

smokes all of the time, and constantly paces the floor even while talking on the telephone. His manners are superb. He is quite charming and endeavors to make all around him feel at ease. He likes to be surrounded by either extremely modern furniture or furniture of the Renaissance period.

Mr. Cramer was kind enough to allow me to examine some of the relics in his studio and explained the history of some to me. In one corner was an early seventeenth century Florentine cabinet. On the wall above his second grand piano was a chasuble of the early eighteenth century. This was a delicate lavender satin interwoven with silver thread. On a small stand in front of one of the windows was a handcarved Mexican Madonna by Miguel Magano. Displayed on the most

inconspicuous wall was an oil painting of Mr. Cramer done by Mrs. William C. Bobbs of the Bobbs Merrill Company. In another corner on a high pedestal was a statue of Diana de Gabies, willed to Mr. Cramer by the late Mrs. de Marcus Brown. Pictures of his sponsors, Lawrence Tibbet, Rudolph Ganz, and Joseph Levene were the only photographs displayed. He explained that he did not exhibit pictures of his artist friends because he felt so many pictures "clutter up the walls." Mr. Cramer likes his studio because it is secluded from the noise and hum-drum of the outside world.

By then the allotted time so graciously granted me by Mr. Cramer had hurried along too fast, and I left with the feeling that many hours could be spent pleurably with this great artist.

Sam Vello

LENA WILLKIE

Sam was a foreigner employed at the steel mill in my home town but no one seemed to know his nationality. He was one of the "wops" which meant that he was from one of those mysterious countries in southeastern Europe. This was obvious from his physical characteristics and his accent. Sam was short and stocky with the heavy shoulders of one who earns his living by manual labor. Black hair and eyes, a swarthy complexion with a heavy beard showing blue below a closely shaved skin which was coarsely textured, sideburns a trifle too long, high cheekbones and blunt features gave him a somewhat Mongoloid appearance. His hair was always neatly trim-

med and kept in perfect order by the lavish use of pomades. He always looked to me like a crude edition of George Raft.

At the mill the men treated Sam with derisive tolerance, for he came to work neatly dressed. Work in a steel mill is hot and dirty and most men wear dirty overalls, ragged shirts and jackets. Of course, Sam wore the rough clothes the work required but they were clean and neatly patched. Also, mill workers were conspicuous for the redness of their faces which was caused by the great heat of the furnaces. Sam protected his face by a mask. The other men could have done the same but they considered it sissy to worry about their looks. Although he

could easily have afforded a better neighborhood, he lived close to the mill and it was said that he did so that he could get home quickly when he was dirty.

Sam was not married and he showed no interest in women. The ruling passion of his life was clothes. It did not matter how correct they were as long as they were of good material, well made, and "loud." Checked, plaid and striped suits, shirts, ties and handkerchiefs were mixed by him with reckless abandon. All of his shirts were silk. A large pearl tie-pin, a diamond ring and an ornately carved wristwatch were worn with every costume. It was not unusual to see Sam two or three times during the same evening in a complete change of clothing. You might see him in a loud-checked suit, dark shirt, suede shoes with heels higher than is customary and a derby. Later you would find him in a pearl grey double-breasted suit with pearl grey suede shoes and Fedora and again he would be in full dress, complete with top hat, white tie and tails. It is small wonder that everyone in a small mid-western town knew him.

Sam possessed no great intelligence and was never happier than when he was the center of attention. He went to all the basketball and football games and smiled happily at the whistles and catcalls his appearance, and attire, always evoked. After a game he always came to the local Sweet Shoppe and treated whoever was part of the group to which he attached himself. Naturally there was always a crowd of boys and girls around him. Sam was about 45 or 50 when I knew him but he preferred the company of young people. His naivete and eccentric clothes caused him to be looked down upon by his contemporaries but that never hurt him. His grin and ponderous

wit were an ever present part of him.

Small luxuries which we take for granted gave him intense pleasure. He smoked cigars constantly and always the most expensive ones. He rolled them from side to side in this mouth, taking them out now and then with a precise air and regarding them as though they were precious. The same was true of the sundaes and sodas he partook of with the school crowd. He savored each spoonful thoroughly before he swallowed it. His attitude was that of an orphan at a circus for the first time in his life. He never spoke of his native land but his cleanliness, his passion for clothes and his intense enjoyment of little things spoke of a bleak childhood in grinding poverty.

The most vivid recollection I have of Sam was attendance at High Mass one Easter Sunday. First of all it was a surprise to see him in church as no one had ever known him to attend before, but what made the congregation open their eyes wide were his clothes. Sam was attired in a white full dress suit, complete with white tie, white shoes, and a white top hat! Sam seated himself about midway on the center aisle and the only persons who gave their undivided attention to the services were those who sat in front of him. At the Gloria and Credo when the priest seated himself at the side of the altar and donned his mitre, Sam put on his white top hat. When the priest doffed the mitre, Sam removed his. The usual coughing and stirring of a group of people were absent that morning as eyes were fixed on him in rapt attention, but outside of these unfamiliar acts of worship and his striking attire, he conducted himself with seriousness and dignity. Sam followed the ritual closely and it was very evident that he had come to church

to pray. It was later learned that he belonged to the Greek Orthodox church and was following its ritual. Of course, his appearance at church was the topic of conversation at all church meetings and gatherings for weeks thereafter.

The mill has since been dismantled and the workers have gone to other mills over the country. Sam had to follow the work he knew and he left my home town. I often wonder what his wardrobe now contains.

A Nobody

ROSALIE ELKIN

The little flag hanging in the window had turned dirty with age. Now it didn't stick out like a sore thumb as it had when it was new. The white field surrounding the gold star was a dingy gray, almost black, matching the color of the house to which it belonged. The house was like most of the houses in the Negro district of the city. It didn't have more than three rooms — two bedrooms and a kitchen that served both as a living and dining room. There was no wall-paper covering the walls and no carpet covering the floor, but the people living there didn't mind that. This was the best house they had ever lived in — so far. All they had to do was glance at the flag, and they'd forget about the dirty rooms and the scarcity of furniture.

That flag stood for their own Jed. John George Washington was his real name, but everyone called him Jed. He was the oldest of the five Washington children. His childhood was spent in the south, but later the family moved north. Jed remembered only two things about the south. He remembered the school that he attended. He loved reading and studying. He wanted to be "somebody," someday — maybe another George Washington Carver. Jed also remembered the day that he met some

white boys coming home from school. They started throwing stones at him, and Jed, not to be outdone, threw some back. Then they began to yell, "Ya dirty nigger — ya dirty nigger — ya dirty nigger" Jed was bewildered. He wasn't dirty! He was always clean when he went to school and today he had been especially careful because he had on the new shirt his mother had made for him. He stopped throwing stones, so they shoved him into a nearby alley. Someone knocked him down, and they shouted, "Stay where ya b'long, ya dirty nigger!" Jed ran home, hid under the porch, and tried to figure out why the boys had called him dirty and why they had told him to stay in the alley. He had as much right on the street as they!

Jed never forgot this. He remembered it again when they hanged his father. They said he had killed a man, but he hadn't. Jed knew this. He told them about it. He was taking a walk with his father when they saw two men fighting. One man was being beaten badly when Jed's father tried to separate them. Jed saw the real murderer slip the knife into his father's pocket. He ran away, leaving the murdered man in his father's arms. Jed told them this, but they wouldn't believe him. He heard someone