

Mary L. Bradford

## *JOSEPH*

Joseph, according to the record just, angel-ridden  
and consulted last, what glory may you claim?  
Was yours a father's care, but, God-bidden,  
respect for foster child you could not name?  
Was your pride greater than any heart-hidden  
common love for common men the same?

It was you who showed his hands the glory of the lathe  
in shaping wood to meet its proper use.  
But was it He whose growing shaped your faith  
that you might stand in sorrow at that last abuse  
as high above a puzzled world a wooden wraith  
was raised to meet some deep excuse?

No doubt it is as said: you "received your reward  
in Heaven" as do all who need not repent.  
But you appear on earth at every Christian board,  
leading the ass, your face intent  
above the child, your eyes turned always toward  
the path. You gave a joyous thing — consent.