

# BOOKS

By DICK MILLER  
Highland School Librarian

WHEN I WAS a young sprout growing up on a ranch in the Flint Hills we had a crew of pretty tough characters working for us.

The Old Man ruled this bunch with an iron hand and a touch of humor. He gave an order and you jumped to carry it out but the twinkle in his eye gave you a little good-feeling deep down, even while you jumped.

He had a way with men, the Old Man did, and you'd break your back getting done whatever it was he wanted, and he'd be right in there alongside you. You'd work your fingers to a nubbin and still the Old Man would be doing twice as much as you were.

Don't get the idea he was perfect. He wasn't. He had his own way of doing things and if you didn't do it right enough you did it again. But at the same time, he was open to suggestions. If you could prove to him -- diplomatically -- that you had a better way, he was willing to have a go at it. And prove it you had to. He didn't go much for hare-brained schemes.



DICK MILLER

I suppose his two watch-words could be described as "discipline" and "intelligence" -- discipline from his men (and the strongest sense of self-discipline) and intelligence in the form of common sense and knowledge. He was born with common sense, and knowledge he absorbed from books.

My earliest recollections of the Old Man are mental images of him reading to me. He was an omnivorous reader (Better check the dictionary on that word. I did.) and whatever he happened to be reading he shared with me.

I was teathed on Hemingway and Walter Scott; Robert Service and Kipling; Robert Benchley and H. Allen Smith. It must have taken root because I grew up to be a librarian. There are worse occupations.

On a long hunt we would sit beside a tiny fire, nursing our cups of tea, and the Old Man would read. I can still hear his voice, strong and low and gravelly, as he read Service's "Cremation of Sam McGee."

"There are strange things done in the Mid-night Sun by the men who moil for gold. The Artic Trails have their secret tales that would make your blood run cold. The Northern Lights have seen queer sights, but the queerest they ever did see, Was that night on the marge of Lake LaBarge. I cremated Sam McGee."

THE POEM GOES ON for many more stanzas and I probably have misquoted Mr. Service to some degree but none-the-less the feeling is still there. It's a man's poem -- to be read by a man to a man.

The same is true with THE GREEN HILLS OF AFRICA by Ernest Hemingway. To a teenage boy who would be a man, I strongly recommend this book. It may seem strange to some people that I would write of Hemingway in a column directed toward young people. It is not strange. Hemingway was one of the great writers of all time. His style has influenced practically every writer in the last forty years and THE GREEN HILLS OF AFRICA, although not critically acclaimed as one of his better books, makes fine reading. So does THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA. I recommend both to all boys of high school age.

I have read and re-read THE GREEN HILLS OF AFRICA many times and at each reading I discover something new and fresh while at the same time I savor the old well-known lines again and again. There is much of life and human nature in that book.

When I reached my teens the Old Man figured I was old enough to ramrod the outfit, (we ran a few cows) so he took a sort of supervisory back seat to watch how The Kid operated. Apparently I did all right. At least I'm still around

**The COVE** Free BINGO Starting Mon. Feb. 14 2:30 p.m.  
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## Library Open Evenings

THE LIBRARY at Highland Elementary School is now open until eight o'clock every evening, Monday through Friday. All elementary, junior high and senior high students, and adults may use the facilities of the library for study, research, or just pleasure reading. The library will be open from 2:15 p.m. until 8 p.m. each evening. Mr. Albert Bowen is in charge of the Study Den and is available to offer students any assistance they may need.

## (EDITORIAL, from page 2)

where it exists as an island in a prejudiced community."

What to do? We may start by outlawing derogatory terms (like "Whitey") by eliminating racial jokes, by refusing to ridicule racial differences, by avoiding conversations which play up to the mistakes of some whites, by urging understanding and sympathy for all God's children.

I will be forever grateful to my parents who let me be "partners" with a white boy on a Sunday morning paper route. And that was back in the days when such things just weren't done.

"Men can learn to be unprejudiced as well as prejudiced," writes Dr. E. Chinoy in Society "and the experience of satisfactory relations with members of other groups may serve that purpose."

As adults we are, to some extent prisoners of their prejudices. But we need not make our children into our own image and likeness.

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to write this column.

I'm not going to try to tell you that I had fifteen rough-and-tumble cowboys ding around spouting poetry but I will tell you that there was a lot of Robert Service read around the fire and the bunkhouse at night.

THERE IS SOMETHING about the lusty, outdoor verses and the ballad-like rhythms of Robert Service's works that appeal to men of that stamp. The same is true, again, of some of Hemingway's writing, although much of the more subtle meaning is lost. The hunting sequences are readily grasped, however.

Years later, in Alaska, I was beside the Old Man while he stood his ground and dropped a charging grizzly almost on our feet. He had a dog-eared copy of Robert Service's poems in the pocket of his hunting coat at the time and weeks later--while we were panning gold on Jack Wade Creek--the book dropped from his pocket into the water. The Old Man dried each page carefully and that night he was reading from it again by the light of the fire.

If all these rambling words of mine must have a point I suppose it is this: a man can like to read books and still be a real he-man.

There are some people in this world who associate book-reading with sissies. These people will never be worth the powder and shot it would take to blow them up.

Throughout the history of the world, every great man--and every great woman--has appreciated fine books. Maybe we can all learn something from that.

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## Negro History Classes

THE CLARK COUNTY Adult Education Department announced this week that William E. Wynn, Las Vegas High School teacher, will conduct adult classes in "History of the Negro" beginning Monday, February 14 at Las Vegas High School--Monday and Wednesday 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Registration begins Monday, February 14, Room 401.

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## Adult Modern Math Class

On January 27, 1966 the VOICE published an article announcing the possibility of a Modern Math Class starting at Jo Mackey School. The class is now more than a possibility, it has become a reality.

Classes will begin at 7 p.m. February 22, 1966 at Jo Mackey School. The classes will be especially designed to enable parents to help their children with Modern Math homework. However, adults interested in upgrading themselves in this area are encouraged to attend. The textbooks and other supplies necessary for the course are free of charge to the students.

H. P. FITZGERALD, Project Coordinator, announced that any interested persons may enroll between now and February 22. Applications may be made by calling 649-2359 or 649-2350, Monday, Thursday and Friday from 9 to 5 p.m. Ask for Mrs. Norma Cherry.

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