

A Thousand Stories in Lake District of Manitoba Says Canadian Authoress

Martha Ostenso Gave Best First Novel of Year that Setting

Miss Martha Ostenso, who was awarded the \$13,500 prize and royalties on the book for the best first novel submitted during the past year in a contest organized jointly by Doubleday & Company, Pictorial Review and Famous Players-Lasky Corporation, is a twenty-four-year-old school teacher from Manitoba. Miss Ostenso's novel will be serialized, filmed and published in book form in 1925. The story, which is called "The Passionate Flight," deals with the farmers of the Western Prairies and portrays the romance of one whose ambition to soar beyond the black loam led to dramatic consequences.

More than 1,500 manuscripts were submitted. The judges state that Miss Ostenso's was so far superior that no other story seriously rivaled it.

A brief sketch of her life and the circumstances which inspired her novel, as related by Miss Ostenso, follows:

"Where the long arm of the Har-dangerford penetrates farthest into the rugged mountains of the coast of Norway, the Ostenso family has lived in the township that bears its name since the days of the Vikings. The name means 'Eastern Sea,' and was assumed centuries ago by an adventurous forerunner who dreamed of extending his holdings over the mountains and through the lowlands of Sweden eastward to the very shores of the Baltic. Although his dreams never came true, the family name recalls it and the family tradition of land-holding has persisted unbroken; the part of the land that borders the lovely fjord is still in its possession, handed down from eldest son to eldest son.

"My father, a young son, was free to indulge his roving disposition. A few years after his marriage to my mother he decided to emigrate to America.

"My mother's parents lived high up in the mountains, remote from the softening influence of the coast towns. At their home it was, near the little village of Haukeland, that I was born. This, the first of many small towns in which I have lived, is known to me only through hearsay, for when I was two years old we came to America.

"The story of my childhood is a tale of seven little towns in Minnesota and South Dakota. Towns of

the field and prairie all, redolent of the soil from which they had sprung and eloquent of that struggle country, to the farmer the world over, a struggle but transferred from the Ostensos and Haukelands of the Old World to the richer loam of the new. They should have a story written about them—those seven mean, yet glorious little towns of my childhood! In one of them, on the dun prairies of South Dakota, I learned to speak English. What a lovely

Towns. My father's restless spirit drove him north to the newer country. The family settled in Manitoba.

"It was during a summer vacation from my university work that I went into the lake district of Manitoba, well toward the frontiers of that northern civilization. The story that I have written lay there, waiting to be put into words. Here was the raw material out of which Little Towns were made. Here was human nature stark, unattired in the convention of a smoother, softer life. A thousand stories are there still, to be written.

"My novel lay back of my mind for several years before I began to write it. In the intervals of those years, spent as a social worker in a great city, I often compared the creaking machinery of skyscraper civilization with the cruder, direct society of the frontier. Slowly, as my yearner and nearer to the heart of the city, the border life began to be limned clearly against the murky background of my work-a-day scene.

"A year ago last summer I returned to Manitoba. The approach to remembered scenes renewed my interest in my story, the character stood out clear-cut at last, and I made the first draft of the novel.

"I was not satisfied with the result and laid the manuscript aside, with no definite purpose regarding it. It was not until spring that I returned to the city and learned of the Curtis Brown contest. It was with diffidence and reluctance that I was persuaded by friends, who thought well of the early draft and its possibilities, to rewrite it in time to submit it for consideration. At best, I felt, it might not be wholly ignored.

"I leave it to the scientists and pseudo-scientists who argue interminably about the relative influence on men of heredity and environment to decide the responsibility for what ever merit my story may have. The blood of the Norsemen! The Seven Little Towns? Perhaps—I do not know. No—but I have my own very unscientific opinion. It won't bear stating, but this much may be said of it: It has something to do with magic and fate and all the other impossible, beautiful things that I believe in."



Martha Ostenso

language I found it to be, with words in it like pail and funeral and alone, and ugly words, too, like laughter and cake and scratch! What strange sounds the new words made to me.

"Later, in another of the little towns, I learned that it was fun to make things with words. It was fun living in a little town in Minnesota that I became a regular contributor to the Junior Page of the Minneapolis Journal, and was rewarded for my literary trial-balloons at the rate of eighty cents a column. In the public school of that little town there still hangs, perhaps, a large print of a rural scene in a resplendent frame, with a neat name-plate at the bottom of it. That also came from the Journal, in recognition of an essay which, in my eleven-year-old opinion, placed me abreast of Emerson.

"When I was fifteen years old, I bade good-bye to the Seven Little

to give a freer flow of water to the bridge. Council then arose. —D. Allan, Clerk.

THE LARGEST CLOCKS

The largest clock in the world, weighing four tons, has been started atop the Colgate factory in Jersey City, when Mayor Hague turned the switch that started the giant works moving. The clock measures fifty feet across the dial. Its minute hand is 37 feet 3 inches long and weighs a gross ton. Its hour hand is 27 feet 6 inches long and weighs 1,725 pounds. In the course of a day, the clock's minute hand travels three-quarters of a mile. At night the clock is illuminated by electric lights visible for many miles. The time-piece was manufactured by the Seth Thomas Company.

The next largest clock is the huge time-piece at Mechlin, or Malines, Belgium, which was built in the Middle Ages. It measures about forty feet across the dial. One of its hands has been missing since it was struck by German shells in the war. The cathedral town of Cardinal Mercier, at whose palace the visiting editors had the honor and pleasure of being received during their trip last summer, and of listening to the playing of the celebrated chimes in the tower of the cathedral, within which are a number of world-famed paintings.

A BARGAIN

An ancient car rattled painfully up to the gates of the races. The gatekeeper, demanding the usual fee for automobiles, called: "A dollar for the car." The owner looked up with a pathetic smile of relief and said, "Sold." —Bison.

"Sickness Stalked Into This Happy Little Home"

When Jim Harrow moved into his pretty white-washed cottage he thought he had reached the height of happiness. His wife and his baby boy loudly voiced their pleasure. Everything seemed to be "breaking right" for Jim. But the happy days didn't last long. Sickness fell upon Mrs. Harrow. "It's just a pain in my back, maybe rheumatism," she said. But Jim knew how a previous attack of pleurisy had weakened her, so he called in a doctor. The doctor hinted at "lung trouble" and advised a complete examination. Jim took her wife to a specialist, who quickly confirmed the first verdict. "Consumption," he said. Husband and wife stared at each other in hopeless misery, but cheer was forthcoming. "Don't worry," said the doctor, "a year's treatment at the Muskoka Hospital for Consumptives will cure her, but she must go now—no delay. A kindly neighbor is taking care of the baby boy while Jim is 'keeping house' by himself. Every few days the postman brings a letter which tells how the nurse and doctor are bringing back the health that belonged to Mrs. Harrow. Shortly the letters will come back to the little white cottage. Should you wish to have a hand in such worthwhile work, please send your contribution to Hon. W. A. Charlton, President, 223 College Street, Toronto, Ont.

Problems of the Farm

Contributed by Grey County Department of Agriculture

Cost of Experimental Farms

The total cost of the Experimental Farms of the Federal Department of Agriculture is \$1,805,770, and the total vote for agricultural purposes \$5,850,000. The total cost of all the Federal Departments was \$400,000,000. Agriculture only received therefore one-sixty-eighth of the whole. Is that too much to pay for the development of better varieties of grain, fruits, stock, etc., and for experiments in handling of fertilizers, drainage and the other thousand of things which are valuable and necessary to the farmer.

The following is a statement of the egg circles in Oxford County and the shipping of cull poultry from Bruce County:

Co-operative Activities in Oxford County Farmers' Co-operative Produce Company takes in a group of twelve Oxford County egg circles, federation of which took place in the spring of 1923, commencing operations May 1, 1923. Up to December 31, 1923, this association marketed 193,609 dozens of eggs, paying the members \$52,824 approximately.

The percentage of grades for this quantity works out as follows: 51.09 per cent extras; 30.2 per cent firsts; 7.16 per cent seconds; 4.15 per cent cracks and dirties; and 40 per cent bad, broken and frozen. The average price over that period was 27 cents a dozen. From January 1, 1924, to September 30, 1924, there were marketed 109,196 dozens for which the members were paid \$23,282.21, the price over this period averaging 25 1/2 cents a dozen. This means that during the periods mentioned, the association marketed approximately 22 1/3 cars of eggs.

Also, over the whole period mentioned, from May 1, 1923, to September 30, 1924, this association has marketed 68,556 pounds of live poultry, including 30 complete cars which were marketed co-operatively being made up by small cars and express shipments.

Bruce County Co-operative Activities

In September, 1924, a car of poultry was assembled and taken to Buffalo market. The total number of pounds in this shipment was 13,836, a gain of 890 pounds having been made in transit. The price to the producers for No. 1 birds was 20 1/2 cents a pound; for No. 2, 15 cents; Roosters, 10 cents.

Mr. A. B. MacDonald, Director of Hog raising in Ontario, has the following to say regarding the Hog Industry in Canada: "Hog production in Canada exceeds consumption. In 1923, the Canadian farmer sent to market approximately 5,500,000 hogs. Of this number, 4,680,000 were consumed at home, while the product from the remainder, approximately 820,000, were exported, mainly in the form of Wilshire sides to the markets of Great Britain. This export trade is the safety valve of the Canadian swine industry. Without it there would be an over supply of hog products in the hands of Canadian packers, wholesale and retail meat dealers—a condition which invariably causes a serious handicap to the live stock industry and hence to the future of swine raising is going to be developed in a successful manner, and built on an economical basis, satisfactory live hog prices must be guaranteed the producer. This cannot be done unless markets for Canadian hogs are expanded."

Review of Foreign Markets

For some time to come Great Britain will be the only country in which we can market the big bulk of our surplus hogs. In 1919, 242,115,176 pounds of bacon and pork cuts were exported to the Mother Country. Since then the volume of business in these products has decreased to 401,302,400 pounds, while hog population in Canada has increased from 4,040,070 in 1919 to 4,405,316 in 1923. Studying these figures it will be noticed at a glance that Canada is steadily and surely losing the only available outlet for our over-production of hog product.

The principal cause for this loss of trade is easily found. Denmark, Ireland and Sweden sell bacon in the British markets. Moreover, the United States supply 36.3 per cent of the British bacon requirements, but the first named countries cater to the high class markets of Britain, and hence, are our strongest competitors. To illustrate, in 1919, 744,000 pounds of Danish bacon were retailed in the towns and cities of England and Scotland. In 1923, this amount was increased to 395,425,000 a tremendous increase for so short a period of time, and one which is indeed harmful to the Canadian trade. This phenomenal growth in the Danish export trade of bacon was due solely to the quality and uniformity of product coming out of the Danish packing plants, which could only be brought about by quality and uniformity in the type of live hogs going in. The Danish farmer is producing 80 per cent select bacon hogs, while the Canadian hog raiser is delivering only 14.97 per cent to his markets. The British trade wants the products of the select hogs, and if Canada can not send across the Atlantic the kind of bacon required, Britain will go to Denmark for her supplies, and we shall undoubtedly lose out to the Danish producer.

When a husband gets the last word, it is, "All right, buy the darned thing."

BUSINESS DECLINE OF MAIL ORDER HOUSE

The mail order business is declining. Toronto's two large houses which feature this trade, report this, and the conclusion has been reached that the day of the mail order house is "passing" says the Financial Post. Isn't this just in the natural order of events? Women do the great percentage of the buying, and as they are yearly becoming better shoppers, they know that "seeing" is "knowing" the quality of the goods. Retail merchants in the small and larger centres are trying to supply the demands of their prospective customers, and are buying with judgment and with good taste so that their goods compare favorably with "city" goods. True it is that one does not have so wide a range from which to choose, but this is more than compensated for by the lack of confusion which is created by the sight altogether of too many similar articles. Of course city merchants know the great value of advertising as a seller of goods, and are continuing to learn the value to them of definite city dailies. However, have been quick to make their offer by means of the advertising, and they have held their rightful customers by means of a continuous news service of their merchandise in the local newspapers. The merchant who does not tell his fellow citizens about the quality and price of the goods he has bought for their use, is a man who is helping the city houses to continue their mail order business. These city merchants let us know in detail of their goods, their prices, their bargains and their service. Do your business with your local merchants who are glad to serve you and willing to "tell the world" the story of their merchandise through the local weekly.

About the only right left is the right to feel superior to other clays.

To Our Patrons:

We take this opportunity of thanking our Patrons for their patronage during the past year and trust that their Christmas may be a Merry one. For the year 1925, we wish them increased Happiness and Prosperity.

W. BURNETT & SON
Blacksmiths Durham

C. L. GRANT

A Happy Christmas To All

We take this opportunity to thank our customers for their patronage, and extend to one and all our sincere good wishes for a Happy Christmas.

Henderson's Bakery
Makers of Good Bread

J. & W. McLACHLAN THE QUALITY GROCERS

We Wish All Our Customers and Friends A Happy Christmas And A Prosperous New Year.

J. & W. McLACHLAN
Grocers Phone 34 Durham

EGREMONT COUNCIL

Council met December 15. Members all present. Minutes of last meeting read. Councillor Ferguson objecting to the account of Dr. McLellan re Mrs. Fiddler being put in the resolutions; with this exception, the minutes were adopted as read.

The Reeve reported: J. Morrison, repairs to Morrison bridge 75 cents; J. Rawn, repairing culvert, \$1; County of Grey, that a Committee be appointed by the Council to secure information and possibly write the history of this Municipality for the Grey County history. Calder—Ferguson—That in reference to the communication re history of the County of Grey, that a Committee composed of Messrs. Charles McInnes, James Mack, Donald McQueen and David Allan be appointed to secure information, etc. in reference to this Municipality. Carried.

Calder—Groat—That the question be submitted to the ratepayers re the abolishing of Statute Labor. The Government refuses to pay any grant on work done in Townships relating Statute Labor and promises to pay 30 per cent on all work done in Townships abolishing Statute Labor and to appoint a Road Overseer. Carried.

Mack—Groat—That the Financial Statement as read be received and adopted and 200 copies be printed for distribution and the Treasurer receive \$5 for preparing same. Carried.

By-Law No. 468 appointing N. McDougall, H. Lamont and John McPhee School Attendance Officers for the year 1925 was passed. By-Law No. 469 appointing Lorne Allan Collector of Taxes remaining unpaid was passed.

Groat—Calder—That the following accounts be paid: B. Dickson, sheep killed by dogs, \$30; R. Aitken, inspecting sheep, \$3.50; H. Lamont, services as School Attendance Officer \$5; Chronicle Office, printing account to date, \$10.94; Review Office, printing account to date, \$20.65; Municipal World, for supplies \$11.83; Clerk, balance of salary, \$175; Clerk, postage and telephone account, \$17.14; Treasurer, salary, \$62.50; Treasurer, postage, \$3; Treasurer, stamps and exchange \$13.39; Members of Council in attendance at Meeting, \$15; B. Gibson, use of room, \$2. Carried.

Groat—Mack—That Reeve vacate the chair and Deputy Reeve Calder occupy same. Carried. Brief addresses were then made by the Reeve and other Members of Council. Councillor Ferguson requested the following information as to what was the final result of the meetings held some months ago in which the Reeve and Deputy Reeve attended a meeting of the Advisory Board in Owen Sound and later on another meeting was held in Durham consulting Provincial authorities re the taking over by the Province the Egremont and Proton town line. Also what progress has been made towards carrying out the instructions of the Engineer regarding the approach of river to the Drury bridge as authorized by the Council some months ago. The Reeve answered the questions by stating that in reference to the Egremont and Proton town line, there was no assurance given that the road would be taken over by the Province. As to the Drury bridge, men were engaged in cutting out timber in order

Ferguson—Groat—That the account of Clarke and Moon for advice to Tax Collector, amount \$3.60, be paid. Carried.

Groat—Mack—That the Commutation Tax, amount \$12, re Lot 42, Concession 2, be refunded on account of the certificate being received from the pathmaster stating that the work had been performed in a satisfactory manner since the Roll had been returned to the Clerk. Carried.

Ferguson—Calder—That the Reeve and Treasurer receive \$3 each for reference to matters affecting the Police Village and the Council. Carried.

Groat—Mack—That an order be drawn on Treasurer in favor of the Treasurer of the Agricultural Society, amount \$5, for use of Hall re

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