

University of Missouri

The Magazine of the Mizzou Alumni Association

MIZZOU

Fields and Vineyards

Students' raids of the campus winery inspired a poem by Eugene Field.

Published Aug. 9, 2012

Journalist, essayist and children's author Eugene Field, Arts 1872, is perhaps most famous for his poem, "Wynken, Blynken, and Nod." Several of his works were illustrated by Maxfield Parrish. Field (1850–1895) was at MU when the White Campus area was a 40-acre vineyard.

Winemaking took place in the basement of Academic Hall, just a few yards from



Eugene Field, 1896 *Savitar*

where the Columns now stand. Students' winery raids were legendary, as was the vineyard itself, which appears to have inspired the following poem by Field, published in the *University Missourian*.

“The Vineyard”

Into the vineyard I went with Bill
As blithe as youth can be,
As the sun declined beyond the hill
And drowsed in the western sea
And under the arching vines we sat,
And we sampled this and we sampled that
Till we didn't know where we were at,
Nor the devil a bit cared we.

Out of the vineyard I came with Bill,
Just in time to see
The sun peep over the eastern hill
And grin at Bill and me.
And Bill remarked, “We quit too soon;
Let us sit in the light of that silvery moon
And list to the nightingale's plaintive tune!”
So back to the vineyard went we.

And here's Field's more famous work,

“Wynken, Blynken, and Nod”

Wynken, Blynken, and Nod one night
Sailed off in a wooden shoe—
Sailed on a river of crystal light,
Into a sea of dew.

“Where are you going, and what do you wish?”

The old moon asked the three.

“We have come to fish for the herring fish

That live in this beautiful sea;

Nets of silver and gold have we!”

Said Wynken,

Blynken,

And Nod.

The old moon laughed and sang a song,

As they rocked in the wooden shoe,

And the wind that sped them all night long

Ruffled the waves of dew.

The little stars were the herring fish

That lived in that beautiful sea—

“Now cast your nets wherever you wish—

Never afeard are we”;

So cried the stars to the fishermen three:

Wynken,

Blynken,

And Nod.

All night long their nets they threw
 To the stars in the twinkling foam—
Then down from the skies came the wooden shoe,
 Bringing the fishermen home;
'T was all so pretty a sail it seemed
 As if it could not be,
And some folks thought 't was a dream they'd dreamed
 Of sailing that beautiful sea—
But I shall name you the fishermen three:
 Wynken,
 Blynken,
 And Nod.

Wynken and Blynken are two little eyes,
 And Nod is a little head,
And the wooden shoe that sailed the skies
 Is a wee one's trundle-bed.
So shut your eyes while mother sings
 Of wonderful sights that be,
And you shall see the beautiful things
 As you rock in the misty sea,
Where the old shoe rocked the fishermen three:
 Wynken,
 Blynken,
 And Nod.

Read more in Through the Grapevine.

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Published by MIZZOU magazine, 109 Reynolds Alumni Center, Columbia, MO 65211 |
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