

*Poems  
For*

*“Betty Ring”  
(1931—1932)*

*J Gordon Spendlove*



Dear Linda:

The several poems I had written to and about “Betty Ring” have had a strange and convoluted life. They were written in 1931-1932 some seventy four years ago. My Mother who loved Betty dearly must have saved the originals which “Bea” found in a “Blue Box” which Mother left to her when she died. The “Blue Box” was a depository in which Mother kept her special things.

Just before “Bea’ s” terminal illness she sent the poems to me and they, among other things, got buried in a bottom desk drawer where I found them, while cleaning out my desk after “Mom’s” second admission to Lakewood Nursing Care Unit.

Finding them again gave me the idea of editing and copying them and hoped you’d type them for me. I envisioned making them into a little book titled “Betty Ring” with a copy of her beautiful 1932 picture as a second page and to make her a present of them. But now that her memory has failed so badly and her attention span has become so narrow, I wondered if I should abandon the plan? On second or third thought I hoped to finish the book if only to preserve the precious memories in my mind. A copy for you and Gordon would let you know how very much I loved her and will always love and adore my sweet precious darling. She was so beautiful, so lovely, so talented and I think, a perfect wife and mother.

Since asking you to make copies of the long lost and recently found poems I thought some background and chronology would add perspective and order to their transcriber.

I was twenty-three years of age, soon to enter Medical School, tired, worried and lonely. I had never been much of a joiner. My friendships and relations were largely with young women all of whom were intelligent, personable and some quite beautiful. Our relations seemed casual, superficial or merely friendly but I wanted someone to love and would love me and I was quite sure that kind of chemistry didn’t exist between me and any of the girls I knew or had known. Along about this time I started writing “**Searching**” which would be written in stages and wouldn’t be completed for nearly two years.

Then I met Dorothy Naylor who was Betty’s best friend and before long she introduced me to Betty and I realized right away that she was something special and I hoped we’d become friends — maybe good friends and “**Searching**” got a few more verses.

We became friends and she “went out” with me a few times. I still wonder what this intelligent, talented woman could see in a poor balding medical student. Her wealthy family put her on a special level where she could have done, in worldly ways, so much better. But she could not have found anyone who would love her more.

But she did go out with me when ever I had enough money for streetcar fare, a picture show or stage play and a sandwich or confection after. I started looking forward to the next time and hoped Betty wouldn't tire of this meager fare.

I had a job with the University teaching some classes on Evolution of Planets and Evolution of Mankind, supervising the dissection of animals' laboratory, monitoring some Zoology classes and correcting test papers for Dr. Chamberlin, Professor and Head of the Department. These things made our "dates" possible.

And "**Searching**" got more verses. I was deeply in love with Betty and I hoped she'd come to love me.

Betty's brother Douglas was in Stanford University. Her younger brother Clinton lived at his fraternity house at the University of Utah. Betty had resigned from her sorority because her best friend Dorothy was asked to leave when the Naylor automobile franchise went bankrupt and her father couldn't afford the heavy sorority dues and annual contributions required. So Betty was living with her parents at 1445 Gilmer Drive. Much easier to "date" on an evening or afternoon visit than at a sorority house.

Sometimes I was invited to dinner. Sometimes we had the house to ourselves when her parents would go out for an evening. Sometimes we studied and often she would play the piano and I loved to listen since she played very well.

One time Mr. Ring gave me the keys to his big Buick saying the view over the city from up Parleys Canyon was beautiful and it was and so was Betty and I wrote "**Awakening**".

By now you may guessed that I loved Betty and I knew Betty loved me and "**Searching**" was finished.

Before long we would go to "Smith and Morehouse" a division of the Wasatch Range of mountains where Dr. Chamberlain had a Mountain Lodge in a canyon in a forest by a river. It was rustic to be sure but — handsomely done and could accommodate large groups of people. There was a large commons area where people could dance, show movies, give lectures etc. There were sofas and armchairs all around for small groups. And at one end a large fire place which could take four or five foot logs. Betty and I liked to sit in front of the fire place after most everyone had gone to bed. This was a real "Shangri-La". I wrote "**Canyon Nights**".

When we returned to the City we stayed at the Naylor's huge house overnight where I gave Betty my fraternity pin and she stayed pinned. I wrote "**Reminiscence**".

Later I brought Betty out to our home in Bingham Canyon for five days. Mother and Father fell in love with her and I got a lecture about always keeping myself worthy of her. This was an idyllic chat. I loved Betty with all my heart and I tried to capture some of those precious moments in words and I wished I had taken some classes in poetry writing.

Before the summer was over Mr. Ring found that he'd be transferred to Tucson, Arizona to head the Western Division of AS&R American Smelting and Refining Company. Betty didn't want to remain in Salt Lake City alone so she resigned her teaching position and joined me in Louisville, Kentucky where I had gone some weeks earlier to begin my fourth year of Medical School.

I had made arrangements for the Bishop of the L&D Church to marry us in a civil ceremony in the Church Chapel. I called early on the day Betty would arrive by train only to learn that the Bishop had been called back to Salt Lake on some sort of emergency.

The County Clerk referred me to a Christian Minister who married us in the living room of their house on 9-22-1933 about 4:30 pm. His wife played an organ, my friends from Salt Lake and Magna, John Jones, Rulon Smith and Eddy Van Aelstyn with whom we been "Batching" were witnesses. It was Betty's Birthday. We were 25 years of age.

The Minister drove us down town where we sent "Just Married" wires home, had dinner and a taxi home (the only place I'd been able to find in a very short time which we could afford). In a short time we found a nice apartment. I started Medical School and Betty worked in the Pediatric Clinic and the Orthopedic Clinic for which service she got a good lunch. We walked to and from school morning and afternoon until she got a job with Kentucky Emergency Relief.

## SEARCHING

Through days and nights whose passage fill us always  
with hope which ever rises above despair  
I dared to hope, to dream about your coming  
to blend my dreams of you with prayer.  
I wanted you to have and hold forever  
but eyes of love are often blind  
and you for whom my heart was calling  
seemed so very hard to find.

I asked the flames that danced in fire places;  
I asked the dawn the sunset and the dark  
whither I should go and hope to find you  
and a love to match that in my heart.  
My dreams so filled with you and careful planning  
were built around my love for you but gained  
small consolation for my mind while knowing  
you lived in dreams and they would not remain.

I searched for you it seemed I'd always waited  
for that love that you'd be glad to give  
and hoping, waiting, wanting praying for you  
taught me how to love you and to live.  
And then you came to me I know not from where  
and hope like a moon lit wave swelled up in gleams.  
I knew at last my search had found you  
you were the girl who'd lived in all my dreams.

Since you have come to me there is no saddens  
or emptiness in life for every day  
I learn to love and to appreciate your beauty  
and loveliness in sweeter, deeper ways.  
You've filled my life brim full with gladness.  
you give each day a heart and soul.  
filled with love and joy and I know surely  
Each day with happiness unfolds.

Every day since you have come it seems that living  
has more and more become a melody.  
A song of love whose' rhythms  
beckons unresisting you and me.  
And every day a harmony of living  
makes the "song of love" our song.  
My soul in tune with yours.  
looks to a future  
bound by a tender love forever strong.

Each evening draws a veil of shadows 'round us  
the night in dusty loveliness conceals  
two souls that merge in love together  
a love that grows and cares and feels.  
And together we look forward to tomorrow  
with happiness and hope and mutual trust  
to love and live; to have and hold forever  
This precious love that god has given us.

## AWAKING

Only friends were we.  
And then one night you played for me  
a haunting, soft, sweet melody  
and my lonely heart reached out dear one to thee.

Soft lights made a halo of your hair.  
Dark eyes, sweet smiles enraptured and ensnared  
an eager willing heart that dared  
to love you and to hope you cared.

Your lips to mine surrendered and I knew  
that only you I loved — loved only you.  
And hoped to hear the words, “I love you too.”  
Then saw them in your eyes before you said “It’s true”.

Its truth you doubted and you were afraid.  
But in my soul love grew and undismayed  
strove hopeful that my love  
would make you unafraid.

To each of us this love has finally come  
and whispers softly, “Life has just begun”.  
We both know now that Heaven has made us one  
to love and cherish each the other until life is done.



## CANYON NIGHTS

Night with its stars and its soft caress  
and the soft warm kiss of the breeze's  
night brimming full with happiness  
lulled to rest by the streams and the trees;  
night whose shadows calls the birds to nest  
and bids them rest 'til the dawn;  
brings hours of the days' loveliest  
and fills our hearts with song.

And night holds us close to nature's breast  
in the hills at the end of day  
and a murmuring stream sings of peace and rest  
making music along the way.  
Enfolded by night 'gainst the heart of the hills  
and to feel their slow throbbing beat  
infuses our hearts with a strength that will  
to make our love strong and sweet.

Night with its soft shattered darkness  
piled back and repulsed by the fire  
makes our hearts rivals in riotousness  
and fills them with love and desire.  
Oh sweet happy night with shadows deep  
waging war with the flame  
whose dance fantasy o'er the embers leap  
like a small happy child in a game.

With shadows about us draped softly  
like a cloak with billowing folds  
and the light like a diadem costly  
gleams in your hair like gold.  
Your lips and your arms and your body pressed  
so soft and close to me you must surely know  
that a heart filled with love thrills to each soft caress.

The hills sealed a love that gave you to me  
And I want them always to share  
A place in our hearts through eternity  
And I ask in a silent prayer  
"God give our love the strength of the hills  
and keep it always as pure  
as the wind and streams and the laughing rills  
and grant it shall always endure."

## REMINICENCE

### Prologue

Out in the darkness of the night  
its self disporting 'round a light  
a gypsy moth is flirting with a flame,  
my memory takes me far way  
and like a moth around a ray  
of light goes to the mountains once again  
back to a happy time one day in May.

A canyon ringed on every side  
by mountains tall and sunset dyed  
the snow capped crags blood red and gold and white  
and down along the canyon floor  
a river wound and ever more  
its sighing rush made lullaby of night  
And put the world with love in rhyme one day in May

### Poem

Glorious days and nights filled to the brimming  
like golden goblets filled too full with wine  
were heady draughts intoxicating  
a heart so filled with love as mine.

In memory we walk beside the river  
and listen to its whispered lullaby  
and wonder at its headlong course to elsewhere  
wondering also "whither goest you and I?"

Arm in arm we follow pathways  
so indistinct so nearly undefined  
yet leading onward ever upward  
to snow capped peaks against the sky outlined.

We pause again to think and in reflection  
we see a life together for all time  
whose paths are also veiled and partly hidden  
yet leading us to heights sublime.

The new leaves on the quaking Aspen  
flash yellow flames back to the sun above  
in rustling, whispering notes that add a tenor  
to the spring time “melody of love.”

We climb the road and weary with our walking  
pause breathless giving rest to racing hearts  
and listen to the song that nature’s playing  
an unspoken vow that we shall never part.

Night ever follows day and brings the evening  
that pulls the setting sun into the west  
and ushers in a reign of joy and laughter  
and song and dance sans care — then rest.

When gaiety is done and most are sleeping  
in the great stone hearth the glowing embers die  
while casting grotesque figures on the ceiling  
transports to lands of fairies you and I.

The restless flame with in the fireplace  
wages careless warfare with the dark  
repulsing a myriad of dancing shadows  
and lights a fire of love within my heart.

Again we pledge a love that’s true and sacred  
as God intended love should always be  
and with tears and kisses seal forever  
A love that binds through all eternity.

### Epilogue

Betty darling how I love you  
only half can e’er be told.  
Betty dearest how I want you  
Forever mine to have and hold.

## **SWEETHEART**

There's a place in Salt Lake City up on Gilmer Drive  
a little white walled cottage numbered fourteen-forty five.  
Where lives a darling brown eyed girl who's love personified.  
The budding charms of womanhood through her are glorified.

There's beauty in her dear dear face that's "tenderly beguiling."  
There's heaven in her soft dark eyes and sunshine when they're smiling.  
Black lashes like two silken veils try to put in hiding  
A hint of lurking mischief in those soft warm depths residing.

Black eye brows like petite coquettes in merriment full gracious  
arch laughingly above her eyes assuming airs audacious.  
Like petals of a red red rose are her lips and sweet  
that promise loves expression —joy and happiness complete.

Dark hair parted in the middle of her savvy pretty head.  
wave round' her face in rapture cascade brown with glints of red.  
Add a disposition sunny then I'd like to say one thing  
this lovely lady is my sweetheart — enchanting girl my Betty Ring.

## NOCTURN

With evening shadows falling o'er the mountains there comes calling  
a still sweet voice that says "dear boy goodnight".  
And even through you're far away I knew you call at end of day  
"your Betty loves you" and again "goodnight".

Seems to make the day worth while and fills each hour with a smile  
to know each evening you'll bid me "goodnight".  
It makes my cares and troubles fleeter, joy and happiness is sweeter  
because you whisper at the end of day "goodnight."

So each night I answer you with a love that's good and true  
"sweet dreams dear girl" "I love you too. Goodnight"  
Each night I ask the God above to help us glorify this love  
a prayer for us each evening then "goodnight."

Note: In one of Betty's letters she said each evening she looked over toward Bingham  
and whispered "good night dear boy".

## LITTLE THINGS

I wonder if you know there's magic  
in the little things you do or say.  
Little things by most unnoticed  
are the things that make me love you more each day.

It's the little things you do that makes me love you.  
With big things I'm concerned but more or less  
little deeds accomplished without thinking  
are the very things for which I love you best.

It's the little things you do that show me really  
how sweet you are, how dear you'll always be.  
It's they that tell me that you'll always  
bring joy and happiness complete to me.

Big things are done by dint of thought and struggle  
and are seldom finished in a day.  
But small things done unconsciously and daily  
the metal of ones' character assays.

The little things you do for which I love you  
and because of which I love you more each day  
file slowly through my mind in retrospection  
I see them in fancy's disarray.

I love the little verses in your letters.  
I love the way you say "goodnight" to me  
and when you end your messages "Your Betty"  
I love you just for little things like these.

Because you hold my hand and like to touch me  
at times so softly on my arm or face  
or call me "dearest boy" a little nonsense  
makes the world for me a better place.

Because in picture shows in friendly fashion  
you pass your arm through mine and clasp my hand  
exerting at odd times a little pressure  
and look at me and smile — I understand.

I love you when one by one your fingers  
touch lightly on my lips to have each kissed,  
for little kisses on my cheek or forehead  
there are very few sweet things you do I miss.

I love you because you play at evening  
when I have sometimes sung to you,  
and because you love and teach the little children  
Another little thing I love you do.

There are a thousand little things that make me love you  
A thousand little things you do or say,  
Little things you do unthinking  
Make me want and love you more and more each day.

## RABBIT STEW

If you were a rabbit  
you'd get shot, shot, shot.  
and then you'd get put  
into a pot, pot, pot.

With carrots, pears and turnips  
and you, you, you  
some salt and boiling water  
you'd be rabbit stew.

and when I found the bunny  
that I'd stewed, stewed, stewed  
was my little sweet heart Betty  
I'd be in an awful mood.

My grief would be so great  
I'd tear my hair, hair, hair  
I'd go get me drunk  
and I wouldn't even care

Since I want to be with  
what e'er you do, do, do  
I'd drink up all the liquor  
then I'd be also "stewed."

Note: In one of Betty's letters she wrote:

"If I were a rabbit  
I would hop, hop, hop  
And when I got to Bingham  
I would stop, stop, stop."



## HAPPINESS

Shucks! It's easy to be happy! All I gotta do is say  
the formula for happiness at the starting' of the day.  
And when the evenin's starting' to it helps like everything  
To repeat "your Betty loves you" you know you're mine Miss Betty Ring.

My happiness depends on you. At least that's how it seems.  
All my dreams encompass you — my castle built of dreams.  
And since I know you love me too can I the world entreat  
for more of what's called happiness, when I love you my sweet?

Gosh no! There ain't more happiness than having you and knowing  
that you're really, truly mine and someday I am going  
to change your name from Betty Ring to mine and make it "Mrs."  
And lease forever happiness and pay the debt with kisses.

You see, I think you're simply swell, your sweetness is inherent.  
I've proof for thinking that you're grand. I know you have grand parents.  
And as for making happiness you cause my heart to sing  
you're such a perfect sweetheart. God bless you Betty Ring.

