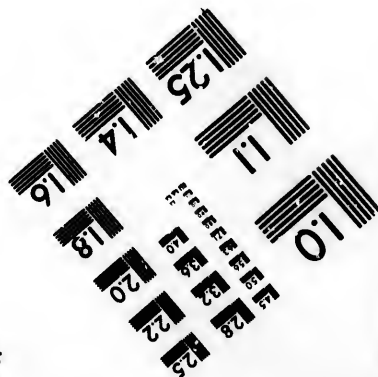
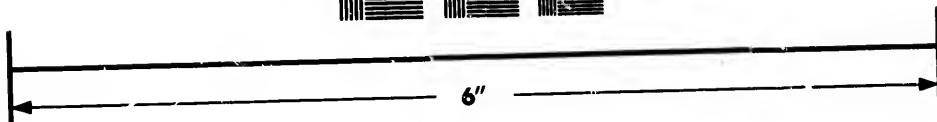
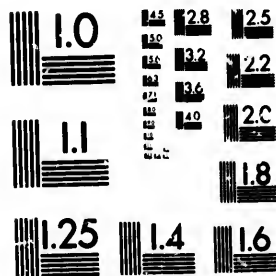


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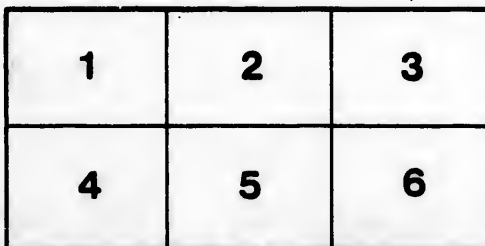
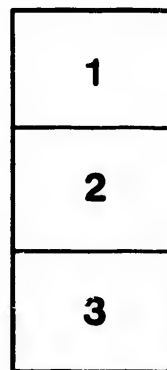
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AN EPIC POEM,

— THE —
NORTON HOUSE

BY

J. W. KEATING,

Poet Laureate of the Norton House.

St. Catharines, March 3rd, 1886.

ST. CATHARINES :

C. Sherwood, Book and Job Printer,
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2

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Go
in
a

To Miss Katie Gibbs
with the Compliments of the
Author
James W. Keating



TO

Miss Hily Norton.

Whose many amiable qualities
have inspired these few lines,
the following Poem, is with
permission, respectfully in-
scribed.



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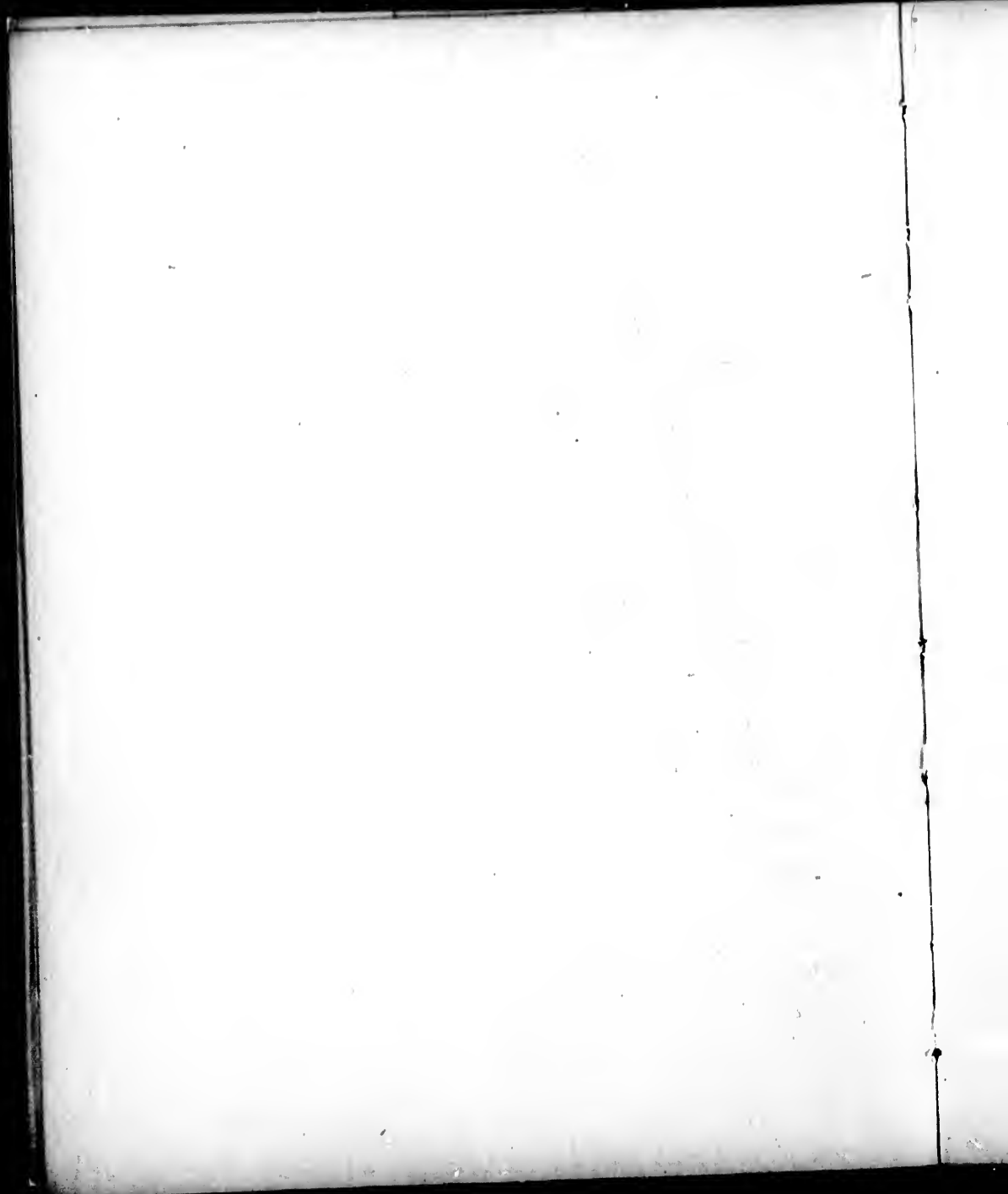
APOLOGIA.

The author of the following poem having been dubbed "Poet Laureate of the Norton House" some two years ago by W. K. Pattison, Esq., and having held that title undisputed ever since, was challenged by Capt. Edwin B. Andros, late of Her Majesty's Service, to write a poem descriptive of the inmates of the Norton House. It was arranged by Capt. Andros and the writer, that on a certain evening the poems should be read before a select committee composed of the inmates of that delightful resort. Wednesday, the third of March, 1886, having been selected, the poems were read by their respective authors, and the time-honored laurel wreath was awarded to the writer by the committee appointed. The chairman, with his usual grace, announced the decision.

Miss Annie Conolly placed, with due ceremony, the wreath on the poet's brow.

THE AUTHOR.

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◀The Norton House.▶

'Twas night! Ulysses, a weary traveller, passed
Through St. Catharines, and his eyes about him cast
For a hostelry in which to seek repose,
And then espied, just at his very nose,
A mansion near, with many a gleaming light,
Which swiftly fell upon his wary sight.
And as he stood he gazed, and then beheld
His friend, Orestes, as the gate he held.
Then Ulysses Orestes thus addressed:
I'm o'ercome with travel and sore oppressed,
Where can I seek a lodging for the night?
Give me counsel in my sorest plight.
See that mansion, with an hundred gleaming lights,
That shed a lustre, dazzling our feeble sights,
And which do now light up that beauteous park,
As the shade of eve advances into dark.
Whilst on the other side a church I see,
Whose lofty towers surpass the tallest tree,
And with many turrets quite unique in form,
That brave the lightning and the coming storm.

Canst thou tell me what may this mansion be,
Which stands out boldly, I so plainly see?
Then to Ulysses Orestes thus replied:
It is the Norton House you have espied—
A hostelry, o'er which Lares do preside,
And where travellers from distant lands reside.
'Tis kept by three fair damsels, who adorn
This cosey mansion, and are to the manor born.
Here dainty viands are placed before the guest—
The guest himself can always do the rest—
And quaff the oblivious drink from Lethe's bowl,
To then recline and rest his weary soul.
Then thus Ulysses to Orestes spoke:
You have immensely my curiosity 'woke.
Tell me of those beauteous damsels more;
Their wondrous beauty I would fain adore.
Then did Orestes to Ulysses speak:
Regarding the information you thus seek,
I'm more than pleased to grant your fair request,
Although you might have made it your behest.
There's Emma, the beautiful, lovely and divine,
Who in any role would immensely shine,
And grace a throne with majesty of a queen,
Or fill the station of an empress e'en,
With rare skill can play the piano forte,
And to numerous accomplishments resort,
And, like the nightingale, is sweet of voice;

The selection of her songs is rare and choice,
With complaisancy her guests she entertains,
As queen of many accomplishments she reigns.
Then there's Hity, of whom how shall I speak?
The most beauteous damsel you could wish to seek;
Her hair 'tis dark, her eyes most heavenly blue,
As you'd perceive, should she e'er gaze on you;
Her face, 'tis like a goddess, and inspires
The highest admiration, and requires
Slight observation to detect her charms,
An act, however, which greatly her alarms.
There is, indeed, for you the rarest treat
This fair maiden some future day to meet.
Then there's Eleanor, another sister yet,
'Ith whom Harry Hunt, in impassioned love did get,
And, after months of courtship, met his fate,
And with her entered the connubial state.
There's another maiden, who can well preside
Within those walls: Miss Eleanor McBride,
Whose charms of womanhood can ne'er be surpassed,
And her friendships will forever last.
And then, besides, there is a brother Fred,
Who, for some years, a merchant's life hath led;
And who now sojourns in New Orleans,
Amidst fair damsels and 'neath tropic scenes.
There's Nellie Hunt, a girl of wondrous fame,
Who some years since to St. Catharines came,

Now in Loretto Abbey she resides,
A pupil, where she her future life decides.
And Charles Norton, sire of the maids
Who keep this hostelry, and from all raids
Of insolence his daughters ne protects,
And from all travellers their guests he well selects.
Then thus Ulysses, who deep interest felt,
Whilst in recital, his friend Orestes dwelt.
Pray tell me, also, something of the guests,
Who've in yon mansion built their cosey nests,
Canst thou tell me who and what they are?
Are they local, or came they from afar?
And then Orestes, upon his being pressed
For further knowledge, Ulysses thus addressed:
There's Lizzie McKeown, who therein dwells,
The wife of John McKeown, and far excels
All other women in her wifely cares,
And in her husband's trials gently shares,
And at all times, and in all hours,
Her love and devotion on her husband showers,
And thus, gliding down the hill of life,
Gently with her husband, free from strife.
And then there's Mary, the beloved wife
Of Mortimer Neelon, who throughout her life
Devotes herself, in all ways she can,
To accede to her husband's every plan,
And to her children, Arnold and Kathleen,

The truest mother she hath ever been.
Then Annie Conolly, of more than beauteous fame,
Who some years since to Ontario came.
Near wild Niagara, with assiduous thought,
She her knowledge in Loretto sought,
And now resides within those stately walls,
And from her friends with grace receives their calls.
Divinely gifted, with exceeding grace,
Whilst great beauty beams from form and face,
And whilst her form and features I extol,
They unsurpass the beauty of her soul;
Then to her tender mercies I commend,
With sincere pleasure, thee, my warmest friend.
Then Annie Wallace, who here did once sojourn,
With Nanna and Leslie, and may yet return,
And with her graceful presence again adorn
This house: her absence the guests do greatly mourn.
Fair Beatrice Fairbairn, a most beauteous maid,
From Bowmanville, hath several visits paid,
And brought her sister, Katie, to restore
Her health to her, as 'twas in days of yore;
These two fair girls repeated visits made,
Each time they came for several weeks had staid,
They at length, to their peaceful home return,
When Cupid's arrow in many hearts did burn.
Fair Edith, too, from Woodstock's balmy air,
Oft the hospitalities of this house doth share.

There is at her departure deep regret,
Her grace and loveliness none will e'er forget.
Then Pattison, a barrister of great fame,
Hath honors won and gained a noble name,
At length aspired to become a public man,
His friends elected him an Alderman,
And will not forever in profession drudge,
But will don the ermine, and preside as judge.
There is another hero, Frederick King,
Who, with wondrous skill, can sweetly sing ;
And is an athlete, and master of lacrosse,
To him a ball is a trifling thing to toss.
Then there's Kilner, and strange 'tis to relate,
That he hath never ta'en to himself a mate,
But Cupid spied him, and with unerring dart,
Did sorely wound him in his tender heart,
So now an angel in every girl he sees,
In the married state to go he now agrees.
There's Neelon, too, who with grace presides
O'er his household, and his time divides
Between his family and commercial ties,
And in all matters acts extremely wise.
Then there's Pocock, who doth also dwell
In yonder mansion, and doth by far excel
All other horticulturists, in his line,
For every plant he grows is rare and fine.
Then there's Walker, and Macgregor, too,

Acres, and A. T. Hubbard, just a few
Of the many bankers who have dwelt
In you mansion, and who oft have knelt
At the feet of many a maiden fair,
And each received of gushing love his share.
There is Murphy, Esten and Van Nostrand, too,
Who through theodolite and compass view,
By planted stakes, their many complex lines,
And take field notes, with professional signs.
Then Ralph Andros, who can tame with skill,
A goat that would any other person kill.
Then great John McKeown, of wondrous fame,
Who as a lawyer hath hewn out a name,
And who for the House of Commons ran,
Was sadly beaten by another man.
The Government, which he well supported,
Soon as his political friends reported,
Declared that they would give to John McKeown
The highest office in their gift, as soon
As the Tories from the treasury bench were thrown,
And this event soon happened, as 'tis known.
Then John as County Attorney was installed,
And into the sweets of office gently crawled,
Since then he has performed his duties well,
And into prison sent many men to dwell ;
Besides the legal knowledge he has in store,
As a scholar stands high in classic lore.

Some future day the ermine he will wear,
And with dignity the honor he will bear.
Then great Andros, the last, though not the least,
Could take a seat at any monarch's feast.
A warrior bold, and, with a marshal's skill,
In many fights did great numbers kill,
And as his cohorts to the battle led,
His gleaming sword filled every one with dread.
As he advanced, he fell upon the foe,
And, with his sword, ten thousands down did mow.
And hecatombs of corpses strewed the ground
On every side, and for miles around
Deluged the land with carnage and with gore,
And thus he swept the country o'er and o'er.
The ascending ghosts, the mantled tree tops lashed,
As through the leafy branches they were dashed,
From battle-field he marched to battle-field,
And caused the Sepoys at every point to yield.
Thus, after many conquests gained with skill,
Retired on his laurels, and wears them still.
And when Orestes his recital finished,
Found Ulysses' interest undiminished,
And then led him into that mansion fair,
Where he received attention and great care.



