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# 504

# STORIES of New Jersey

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FEDERAL WRITERS' PROJECT of the WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION

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SCOTCH PLAINS

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## W A L T W H I T M A N ' S H O M E

A little gray house, once the home of a Camden working man, is today one of the literary shrines of the world, maintained by the City of Camden as a memorial to the great Walt Whitman. Here "the good gray poet" spent the last eight years of his life; and here he died in the midst of the simple people he loved, whose minds and hearts he had understood and interpreted in his striking and original poetry.

From the far corners of the earth people have come to this quiet back street to pay homage to the man who has been ranked with the great poets of all times. Among those who have written their names in the guest book is the Japanese poet, Katsua Kawa, who has translated Whitman's poems into the language of his country, where they are as familiar to every school boy and girl as are the poems of Longfellow and Milton to American school children.

Whitman has been called the father of modern poetry. His subjects were the common everyday people and things about him. He found beauty in drab, sordid streets, in the harsh lines of factory buildings, in crowding chimneys and plodding ferryboats, in dull-eyed, tired working people and the problems of their daily living. The new and free style of his verse, which often disregards rhyme and adopts the rhythms of Nature rather than the pattern of earlier poetic forms, was adopted after long and patient experiment as best suited to ex-