



Fig. 2—6TA or 6UA Dial and Associated Parts

# THE ROTARY DIAL

ISSUE 19  
SEPTEMBER 2014

[www.therotarydial.ca](http://www.therotarydial.ca)

## CONTENTS

### **Jacob Riyeff**

Summer Lingers: A Modified Rondeau 3

Autumn Gales 4

### **Claudia Gary**

Royal Hotline, 1987 5

Antiseptic 6

Announcement 7

### **Rob Griffith**

Moving-in Day 8

A Prophecy About Crónán the Poet 9

### **Barbara Lydecker Crane**

Constant Bliss 10

### **C.B. Anderson**

A View from the Foothills 11

### **Robert Boucheron**

Fable 12

### **Henry King**

Agnostic Epigrams (IV) 13

The Butterfly's Burden 14

Contributors 15

JACOB RIYEFF

**Summer Lingers: A Modified Rondeau**

Hot days like this one wonders:  
hot days in autumn, listless.  
One wonders why one's maker  
made one as one is –  
on days with time to wonder.

Hot days to lose one struggles:  
autumn days with naught to do.  
Made by one's brilliant maker –  
hot days like this.

Foggy days in restive duty,  
hazy days in crumbling hours:  
one looks askance for solace,  
too tired to fall, to reel.  
Static days of open numbness –  
hot days like this.

## **Autumn Gales**

the seabirds watch and wait  
they wait and watch some more  
wind and water all they know  
the seabirds watch and wait

CLAUDIA GARY

**Royal Hotline, 1987**

*The Princess is believed to have suffered from bulimia nervosa, [which] afflicts millions of American women. –"Di's Private Battle," People Magazine, August 3, 1992*

Soon, Princess Di, you'll lend this thing your name,  
crowning a hushed disease with regal grace.  
Beauty salons will buzz; women will claim  
to know you. But for now I stuff my face  
and then go toss my cookies at the throne  
in secret. Are we sisters, who have yet  
to learn this malady is fashion's clone?  
And meanwhile, where's my image? I forget.

Maybe I left it by the forced-air dryer  
tucked in a magazine, or by the sink  
where a woman's hands massaged my scalp for hire.  
Wait, here's a doctor's number. Do you think  
he'll help close the two decades, plus or minus,  
that I've been kneeling like Your Royal Highness?

## Antiseptic

Her father dabbed peroxide on her foot  
and watched it bubble where there'd been a splinter,  
reminding him of something he had learned  
from training in the Air Force. "It's surprising,"  
he said, "but you will never be without  
an antiseptic: your very own urine."

Her mother shouted from the next room, "Hey!  
Don't tell her things like that!" and the girl sensed  
new light, but couldn't say just what it was  
or whether it was pretty. Pretty meant  
so much to Mother: pretty furniture,  
sculpture and bric-a-brac beside the window

to cast unusual shadows. Pretty, too,  
were glimmers of the 59th Street Bridge  
as seen from Sutton Place in bumpy-textured  
new paintings by an alcoholic aunt.  
But what was wedged below the prettiness,  
and how far down? Was it buried too deep

to tweeze it out and cleanse the wound? She soon  
would find an elixir captured between  
décor and rough landscape, between alluring  
reflections of an old bridge on the oil-  
slicked surface of a long-polluted river  
and fish you mustn't eat, swimming below.

## Announcement

Mom takes you on a lunch date, someplace chic  
in early 1962 L.A.

She's been mysterious but now can speak.

"You'll be a sister soon!" you hear her say  
with her slow, careful smile, indelible  
pink lipstick outlined with a little brush,  
then colored in. Her dress is oddly full  
but no less elegant. Did she just blush?

Eight-and-a-half, you shrug your shoulders, since  
this *can't* be as unnerving as the flames  
that grazed your house last fall. With chewy mints  
you ladies leave for home, discussing names.

Back in your room you hug yourself with glee.  
At long last, maybe soon she'll let you be.

ROB GRIFFITH

### **Moving-in Day**

Next door, apartments fill with students,  
the lights snapping on one-by-one in rooms  
where soon they'll dog-ear Proust and drink cheap beer.  
It's there within their honeycomb of cells,  
within the TV's glow and Delphic murmur,  
they'll fumble toward their quiet raptures,  
bare arms and legs entwined against the night.  
And in that flickering half-light, piles of books  
will loom like menhirs brooding on desire,  
the shades of Melville, Chaucer, Keats, and Frost  
sailing through this paper glade to stare  
expressionless at their mayfly lives. At dawn,  
the shadows ebb and leave a light as weak  
as milk. Transcendence lingers like a dream.

## **A Prophecy About Crónán the Poet**

*An Irish poet approached them....When he had gone, the brethren asked St. Columba, “Why did you not ask ... that he should sing us a tuneful piece?” The saint answered, “How could I have asked for a merry song from that unhappy fellow? His enemies have murdered him.”*

It's words, not knives, that took my life –  
Or, rather, lack of words –  
For who can know a summer dawn  
Without the sound of birds?

BARBARA LYDECKER CRANE

### **Constant Bliss**

What if my soul might drift in late one night  
and find that heaven throbs in disarray?  
My mother's morphed into a sybarite  
in a satin gown with deep décolleté  
as she shimmies with – our family pediatrician?  
And there – that's Dad! He's sporting a toupee  
and nuzzling Mother's statuesque beautician.  
I'm dazed as dozens of cousins stroll astray.

If eternity is everlasting lust,  
with my favorite teenage boyfriends I could play.  
But when I find the two, the plan's a bust:  
they're arm in arm, then they're...I look away.

It opens wide and swings with every kiss,  
the gateway to this realm of constant bliss.

C.B. ANDERSON

### **A View from the Foothills**

If you believe that everything you need  
To know is written in the Bible, you  
Have missed the point, for Scripture's just a seed  
Requiring germination in the hearts  
And minds of humans. All too often, true  
Believers think that inspiration starts

And ends with what some privileged person wrote  
In Greek about two thousand years ago,  
And they will do their very best to quote  
It endlessly. There's no catalysis,  
Like trumpets at the walls of Jericho,  
To bring them down to earth. Paralysis

Of mindset is a grave condition fed  
By two related causes: lack of sense,  
Or flat refusal to employ one's head  
To separate the wheat from worthless chaff;  
And bald self-righteousness subserving bents  
Of preachers who've forgotten how to laugh.

Down in the valley there's a middle ground  
Where no one bows to fabricated idols  
And circuit riders never come around.  
The river there is balm for restless feet,  
A stopping place for steeds that slipped their bridles,  
A paradise where kindred spirits meet.

ROBERT BOUCHERON

**Fable**

Dull feathers gladden with a puff,  
And those so favored preen.  
They flock together, glad enough  
To twitter and be seen.

Say that a new bird lights among  
This chorus: by some law,  
They love his plumage, praise his song,  
And peck the stranger raw.

I am no swan or nightingale,  
And have no wings to try,  
But I can tell a simple tale,  
And watch the feathers fly.

HENRY KING

**Agnostic Epigrams (IV)**

I put the “I can’t” into “supplicant”,  
the one who wants to want to pray, but won’t.

As Christ’s the thorn in my side, I’m the spear  
in His. I’ll be the cause of His despair,

the thief at His left hand; and maybe later  
the sinner in God’s great incinerator.

## **The Butterfly's Burden**

*on the flyleaf of Mahmoud Darwish, translated by Fady Joudah*

Growing out of the spine in mirrored shapes,  
on one page, Arabic calligraphy,  
Roman characters facing it: just so,

before she learns to spell, a child scrapes  
her brush across the palette, paints a B,  
then folds the piece of paper in two.

Which lepidopteran is it? A Monarch, or  
an Admiral? – the latter, a word for the sea  
adopted, adapted and added to,

the way some insects flit from flower to flower  
(their wings themselves bouquets) and carry  
pollen between them, so that more can grow.

But these wings aren't symmetrical: perhaps  
that's why it flutters so erratically,  
sketching an arabesque – which explains how,

despite its vivid colours, it escapes  
the nets of the collectors: poetry  
comes only to the hands that let it go.

## CONTRIBUTORS

**Jacob Riyeff** is a PhD candidate at the University of Notre Dame where he studies medieval English literature. He enjoys playing the baritone ukulele and convincing anyone he can to read Old and Middle English poetry with him. Jacob lives in South Bend with his wife and two children.

A 2014 finalist for the Howard Nemerov Sonnet Award and 2013 semifinalist for the Anthony Hecht Poetry Prize, **Claudia Gary** writes, edits, sings, and composes tonal chamber music and art songs. She is author of *Humor Me* (David Robert Books 2006) and several chapbooks. Her poems appear in anthologies such as *Forgetting Home* (Barefoot Muse Press 2013) and *Villanelles* (Everyman Press 2012), as well as in journals internationally. Her articles on health appear in *The VVA Veteran* and other magazines. For more information, see [http://www.pw.org/content/claudia\\_gary](http://www.pw.org/content/claudia_gary).

**Rob Griffith's** latest book, *The Moon from Every Window* (David Robert Books, 2011), was nominated for the 2013 Poets' Prize; and his previous book, *A Matinee in Plato's Cave*, was the winner of the 2009 Best Book of Indiana Award. His work has appeared in *PN Review*, *Poetry*, *The North American Review*, *Poems & Plays*, *The Oxford American*, and many others. He is the editor of the journal *Measure* and teaches in the Creative Writing Program at the University of Evansville, Indiana.

**Barbara Lydecker Crane**, of Somerville, MA, has published two chapbooks, *Zero Gravitas* (White Violet Press, 2012) and *ALPHABETRICKS* (for children, Daffydowndilly Press, 2013). The winner of the 2011 Helen Schaible International Sonnet Contest, she has recent or forthcoming poems in *American Arts Quarterly*, *Angle*, *Light*, *Mezzo Cammin* and *Think Journal*.

**C.B. Anderson** was the longtime gardener for the PBS television series, *The Victory Garden*. In the past ten years hundreds of his poems have appeared in scores of print and electronic journals. His full-length book of poetry, *Mortal Soup and the Blue Yonder*, was published in 2013 by White Violet Press.

**Robert Boucheron** is an architect in Charlottesville, Virginia

(boucheronarch.com). He holds a B.A. in English from Harvard and an M.Arch from Yale. His stories and essays have appeared in 2014 in *Belle Rêve*, *Bangalore Review*, *Commonline Journal*, *Coup d'État*, *Digital Americana*, *Lowestoft Chronicle*, *Origami Journal*, *Outside In Literary & Travel*, *Piedmont Virginian*, *Poydras Review*, *Ray's Road Review*, *Short Fiction*, and *Work Literary Magazine*.

**Henry King** has a Ph.D. in English Literature from the University of Glasgow. His poems have appeared in a number of journals in print and online, and in Carcanet's *New Poetries V* anthology; his essays and reviews frequently appear in *PN Review*. He currently lives in England, while his family are naturalised Canadians living in Vancouver.