

By: Edwards

H.R. No. 2024

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Texas is home to numerous authors and poets who have
2 earned international acclaim for their work, but one of our state's
3 most unique and prolific authors, Missy Jones Thistlewood, remains
4 unknown to all but a few devotees of her unusual literary milieu;
5 and

6 WHEREAS, Melissa Elizabeth Jones was born in Lubbock in 1912,
7 and while growing up on her family's cotton farm, she could hardly
8 have guessed the unusual turns her life would take; she began dating
9 Arthur Thistlewood while the two were still in high school, and
10 despite admonitions from friends about the nature of her future
11 name, she married him soon after graduation; and

12 WHEREAS, Mrs. Melissa Elizabeth Thistlewood then endured
13 much good-natured teasing from family and friends about her
14 difficult name, and this initiated her lifelong fascination with
15 tongue twisters; when the economic pressures of the Great
16 Depression made it difficult for her and Arthur to support their two
17 young children, Mrs. Missy Thistlewood put her hobby to good use,
18 and with money borrowed from her parents, she published her first
19 book of tongue twisters; and

20 WHEREAS, From such seemingly simple sentences as "Plain bun,
21 plum bun, bun without plum" to the more difficult "There was a
22 little witch which switched from Chichester to Ipswich" to the
23 fiendishly difficult "Miss Smith's fish-sauce shop seldom sells
24 shellfish," Mrs. Thistlewood's book included a vast collection of

1 alliterative literary twists and onomatopoeic monstrosities, and
2 it quickly became a tremendous success; and

3 WHEREAS, To this day, her favorite creation is the one that
4 was inspired by a variation of her own name; for the past 60 years,
5 generations of American children have struggled to recite:
6 "Theophilus Thadeus Thistledown, the successful thistle-sifter,
7 while sifting a sieve-full of unsifted thistles, thrust three
8 thousand thistles through the thick of his thumb; Now, if
9 Theophilus Thadeus Thistledown, the successful thistle-sifter,
10 thrust three thousand thistles through the thick of his thumb, See
11 that thou, while sifting a sieve-full of unsifted thistles, thrust
12 not three thousand thistles through the thick of thy thumb"; and

13 WHEREAS, Mrs. Melissa Elizabeth Thistlewood, if she were in
14 fact a real person, would undoubtedly join the Texas House of
15 Representatives in lauding the elocutionary expertise and
16 pronouncedly proficient pronunciation with which our reading
17 clerks have read this resolution and thousands of other legislative
18 documents in the course of the 78th Legislative Session, and it is
19 to be hoped they will accept this good-natured tribute as an
20 expression of deepest appreciation and esteem from the members of
21 this chamber; now, therefore, be it

22 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 78th Texas
23 Legislature hereby honor T. C. Turner and Shannon Steward for their
24 dedicated service as reading clerks and extend to them warmest best
25 wishes for continued success and happiness in all their future
26 endeavors; and, be it further

27 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be

H.R. No. 2024

1 prepared for this dynamic duo as an expression of highest regard by
2 the Texas House of Representatives.