he reached the sand.

Today, in that same place is a great sand dune. Nearby, in the water, are piles and piles of oyster shells.

Louise D.
HALLOWE’EN

Hallowe’en is the best time of all the year!
Witches with coal black cats, riding through the night.
Every time I see one in my dream,
I jump (it is morning)
Witches mostly in forest and wood,
Wind through the marshes when it is dark.

Sue Sigmon

WITCHES

Witches in the forest,
Witches in the wood,
They wear black cloaks and hoods.
They have long black hair,
And on their brooms they fly through the air.

Witches have big black cats,
And long pointed hats.

On Hallowe’en night when I lie in my bed,
I hear the witches overhead.

Quickly, I pick up a lamp,
I thought I saw her hair.
Was there a witch there?

Ellen
THE WITCH

Once there was a witch,
She was a very mean witch
Because she always had a switch,
For little girls that are rich.

And she has a broom,
I do not like it at all.
With it she rides all around the room.
But some day she is bound to fall.

And she has a brother named Paul,
I can not talk about him, Oh, No!
But I can say I do not like him at all,
Because he is everybody's foe.

Lois Cordle

THE WITCHES

I saw a witch upon her broom
Flying away up over the moon.
Then, in a moment I saw another,
All dazzling black with no other color.

But in a big flare of light,
They disappeared into the night.

Tommie
THE DUCKS

The ducks always say to me,
That I'm the naughtiest boy they see.
But when I catch them on the green,
They always say 'quack, quack,' to me!
And when I see their tails stuck up,
Then that's the time to shoot them up.
So then I raise my toy gun.
It's then the shooting has begun.
I count them as each one falls down,
Wondering where such ducks could be found.
I shout with all my heart's delight,
As that last shot hits them just right.
I watch them as they go floating by.
For they are toys and can not fly.

Alice Merritt

A LITTLE DUCK

Once there was a little duck,
And he always had great luck.
One day he played in the sand,
And pretty soon he heard a band.
The little duck went 'quack, quack!'
And after that he took a walk,
He met a duck who wanted to talk.
So they talked and talked.
Pretty soon they cut it short.

Anne Kippenbrock
DUCK HUNTER

Once a little hunter went out to shoot some ducks,
But every time he went to shoot he had bad luck.
Yet, the man in the other boat shot three ducks.
And the other listened to his good luck.
After this ———
The little hunter filled his gun with lead,
And put his cap on his head.
Soon his luck began.
Hear the bang, bang, bang.
Fuss and feathers!

Ellen Whitehurst

A POEM

Have you ever seen any ducks, geese, or swan
Swimming in the swamps and on the ponds?
They do not have churches with steeples.
I doubt if they even go to church.
(And I shall not begin a search)

Do you think they go to Sunday School?
Or just swim about in the pool.
Do you know I think they're a lazy bunch.
Swimming about and eating their lunch.
(That's what I think)

Carol Ann Wood
WHEN IT IS COLD

When the North winds blow,
The ducks know it's time to go.
So to the wing they take,
And head for a southern lake.
For there they know,
They will find feed,
To fill each duck's need.
And when the winter is no more,
They'll fly back to the northern shore.

Louise Disosway

IF I WERE A BIRD

If I were a bird, I'd fly and fly
Until I met the prettiest cloud in the sky
I'd see if it were sweet and soft,
And if it were rosy and white,
Then, I'd go to sleep and sleep there all the night.

Diane

BIRDS

Little birds a-singing
Your merry music so very sweet.
Wake me up at break of dawn,
In the very early morning.

Tommie
THE BUTTERFLIES

O, butterflies with your pretty wings
You fly through the air
As the birds sing.

You fly from flower to flower all day,
Then you go in to rest from play.

The flowers grow all around
And the violets cover the ground.

The butterflies are very happy and gay
And they fly from flower to flower all day.

Helen

IF I WERE A BUTTERFLY

If I were a butterfly,
Then you would see me passing by.

I would fly over the hills and meadows
Where the sweet flowers are all day,
Then very happily I'd go home from play.

If I were a butterfly,
With wings of black and gold
I would not stay here when the days grow cold.

If I were a butterfly
Up in the sky
Then you would see me passing by.

Helen
O LITTLE CLOUDS

O, little clouds up in the sky,
Won't you stop to say goodby?
Floating past every tree,
Floating past my mother and me.

Tommie

RAINY DAYS

On rainy days people walk down the street
With flappy rubbers on their feet.

The raindrops look like tiny diamonds tumbling from the sky.
And they make a shimmering puddle as on the ground they lie.

Helen

THE WEATHER

The weather is a very nice thing,
The wind its song will sing.

At night the stars shine bright and fair,
Like little diamonds glowing in the Air.

The weather is a wonderful thing,
With rain and snow and birds on wing.

Helen
SPRING
I love the spring,
The lovely spring,
And when we play in the sun
Oh, we have so much fun!

And you know when it's spring
Everything wants to sing.
I love it when spring is here
The day is full of light and cheer.

Ellen

SPRING IS COMING AGAIN
Spring is coming very near,
And I hear the bells ring clear,
From the south the birds will come.
Now, spring has already begun,
All the flowers are on their way.
Soon they will be blooming every day,
And the leaves are very green,
All this is a very pretty scene.

Alice

SPRING
The song of the birds is very gay,
As among the trees they play.
The flowers are blooming all around,
And the songs of birds and bees make a beautiful sound
The trees are putting on their dresses of greens
As to a ball their going it seems.

Oh, spring is the wonderfullest season in the year
When the sky is blue and clear.

Helen

SPRING

Spring, spring, wonderful spring,
And all the pleasures you do bring
Budding trees starting to fling
Bees, birds, and everything.

I like spring the best of all
But some prefer the fall
In spring the birds begin to call
But in the fall the leaves begin to fall.

Lois

SPRING IS COMING

Spring is coming,
Birds are humming,
Spring is coming
Bees are humming,
The trees are getting new leaves,
The time of the year for bees.
Old chimes in the church are ringing.
The flowers are blooming,
Spring is coming,
Birds, people, bees are humming!

Carol
SPRING IS HERE

Spring is here
Summer is near
Birds are in the trees
Honey is sucked by the bees
The trees wave their branches in the breeze
The morning glories dance with the sweet peas
The trees bore their leaves
Spring is the best season of the year
And we all know spring is here.

Phyllis

IN THE FOREST

When I go through the forest it is a happy day for me,
There are butterflies, water springs, and a lot of things to see,
There are wild flowers and beautiful green trees, wild grasses and bees
And when it rains or snows
The tree branches wave, and the wind blows.
When it is summer and the leaves are on the trees,
In the forest there is sun and breeze
In the forest the birds are singing
In the forest the leaves are swinging.

Phyllis
WHEN SPRING IS HERE

When spring is here I'd walk through the woods
To see the new-born robinhoods.
They live in a tall tree
With a bumble bee.

When spring is here I'll hear the birds sing
Then, they fly away with a flap of their wings.
But spring isn't here and it's a rainy day
And indoors I'll stay, instead of going out to play.

Diane

SPRING

Spring is coming
The bees are humming,
The birds are singing
The bells are ringing
Spring showers are falling
And the children are calling
The daffodils are showing,
Their yellow petticoats are glowing
The birds are making their nests,
Spring is here.

Anne
VIRGINIA WOODS

When the trees are very old,
Then its time for them to mold,
Sometimes we go to stay
With them a very pretty day.
So we go to the big woods,
And there we see robinhoods,
And we climb the best tree.
All now is very free,
And I turn to go on and on.
Then, I see my home beyond.

Alice

TOBACCO

After the men worked in the tobacco fields
They were ready to have their meals.
And then to England the tobacco will go.
As all the sailors say, ho! ho!
Then, the money they will receive,
And used to take care of financial needs.

Kay Tunstall

EARLY VIRGINIA PEOPLE

Long ago the people were fair,
They wore wigs on their hair.
When they would walk down the street,
They would bow gently to everyone,
They would meet.
They had very good manners,
Even the carpenters and canners.

Diane
MY QUIZZ

I know how Virginia got its start:
By selling apples, oranges and tarts?
No, you are wrong!
Virginia got its start by shipping out tobacco,
Not by selling oranges, apples, and tarts!

I know who sailed to Jamestown.
Captain John White?
No, you are not right!
It was Captain John Smith,
Not Captain John White!

Donald Baum

VIRGINIA

I love Virginia which is my home,
The land where the Indians long ago did roam.
In Virginia the Indians were within,
But the colonies soon did begin.

This land where the woods were gay with flowers,
And the birds were singing through the happy hours.
This land was a beautiful land I know.
Its flowers and trees in the sunlight did glow.

I love Virginia this home of mine,
And I hope it will always be as fine.

Helen
THE SPINNING WHEEL

The old spinning wheel in the attic
All dust covered by time
Bring back fond memories
Of old granny so grand and kind.

Now she was old and decrepit
Ninety-seven or more,
But her spinning wheel kept her going
Till at least she was a hundred and four.

Lois

THE CIRCUS

When the circus comes to town,
All we children gather round.
One by one the drums will beat,
Hear the elephants stamping feet.

See the circus girls do tricks,
Keeping time with magic sticks.
The acrobats do funny things,
I wonder if they have wings.

And when the funny clowns appear
We children laugh till we have tears.
The peanut and popcorn man goes by
"I want some", all the kids will cry.

So when the fair is done and gone,
We leave the circus to go home.

Alice
FLUFFY

Fluffy stands on her hind legs,
She puts her paws up on the table and begs,
Fluffy wants to come in
And so does the wind.

When Fluffy wakes up in the morning,
In awhile she is yawning,
She is golden brown and not small,
And her eyes are golden round as a ball.

Kay Tunstall

PRETTY THING

Pretty thing doesn't come each day,
To meet me on my wandering way,
For he was killed and laid to rest,
I wonder why I loved him best
With six more pups as shaggy and white
To run and play and bark and fight.

But somehow from the very start,
He crept right in and took my heart.
One day a car came running by,
And killed my pup and made me cry.
So grand-dad dug a little grave,
And made me promise to behave.
We laid him down in the grave to rest,
And I planted flowers for I loved him best.
Five years have passed since that awful day!
But I still love Pretty Thing to this very day!

Alice

AIRPLANES

I'd like an airplane because it's such fun to fly,
Straight up into the big beautiful sky.

I'd like to be an aerial gunner, too,
I'd show the enemy what I could do!

I'd fly over Germany and Japan,
And do my bit for Uncle Sam!

Donald Baum

THE SUN

The sun is a wonderful thing,
The earth its sunlight does bring!

Early in the morning, when the stars are still in the sky,
It takes a daily journey high.

The sun keeps us happy and gay,
And gives us strength to run and play.

The sun is a wonderful thing,
The earth its sunlight does bring!

Helen
SUNSET

I like to watch the sunset
About seven o'clock each night
On a pink above blue background
It makes the evening just right

The birds are going to their nests
The squirrels quietly frisk, too
And I am getting sleepy now,
So I'll say goodnight to you.

Tommie

HARVEST TIME

I like the fall of the year,
When the sky is chill and clear

Then it is harvest time
With pumpkins big on the ground,

When mother makes a pumpkin pie
It is the best that can be found.

The wind is whistling through the trees
As if it were talking to the geese.

Harvest time is in the fall of the year
Then you know winter is near.

Helen
THE DREAM I DREAMED LAST NIGHT

Last night when I went to bed,
I dreamed my dolls got up and fled,
I dreamed my clown doll got up and danced,
My beautiful China doll did prance.
And my rag doll Molly,
Sang and sang for she is very jolly.

I dreamed of all this,
'Til the next morning when I opened my eyes,
And I did rise,
And came face to face,
With Molly in her collar of lace,
My beautiful China doll, with face so bright!
That's the dream I dreamed last night.

Carol

MY DREAM

I had a dream last night,
I dreamed I saw a light.
That shown from out the sky,
In between the stars on high.
There was something mysterious about this light,
That was in my dream last night.

It was brighter than any light could be,
It was so bright I could hardly see,
But as morning came on,
The light was gone.
I ran to the window to find the light
I thought the dream might be right
When I got ready to come to school,
The sky was only clear and cool.

Phyllis

MY GREAT ADVENTURE

One night I had an adventure in my sleep
I dreamed I was in fairyland to stay for a week,
The fairies wore beautiful clothes,
The men wore neckties and the ladies wore bows.

Their wings were oh, such beautiful shades of yellow and pink,
And me with a dress that was the color of ink.

That night I was sorry about the way my dress looked,
The fairies must have thought I was the cover of a book,
But when I woke up, who should it be,
But mother's kind voice speaking to me.

Phyllis

THE MOON AND THE STARS

Every night before I go to bed,
I look to see if the moon is still there,
Yes, there it is,
The stars look as if they are two in a row,
Walking pair by pair.
I look up in the sky,
To see the beautiful clouds rolling by,
And in the mist I think I see,
The Lord of the Easter-tide,
Smiling down on the earth.

Then, I think back through the years,
Back to the time of Jesus' birth.
And after thinking for awhile,
I look up to see if the moon is still there
Large and lovely, like it grew.

It will watch over me the whole night through!

I was on our back porch last night, looking at the moon and the stars. And as I looked, I thought about the Lord. Then, the poem just came to me.

Carol

MOON, STARS AND CLOUDS

The moon is bright and clear
It shines so bright it feels very near
The stars that shine above
Make me think of Jesus whom I love.

The clouds that float so gently
Remind me of an airplane in the sky.
They are so soft and white;
I wish they would stay near all night.

Lois
FAIRIES

As I went to bed last night,
I saw two fairies dancing left and right,
They danced and danced,
They pranced and pranced.
I guess they thought I was asleep,
But I wasn't so to the window I did creep.

After a while they flew into the night air,
Oh, my, but the fairies are very fair;
up in the sky so high!
The clouds hide them as they go floating by.

And then I thought this is a moment,
I will never forget!

Carol

MY MAKE-BELIEVE WINGS

If I had wings I'd fly and fly,
Up into the beautiful sky.

If I get tired I'd sit in a tree,
And watch a busy little bee.

Then I'd fly away again,
Over the fields and over the plains.

Diane Cullifer
THE GOLDEN SHOES

As I was going through the wood one day,
I stumbled and fell on the ground,
But I got up and wiped myself off,
Oh, what have I found,
A pair of golden shoes,
All gold and shiny.

I thought they must have belonged to a fairy,
For they were wise and tiny
I heard a little noise and ran to hide,
Then I saw a little fairy
Dancing round and about.
Ho, Ho, she was no bigger than a cherry.
All at once she stopped
And started looking for her shoes,
But she could not find them,
Her pretty shoes of gold and blue.

Carol

THE FAIRY AND THE GOLDEN SLIPPERS

Once I saw a Fairy,
Creeping in the woods,
With a lovely little star,
She wasn't very far!

Once I saw a Fairy,
Creeping into town,
With a lovely little crown,
She wasn't very far!
Once I saw a Fairy
creeping in a palace,
With some golden slippers
She was the same fairy!

Not long ago, when I was alone, I saw a little fairy, dancing around a buttercup. I thought I would write a poem.

Jo Ann Boeckman

MY HOLIDAYS

My holidays are very nice,
But there isn’t snow nor ice.

As the people along the streets walk,
Of holiday things they talk.

And at night the children think they see fairies winging,
And they do hear the soft chimes ringing.

Then they think of long ago,
When Christ was born in a manger low.

Helen

BUBBLES

I like to see the bubbles floating in the air,
And they sometimes join each other to make a pair,
They dance around and around like fairies!

Helen
THE AMERICA WE LOVE

Long ago when our country was found,
There was nothing here but trees and ground.
The Indians taught the men how to plant corn,
The food they had brought along,
Did not last very long.
When our country was not very old,
Tobacco was sent to England to be sold.

Ellen Whitehurst

MY COUNTRY.

I love the country of the brave and free,
And many people love thee.
The president loved the country too,
Which is waving the red, white and blue.
The president was ill for many a year,
And now he is dead with many a tear.

Anne

MY COUNTRY

When our country was young and bright,
Yeardley went to get self-government right
And still self-government lives to this day
In exactly the very same way.

Alice
OUR PRESIDENT

One of the greatest men we have had for president died Thursday April 12, 1945 at 3:35 o’clock. We will always remember him as a great president. He was the commanding chief of the Army and Navy. The commentators say that the men of the Army and Navy will miss their commanding chief.

President Roosevelt has four sons in the armed forces. Mrs. Roosevelt sent a message to her sons which said, "Your father slept away this afternoon. He did his duty to the last, as he would have you do." She signed the message, mother.

Helen.

OUR PRESIDENT

Our president made us happy and free.
Our president made us happy with glee.
We honor him with delight,
Every day and every night.

One day God needed a new star,
He said, "I will see about that tomorrow".
So he called on our president.
But his spirit still lives on.
His ideas will be carried on.

Louise Discosway.
# BIBLIOGRAPHY

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VITA

Bessie Jennings Ansell, Bachelor of Arts Degree, 1935, College of William and Mary, was born in Princess Anne County, July 6th, 1895.

The candidate for the Master of Arts Degree has taught in the public schools of Norfolk and Princess Anne Counties and City of Norfolk for a period of twenty-eight years.