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"Ave, Ogden! Nash in Latin" Book Published

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DAYTON, Ohio, May 7, 1974 --- "I was bored with what we were doing in Latin class," is a sentiment familiar to many present and former scholars. Brian N. Meyer is one scholar who decided to do something about his expressed ennui. The result is a book recently published by Little, Brown of Boston, entitled Ave, Ogden! Nash in Latin. The book contains 52 poems by Ogden Nash in both English and Latin, translated by Meyer and James C. Gleeson, his former Latin teacher.

It all started after the death of Nash, famed American humorous poet. Meyer, then a student at St. Xavier's High School in Cincinnati, was "bored" with what he translated in class, and decided to try his hand at something livelier. With two years of Latin background, he translated fifteen poems by Nash. Gleeson, Meyer's Latin teacher, polished up the verses before they were submitted to Little, Brown, who published most of Nash's works. According to Meyer, Little, Brown agreed to publish 50 poems. Working between his regular studies and activities, Meyer finished 52 verses over the year. Now, a year and a half later, the book is out. It was recently reviewed in the April 15th issue of Time magazine.

All the verses in Meyer's translations rhyme, and he preserved the meter wherever possible. The poems he chose to translate are "short and easy to translate, and ones that are interesting." Meyer adds, "It's easy to condense ideas in Latin."

Originally, Meyer hadn't thought of publishing his poems in book form. "I thought a classical magazine would take a few of them," he said. Meyer would be pleased to see the book used in the classroom, not replacing textbooks, but "as a supplement to the classics, something less boring."

Half of the book's royalties go to the Nash estate, and the other half is split between Gleeson and Meyer.

A native of Cincinnati, Meyer is a sophomore majoring in chemistry at the University of Dayton. While he has no present plans to do other writing, he is an active band member. He plays the clarinet, saxophone, and piano in UD's concert, marching and jazz bands.