

CLASS

In 1934 the W.P.A.
had women making
clothes from burlap bags
straight from the cowsheds
and granaries of Big Muddy

Ravonia Guilford made
herself a stunning suit
using buttons from her
brother's old World War One
army overcoat

But she had class to start
with
always wore a gold ring
with a dark reddish stone
even when she hoed cotton

One neighbor asked her
what kind of precious stone
is that anyway

I think it's carnelian, Ravonia said,
belonged to my Virginia great aunt

PERCY MONETTE

I remember he wore knickers
when he was a kid
and had to study cello
took lessons every week in
Santa Rosa

and always ate with a lace
doily under his plate
so different from the roughneck
children of lumberjacks

A friend from those early days
wrote me recently
poor Percy fell apart after his
mother died
and the money evaporated

He is working in a sleazy
bar and cafe
on the old highway that
runs through Red Bluff
they say he hocked his cello

— Wilma Elizabeth McDaniel
Hanford CA