

Nell Murbarger's first sold story, Age 13.

From: Lewis, Kenneth R. *Nell Murbarger: "Roving Reporter of the Southwest" a Biography*. 1992. University of San Diego, Master's Thesis. Appendix A, pg. 130.

FROM YOUNG OBSERVERS

HARD TO PLEASE

One spring, quite a long while ago, when we lived in the city, a little Wren decided to build in our mail-box. We knew if she stayed there, she would be interrupted too much, and there was a possibility that her nest would be destroyed entirely, so we built another bird house and put it in a shady place not far from the mail-box. Then when the birds were both away, we moved the straws, hair, feathers, etc., from the mail-box to the new home with as much care as possible. To our eyes, the way that we had fixed the nest looked perfect; in fact, I suppose that we thought the job better than the way the bird had done herself.

Presently Mamma Wren returned and after some trouble and fuss she found the new nest. She seemed to eye it contemptuously, as though she could not conceive of anything so badly misplaced as it was.

Finally she got down to business, and with an incessant scolding, straw by straw, she threw them to the porch floor. At last every one was out, and mamma suggested that she was perfectly welcome to our broom if she wished to sweep her new home.

When she had gotten all of the 'furnishings' out, she flew down to the little pile and, one by one, she picked them up and flew back to the new nest and placed them to suit herself.

We were sorry that we had caused her so much extra work, and we told her so. She accepted our apology, after we promised never to touch her precious nest again.—NELL LOUNSBERRY (age 13 years), *Hillcrest, S. Dak.*

[Female Wrens usually treat the nests built by the males in this same way. Evidently they are quite particular.—A. A. A.]

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