



By DICK MILLER
Highland School Librarian

TEN YEARS AGO, a young man--a school teacher by profession--decided to quit his job in a small, midwestern elementary school and blaze new trails in the great Northwestern frontier. So he packed a few of the barest essentials and set off to the north, burning his bridges behind him.

In the fall of the year, he found himself on the north slope of the Alaska Range, not far below the Arctic Circle. He was teaching school again, in a tiny wilderness community on the furthest fringe of civilization.

It was a way of life completely foreign to him. The students were wild and long-haired (this was before the era of the Beatles, the Rolling Stones and other envoys of our present-day culture) and sadly lacking, or so the young man thought, in the "advantages" of the more civilized areas to the south.

Fired with a missionary zeal composed of one part ignorance and two parts inexperience, the young man set out brazenly to enlighten the barbarians.

First, these children of the wilderness--sons and daughters of fur-trappers, Indians, and homesteaders -- must have haircuts. After all, how could a boy learn long division with these ridiculous braids dragging all over his split-log desk? Forthwith, the school room was changed into a barber shop and with the aid of a strong right arm and a sharp skinning-knife, the floor was strewn with the accumulation of years of protective head-growth.

THE YOUNG MAN allowed that the operations were successful. . . except for two cases of pneumonia that developed when the newly-shorn flock ventured out into the forty-below-zero weather without the accustomed warmth of a full head of hair.

That year was marked by many similar occurrences, culminating in the Great Knife-Carrying Fiasco.

Every single student, boy and girl alike, carried a wicked-looking sheathknife on his belt. Many of the student body had long distances to travel each day to reach the school. Some walked and some traveled by dog-sled, with a rifle lying on the sled in a moose-hide sleeve. As these pioneers lived by the meat they killed, it was advantageous to send the child to school with a gun and knife. Many a moose and caribou were killed, skinned, and quartered on the trail to and from school.

But the young man thought it was barbaric to teach a class of elementary students, each of whom packed a knife on his hip. Thus, knives were forbidden at school.

It was not long before the school master saw the error of his decision. A sixth-grade boy met a grizzly bear on the trail while mushing home on his dog-sled. The dogs went wild trying to get at the bear and tangled the traces. Without a knife the boy could not cut loose the dogs and, as a result, two of the dogs were killed before the others could break loose and chase the bear away.

Then, in the last blizzard of the winter, three children, two brothers and their sister, lost the trail and without knives could not build a suitable shelter. They managed to keep a fire going by breaking off dead spruce limbs but by the time they were found they were suffering from exposure and nearly frozen.

IT TOOK A LONG TIME but the school teacher finally woke up to the facts of existence in the wild. He began to let his hair grow and he accepted a belt-knife as a gift from the proprietor of the trading post. He wore the knife constantly, even in the classroom. Never again did he try to change the proven ways of a strange people.

That young teacher made the mistake of which

Negro Fashion Designer

SOCIETY'S BEST-KEPT SECRET
by Dorothy Johnson

RICH WOMEN PASS HER NAME among themselves--some have even cheated her, but few outsiders have heard of Ann Lowe, the only Negro to become a leading American fashion designer.

In the wake of the excitement engendered from viewing the Gamma Phi Delta's Alpha Rho Chapter-sponsored Ebony Fashion Fair, Sunday, at the Sands Hotel, my thoughts turned to our own American Negro designers who, with the exception of a select few, have failed to receive real recognition in this highly lucrative field.

ANNE LOWE, great granddaughter of a white plantation owner and a female slave, has spent a lifetime struggling her way from the Alabama town of her childhood to the top of a profession dominated by whites. Her specialty is expensive, exquisitely hand-stitched formal gowns, and her customers are from the best families of American society--Du Pont, Auchincloss, Vander Pock, Lodge, Hamilton and others too numerous to name. No one can compete with or match Ann Lowe in the fashioning of debutante and wedding dresses. Still, after a 48-year career, she is comparably unknown.

many of us are guilty; failure to understand the ways of a people strange to us. The world is made up of many people and the customs of each are different. This writer, for one, likes it that way--it makes life more interesting to learn the customs of others. But it requires understanding. Without understanding, we, like the young man in the wilderness, are going to be up to our ears in problems.

The only remedy is to learn all we can about others. With this learning will come appreciation and understanding.

Naturally, each of us cannot travel about the world and live with people of other races and nationalities. But right here at home we are doing that to a certain extent. And a very important tool is available to all of us--books.

The following list of books may be found in almost any library, surely, most of them are in your school library. The books are about persons of other races and other countries, and are intended for adults as well as school students.

IF YOU GET THE BOOKS from a library shelf, notice the other books on the same shelf. They will be books about the same subject and might be of more interest to you than the books listed here.

The numbers represent the approximate grade level for which the book was written, although this is very flexible. For example, a book marked "5-7" means it is written for students in grades 5, 6, and 7, but may also be quite suitable for lower or higher grades. It should be used only as a rough guide.

- Bannon, Laura, HAT FOR A HERO (Mexican), 1-3
- Bard, Mary, BEST FRIENDS (French), 5-7
- Benary-Isbert, Margot, THE ARK (German), 7-9
- Church, Richard, FIVE BOYS IN A CAVE (English), 6-7
- Clark, Ann, SECRET OF THE ANDES (Inca Indian), 4-7
- De Angeli, Marguerite, ELIN'S AMERIKA (Swedish), 4-6
- De Angeli, Marguerite, UP THE HILL (Polish), 4-6
- Flack, Marjorie, STORY ABOUT PING (Chinese), 1-3
- Goets, Delia, OTHER YOUNG AMERICANS (Latin Americans), 8-9
- Guareschi, Giovanni, DON CAMILLO'S DILEMMA (Italian), 10-12
- Lewis, Elisabeth, YOUNG FU OF THE UPPER YANGTSE (Chinese), 7-9
- Lipkind, William, BOY WITH A HARPOON (Eskimo), 4-6
- McSwigan, Marie, ALL ABOARD FOR FREEDOM (Czech), 6-7
- Papashvily, George and Helen, ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN (Russian), 10-12
- Rugh, Belle, CRYSTAL MOUNTAIN (Lebanese), 4-7
- Schartum-hansen, Ingvild, INGVILD'S DIARY (Norwegian), 5-8
- Seredy, Kate, GOOD MASTER (Hungarian), 5-7
- Shannon, Monica, DOBRY (Bulgarian), 5-8

Miss Lowe learned her skill and technique as a child. Her mother and grandmother sewed for the elite of Montgomery, Alabama. As a child of six, Ann would take scraps of material and fashion them into detailed miniatures of the flowers in the garden of the plantation where she lived. When she was 16, Ann's mother died, leaving unfinished four dresses she was making for a New Year's Ball. Ann finished the dresses.

Shortly after her mother's death, she married, and gave birth to a baby boy a year later. Ann's husband did not want her to sew except for herself and their child.

ONE DAY, in a department store, wealthy Mrs. D.C. Lee saw Ann selecting some materials. She remarked to the saleslady: "Look at the lovely clothes that girl is wearing". The saleslady introduced them, and Ann confided to Mrs. Lee that she had made her own clothes.

"I'm from Tampa", said Mrs. Lee, "and there isn't anyone in Tampa who can sew like that". She invited Ann Lowe to come to Tampa to make a wedding dress and trousseau for her daughter. The offer provided the chance for which Ann had often dreamed--an opportunity to make lovely gowns. In defiance of her husband's order to remain at home, Ann took her baby son and went to Tampa. (Later, her husband divorced her.)

When her work for Mrs. Lee was completed, she went from home-to-home, in Tampa's finest residential districts, making dresses. One day, looking through a fashion magazine, she came across an advertisement for a New York Designers School. She wrote, and was accepted by the school.

Ann Lowe was 18 years old when she went to New York. Her first stop was the school of designing. Asked what she wanted there by the director of the school, she showed him his letter accepting her as a student. He was obviously upset at her being a Negro but, after scrutinizing her clothes, he couldn't turn her away.

THE OTHER STUDENTS refused to work in the same room with a Negro, so Ann was put in a room alone. After six months, she was graduated, and was told, by the director, that there was no more they could teach her; "You are very very good" she was told.

With her son, Miss Lowe returned to Tampa where she obtained all the work she could possibly handle. By the time she was 21 years old, she was running the City's leading dress establishment; one that employed 18 dressmakers. By 1927, she had saved \$20,000 and was ready to move to New York.

She rented a small workshop but, within a year, she was broke. After weeks of job hunting, she offered a shop owner a deal: "Just give me a place to work and some fabric, and only if you sell my dresses, do you have to pay me".

(See LOWE, Page 10)

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