

Poems in the form of Haiku by Paul Curry Steele

The upper Charleston
Was named not after King Charles
But after Charles Lee.

Many coal trains brought
Much dirt into Logan. We
Did not question it.

Charles Lee is almost
Unknown. Charles Town was meant to
Honor a father.

Mayor of Logan,
My father was considered
"Clean," i.e., honest.

At her stage lecture
In town, Mrs. Roosevelt
Impressed and charmed us.

Mrs. Roosevelt
Said wine was regularly
Served all at dinner.

Mrs. Roosevelt's
Check for a hotel bill bounced.
My father paid it.

My sister was named
Sybil Mildred Steele. *Mildred*
Fell into disuse.

To me, *Sybil* is
A beautiful name, one not
Often encountered.

Sybil informed us
Of pig Latin, which she had
Picked up in high school.

Sybil listened late
To "Moon River": deep male voice,
Amorous readings.

Poems in the form of Haiku by Paul Curry Steele (page 2)

Having borne three sons
And one daughter, Mother hoped
I would be a girl.

I knew my parents.
Some, pathetically, never
Learn who they came from.

My embroidery
Hoop was smaller than Mother's.
We embroidered well.

My father did not
Read books, only newspapers.
Mother liked Zane Grey.

The "Spanish flu" spread
Around the world, killing off
Millions of people.

My parents came down
With the flu but recovered.
A man next door died.

Mother seldom used
Hired household help. She preferred
To do things herself.

Two pounds ground beef; one
Pound ground pork; tomato soup;
Crackermeal. MEAT LOAF!

Grandma Curry smoked
A small, off-white clay pipe but
Only *en famille*.

Mother yawned loudly,
Not knowing any better.
I yawn noiselessly.

I would help Mother
Bring in clothes from the clotheslines
As winds foretold rain.

Poems in the form of Haiku by Paul Curry Steele (page 3)

Penises of whales
Aristotle Onassis
Turned into barstools.

On the radio
I heard Paderewski play
On a concert grand.

Maria Callas
Went from fat to slim at the
Expense of her voice.

John Paul II
Credits the Virgin Mary
With saving his life.

Wilde on his deathbed:
"Either that wallpaper goes
Or I go." He went.

"Ann Landers" died at
83, was living with
A "gentleman friend."

President Lincoln
When shot had Confederate
Bills in his wallet.

Lizzie Borden hired
Expensive lawyers and got
Away with murders.

Jesus showed a rare
(For his time) empathy with
Women. They loved him.

Jeffrey Dahmer had
A problem with alcohol
And the urge to kill.

Einstein's words before
Dying were lost: None hearing
Understood German.

Poems in the form of Haiku by Paul Curry Steele (page 4)

Eighty-six, a man
Confused in his car killed 10,
Injured 69.

Among those who died:
A seven-month-old boy and
A three-year-old boy.

"You will go to Hell!"
A man exclaimed who saw me
Playing solitaire.

The word *therapist*
In a newspaper I first
Read as "the rapist."

I still find it strange
That some draw a line across
The number 7.

Sharks have roamed oceans
For many millions of years,
May be endangered.

Women who show most
Of their breasts in public are
Wise not to show more.

Bob Dylan was once
Robert Allen Zimmerman.
"Dylan" from Thomas.

The actor Thomas
Cruise Mapother, IV, would
Become our Tom Cruise.

Frizzell Gray became
Kweisi Mfume of the
NAACP.

Men's pants no longer
Have a small pouch for keys in
The left front pocket.

Poems in the form of Haiku by Paul Curry Steele (page 5)

I am left lying
In a tub of cold water,
Held down by canvas.

My physical and
Emotional attraction
To men is sweet hell.

Of guitar music,
I value most a well-played
Classical guitar.

The two-handed "scales"
Up and down a piano
Were too much for me.

At a Lions Club
Dinner I played the stirring
"Warsaw Concerto."

When a child, I could
Just fit into a recess
In the stone church wall.

My doctor gives me
Viagra, which retails for
\$10 a pill.

I have overcome
My obsessive-compulsive
Disorder with help.

I flinch at the word
Spike, so fashionable now
As both noun and verb.

When you listen to
A classical guitarist,
Ignore knuckle twists.

Suicide by drug
Overdose is not, I learned,
An easy way out.

Poems in the form of Haiku by Paul Curry Steele (page 6)

Florence Clothier
Told my parents that I was
Homosexual.

Dr. Clothier,
A psychoanalyst in
Boston, pitied me.

I met my parents
After they had talked with her.
Both had been crying.

A strained lunch. They left
To attend a baseball game
Before flying home.

Harvard expelled me
"For reasons of health" after
A near suicide.

Dr. Clothier
Had every new patient write
A life history.

"You write very well!"
She told me after reading
My 60 pages.

"Have you ever thought
Of trying to become a
Creative writer?"

No. None before her
Had envisioned that for me.
It was a beacon.

Her office couch: raised
At one end and covered in
A gray tapestry.

Gay marriage, a fact
Elsewhere, will become such in
This country also.

Poems in the form of Haiku by Paul Curry Steele (page 7)

The Golden Gate Bridge:
A man jumped off it, survived
And now is happy.

"Come to Mama," said
The prostitute on the rug,
On her hands and knees.

Plastic fly swatters
Do not kill flies. They only
Propel flies away.

Will nobody keep
The Amazon rain forest
From being destroyed?

Television shows
That joke about being gay
Demean those who are.

Emeralds, they say,
Are often dyed to produce
An even color.

The murderess wore
In court a black eye patch and
A gold crucifix.

It is said that God
Created people because
He loves good stories.

The venom of the
Female black widow spider:
Extremely toxic.

A madman attacked
The *Pietà* out open,
Now in a glassed room.

My Uncle Carson
Would tease his wife, Maybelle, by
Calling her "Mabel."