

GRIGGSBY'S STATION

by James Whitcomb Riley

(Born in Greenfield, Indiana, Riley became known as the Hoosier poet after much of his life was spent in the state, in the area of Indianapolis and Greenfield. This poem is from the book, Riley Farm Rhymes, published in 1883, and is well known by some branches of the family. It would be interesting to learn the source of Riley's inspiration for the poem.)

Pap's got his pattend-right, and rich as all creation;
But where's the peace and comfort that we all had before?
Le's go a-visitin' back to Griggsby's Station--
Back where we ust to be so happy and so pore!

The likes of us a-livin' here! It's jes' a mortal pity
To see us in this great big house, with cyarpets on the stairs,
And the pump right in the kitchen! And the city! city! city!--
And nothin' but the city all around us ever'-wheres!

Climb clean above the roof and look from the Steeple,
And never see a robin, nor a beech or ellow tree!
And right here in ear-shot of at least a thousan' people,
And none that neighbors with us or we want to go and see!

Let's go a-visitin' back to Griggsby's Station--
Back where the latch-string's a-hangin' from the door,
And ever' neighbor round the place is dear as a relation--
Back where we ust to be so happy and so pore!

I want to see the Wiggenses, the whole kit-and-bilin',
A-driven' up from Shallor Ford to stay the Sunday through;
And I want to see 'em hitchin' at their son-in-law's and pilin'
Out there at 'Lizy Ellen's like they ust to do!

I want to see the piece-quilts the Jones girls is makin'
And I want to pester Laury 'bout their freckled hired hand,
And joke her 'bout the widower she come purt' nigh a-takin',
Till her Pap got his pension 'lowed in time to save his land.

Le's go a-visitin' back to Griggsby's Station--
Back where they's nothin' aggervatin' any more,
Shet away safe in the woods around the old location--
Back where we ust to be so happy and so pore!

I want to see Marindy and he'p her with her sewin',
And hear her talk so lovin' of her man that's dead and gone,
And stand up with Emanuel to show me how he's growin',
And smile as I have saw her 'fore she putt her mournin' on.

And I want to see the Samples, on the old lower eighty,
Where John, our oldest boy, he was tuk and burried--for
His own sake and Katy's,--and I want to cry with Katy
As she reads all his letters over, writ from The War.

What's in all this grand life and high situation,
And nary pink nor hollyhawk a-bloomin' at the door?--
Le's go a-visitin' back to Griggsby's Station--
Back where we ust to be so happy and so pore!