

# BOOKS

By DICK MILLER  
Highland School Librarian

WHO'S IN CHARGE OF LINCOLN?, by Dale Fife. Coward-McCann, 1965.

IMAGINE YOURSELF in a situation like this: You are a third-grade boy alone in your house for two days. Nobody ever believes the things you tell them because you. . .well, sometimes your imagination gets the better of you and you stretch things just a wee bit. . .maybe more than a wee bit. Suddenly, on the street, a man hands you a paper bag and you discover it is full of money. No one will listen to you. And then you find yourself on a train to Washington --alone. What would you do?

That is exactly what happened to Lincoln Farnum, and what he did to take care of himself in a very strange situation makes an extremely fine story.

It all began when Mother had to go to the hospital two days early. She would not be gone long, just long enough to pick up the new baby.

(Lincoln hoped it would be a Herman and not a Hermione. "They already had three girls and there wasn't room for any more dresses in the closets. Besides, he had already divided his toys, half for Herman and half for himself.")

Everyone was prepared for the expected emergency. Pop would be making the New York-Chicago run on his train. Sara would be on her class excursion to Washington. Sassy and Sissy, Lincoln's twin sisters,

were to go straight to Aunt Charlotte's house from school. Mrs. Readywell was to come stay with Lincoln. But when Lincoln told the family that a horse had fallen on Mrs. Readywell, nobody believed him. And it was true. A horse HAD fallen on Mrs. Readywell--sort of.

At any rate, that is the setting. Lincoln is left alone. Then along comes the man with the turned-up coat collar and the turned-down hat brim and plunks a paper bag into Lincoln's arms and gives him fifteen dollars to deliver the bag to the subway station. The man says his lunch is in the bag.

Eager to earn the fifteen dollars, Lincoln darts to the subway station, paying no attention to the whistle and sirens behind him. Of course, the mysterious stranger does not appear and Lincoln is left holding the bag. Literally.

No one shows the slightest interest in Lincoln's story. They know him and his tall tales too well. They will not even wait to be shown the money. The banks are closed. Officer Roberts is off duty. So Lincoln decides to go to the railroad station in an effort to catch Sara before her excursion train leaves for Washington. And that is how Lincoln finds himself on a train to Washington.

What he does in Washington and the way he solves the problem of the money bag makes an intriguing tale and answers the question put forth in the title: who is in charge of Lincoln? Lincoln is in charge of Lincoln.

Dale Fife has a marvelous sense of humor and has created a wonderful character in eight-year-old Lincoln Farnum. Lincoln is a Negro boy, although there is nothing in the text to indicate this. Paul Galdone drew the pictures for the book and his illustrations of a small Negro boy on a wild adventure certainly add zest and action to the fast-paced story.

WHO'S IN CHARGE OF LINCOLN? is exactly the right length--61 pages--for children the age of Lincoln Farnum. A third-grader's concentration span is not sufficient for a longer book and the pace is fast enough to hold his interest but not so fast that it leaves him breathless. The vocabulary is pitched at just the right angle to offer some challenge and stimulation and still



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## Busy Hands



YOUNG ARTISTS--These young members of Arts and Crafts classes at Jefferson Center are shown with some of their handiwork. Posing at top with "mobile sculpture" constructed from painted tree limb are (from left) Porter Troutman Jr., instructor; William Hudson, Connie Bell, James Hudson, Gail Hudson, and Sheila Thomas. This was a Halloween project. Shown making pencil holders in bottom photo are (from left) Mrs. Lillian Carter, VISTA worker; Debra Jackson, Linda Lofton, Billye Joyce, Nieta Nevens, Lila Rabb and Shirley Edmond.

not smother the reader with oversized verbiage. This is not an easy task to accomplish and Mrs. Fife is to be congratulated on her wisdom and care in her happy choice of sometimes poetic words.

This is Dale Fife's second book. Her first, A STORK FOR THE BELL TOWER, was set in Alsace, where Mrs. Fife's parents were born. Mrs. Fife now lives with her family in San Mateo, California.

Artist Paul Galdone was born in Budapest, Hungary, but has lived in the United States since he was fourteen years old. Mr. Galdone has illustrated many fine books for boys and girls. He now makes his home in Rockland County, New York.

## Matt Kelly Parents In Record Turnout For PTA Meeting

AN EXPLANATION of the new Platoon Program of specialized teaching by Principal John Walker featured the new school year's first meeting of the Matt Kelly School PTA, which attracted a record number of parents to the school's multi-purpose room last week. Walker said the new teaching system was "experimental" and subject to change--depending on results.

Assessments of parent and teacher reactions to the Project Head Start program were ably presented by Mrs. Florence White, a teacher, and Mrs. Eloise Winn, a parent. They agreed the program was very successful, especially in regard to improved behavior and verbalization. It was suggested that Project Head Start be established as "Project Regular Start."

Mrs. Grace McGlothen, Madison PTA unit program chairman, got the meeting off to a relaxed start by leading group singing after the pledge of allegiance and flag salute ceremony conducted by Mrs. Blackwell and her Matt Kelly Cub Scouts.

Faculty members were introduced by new unit president Mrs. John Turner and each teacher was presented with a carnation. Mrs. Connie Larsen delivered an inspiring talk on PTA purposes and goals, and Mrs. Joyce Hutchins, school secretary, outlined the functions of her office and how her services could be best utilized by parents.

A head count showed that Homeroom 28 had the largest number of parents in attendance and 5th grade instructor Mrs. Joanne Drum proudly accepted the prize--a beautiful rubber plant--in behalf of her charges and their parents. It was a rewarding day for Mrs. Drum, who had earlier presented a fine rendition of the safety play, "Screwy Louie," with author Walter Jenkins and his wife and Vegas Verdes School principal in the audience.

## Foreign Lingos Intrigue Kit Carson Youngsters

KIT CARSON SCHOOL visitors may be pleasantly surprised by children's voices chattering in French or Spanish this winter. Fifth and sixth graders now have the privilege of learning a language and the children are responding enthusiastically according to French teachers Mrs. Cook and Mr. Carter, and Spanish instructors Mrs. Klingler and Mr. Ramirez.

The Kit Carson "Reporter" is due to make its debut in November. Classroom reporters are preparing detailed stories on Judo Club, social dancing club, French club and Library club activities. Mrs. Klingler is in charge of the student publication.

A Halloween Carnival will be held Oct. 29 at Kit Carson at 7:30 p.m. Everyone's invited!

The Safety Patrol at Kit Carson Elementary School has been organized by Walker Campbell and Mrs. Pauline Servin, assisted by school safety officer Keith L. Ruesch of the Las Vegas Police Dept., who is working very hard to make this squad the best in the city.

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