



Looking Back:

Reflections of the Past in Tennessee

May 1973 • COLLEGE Special Issue

Authors

Janice Dobbins, senior English major and current COLLAGe Feature Editor, creates an interesting look into the art of quilting as experienced by Miss Sarah Kindel and Mrs. Dolores Hinson in "Quilting: Revival of Creative Stitchery."

Faye Mullins, senior history and journalism major, gives us a delightful look at Jim and Mazel Hughes, Warren County craftspeople, in "Ladderback Craftsman."

Caneta Skelley, senior English major, reviews one of the most interesting phenomena to grow out of the youth culture of the late 1960s and early 1970s - rebirth of the commune - in her in-depth article "Revival or Revolution?"

David Scarlett, former Middle Tennessee State University student, in his article "Gallagher - Quality Trademark" makes us aware of the little-known talents of J.W. Gallagher of Wartrace.

Harold Baldwin, associate professor of industrial arts at Middle Tennessee State University, has captured the mood and feeling of the place, people and events that have created Nashville's Grand Ole Opry.

Charles K. Wolfe, assistant professor of English at Middle Tennessee State University, discusses a relatively unknown era of the music industry in the state of Tennessee in "That Old-time Music."

Anne W. Nunamaker, an alumna and former assistant professor of journalism at Middle Tennessee State University, writes an in-depth review of rural southern life, culture and folklore in "The Foxfire Book in Review."

Connie Dowell, junior journalism major and current COLLAGe Managing Editor, writes of the many facets and aspects of the creative talents of Middle Tennessee State University's Professor Roy Mills in "Craftsman for All Seasons."

Ralph W. Hyde, associate professor of English at Middle Tennessee State University, provides us with an interesting and nostalgic view of his growing-up years in Tennessee in his prose article, "Looking Back: A Reflection."

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• Photo by Harold Baldwin

Preface

This issue began with the compilation of feature materials in October of 1972. However, the basic theme "Tennessee, its culture and its craftspeople" had its roots in the highly praised "Dying Cultures of Tennessee" section published in the April 1972 issue of COLLAGe. COLLAGe is the student creative publication of Middle Tennessee State University and functions, as the name indicates, as a unification of artistic, literary and general feature elements. We further function to provide an outlet for creative talent, as well as, to provide an area of journalistic experience differing from the other campus print media.

Every student, member of the faculty and alumnus of the university is given the opportunity to have his work published. From the many contributions COLLAGe receives, a staff of student editors and raters select those which in their opinions are of the highest quality and merit printing. We feel this two-volume set is indicative and representative of this quality.

COLLAGe is created and produced entirely by students of Middle Tennessee State University for the university community. The writing and illustrative materials are often a combination of student-faculty work. However, the editing, the typesetting, the layout and page design, and the tedious process of paste-up are entirely done by students. The magazine goes camera-ready to the printer.

We are especially grateful to Mr. Glenn Himebaugh, who gave us helpful suggestions, patient attention and technical assistance, to Mr. Harold Baldwin, who has been one COLLAGe's most faithful supporters and truthful critics, to Dr. James K. Huhta, who also acted as a consultant for this issue, and to Dr. Edward Kimbrell, who gave us continual support throughout the year. Special thanks to Teena Andrews, our courier.

COLLAGe wishes to thank our benefactors and patrons because without their financial backing this issue could not have been produced.

Above all, we wish to recognize those individuals who have contributed material to COLLAGe this year. Thank you.

William C. Bennett

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Revival of Creative Stitchery

● A Feature by Janice Dobbins

A gray-haired lady in a hand-knit sweater and a red-and-white checked gingham dress bends over a quilting frame making tiny stitches in intricate patterns on the muslin. A bright light above her work makes the quilt the central object in a large room with a few other pieces of furniture scattered along the wall in the shadows.

A scene from a half-century ago? Perhaps, but this is the way Miss Sarah Kindel of Mt. Pleasant, Tennessee, still works today.

"I started way back yonder," she said when asked how long she had been quilting. She explained that she had grown up in the country with only a wood fire for heat.

"We had to quilt those quilts to keep warm. I never slept in a room with a fire in it 'til I was 40 years old," laughed the spry 81-year-old.

Miss Sarah, who receives Social Security, does not have to work, but she likes to keep busy. "I'm just not going to sit around and suck my thumb if I can help it," she said crisply.

As evidence of her alertness and youthful attitude, she only began to do fancy quilting about five years ago. "I did ten one summer, three the next, and eight this summer," she explained proudly.

The demand for Miss Sarah's work and that of others like her is proof that the beautiful art of quilting is prospering in Tennessee. Although it never really died, quilting had been given a new lease on life as interest in it, like other crafts, has been revived in recent years.

"It's the sentiment of the thing they want," insisted Miss Sarah, as she is known in her town. She went on to explain that people today want quilts and want their children to have them because they remember their grandmothers' making them. One customer was so thrilled with the final product that "she just played with that quilt like it was a pussy cat," chuckled the old lady.

Grandmother's quilts were of a variety of patterns and in Tennessee reflected the different nationalities of the early settlers.

Quilts show the pattern of immigration,

according to Mrs. Dolores A. Hinson, of Columbia, Tennessee, author of two books on the subject.

"You can't make a quilt that doesn't reflect your background, your likes and dislikes," she commented. West from the Appalachians, the quilts are "a mixture of what the early settlers were."

Thus, Tennessee quilts actually originated in Europe, where women discovered the warmth of several layers of material. Their quilts, however, were a single sheet of cloth, the filler, and another piece of cloth and were generally of sumptuous fabrics.

"The piecing is American, and it was pure necessity," stated Mrs. Hinson, also a consultant on historical quilts for the Star-Spangled House in Baltimore, Maryland.

"Every speck of cloth the early settlers got for 30 or 40 years went specifically for clothing," she added. They were unprepared for the harsh weather and also did not realize their dependence on the textile industry in England. When the quilts and blankets they brought with them wore out, they began making new ones from the good scraps of material they cut from their old clothing. And the crazy quilt was born.

An innate love of beauty caused more attention to be directed toward color and form; they started mixing and matching colors and designing patterns.

"This was repeated on every (American) frontier more or less depending on how far they were from civilization and how long it took supplies to reach them," stated the quilting expert.

Since people from practically all the settled areas of the East migrated to Tennessee, numerous types of quilts are found here. "There are none native to Tennessee because the kinds overlap," commented Roy Overcast, craft coordinator for the Tennessee Arts Commission.

This diversity makes Tennessee quilts particularly interesting, for one must examine the various influences in the earlier quilts of the East.

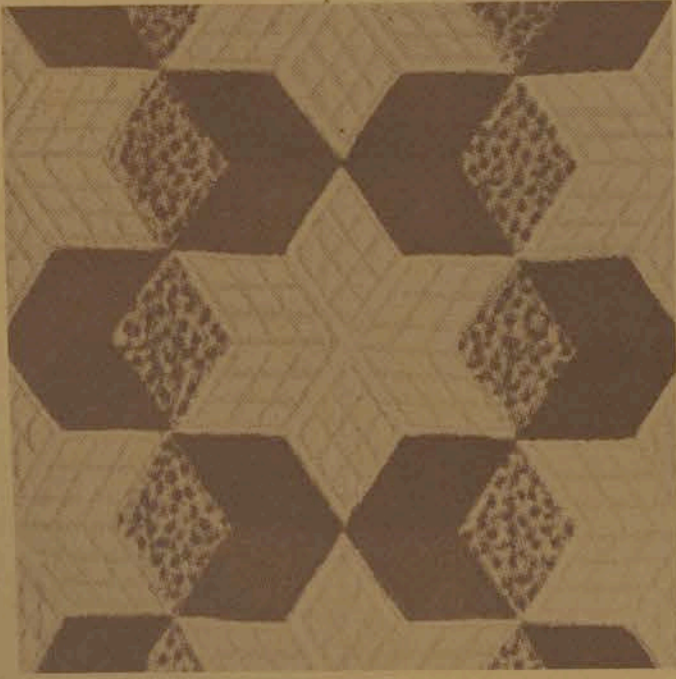


● Photo by Linda Sissom

Although she is now past 80, Miss Sarah Kindel of Mt. Pleasant, Tennessee, learned to do fancy quilting only five years ago. Now she produces

about eight quilts a year -- an indication that this old art is being revived.

"Waste not--want not" is shown in the New



• Photo by Linda Sissom

Tumbling Blocks is composed of simple geometric shapes which combine to form a stunning pattern.

England quilts," pointed out Mrs. Hinson. English New York and Pennsylvania quilts are similar, having more reds and yellows than the dark New England products. The Dutch influence in that area produced clashing colors and "louder quilts than in any other place in the U.S.," she added. More primitive designs were the result of the German settlement in areas of Pennsylvania (Pennsylvania Dutch). Many of these conflicting designs have found their way to Tennessee as Northern settlers poured over the mountains to the "western" frontier.

Tennesseans from the Tidewater region of Delaware, Maryland and Virginia brought freer, more artistic quilts. The river culture of this area was wealthier and received more foreign imports, accounting for their more masterful coverlets.

In the aristocratic South, "quilting was terribly elaborate to prove they were ladies," explained Mrs. Hinson. These people were wealthier and more pretentious. Since the climate was milder, quilts were not required

for warmth. The women here made quilts to demonstrate their sewing talent and show that they did not have to work. They produced fanciful, appliqued designs almost entirely.

In contrast, the mountaineers and poorer Southerners returned to the New England patterns with crude blocks and triangles but with the Southern freedom of color. "Their quilts were entirely different from New England in that the colors were so different; they used anything and everything," says the stitchery connoisseur.

Tennessee quilts, therefore, show all these influences, but the most popular old patterns in the state are the Double Wedding Ring and the Postage Stamp, stated Overcast, who works with local quilters in marketing their products.

The renewed interest in this old art has not confined itself to traditional patterns, however.

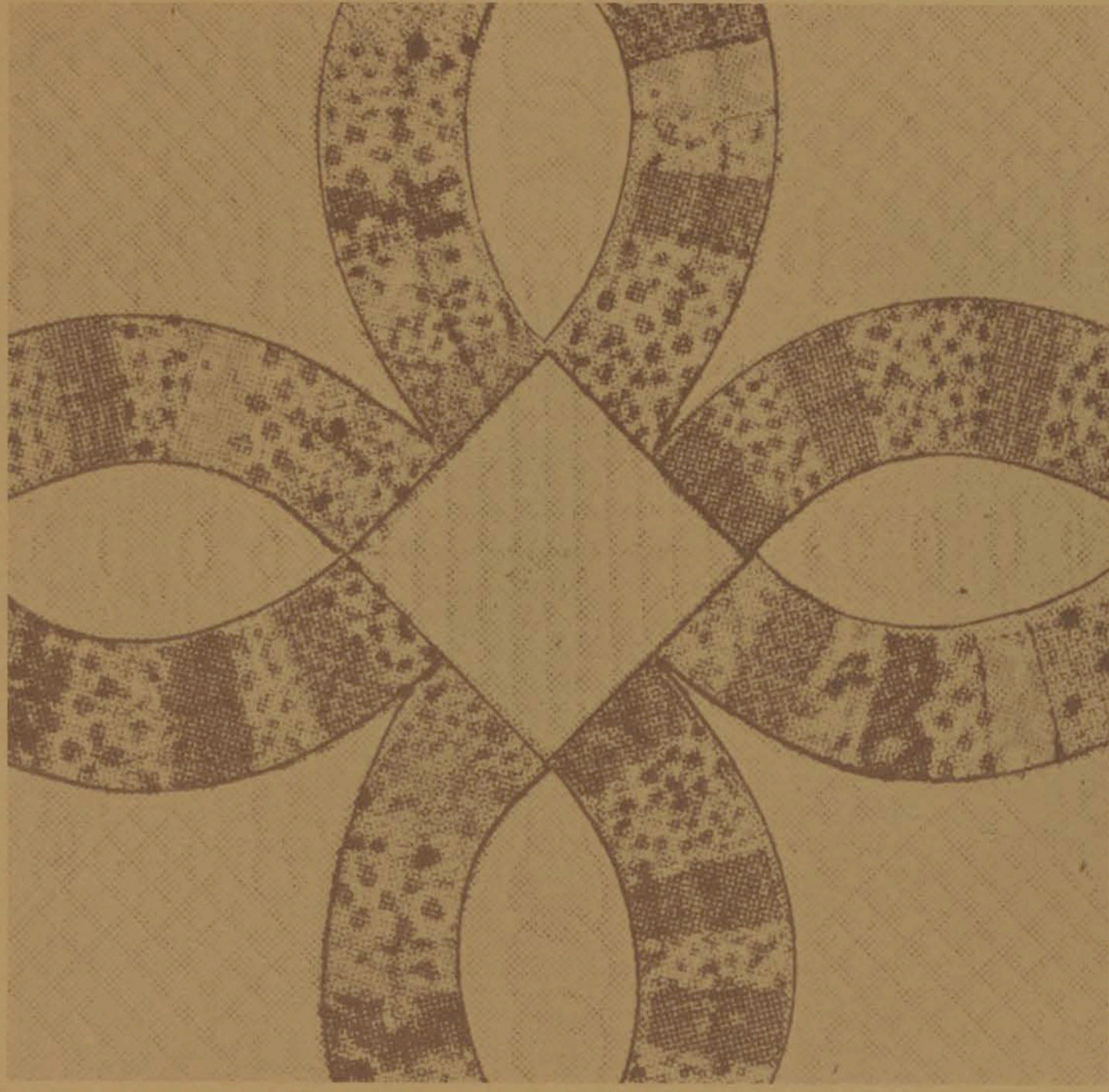
Dolores Hinson not only classifies old quilts but also makes her own modern designs.

"I had a man on the moon two years before the government!" she grinned, holding up her "Race to the Moon," a blue ribbon winner at the Woodlawn Needlework Exhibition at Mount Vernon, Virginia, in 1968. •



• Photo by Linda Sissom

The Dew Drop pattern is representative of the elaborate appliqued quilts produced in the aristocratic South.



• Photo by Linda Sissom

Although there are no quilts truly native to Tennessee, numerous types of quilts brought by the early settlers are found in this area. This diversity makes Tennessee quilts particularly interesting because of the various influences from earlier Eastern quilts. The Double Wedding Ring, however, has long been

a favorite with the quilters and collectors and is one of the most popular patterns in the state. The intricacies of the tiny quilting stitches as well as the piecing makes it a showy masterpiece. Traditionally this quilt is given by grandmothers to their grandchildren as a wedding gift.

Ladderback Craftsman

● A Feature by Faye Mullins

What does it take to make a Boston rocker? Jim Hughes and his wife Mazel, who make and sell all kinds of stools in Warren County, can not only tell you but show you. And they will be more than glad to do it, giving you the warm welcome so characteristic of country folks.

"We make anything from doll chairs to the big rockers," Jim said, as he stood in the basement of the ranch-style home, all cluttered with stacks of ladderbacks, rockers of all sizes and stools. His wife Mazel, seated in her work area in the corner, where she took time out from weaving the rush bottom seat in a chair, said they make chairs of maple, ash, cherry, walnut, oak and birch, of which they sell more maple and ash than anything else.

They produce about 40 to 50 ladderback chairs a week. A maple ladderback with a rush bottom will bring \$13; one with the flat bottom with the paper base costs about \$7. The rush bottom is made from a cord that makes a sturdier seat, and it takes Mazel about an hour and a half to weave one rush bottom seat. The flat bottom takes about half that time.

Revealing his contempt for "store-boughten" furniture, Jim related the tale of "the maddest lady I ever saw," who he said came from Murfreesboro. She had purchased a defective dinner table and chairs at a furniture store in Shelbyville. She got Jim to make her some new chairs, but he does not know what she did about her table, which he described as "warped to where the grub wouldn't set on the table." She had ordered solid maple, and she got gum. Jim says that most stores use several different kinds of wood in one chair and then stain it all one color.

In the same spirit, Jim refuses to keep hired help anymore. He says, "All a hired hand cares about is payday." He finds that it works better if he does it himself, and Mazel does a lot more work than any hired hand would do. She quit her job at the Woodbury Shirt Factory, where she worked for 23 years, and has been helping Jim full-time for the past two or three years.

Beating the high cost of lumber, Jim cuts his own which he gets from the swamps, 700 to 800 feet at a time in the winter; in the summer, as needed. His own 50-acre farm has very little timber.

The rounds are dry kilned, and the chairs are put up green. When the chairs dry in about a month, they tighten on the rounds so that they are much sturdier. Jim demonstrated the effectiveness of this technique by attempting to twist the round with a wrench, showing that it would not turn at all.

The talented carpenter has been at this chair business for some nine years now. His wife explained, "It was just something he decided he wanted to do, so he started doing it."

Prior to this, he had farmed their 50 acres. After he began this, he had little time for farming and had done none for the past three years until this year, when he started raising a little corn. The Hughes also own some hogs and cows, but most of their time is spent on chairs.

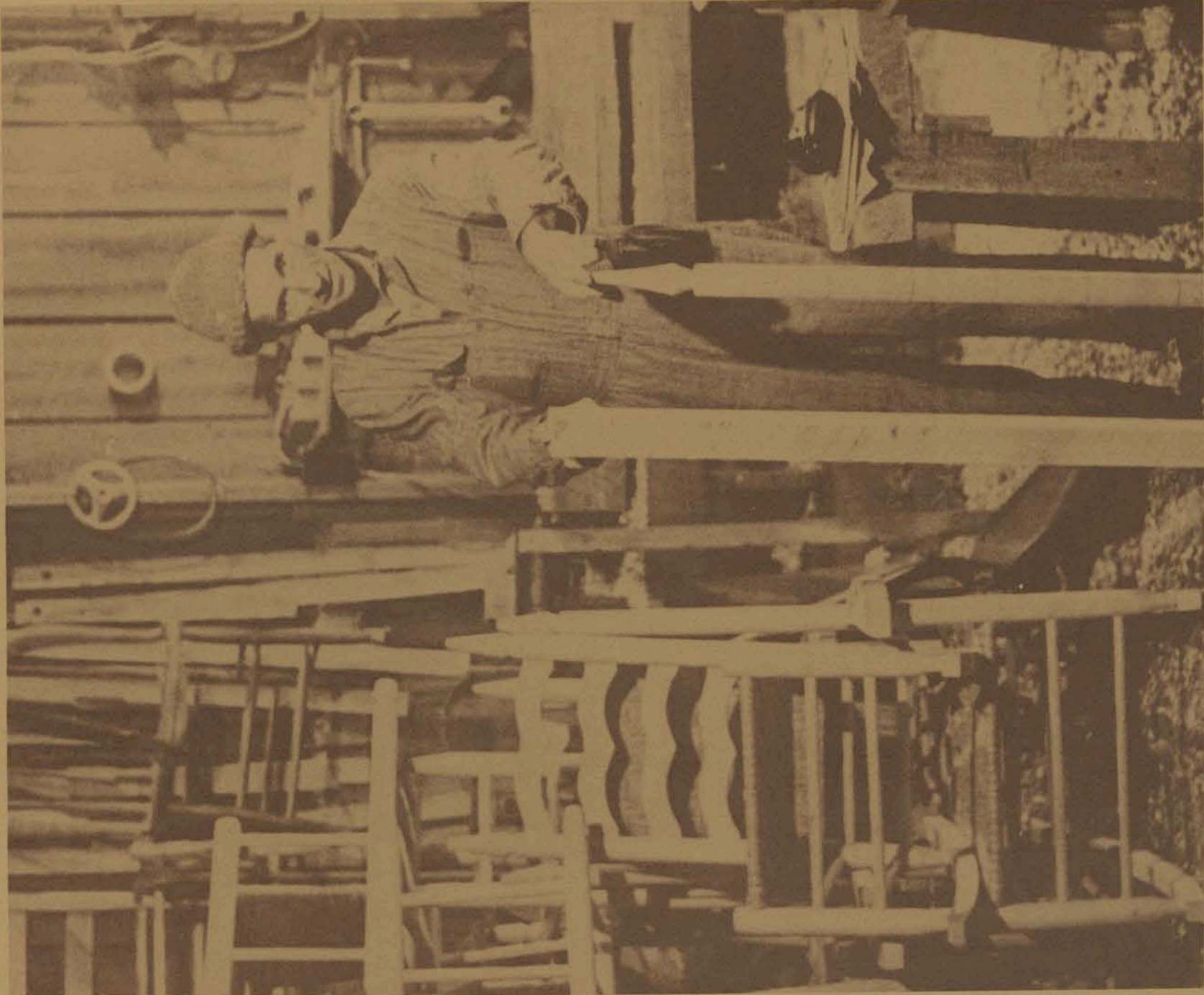
Jim learned this trade from Mazel's father, who worked with him for the first four years. Her father probably learned from his father, she said, and he just grew up with it.

Their biggest business is local, but they have get a lot of tourists, especially in the summer-time, when they do the most business. It takes about two weeks after an order is placed before the customer can pick up his chair because of the number of back orders. They get most of their customers on referrals.

Jim and Mazel usually spend from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. working on chairs at the shop, but customers are apt to show up any time day or night and are always welcome.

Mazel has confidence in their product, saying, "They last a lifetime." She offers as evidence some of her own which her father gave her as a wedding present 27 years ago and which are still in good shape.

With this proof and this motto, it is reassuring to note real craftsmanship is not dead—at least, not in Warren County, Tennessee. ●



● Photo by Faye Mullins
Jim Hughes pauses from his work to show a craftsman is proud of his quality work and scorns "store boughten" furniture.

Revival or Revolution?

● A Feature by Caneta Skelley

One Sunday morning in San Francisco, in February of 1970, Stephen said, "Let's go to Tennessee," and the group that gathered to hear him speak thought it was a good idea. Now, after three years, that "idea" has developed into a growing village of 500 men, women and children, all living and working together within the framework of Stephen's counseling and teaching. Rejecting the materialism of modern society, these people have devoted themselves to the building of The Farm, a community based on their religious beliefs and supported by their combined efforts and resources.

The residents of The Farm, a 1,014-acre tract of wooded land in Lewis County near Summertown, Tennessee, have come from varied backgrounds, states and nations. Originally they traveled to San Francisco because they had heard that religion was being revived there. At the center of this revival was Stephen Gaskin's Monday Night Class and Sunday Morning Service. For five years people had been coming to "hear and speak the truth. We learned that was how you held communion, and we became a Church." Gradually, over the years a community evolved, and when Stephen left on a nationwide tour to speak at churches and campuses, this group trailed him in a caravan of converted school buses and trucks.

After returning to California, these people, who traveled together for four months, decided they wanted to continue living and working together on a farm. In only a week they left California for Tennessee, where they had "felt welcomed by the people and the land."

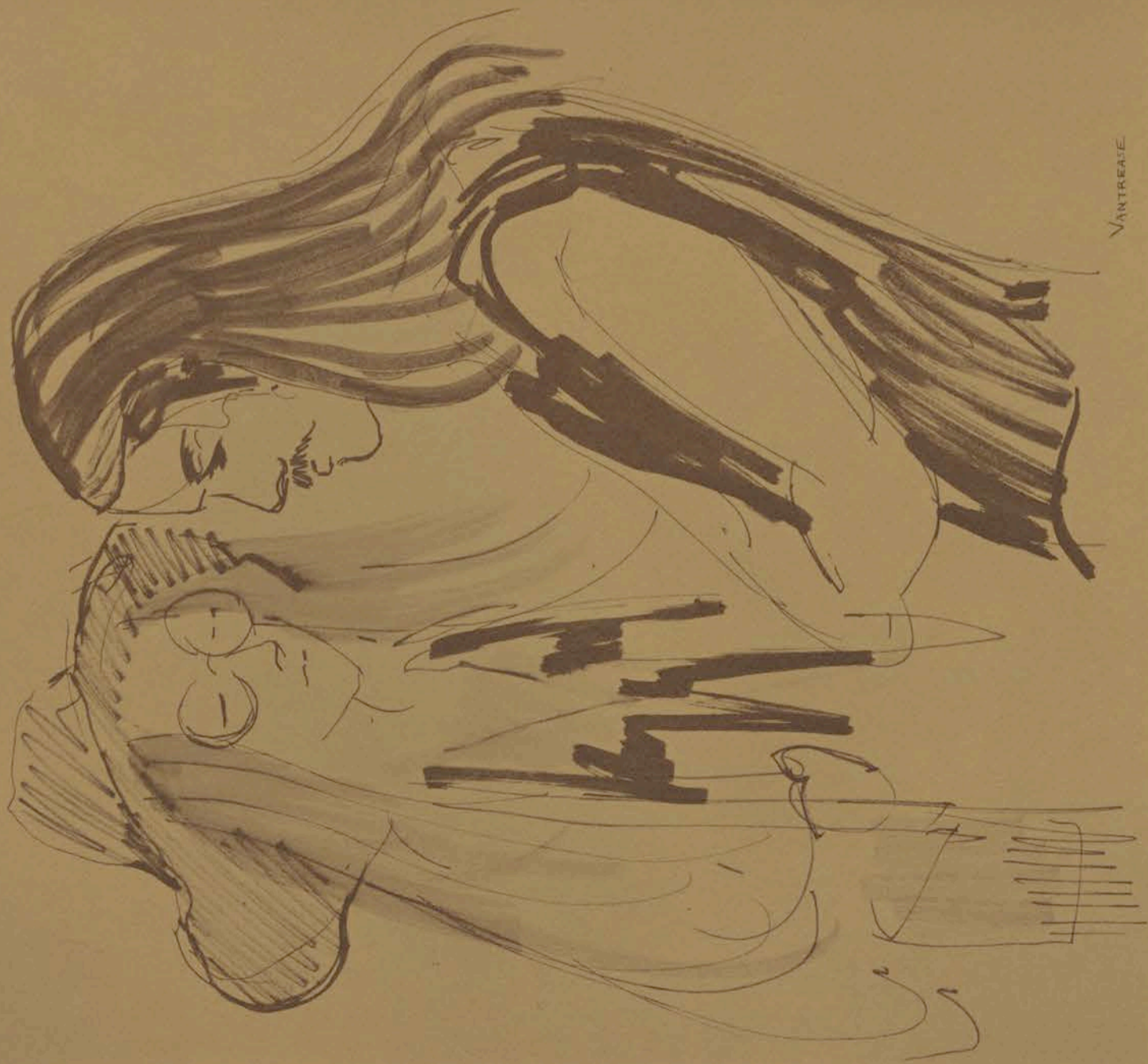
For some weeks they traveled through the state before purchasing the land in southern Middle Tennessee which they felt would meet their needs. Because they had not been involved in the building of a town before, a technology had to be and is still being developed. Living in the converted buses, the members of The Farm began to make plans for permanent housing, clearing land and planting crops. As with any community, problems immediately arose. Not only were knowledgeable carpenters lacking within the family, but also no one knew

anything about farming. However, an architect within the group has directed the construction of the housing and community facilities, and with the help of the Agriculture Department, The Farm has been successful in its production of fruit and vegetable crops.

It was a cold November afternoon when members of the COLLAGe staff approached the main entrance to The Farm by way of roads made memorable by the recent rains. The tall, blond gatekeeper swung wide the gate, welcoming us even before we had introduced ourselves. Explaining our interest in visiting the community, he seemed pleased and commented with a phrase quite familiar to us by the time we left, "Far out!" He immediately called to one of his friends, and Thomas, dressed in his work clothes with a wool cap pulled down over his shoulder-length red hair, postponed his planned work to answer our questions while guiding us around The Farm.

Riding down the main road in a old pickup truck, we were amazed at the concern and friendliness which seemed to be with everyone. As we met men, women and children going about their business or play, each greeted the other by name, usually stopping to talk for a minute. In contrast with the bleakness of the blustery fall afternoon, an unmistakable sense of warmth and calmness was conveyed to us through the expressions, words and actions of all we met. Each inquiry we made was treated with consideration and answered as truthfully and completely as possible by our amiable driver.

A few feet from the front gate is a modern ranch house. Built by the previous landowners, it contains offices and the school. Accredited by the State of Tennessee, grades range from kindergarten to high school level. Six certified teachers and one principal instruct all usual courses with special instructors for art and music. The school, using texts provided and required by the state, meets five days a week at regular school hours. Each day begins with a half hour of meditation and physical exercises.



● Drawing by Robert Van Trease of The Farm, a 1,014-acre tract of wooded land in Lewis County near Summertown, Tennessee, have come from varied backgrounds, states and nations."

"Rejecting the materialism of modern society, these people have devoted themselves to the building of The Farm, a community based on their religious beliefs and supported by their combined efforts and resources. The residents

The main road leads to the right of one of the large fields which had been planted and harvested earlier in the season. Cultivating over one hundred acres, the members of The Farm are trying to grow as much of the food they consume as possible. Women of the The Farm worked in summer and fall canning, freezing and dehydrating fruits and vegetables for winter storage. Food and staples which are not grown on The Farm are bought from local mer-

chants and farmers in bulk quantities. When possible, pickers are sent out to gather apples in Michigan, pecans in Georgia, peppers in Lewis County or wheat in Kansas.

A spiritual agreement to keep peace with animals requires a strict vegetarian diet. No meats or dairy products are consumed by members of The Farm. Soy bean products are used as a milk substitute, for they have the same protein as cow's milk, twice the iron, and

calcium added to equalize the nutrients. The soy dairy, relying on one of the main crops, produces 250 gallons of soy bean milk each week. With help from qualified nutritionists, a vegetarian diet is continually developed which is not only complete in food value, but tasteful and economical as well.

Working to improve and rebuild the soil, late cane fields are covered with winter legume, and sorghum pumice is returned to the field in the form of sheet compost. Making sorghum molasses is one of the more recent money-making enterprises of The Farm. This year their mill has produced over one thousand gallons of Old Beatnik Sorghum Molasses.

Adjoining tents shelter the community food and clothing stores. All food, whether for individual use or for the numerous community kitchens, is found at the store. Sacks of oats, flour and sugar, barrels of corn meal, and of dried beans, and smaller foodstuffs are set all around the tent. To be sure that everyone gets a fair share, signs remind customers to get only their allotted portion.

Other community facilities include the recently completed laundromat and an 18-shower bathroom. Construction is under way for a new community kitchen and meeting hall. This hall will be under a dome 75 feet in diameter and 30 feet high. A six-family apartment complex has been completed as have two of the many planned houses. Using local material like stone and rough-cut oak and poplar, and experimenting with adobe brick, the houses are Dutch frame with added dormers designed to be more flexible for larger families. Some of the men work at sawmills in exchange for much of the lumber while the rest is purchased from local suppliers.

In the new apartment house, we were welcomed by the six families who make their home there. In the spacious main hall the fathers played with the children while the mothers prepared the evening meal in the kitchen. It was dusk, and kerosene lanterns were about to be lit. Electricity is used only in the school house, laundromat and sorghum mill. Cooking is done on propane stoves while wood burning heaters are used for the rooms. The ladies were watching over the simmering vegetables and taking up cookies right from the oven.

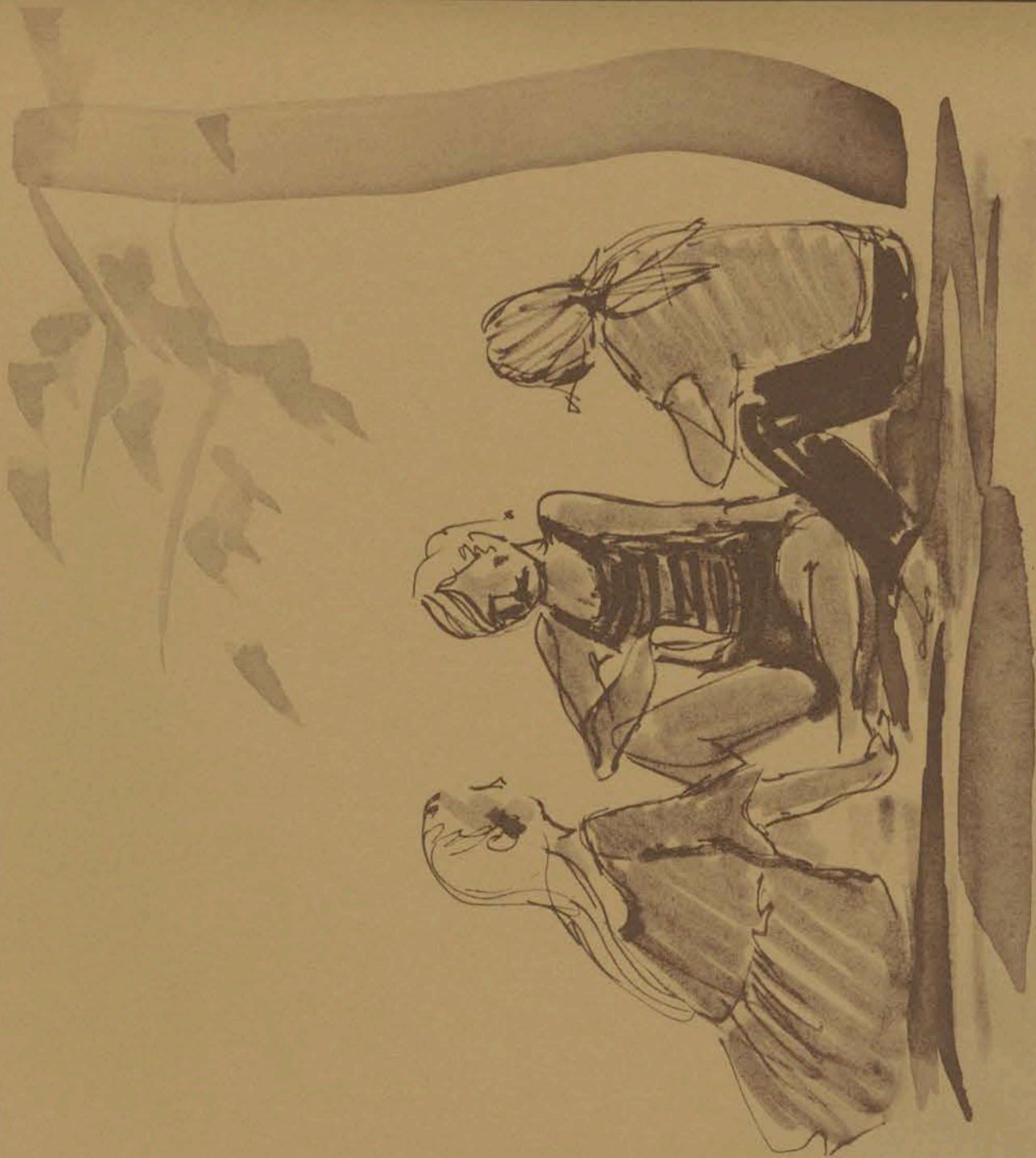
One man with flowing black hair proudly showed us his family's rooms. Each apartment has one large bedroom-sitting room combination and a loft for storage or for the children's beds. The outside wall is completely

glassed in, looking directly into the woods. All commented how much they enjoyed seeing the autumn season change from these rooms. Simply but comfortably arranged, these apartments seemed to please the residents very much. As we left the families echoed each other with "Bye now," and invitations to return soon.

Within the population of 500 people are over 200 married couples with 115 children. The Church of The Farm is recognized by the State of Tennessee, and Stephen is authorized to perform the sacrament of matrimony. Licenses are issued from Lewis County. Stephen has said, "You can look in books on how to carpenter or old-fashioned books about how to weld by hand with a hammer, and you can find a usage of the word marry, and it means to take two things and put them together so that they are one thing. It means union. Union is one." Marriages are lifetime commitments, and married couples are faithful to each other and raise their children together. All of the babies of The Farm are born in their parents' homes with the midwives delivering. The mothers are completely satisfied with the arrangement and they say that they wish to have all their children born at home.

When asked about relations with the local people, Thomas candidly replied, "Well, we've had to work on that." He went on to tell how neighbors had at first been leery of these people who traveled in old buses and trucks and had such long hair, beards, strange clothes and different ways. Over the months as they associated with the townspeople and worked with many of them, consistently showing their beliefs and love for each other and mankind, they have been accepted into the community. Visitors are always welcome at The Farm, and members are eager to show their home and lifestyle to the rest of the world. Buying space in local newspapers to explain themselves and answer questions has done much to remove the stigmas attached to the family. Periodically for themselves and visitors, **The Farm Report**, is printed to give quarterly financial statements and general information about activities and plans on The Farm. In-depth explanations of Stephen's philosophy and the life style of his followers are given in his Random House publications, **Monday Night Class** and **Caravan**.

Several local churches, having read these publications and been exposed to the beliefs and members of The Farm, have visited their Sunday Morning Service and Monday Night Class. Thomas reported that topics ranging



VAN TREASE

●Drawing by Robert Van Trease
As each person joins the crowd, he meditates with his brothers and sisters and with God.

"Each Sunday morning before dawn members of the family begin to gather on a cleared hillside.

from diet to theology were discussed in several lively sessions. However, as each group came to understand the other's beliefs and reasoning, they found they had much in common; and all parted as friends.

Stephen has said that the purpose of all religions is to make the connection between this world, the Infinite and God. If a person's religion does this, then that is the true religion for him. Stephen believes that only one real religion exists, and that is as yet unwritten. "All attempts at religion are attempts to bring that one true religion into man's understanding." Studies are made of varying philosophies and the teachings of Christ, Buddha and other religious figures. Stephen feels that the world has become a village, and "we can't say that the people on the other side of the village don't know where it's at. And that we have to recognize that all mankind should be saved. And that there shouldn't be any stumbling blocks in the way, that salvation is dictated by compassion, and compassion put no riddles in the way of salvation."

Each Sunday morning before dawn, members of the family begin to gather on a cleared hillside. As each person joins the crowd, he meditates with his brothers and sisters and with God. "The basis of our church is soul communication," explains Stephen. "You can pray with your fellow man, or you can pray to God. It's to communicate by soul communication from heart to heart, without having to speak. We believe in that really a lot. In fact, the reason we are so gathered on this farm is not because of anything anybody ever said aloud as a reason for us being together but an agreement that we have come to somewhere beyond speech, somewhere past speech."

In the three years that the members of The Farm have lived and worked together, they have accomplished many of their goals. But it has not been easy. Everyone has had to do his part of the work, and hard work it is. The long winter months are difficult for those who still live in the buses they came in. With little money coming in during this season, the financial strain is felt by everyone.

One cannot help but wonder if this attempt to establish a community based on common religious beliefs will not end as have so many others in the history of our country. Will the second generation of The Farm's members feel as their parents or will they return to the materialistic ways of the outside world? The concepts of the members might be called revo-

lutionary in that they have have rejected established society to form their own community. Yet many of these ideas and certainly the lifestyle is but a revival of age-old traditions. Perhaps The Farm is but a revival of forgotten standards, but to this decade, at least, it is revolutionary.

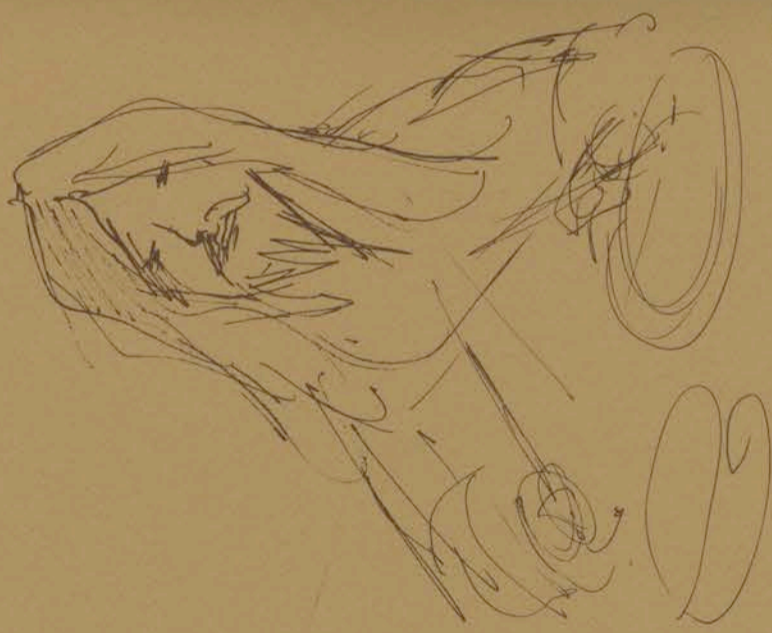
Stephen and his followers realize the problems they face, but are willing to work together to find solutions. Though it will take time, they have made a start in what they firmly believe is the right direction. Stephen wants for his followers and himself "peace and quiet, something to do that means something, a chance to grow, and a chance to do something." •

Author's note: Sources for information given in this article and quotations are from:

The Farm Report, December 1971, and June 1972

Monday Night Class, by Stephen Gaskin, Random House

Personal interviews with members of The Farm.



•Drawing by Robert Van Trease

"Perhaps The Farm is but a revival of forgotten standards, but to this decade, at least, it is revolutionary."



"Within the population of 500 people are over 200 hundred married couples with 115 children. The church of The Farm is recognized by the

State of Tennessee, and Stephen is authorized to perform the sacrament of matrimony. . . ."

Gallagher-Quality Trademark

● A Feature by David Scarlett

The country's a 'pickin' and a 'grinnin'', and J.W. Gallagher, guitar-maker extraordinaire, wouldn't have it any other way.

"Well, both of us use J.W. Gallagher guitars, made down in Wartrace, Tennessee. . .because Mr. Gallagher builds one of the finest instruments I've ever put my hand on."

Doc Watson, the recognized king of bluegrass guitar, made that statement concerning himself and his son in the the July/August 1972 issue of **Guitar Player** magazine.

A Gallagher guitar has also found its way into the hands of Neil Diamond, leading male vocalist for the past three years in succession. Interviewed after a concert in Nashville's Grand Ole Opry House, he commented, "I like the sound of a Gallagher . . . it's a good guitar."

J.W. Gallagher does indeed make some of the finest guitars in the world. Just ask Grandpa Jones, Stephen Stills, Peter Yarrow, Paul Stooky or any of the nearly 500 other people who own Gallagher guitars. This conscientious craftsman is definitely making his presence widely known in the entertainment industry.

How, it might be asked, does one become involved in the business of making hand-crafted guitars? In the case of J.W. Gallagher, a former furniture maker in his home town, Wartrace, it was something into which he drifted.

Prior to 1965 Gallagher worked in his furniture shop in Wartrace, but when a company which was to have an office in Shelbyville asked if he would consider employment as a guitar-maker, he said yes. It didn't take him long, however, to realize that the company was more concerned with its profits than with the quality of its merchandise, so he left it and formed a company of his own.

It is ironic that a man such as Gallagher was able to start his own company and turn it into the success it is today without having a personal knowledge and mastery of the guitar. Asked about his musical background, he thought for a moment, smiled and said, "Oh, we had a guitar. My mother played it some, but I never did do anything more than bang around on it a little. At the time started working for the com-

pany in Shelbyville, I didn't know the difference between a classical and a steel-stringed guitar."

Since Gallagher doesn't occupy what little spare time he finds by playing musical instruments, he has turned his energies in another direction. He derives great satisfaction from restoring old cars. His current pride and joy is a 1965 Mercedes, which he has in excellent condition. There only two mechanics who are ever allowed to work on it because Gallagher feels that a good many people don't give the service they are paid to give.

This applies to guitar manufacturers as well as well as other businesses. According to Gallagher, "They'll all take your money, but very few will give you what you pay for the first time. So many people will try to mass produce guitars and make a lot of money, but it just doesn't work that way."

One of the reasons Doc Watson is such a staunch supporter of Gallagher guitars is that they are not mass-produced. "He doesn't build in wholesale lots. He has a little shop and builds about 75 to 100 guitars a year," Watson noted.

The shop, situated near the Wartrace city hall, appears, at first glance to be deserted. The broad blankness of the face of the building is interrupted only by the single word--Gallagher's. A quick glance through the dirt-smudged front window seems to confirm the assumption that the shop is, indeed, deserted. The walls, strikingly drab in their nakedness, lend an air of bland depression to the entire room, and the dust, which is blatantly obvious on the floor and in the air, seems to be a constant reminder that this is a craftsman's shop. The office itself has a cluttered desk, a workbench, and, in contrast to the large outer room, a good deal of personality. The actual construction of the guitars takes place in the back of the shop in two rooms which contain all of the heavier equipment, clamps and vices, stacks of materials, and approximately 40 guitars in various stages of completion.

Considering the names and the positions of



● Photo by Nancy Nipper

J.W. Gallagher of Wartrace, Tennessee, produces some of the finest guitars in the world. Neil Diamond, Doc Watson, Grandpa Jones,

Stephen Stills, Peter Yarrow, Paul Stooky, or any of the nearly 500 other people who own Gallagher guitars will attest to this fact.

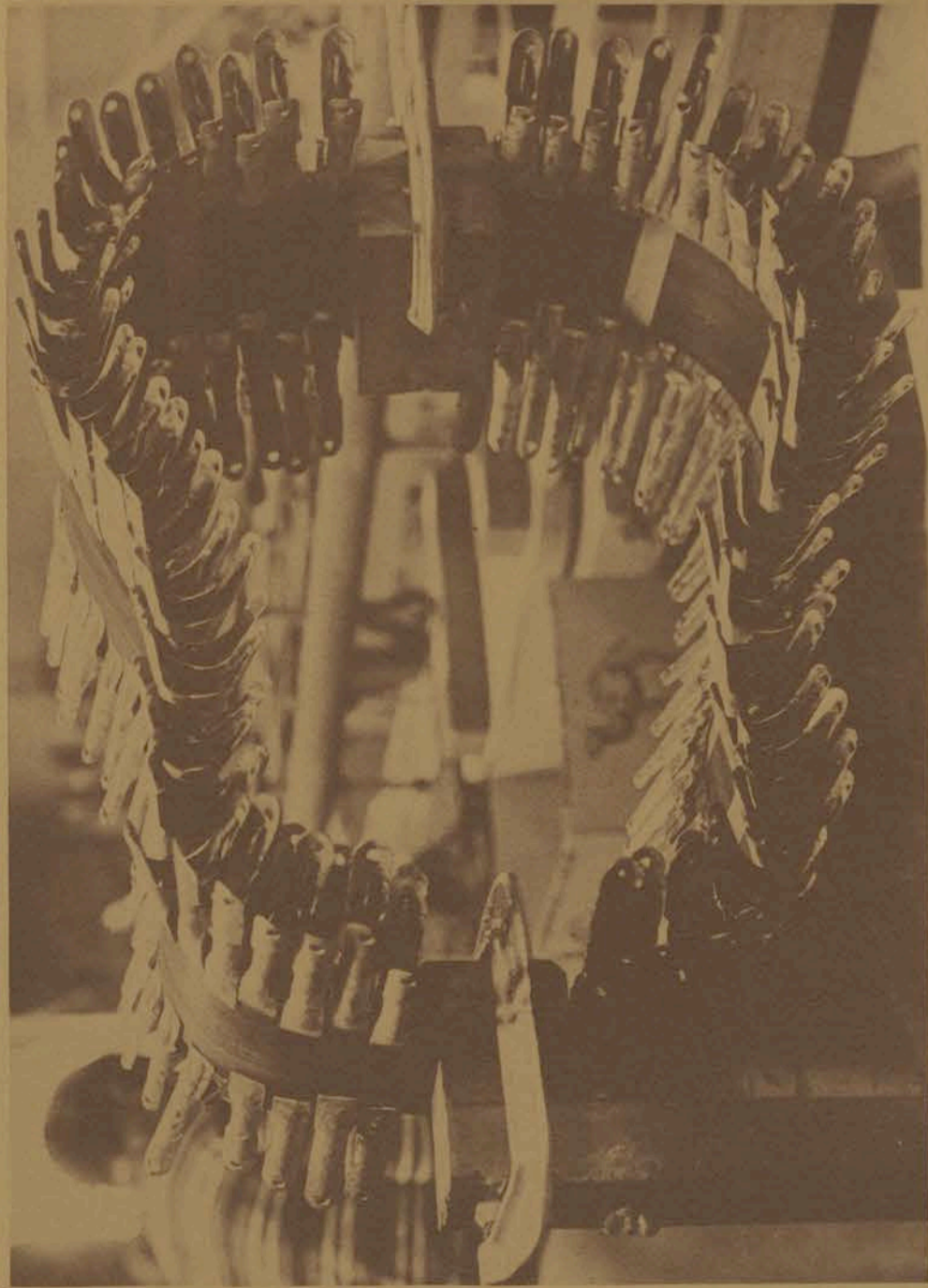
many Gallagher owners, the quality of the instrument should be apparent to anyone who understands the pride all great entertainers take in their work. Grandpa Jones, of "Hee Haw" fame, is one celebrity who deeply appreciates the work that Gallagher is doing. When asked how Grandpa liked his guitar, a look of warm satisfaction came over Gallagher's face, and he recalled a letter he had received from Grandpa. "From what I hear, Grandpa just never writes letters unless it's pretty important, so when I got his letter saying how much he liked my guitar, I knew he really meant it. It was layin' right here on my desk, but when I went to look for it, it was gone. I guess somebody saw it and thought it would make a nice souvenir, but I sure do wish I had it," the guitar-maker said.

Though Gallagher enjoys different kinds of

music, he wasted no time in saying that bluegrass is his "favorite type of music, and Doc Watson would have to be my favorite performer." Doc and J.W. are members of a very exclusive mutual admiration society and are probably each other's best publicity.

Gallagher recently went to see Doc and his son Merl play at a festival in Nashville which was hosted by Ralph Emery, Nashville's "Mr. Country Music Radio." After introducing the Watsons, Emery came back on stage and made mention of the fact that they were playing their Gallagher guitars at which time there was a thunderous ovation from the audience.

Gallagher, recalling the event, smiled and seemed to relive the entire experience as he said, "I sure was surprised, but it was a very nice feeling."



At one point during the assembly process several layers of wood are clamped together

•Photo by Linda Sissom

to form the outline of the guitar.

The Grand Ole Opry Collection

• A Photo Display by Harold Baldwin

The GRAND OLE OPRY COLLECTION is a visual anthropological study of the country music culture in and around the Grand Ole Opry located at Nashville, Tennessee.

The photographer is attempting to visually preserve the unique character of all involved with the Opry and the atmosphere it creates in Nashville.

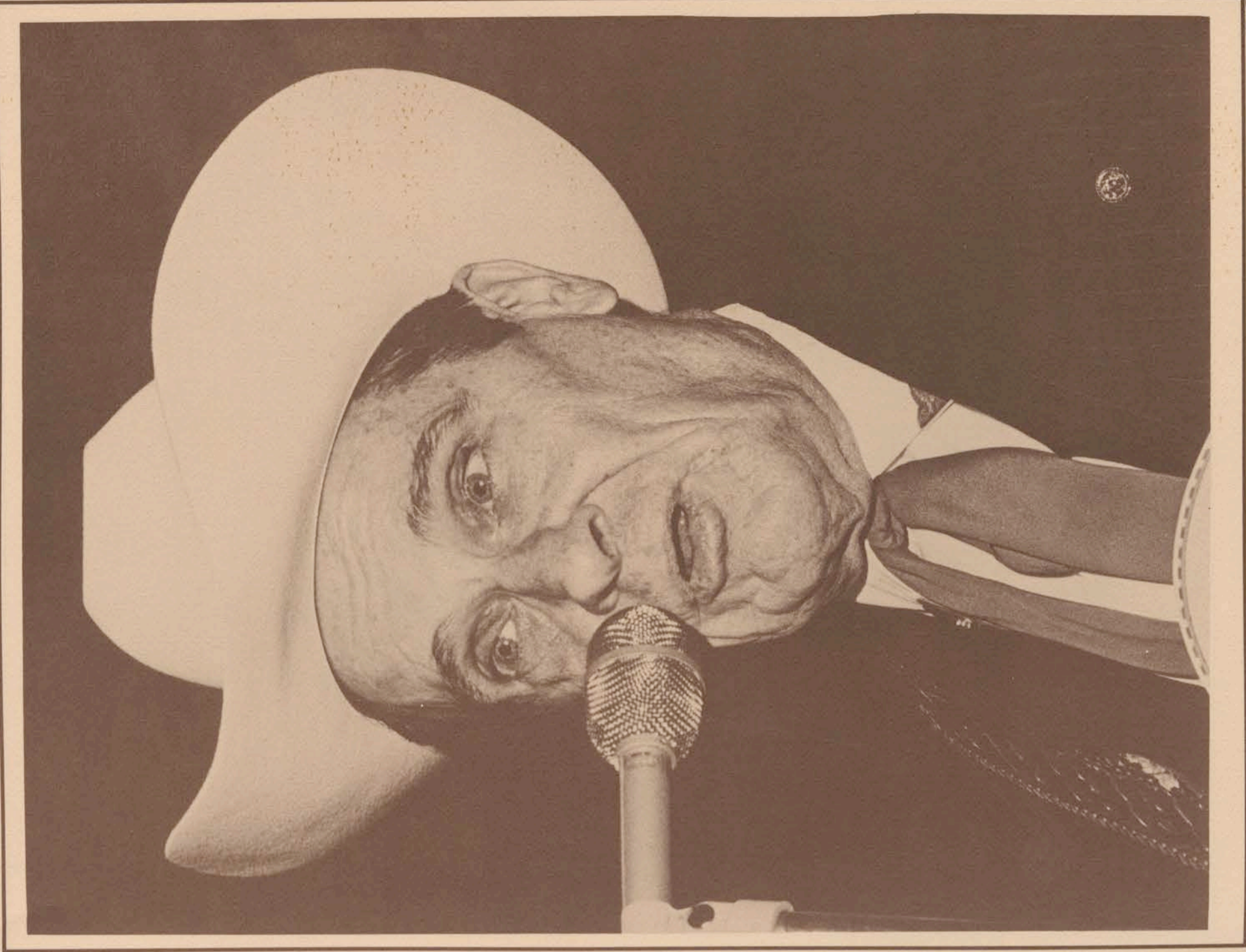
"Most photographers who came to shoot the Opry were interested in the stars. I was

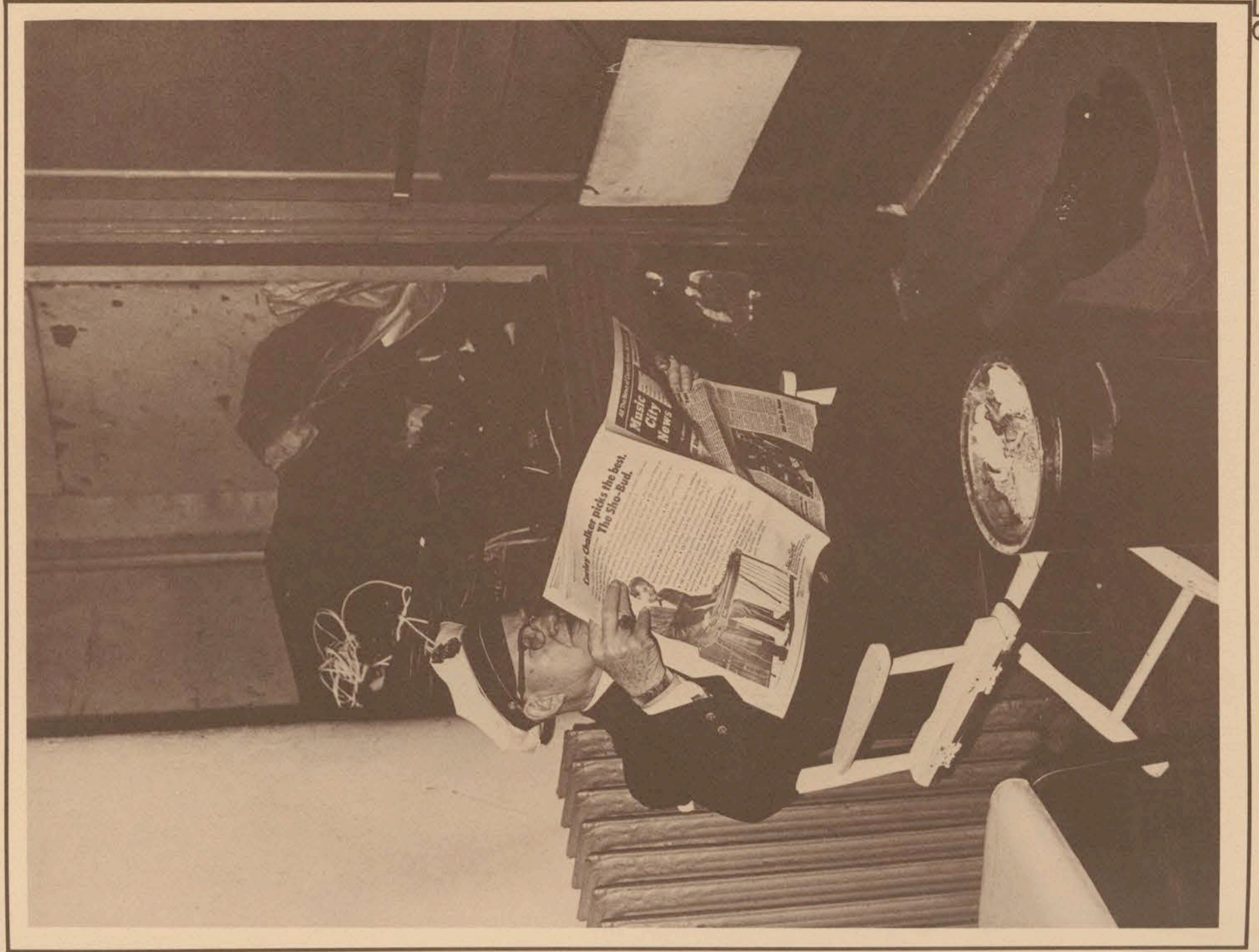
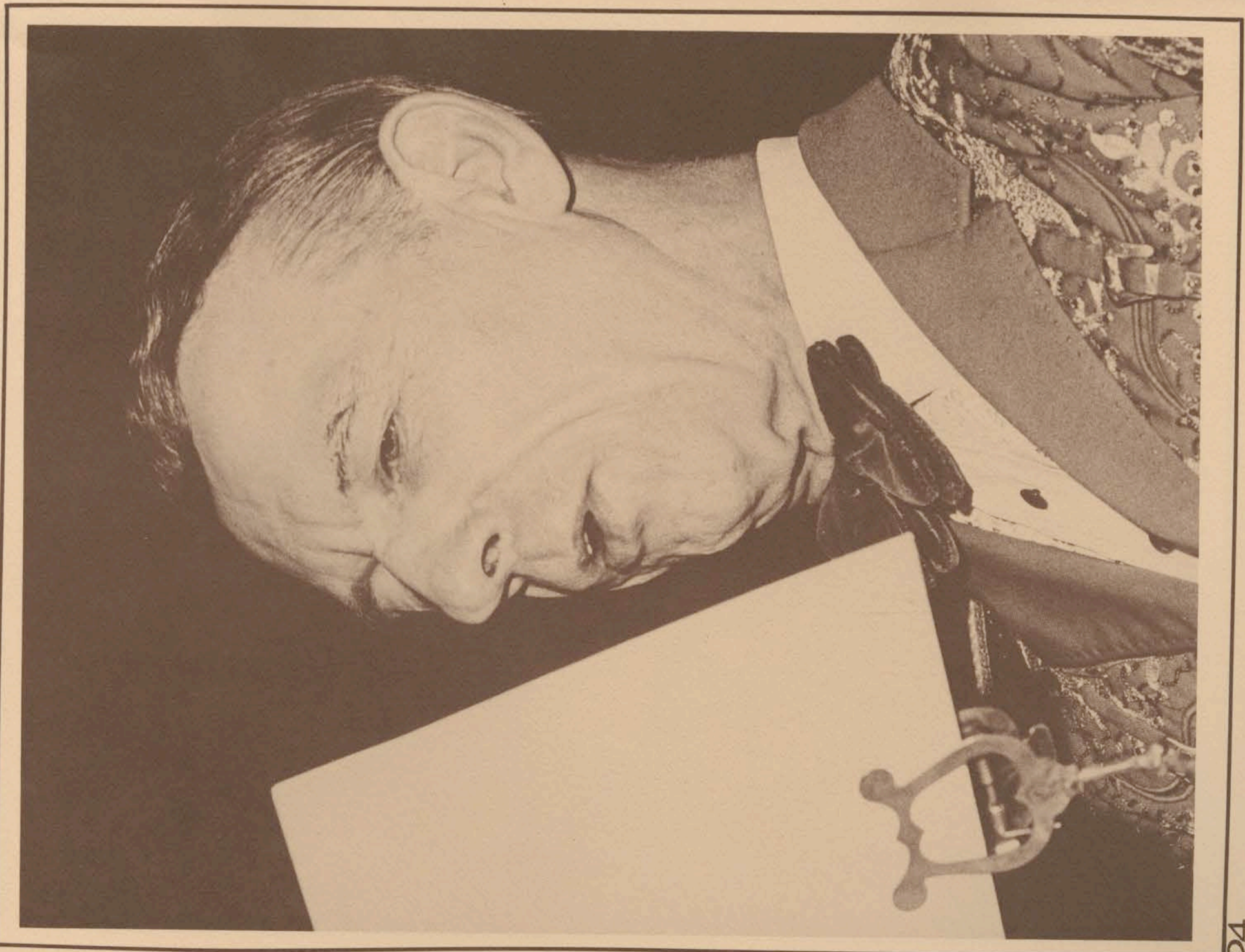
concerned with catching the mood and feeling of the whole area," explained Harold Baldwin.

The Opry-related photos used in COLLAGE are only a small excerpt of a collection of more than 100 taken by Baldwin who spent more than two years working on the project. Harold Baldwin, associate professor of industrial arts, presented this collection at the Parthenon in Nashville in April, 1972. •









That Old-time Music

● Excerpt II by Charles K. Wolfe

Tennessee's recording industry has grown to such an extent that the very name Tennessee has become virtually synonymous with country music throughout the world. But the modest beginnings of the vast industry can be traced back to a handful of far-sighted men who traveled the state in the 1920s in battered touring cars, setting up portable recording studios in hotel rooms, local dance halls and lodges, and recording on fragile 78 rpm records. Then called "old-time music" and "blues songs," it was without qualification genuine folk music and a main genesis for the musical forms which dominate America today. Early talent scouts, the musicians they discovered, and the music they helped to develop is one of the most colorful but neglected periods of Tennessee's cultural history.

At the beginning of the 1920s, there was no such thing as country music or blues, as far as the major record companies were concerned. The record industry was booming, but its sales were aimed at the affluent upper and upper-middle-class buyers, who preferred light opera, parlor songs, and semi-jazz orchestras like Waring's Pennsylvanians, Paul Whiteman's band or Zez Confrey's orchestra. The vast majority of the American public didn't know about country music or blues, but might have considered them sinful, decadent forms if they had.

By 1925, however, two events had conspired to change this: radio and the development of the electrical recording process. The development of radio and radio networks caused record sales to plummet disastrously; Victor sales, for instance, fell by over half between 1921 and 1925. Why should a person pay to hear music on records when he could hear music of the same quality free over the airwaves? Thus record companies, in order to survive, had to look more closely at some markets they had hitherto spurned; two of these were the large black market for country blues (i.e., blues songs structured around stringed instruments instead of band instruments) and the market for hillbilly and old-time music (as country

music was then called).

Both types of music were deemed unacceptable by many radio stations; Nashville's WSM "barn dance," as the Opry was then called, was the exception rather than the rule. The record companies had discovered, quite by accident in 1924, that a large record market for both types of music existed, primarily in the South. Thus by 1927 most major record companies had created specialized series of recordings for distribution in the South. Most companies had a "race series" for blues and the black audience, and an "old-time" series for the Southern lower and middle-class white audience. Victor called its hillbilly series "Old Familiar Tunes and Novelties."

The second event that facilitated the recording blues and old-time music was the development, around 1926, of the electrical recording process. Recording companies quickly learned that Southern audiences wanted the genuine product, not some New York Tin Pan Alley imitation. Blues and hillbilly music had to be authentic in order to sell at all. Since many of the skilled folk performers who appealed to these audiences were not to be found in New York or Chicago, and since many did not care to leave their jobs and families to journey north to audition or record, the obvious solution was for the record companies to go to them.

When recordings were made by the old acoustical process, one needed a lot of bulky studio equipment, including an enormous horn to record into, and transporting a studio was a major task. With the development of the electrical recording process came not only better sound quality, but also less equipment. After 1926 it was possible to fit everything needed to make records into the trunk of a 1927 touring car. Two men could set up a temporary studio in a matter of hours.

From 1927 to 1930 various "talent scouts," equipped with portable recording machines and a couple of engineers, toured yearly through the South in search of talent; they hunted up new performers and re-recorded proven artists



“The modest beginnings of the vast industry can be traced back to a handful of far-sighted men who traveled the state in the 1920s in battered touring cars, . . .”

on location. This sort of field recording was in as many as 15 states in the South and Midwest, including Georgia, Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, North and South Carolina, Missouri, Indiana, Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio, Arkansas and Kansas.

During the peak period of these recordings, 1927-30 (the Depression curtailed them considerably), Atlanta was the town most frequently visited. Nashville of the 1920s, it was the major center for early hillbilly and country music recording. The first genuine hillbilly recordings were made in Atlanta in 1923 by Fiddlin' John Carson. The second most popular recording site was Memphis, which was visited no less than 11 times during these four years with Dallas and New Orleans ranking third and fourth respectively.

Tennessee is extremely well represented in these early folk recordings. Five towns in Tennessee hosted recording sessions in the 1920s: Memphis, Johnson City, Bristol, Knoxville and Nashville. Memphis was the main recording center in Tennessee, with both Victor and Columbia recording extensively there. Next in popularity was the Bristol-Johnson City area, which hosted five trips during this period. Both Victor and Columbia recorded in the area, Victor working out of Bristol and Columbia out of Johnson City. Knoxville hosted two or three trips, and Nashville had one lone visit from Victor in 1928.

Today blues and country music are two vastly distinct musical forms appealing to two vastly different audiences. The gulf which separates them was not quite as wide in the 1920s. Many famous white musicians, such as the Carter Family, Jimmie Rodgers and Riley Puckett, were influenced by black blues singers, and many black musicians (especially around the Johnson City area) became adept at performing their own brand of hillbilly music.

The talent scouts that engineered the on-location recording sessions did not make too much distinction between white and black music, often recording both types on the same day, in the same session. In one instance, the Allen Brothers, a famous white singing team

from Chattanooga, recorded a song called “Salty Dog” and the recording company, listening to the record and thinking the group was black, released the record in its race series. The Allen Brothers promptly sued the company. Even though there was a good deal of mutual influence between blacks and whites, it was an influence that could not be formally acknowledged.

A brief survey of the various recording sessions in Tennessee indicates the extent to which Tennessee artists dominated some of these folk music forms. Two men, Ralph Peer (for Victor) and Frank Walker (for Columbia) supervised most of these sessions in Tennessee.

Peer had earlier worked for Columbia Records and Okeh Records and had built up hillbilly and blues catalogues for them. Peer supervised the pioneer recording by Fiddlin' John Carson in 1923. Peer was later to become one of the giants of the country music industry through his founding of a song-publishing empire which exists today as the Peer-Southern complex. In 1927 the Victor Talking Machine Company (now known as RCA Victor) hired Peer to find new talent in the hillbilly and country blues field. In February Peer and two engineers set out on the first of their Southern tours, during which he supervised sessions in Memphis, Nashville and Bristol.

Frank Walker began working for Columbia records in 1921 and discovered Gid Tanner and the Skillet Lickers, one of the most famous of the old-time bands. Walker recored a great deal in Georgia but made several important trips into Tennessee. He recalled selling 60,000 copies of a record about the Scopes-Evolution trial on the courthouse steps during the trial in Dayton, Tennessee. Walker would frequently advertise in the local papers for talent before he came into a town to record, attracting such groups as the Bowman Brothers and the Teneva Ramblers, the band that originally backed up Jimmie Rodgers.

The first commercial recording session held in Tennessee is believed to have taken place in Memphis in February, 1927. This was one of Ralph Peer's first stops, and he recorded

“The true dawn of country music was not to occur at Nashville, but a sleepy little border town some 300 miles to the east.”

some 34 sides--all by black artists. Peer apparently visited Memphis ahead of the recording crew and consulted with Charlie Williamson, a local jazz band leader and one of Peer's many contacts. On his recommendation, Peer auditioned a group called the Memphis Jug Band. Peer thought the group had market potential, and they were the first artists recorded on the morning of February 24, 1927, in a temporary studio set up in the McCall Building. It was one of Peer's better moves. This four-member band turned out to be probably the most famous blues band in history.

Their success was in no small way responsible for Victor's decision to make Memphis their foremost blues recording center in the next four years. Later many white hillbilly artists also recorded in Memphis (the Carter Family recorded their famous “Worried Man Blues” there), but the first session was composed exclusively of blues singers, gospel groups and famous folk preachers. For the next four years, Memphis served as a major recording center, attracting talent from not only Tennessee, but also Mississippi, Arkansas and Kentucky.

A year later, after finishing a mammoth Memphis session that lasted over two months, Peer and his crew stopped over in Nashville on their way to Atlanta. In October 1928 they made the first commercial recordings to originate from Nashville. The session was set up in the old YMCA building and attracted many performers then playing on the Nashville radio stations.

By this time, the success of WSM's Grand Ole Opry barn dance stimulated two rival barn dance programs on Nashville stations WLAC and WBAW. For a time, one barn dance show was Thursday nights, a second Friday nights and a third (the WSM Opry) on Saturday nights. Many of the shows used the same musicians and bands.

Although many of the Opry greats such as Uncle Dave Macon, Sam and Kirk McGee, Uncle Jimmie Thompson, Dr. Humphrey Bate and his Possum Hunters, and Obed Pickard, the “one-man orchestra,” had already traveled elsewhere to record, many Nashville bands were

anxious to try their hand at record-making. The original Nashville sound was born on Monday, October 1, 1928. The first records made in Nashville to be released to the general public were by the Gully Jumpers, a band led by Paul Womack from White's Creek, Tennessee. The record songs were, symbolically enough, “Tennessee Waltz” backed with “The Little Red Caboose Behind the Train,” released on Victor V-40067. This version of “Tennessee Waltz,” however, is not the popular version known today.

Other bands recording in this first session included the Crook Brothers String Band, which still plays on the Opry. Herman Crook, the leader, recalls the recording session: “There were no royalties in those days. We were paid a flat fee--usually around \$25--for the session.” Other bands from Nashville included the Binkley Brothers Clodhoppers, the Poplins Woods Tennessee String Band, Theron Hale and his daughters, Blind Joe Mangun and Fred Shriber and De Ford Baily, country music's first black star and harmonica soloist for the Opry.

Unfortunately, many of these 69 sides were never released for public sale and may yet reside in Victor's vaults, unheard since 1928. Only 36 sides were ever released by Victor. The session was probably considered a commercial failure, for no one returned to Nashville to record until after World War II. America in 1928 was not quite ready for the actual “Nashville sound.”

The true dawn of country music was not to occur at Nashville, but a sleepy little border town some 300 miles to the east. At Bristol, Tennessee, in a studio set up about 20 feet from the Tennessee-Virginia line, Peer recorded, in 1927, four artists who were to revolutionize hillbilly music and move it away from a music oriented to string bands and instrumental sounds to a music oriented to individuals and vocal music. These artists were Jimmie Rodgers and the Carter Family.

Peer, his wife and two recording engineers arrived in Bristol July 21 or 22, 1927, and set up a temporary studio. According to an interview Peer gave at the time, Bristol was chosen

"By 1930 and the Depression, Tennessee had made its mark as a fertile source for both black and white folk music."

as a recording site because "in no section of the South have the pre-war melodies and old mountaineer songs been better preserved than in the mountains of East Tennessee and Southwest Virginia. . ." Peer began the session by recording his established "star" performer, Pop Stoneman and his family. (The present-day Stonemens, the famous bluegrass-country group, are children and grandchildren of Pop's; Pop himself died only recently.) Peer had hoped that word of his recording would spread, and new talent would show up. But day after day passed and few people came in; a couple of the local church choirs wanted to try out, and Peer accommodated them. Then he hit on the idea of publicizing his efforts; he invited the editors of the local paper, the **Bristol News Bulletin**, to attend one of the sessions. The editor came and watched Peer record a number by the Stoneman Family and wrote a front-page story about it for the afternoon edition. Peer made sure the editor included the fact that Stoneman had received \$3,600 last year in recording royalties, and that even sidemen on the records got \$25 a day. The story worked like magic. The next day Peer was deluged with long-distance phone calls from the surrounding region, and people arrived in Bristol on foot, by car, by train, and by horse and buggy.

One of the calls was from a younger singer in Asheville named Jimmie Rodgers. Rodgers said he was a singer with a stringband and felt he was the kind of singer Peer was looking for; Peer told him to bring his band in next week for an audition.

On Monday two women and a man showed up; they were from Maces Springs, Virginia, and called themselves the Carter Family. Peer let them cut four sides, including "Bury Me Beneath the Weeping Willow" and "The Storms are on the Ocean." He was so impressed that he invited them back on Tuesday to cut two more sides. Thus the famous Carter Family was launched into a career that still flourishes today.

On Thursday Peer encountered Jimmie Rodgers. Rodgers, his wife and daughter, sister-in-law, and band (then known as the Jimmie Rodgers Entertainers) had barnstormed their

way to Bristol, arriving late Wednesday night. Rodgers and the band had been rehearsing the famous "T for Texas, T for Tennessee" song and planned to record it. But Rodgers and the band got into an argument Thursday morning, and as a result they decided to record separately. The band renamed themselves the Tenneva Ramblers (in deference to the fact that the studio was on State Street, on the Tennessee-Virginia line) and made three records. This band, led by the Grant Brothers, continued to be one of the most successful string bands in the area and recorded several other times.

Rodgers then took a pocketful of fan letters he had received on radio and presented himself before Peer that afternoon, wanting to record as a soloist. Peer was not overly impressed, and he laughed when he first heard Rodgers yodel. But he let him cut two songs, "The Soldier's Sweetheart," and "Sleep, Baby, Sleep," an old lullaby. Mrs. Rodgers then came up to the studio and was horrified that Jimmie had not cut his "hit" number, "T for Texas." They begged Peer to let him cut it, but Peer refused; he thought the two songs he had were adequate sample of Rodgers' voice. He did sign Rodgers to a contract and told him he would contact him if he wanted more records.

Rodgers and his family spent the winter in Washington, D.C., hoping to hear from Peer; he didn't, and Rodgers journeyed to Victor headquarters in Camden, New Jersey, in November where Peer let him cut some more sides, including "T for Texas." It was this latter session that really started Rodgers' career, for this record became a smash hit.

With the Bristol session, old-time music started to become country music, and folk music of Tennessee began to become popular music. By 1930 and the Depression, Tennessee had made its mark as a fertile source for both black and white folk music. It had provided many of the roots for two of the most significant strains of popular music in twentieth century America. ●

THE FOXFIRE BOOK in Review

● A Focus by Anne W. Nunamaker

W. Nunamaker

Within his first six weeks of teaching, Eliot Wigginton knew that he needed more than two degrees from Cornell and a protective lectern to cope with the bored but ingenious students in his high school English classes. His confiscation of water-pistols and paper airplanes was increasing as quickly as his supply of chalk and thumbtacks had disappeared. Even his lectern was scorched from a student's cigarette lighter--during class.

In his brief introduction to **The Foxfire Book**, the teacher-editor admits that he was boring his students unmercifully by giving them assignments but no feelings of success. So, after a bit of educational soul-searching, he pushed Silas Marner back into his desk and said, "How would you like to throw away the text and start a magazine?" And that's how **Foxfire** began six years ago in Rabun Gap, Georgia.

The Foxfire Book, a compilation of articles from **Foxfire** magazine, has reached the racks of most college and university bookstores and has even begun to appear on some required reading lists. Published by Doubleday less than a year ago, the anthology heralds "hog dressing, log cabin building, mountain crafts and foods, planting by the signs, snake lore, hunting tales, faith healing, moonshining and other affairs of plain living."

The simple paperback cover which lists its homespun contents does not suggest its significance to college students--or explain its authorship by high school students in the 240-enrollment Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School of northern Georgia. To share the critical enthusiasm over **Foxfire**, we have to go back to the ninth and tenth grade classes of Eliot Wigginton.

Wigginton's idea was to involve all of his students in what would become a quarterly magazine. And the first issue was the true test of the idea, for the concept had to be developed by the class. What would be the contents? The name? Where would they find financial support? One resource for content was the community itself. The students went home and talked to their parents and relatives

(some of them for the first time) to discover the folkways, the crafts and the traditions of the Appalachian countryside. Each student submitted ideas and then voted on the name, choosing "Foxfire," a tiny organism that glows in the dark and is found in the shaded coves of the mountains. But the question of money was the hardest to answer because the school could provide no support. Perhaps this was a blessing in disguise, Wigginton reflects, for it meant that the magazine had to sell, and this financial reality forced the staff to emphasize folklore over poetry.

The Rabun Gap students raised funds for the first issue, but continuing publication was not so simple. The staff went broke at least twice, but each time they failed they came back--a little stronger than before. Both individuals and foundations began to recognize the young journalists' endeavor, and by 1972, But the most important element that contributed to the publication's success was "the kids." The magazine was run by high school students, Wigginton emphasizes. And the students will go to college with the knowledge that "they can be forces for constructive change, knowing that they can act responsibly and effectively rather than being always acted upon."

One of the favorite contacts of the **Foxfire** editors was 85-year old Aunt Arie whose log cabin was "like a time machine" taking one back to another century. "She put on no front, condemned no one, but still said what she thought. She told how she used to live, but without saying how many miles she walked to school each day." Thus, the student editor introduced Aunt Arie and prepared the reader to join him in recreated world of the mountain woman:

"It's a whole lot easier today. I've hoed corn many a day fer a quarter. Many a day. An' we used t'pick huckleberries, me'n m'brother did, an' swap two gallons a' huckleberries fer one gallon a' syrup. Had t'do somethin' t'make a livin'. But we always had plenty t'eat. We always had plenty a' what we had. We didn't have no great stuff that cost a lot... Well, we



•Photo by Cheryl Bible
work. We can't go back now, but we can listen to what they have to say and learn from it . . ."

"Their world certainly contrasts sharply with ours of TV, cars, and mothers who do all the

just didn't have 'nothin't'pay fer't, an' we always tried t'pay as we went. You know, if y'get goin' in debt, next thing y'know you can't pay it t'save yore life...Used t'be I didn't have enough money t'mail a letter with..."

The high school journalists discovered that their ancestors had brought little more to the mountains of Georgia and the Carolinas than "a few tools and a great deal of ingenuity." But the craft required for hewing, notching and jointing, splitting and riving, drilling and dressing the logs that provided the earlier dwellings is recorded in **The Foxfire Book**.

"Their world certainly contrasts sharply with ours of TV, cars, and mothers who do all the work. We can't go back now, but we can listen to what they have to say and learn from it," one young editor observed. And the teenagers listened to their mountain neighbors. They heard what an old chair maker, another-wise reticent mountaineer, had to say about his craft; and they recorded his careful directions with illustrations and photographs. "Take this one with you now if you want, I believe it's a good chair," he told them as they hopped into their jeep to drive 35 miles over rough roads back to Rabun Gap.

The Foxfire Book also includes recipes for cracklin' bread, sweet potato pie, and muscadine wine. Its instructions tell how to pickle green tomatoes and watermelon rind and to dry okra and leather breeches beans. The "food-lore" chapter even explains how to bury cabbage and potatoes so "they'll keep all winter."

The high-school investigators present two opinions on planting by the signs: that of the true mountaineers who believed in "a time to plant and a time to pluck up that which is planted," and that of the "educated people" who held college degrees and a scientific knowledge of agriculture. The students tried not to judge the conflicting positions but couldn't resist a comment: "Younger people, now exposed to a different type of education, are turning to new ways of doing things and often discarding the old in the process. Sometimes this is good. But with planting by the signs, there remains a lingering mystery that refuses to be silenced."

The Foxfire Book uncovers a plethora of past mysteries: the lore of home remedies, the pragmatic aspects of hunting, the people's awe of snakes, and the manufacture of illicit whiskey. But "moonshining as a fine art" had disappeared, and there were several reasons for its decline, the students note. The age

of aspirin had reduced the need for corn whiskey as an ingredient in home remedies. Increasing affluence had cut out the economic advantage of home brew. And the younger generation, not following in its parents' footsteps, had simply decided that there were easier ways to make money. "And they were right," **Foxfire** affirms.

Still, a series of photographs and illustrations reports "how the best of the best was made." But the traditional rivalry between the moonshiner and the local sheriff had changed. Now, the Federal agents had largely taken over the detection duty and the entrepreneur replaced the self-sustaining moonshiner. One contact told the interviewers, "People used to take great pride in their work, but the pride has left and the dollar's come in by th'way."

But **Foxfire's** writers took pride in "preserving some particle of that art" as they brought together the then and now of their geographic area. Their last venture into the memories of Appalachia recalls a mountain man who was "adamant about holding onto an independence he savored." The rustic philosopher believed "everybody ought t'learn how to...live off th'land again," and offered an admonition to any skeptical reader: "People'll look at those pictures and say, 'What is that crazy old man a'doin'?' You tell'em I'm puttin' up 'maters for th'winter, that's what...And I'm proud I can. Let'em laugh. I'll be eatin' good this winter and laughin' back."

Perhaps there was skeptical laughter when Eliot Wigginton stepped from behind his charred lectern and turned his disparate English classes into a journalistic experiment, which he later described as "the answer to student boredom and restlessness" and as "part of the answer to drugs and dropouts." When the students channeled their creative energy into a study of the minds and manners of the Georgia countryside, someone must have said, "What are those crazy kids a'doin'?" But the teacher and his students let'em laugh. Now, with the publication of **The Foxfire Book**, the journalistic venturers, joined by admiring critics, benevolent foundations and delighted readers, are all laughin' back. •

Crafts(man) for All Seasons

● A Feature by Connie Dowell

Rainbow-colored spools line the walls of the artist's studio, a small room crowded with weaving material ranging from an antique spinning wheel to a huge loom.

Roy Mills, assistant professor of art at Middle Tennessee State University, may be found on the third floor of the Fine Arts Building until late at night working on one of his projects. Not only an expert craftsman at weaving, Mills is an accomplished sculptor and potter.

His most recent project, a 13-piece collection of both flat and dimensional woven forms, said to be the largest-scaled endeavor of its kind in Tennessee, decorates the restaurant complex at Paris Landing State Park.

"Spider catchers is what one janitor calls them," explained Mills, "probably because he has to vacuum them just as you do a carpet since both are made from acrylic thread. Most of the local people don't seem to like my work--they think it is too strange."

In the shades of gold, orange and a touch of green, the 9-foot forms had clustered in the restaurant's stairwell. A 12 x 15-foot tapestry-like weaving covers one entire wall of the temporary building at the park in Buchanan.

"I completed all the Paris Landing weavings here," remembered Mills, referring to his studio which is no larger than 12 x 30 feet. "Although it was crowded, I was able to become more intimate with my work."

His interest in the arts is not limited to his studio. Mills has done much archeological field work studying Mayan art in Central America, Aztec and Toltec art in Mexico and English church architecture.

"I became interested in weaving when I saw the beautiful double brocade the Mayans were doing on primitive looms supported by huts and trees," he related; "I'm planning a trip to Sweden to study Scandanavian weaving techniques for this summer."

In 1968, Mills served as president of the Tennessee Artist-Craftsman's Association, a group concerned with promotion of crafts within the state.

He expressed concern about the unusual Tennessee crafts: "Native mountain crafts like broom making and basket weaving may will be forgotten in the future. We have gathered a collection of first quality crafts for shows which is housed at East Tennessee State University as well as a slide show at the University of Tennessee."

Looking about, Mills apologized for the clutter of his studio, explaining that he is well over 50 (or at the peak of his maturity, in his words) and finds better ways in which to invest his time than cleaning.

"I'm never bored enough with myself to have to resort to television for company because there is always a new problem to solve in my work," noted Mills.

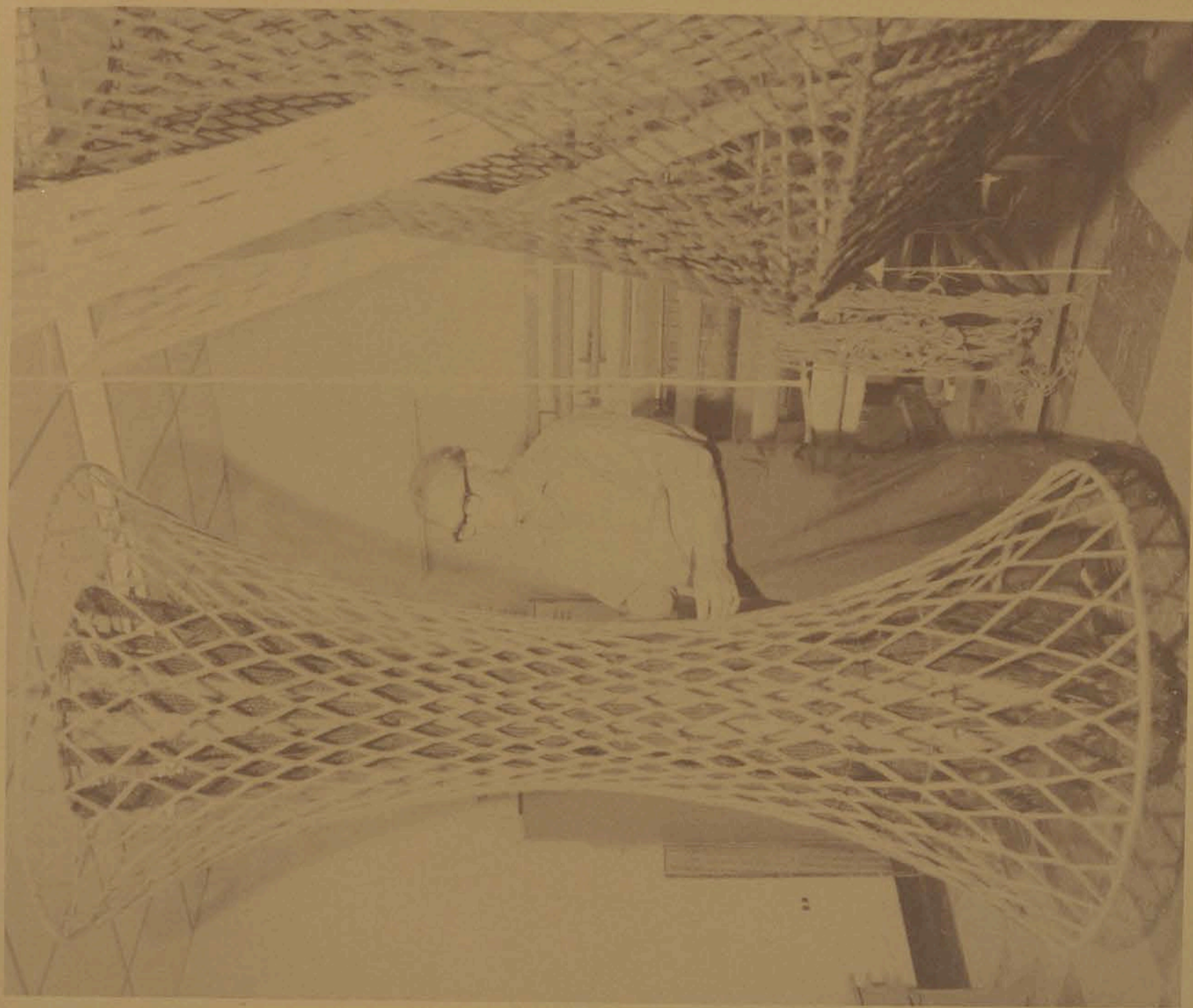
A student dropped in to use his phone, and Mills snatched part of his candy bar as payment. "This place is Grand Central--people coming and going..." complained Mills with a touch of phony crankiness while obviously enjoying himself.

Scraps of paper--ideas for new creations--are pinned to his bulletin board. "I'm always looking for little things that most people overlook," Mills explained, adding that he is probably too inquisitive for his own good.

Pointing to a partially finished tiffany-style lampshade, Mills remembered his problems learning the tedious process: "I finally found an old man who would spend a couple of hours of his day teaching me the craft which is usually handed down from father to son. Later, I discovered that the old gentleman's apprenticeship was under Tiffany himself in Boston."

Mills' curiosity hasn't seemed to fade any with age. "A year before I began to teach weaving, I didn't know how to dress a loom," he chuckled. "I found a used loom and began to slug it out. I learned the process from the beginning--all the way back to the sheep." The antique spinning wheel in his studio is not just for decoration!

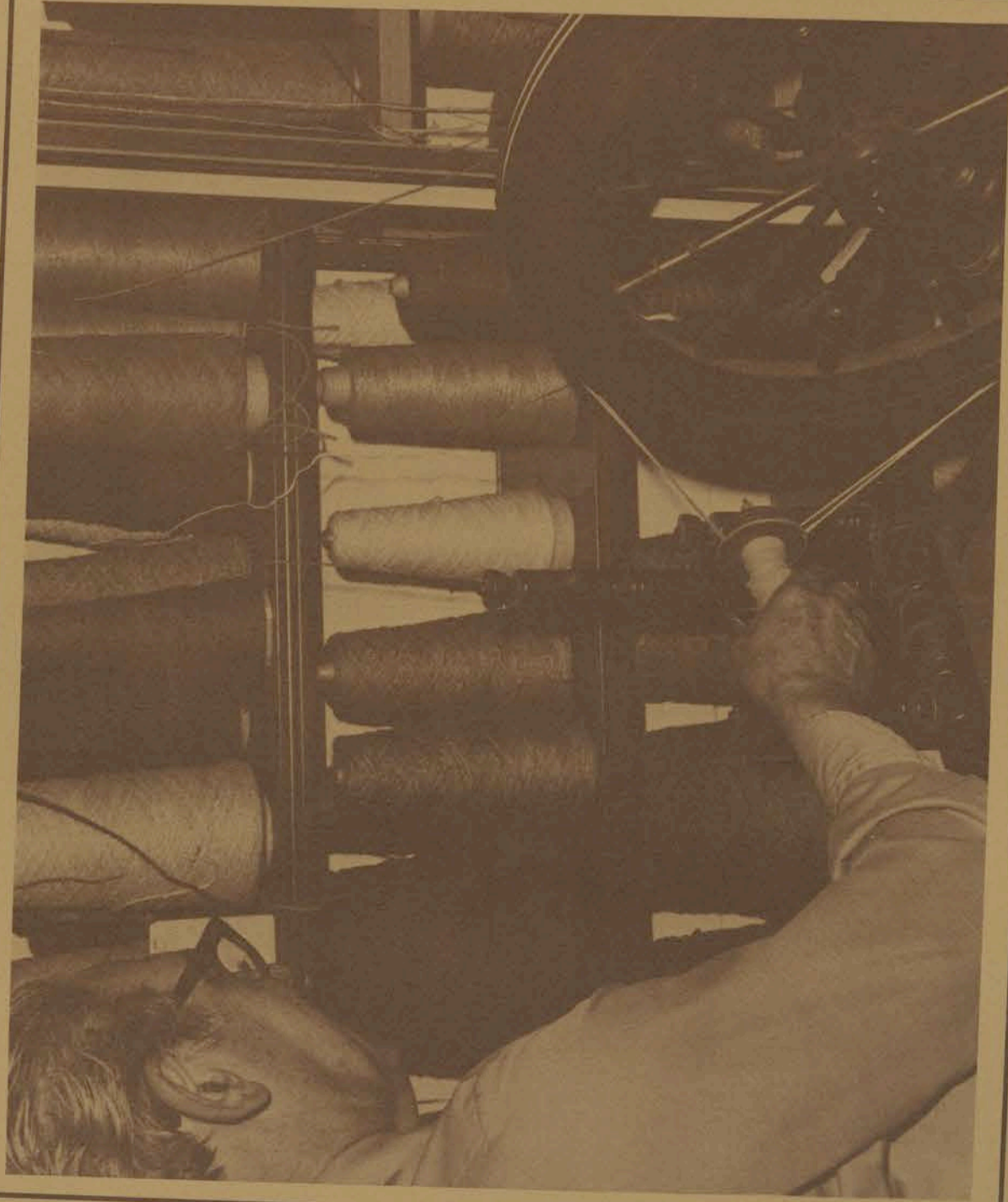
A music student wandered by to ask Mills for some yarn to use as strings on his instruments



● Photo by Linda Sissom
Roy Mills works on a woven sculpture, part of a 13-piece collection which now hangs at the restaurant complex of Paris Landing State Park at Buchanan.

for a class experiment on sound quality. The professor graciously offered several blends and sizes of yarn.

After Mills mastered weaving techniques, he became interested in offering a class in weaving for MTSU students. Unfortunately, money was not available to buy looms which cost about \$400 each. When the Veteran's Administration Hospital in Murfreesboro discontinued its weaving program in 1967, Mills, with the help of art students, recovered the 20 looms which the VA had junked. The craftsman worked for a semester to reassemble



• Photo by Linda Sissom

In shades of gold, orange and a touch of green, the nine-foot sculptures were completed in

Mills' small studio. They were dubbed "spider catchers" by the janitors who cleaned them.

12 of them.

"At the time I started to work on the looms, they were little more than a pile of lumber. I had to soak all the metal parts to remove the rust," he related. These 12 looms are still used for the Weaving I, Weaving II and Weaving Problems classes which Mills teaches.

Mills' curiosity and vitality have led him in many directions. Weaver, sculptor, potter, art historian, instructor, and stained-glass craftsman, Roy Mills is a magician of many media. •



When he became interested in weaving several years ago, Mills learned the process all the way back to the sheep. He even reconstructed

the looms on which he now teaches weaving courses.

• Photo by Linda Sissom

Looking Back

● A Reflection by Ralph W. Hyde

Several months ago I had occasion to remark to a friend that people of my generation (that is, those old enough to remember the Great Depression and to be in military service in World War II) were the last to be rooted in the "folk," at least in Middle Tennessee. By the term "folk" I meant people who shared a homogeneous and largely traditional culture, village or rural, much of whose knowledge was a heritage passed down from their forebears. It is my opinion that the great dividing line between college-age students at MTSU and persons of my generation was World War II. In short, I am more of my Mother's world (she was born in 1891) than of my nephew's world (he was born in 1952). I was born in the final year of World War I, and though that war was horrendous enough, it did not mark the sort of break between my mother's generation and me as World War II did between my generation and that of my nephew.

Let me illustrate. A few years ago I asked my nephew if he could take a jack-knife and make a whistle out of hickory or pawpaw, both of which are abundant on the farm in Robertson County on which we both grew up.

"No," he answered.

I asked him if he knew how to make a sling-shot, using forked dogwood, rubber from an inner tube, and the leather tongue of an old shoe. He said he did not.

Then I asked if he knew how to make a popgun out of elderberry by expelling the pith and making a propelling rod by whittling a dogwood stick.

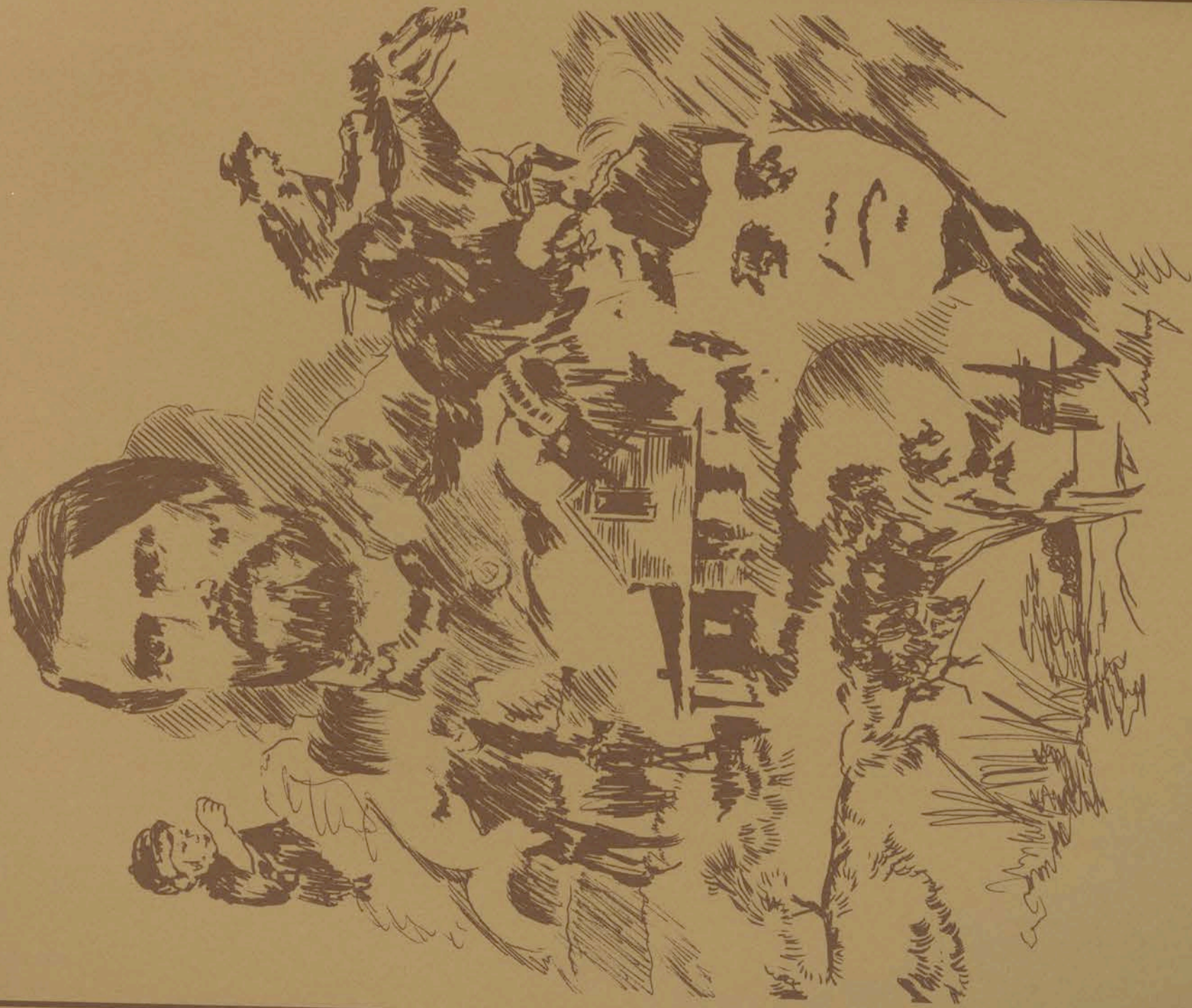
"No," he replied, shifting uncomfortably. "Dad said he would show me how to, but he never has."

This conversation took me aback. Physically the farm and even the house, in which I also had been reared, had not changed all that much, though it is true that his father (my brother, who now owns the homeplace and is a working farmer) has had a tractor throughout my nephew's memory, and no mules. The house itself, throughout my nephew's memory has had electricity and a bathroom, but in my childhood and adolescence the farm had only mules, "coal

oil" lamps and a not-so-quiet privy a hundred feet behind the house.

So there was a difference between physical amenities of the house and farm during my growing up there and my nephew's growing up there a generation later, but the greater difference was that the technological revolution had wholly caught up with him, while it had simply begun to intrude upon my own life there a generation ago. We had an automobile, though no telephone, no bathroom, and no electricity until I had graduated from high school; then we had a radio, though no television. We raised on the farm a substantial portion of the food we ate—chickens, eggs, hogs, cows for milk and beef, wheat for flour, corn for meal and to feed the animals, and all sorts of garden products: potatoes, tomatoes, beans and even peaches, apples, cherries and pears. We had to purchase, of course, most of our clothes, though Mother sewed shirts, overalls, etc. We bought school supplies, salt, pepper, spices, but some of our purchases were made by bartering eggs and chickens for supplies at the village general store a mile away.

Now all of that has changed. My brother, who raises tobacco and beef cattle, has told me that he finds it more economical to buy a quarter of beef and keep it in the freezer than to kill and butcher his own. His son, my nephew, went to the consolidated high school in Springfield, Tennessee, rather than to the little country high school from which both his father and I graduated. So my nephew grew up in a cash-oriented and urban-oriented community quite unlike the one I grew up in. There was, in my high school days, a very considerable chasm between country and town. We all felt it keenly. The town boys looked down on us as uncouth rustics; we hated and envied them for their civilized ways. No greater triumph could occur than for our little country high school to beat Springfield in a basketball game; no greater humiliation could occur for the town boys or girls to be thus beaten. But now the country has moved toward the town; the marked difference in the culture of the two has largely disappeared.



● Drawing by Gerald Moody

When I remarked earlier that my mother's generation is closer to my own than my nephew's, I did not wish to imply that her world and mine were identical. Several months ago my mother told me that when buggies started using rubber tires it was such a revolutionary development that older folk declared the introduction of rubber-tired buggies would bankrupt the country, would ruin the young folks. The country couldn't survive. She fixed the date as 1910 as nearly as she could remember, and only just now I have been looking into a reprint of a Sears, Roebuck Catalogue for 1908. I have checked every picture of a buggy in the several pages listing them, and all have steel tires, even the sportiest. Her date of 1910 is probably about right for the introduction of buggies with rubber tires. So older folks of that day thought young folks were going to the dogs, just as many older folks today think today's youth are going to the dogs.

In spite of the differences, her world was in most respects more like mine in my growing-up days than my world was like my nephew's in his growing-up days.

Okay, what sort of world was it back then? What did we have that my nephew never had? Whatever we came up with is not necessarily to be interpreted as being superior to my nephew's world, just different.

Religion played an important role in our everyday life. One went to Sunday school and church every Sunday morning without fail. If there was a Sunday evening service, one went to that. If there was a Wednesday or Thursday evening prayer meeting service, one usually went to that, too. Every evening there was a short Bible reading in the home and frequently family prayers after. Biblical phrases from the King James Version were naturally a part of my parents' speech, "spare the rod and spoil child" being a favorite of my parents, though neither was particularly prone to administer violence.

The big event of the year was the protracted meeting at the local church, lasting about ten days and sometimes two weeks. The minister was frequently a well-known evangelist from Nashville, or sometimes even Florida or Texas. A few days before the meeting began, a singing teacher might come, as an advance man, into the community and give singing lessons either in the church house or in private homes, using the shaped note system in which the singer learns the tonal value of the notes, then sings the notes (fa-sol-la) through the song,

then sings the words. For people who knew no music and who would not use a piano in worship it was necessary to learn enough music to avoid sounding like mules braying.



• Drawing by Gerald Moody

The protracted meeting, also called a revival, was a religious, social and cultural event, all rolled into one. Sinners were brought to Christ, urged on by the exhorting ministers and the singing groups with hypnotic effect. Backsliders were brought back into the fold. The meeting allowed friends and acquaintances to see one another; boys and girls could court in an approved context, walking or riding together to church, sitting together, and walking or driving home together. And as a cultural event the protracted meeting was a sort of substitute for a Metropolitan Opera, with good singers from another community sometimes coming to perform.

Once when I was perhaps ten years old I was at a great dinner-on-the-grounds singing at a nearby Methodist church. A featured singer had been brought in and he sang with great power and, I thought beautifully. I heard a man say to another, "He's got a million dollar throat and a ten cent head." When I asked my parents what the man meant, they told me, reluctantly, that the singer was a notable drunkard as well as a great singer. I was considerably shocked.

The puritan ethic was strong in my parents. I have heard my father, long since dead, say that it is better for one to throw rocks over a fence, then cross over and throw them back again, than to be idle, for "an idle mind is the devil's workshop." He was Sabbatarian enough to be horrified at fishing on Sunday, nor was he indulgent toward fishing at any time, for one could be better employed. The worst sort of trifter was a fiddler, for reasons I have never fully comprehended, though I suppose since a fiddler was associated with dances, that was sufficient reason to despise him. In older times the fiddle was called the Devil's box; so perhaps a fiddler was the Devil's henchman. But perhaps it is a bit more complicated. A fiddler was likely to be an idler and, to be in form, his fingers had to be supple; so it may be that here again the puritan work ethic was operating: the fiddler did no "real work." Hence he was to be despised.

In a society that took the Bible literally, believed very devoutly in angels and devils (or rather the Devil), and lived more or less close to Nature, it is not surprising that the Bell Witch of Adams, Tennessee, was a popular subject. So far as I know, when I was a child everyone in Robertson County believed in the Witch. Certainly I did. My parents and other adults told stories about Old Kate and Betsy Bell and how the Witch harassed old John Bell

to death. Once I was in Springfield when a cousin of mine who lived there pointed at a young woman.

"See that woman," he said. "She can't never get married."

"Why?" I asked.

"Cause she's a Bell. If a Bell woman gets married, the Witch comes back to haunt her." I shuddered and marveled at the awful curse that had descended upon the Bell family.

Once when I was about twelve years old there was an electric power failure in a nearby community that had electric lights. I know now that a transformer had probably been blown, but at that time it was widely thought to have been the Bell Witch that had caused it. She had stayed a hundred years before that she would return after a hundred years, and the hundred years were up.

And as I recollect tales of the Bell Witch I also recollect a story that was going round the schoolground one spring morning when I was about ten. It must be remembered that air-planes were not nearly so common then as now. The story was that a pilot, flying a small plane, looked behind the cockpit and saw astride the fuselage a small creature black in hue, with a forked tail and cloven feet. He was unquestionably the Devil himself, and though we scoffed a little, we all believed it.

So to a certain extent we believed in apparitions, in "haints," in creatures of an invisible realm capable of intruding from time to time into the visible world. Such superstitions as we believed in were, however, slowly eroded as we advanced in school and learned a smattering of the sciences. But perhaps the most important lesson we learned was that we were part of a greater world community. Civics and geography taught us that. And as we studied--though as little as we could get by with--we played.

Basketball was quite as popular then as now, and the little country high schools which had neither the enrollment nor the money to support football teams often had basketball teams that would go far in state tournaments. Cooper-town High School, which I attended, was for several years one of the best-known schools in the state for its basketball teams, though I do not believe that the school ever won a state tournament. We had no football teams. For those of us who did not play on the basketball team there were other games played on the school grounds: marbles and "town ball." The game of marbles probably needs no explaining though I suppose it is not much played now.

"Town ball" later gave way to baseball, which was its city cousin. It seems odd to say this, considering its name, but "town ball" was certainly suited for a country school. The only piece of equipment that had to be bought was the ball itself, possibly a sponge ball but frequently a ball of hard India rubber. The bat might be a narrow plank or board. No catcher's mitt or leather gloves were used to catch the ball. A healthy whack at an India Rubber ball could send it sailing far beyond the distance a baseball might fly, a distance which, if the playing field were in town, would create a problem of broken windows. In other respects, "town ball" was fairly similar to baseball.

Everyone brought his own lunch, since there was no school cafeteria; and these lunches usually consisted of home-baked biscuit and homemade sausage, fried pies, an apple, homemade teacakes or cookies. Each student had his own drinking cup, at least throughout my years in elementary school. This cup was collapsible and made of metal, though in a few seconds any student could make a paper drinking cup from a sheet of tablet paper--which was also useful to make "airplanes" to sail about the room when Teacher wasn't looking. The cups, of course, were used in the era before drinking fountains, which came with the installation of running water and restrooms in the school buildings. Before the indoor restrooms one of the most distinctive features of the school-ground was the outdoor toilets, which didn't do much for the aroma on a hot day with a wind blowing.

Entertainment and recreation away from school were rather more simple than young folks now engage in and certainly far less expensive. There were moving pictures and automobiles, but it was the rare student who had his own car. He used the family car, if the family had one. Few of us had the spending money beyond a dollar or two, for in the Depression few fathers could afford to indulge their children with much spending money. Consequently, we had to do with little money, and traditional games provided much of our entertainment and recreation.

One of these games I will describe in some detail, for it was certainly folk, or traditional, though at the time we thought little about that aspect. About the time I was a sophomore in high school we gradually ceased to play these games, perhaps being vaguely self-conscious or ashamed of them because they were rural.

In the country there were "lawn parties" in

the summer. Japanese lanterns, illuminated with candles, were hung in trees, and games were played in the flickering light of the lanterns. They were essentially courting or kissing games. "King William" was a game frequently played. Boys and girls would join hands and form a circle about a boy who stood in the center. Those with linked hands walk or skip to the right, counter-clockwise, and sing a verse: King William was King James's son,

From the royal race was run;

Upon his breast he wore a star

Pointing to the ocean far.

Then all addressing the boy in the center:

Go choose you East, go choose you West

Choose the one that you love best;

If (she's) not here, take a part

Choose another with all your heart.

At this point the boy points to a girl, who detaches herself from the others and joins him in center. The group closes the space made by her departure, and continues with linked hands, singing:

Now upon this carpet (i.e., grass) you must kneel,

Sure as the grass grows in the field.

(The boy kneels on the "carpet")

When you rise upon your feet,

Salute your bride with a kiss so sweet.

(The boy kisses the girl)

There are more verses; I have in my files a detailed account of how the game was played eighty years ago in Middle Tennessee, and in that version not only are there more verses but there are also intricate patterns used, with the boy and girl threading in and out among the circling people.

Two points can be made about this play-party song and game. First, the King William and King James of the first verse may be William of Orange who displaced his father-in-law, James II, as king of England in 1688. If so, we can have some notion of the age of the song. However, such an identification is not certain, and, in fact, the song has been collected in versions in which King James becomes King Jamie, King George and so on. The second point is that in a community where dancing was forbidden as sinful the play-party game, itself similar to a dance though with less body contact (except for the kiss, which was formal and ritualistic, anyway), was socially acceptable.

Observe that the play-party game was not only traditional; it was also largely oral, and everyone was a participant. Today many of us are spectators rather than participants.

In those days traditional oral lore was part of our heritage. We grew up with traditional songs such as "Barbara Allen" and "Little Mohee," and fed into the matrix of folk songs were those such as, "Birmingham Jail," "T" for Texas, "T" for Tennessee, and "Lula Wall," which we learned from the 78-rpm recordings of Jimmie Rodgers and the Singing Carter Family, the great transitional performers between pure folk music and the country music of today. We made little distinction between the traditional and the early country music. Both spoke--or sang--to us.

And we repeated tall tales that we had heard, not realizing or caring that such tales are generic in a folk culture. When I was quite small, perhaps six or seven, a neighbor boy three years older than I was telling me about the Stanley Steamer, or the "White Steamer," as we called it. The Stanley Steamer was an early, steam-powered automobile. Neither of us had ever seen one, for they had ceased to be manufactured years before, but they were still talked about in my childhood.

"How fast would it go?" I asked him.

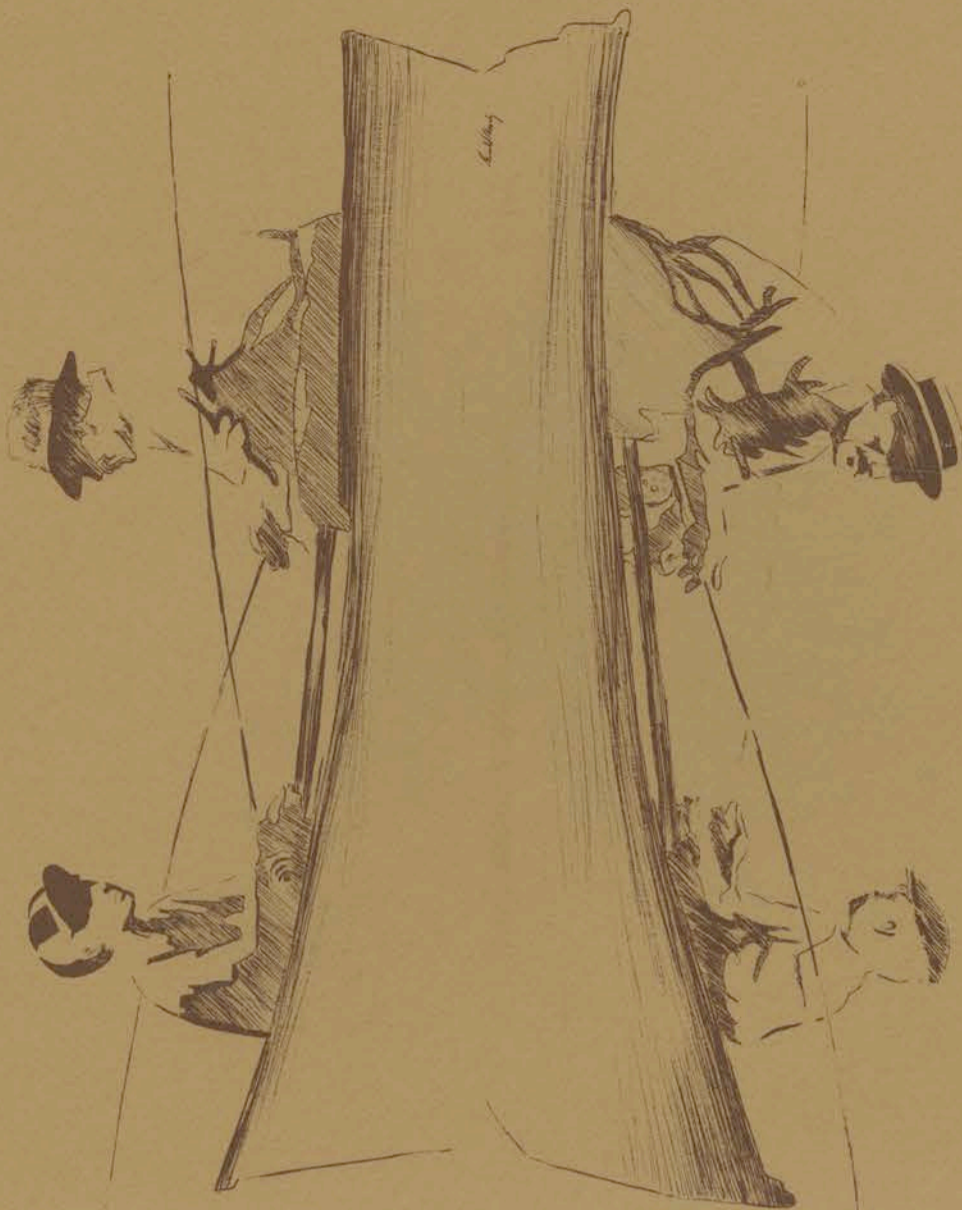
"If you held the throttle wide open for an hour, it would take ten dollars to send a post-card back to where you started from."

And there was a teller of tales who lived in the last century about five miles from where I grew up. His name was Bob Lawrence; he was the grandfather of one of my aunts by marriage. We all knew his stories.

"A cedar rail fence will last a hundred years," he said. "I know. I've tried it many times."

And another: "I loaded my wagon up so heavy the mules couldn't pull it. I thought and I thought. I went to a blacksmith's shop and found two big wheels, twice as big as the rear wheels on my wagon. I took off them little rear wheels and put on the big ones, and, do you know, I had the devil of a time keeping that wagon from running over my mules, 'cause now I was going downhill all the way."

And his biggest whopper, which required a question from an incredulous listener at the proper time: "Did I ever tell you about the time I was chased by a bear? There I was, out picking blackberries, and a bear come at me. I threw down my bucket and took off running."



•Drawing by Gerald Moody

I run through that briar patch, jumping over gullies, running through woods, that there bear breathing down my neck all the time. I run and run, him just behind me, reaching out for me with them big claws. I jumped some more gullies and run through some more briar thickets. I thought I was a goner, for sure, and then I come to the Cumberland River and seen a big cake of ice floating in the river, and I gathered myself together and taken a leap, like a crazy man, and danged if I didn't land on that cake of ice in the river, and that was goodbye to Mr. Bear. That cake of ice saved my life."

Question: "Come on, now. You said that there bear come at you while you was picking blackberries, and then you said you jumped onto a cake of ice in the river. Now explain that!"
"Don't you know! Why, that bear chased me from the middle of July till the middle of January!"

In health and in sickness we had our traditional lore. When I was a small child, the family doctor made his rounds in a buggy, though the automobile was common enough by then. In my recollection, his equipment seems to have consisted of stethoscope and a plentiful supply of pills in two colors, red and white. For some ailments he gave red pills, for others white. He was probably a good psychologist as well and perhaps knew that 95% of all ailments would respond to either the red or the white pill. But parents were amateur doctors; they had to be, in fact, for often a doctor could not be summoned, or else the occasion appeared not to justify the expense of a doctor's call. During the Christmas holidays I asked my mother if she remembered the old remedies. She did, though with some difficulties as to details, for at 81 she, too, lives in a world gone modern. Here are a few of the remedies she used on us:
Sprains - Soak brown paper in vinegar and wrap around the injured part.

A chest cold - Dampen flannel cloth with coal oil, turpentine, grease from mutton (if mutton not available, use tallow from beef). Sleep with flannel on chest. The coal oil and turpentine do the medicating; the grease keeps the coal oil and turpentine from blistering the skin.

Itch - Mix sulphur and lard. Smear over body. Leave on for three days, then take a good bath, change to clean clothes. It was a stigma to have the itch, but one year everyone at school had it. If you think sulphur and lard, mixed and applied to the body and worn for three days, don't stink, you ought to smell a schoolroom full of people thus adorned.

Nettle rash - Mix sulphur and molasses. Eat. Had enough?

She told me other remedies and said they were all efficacious. All of the ingredients, of course, were easily obtained. Her five children have all survived to this day and seem none the worse for having had these remedies applied to them.

A farmer's wife in those days was not only an amateur doctor; she was also skilled in cutting up hogs and cattle that had been butchered, making sausage, lye soap, canning in Mason jars vegetables and fruits for winter, in gardening, in cooking regularly for the family (no TV dinners then!); in washing clothes for the family by boiling in an open kettle, then moving the clothes to washtubs and rubbing them vigorously on a corrugated washboard, and, finally, wringing them out by hand before pinning them to lines in the yard to dry. Then there sometimes came an emergency--a flood or a drought in which crops were endangered--and she would have to help out in the fields.

It was a hard life, and particularly for the farm women, who had few of the labor-saving appliances that are now commonplace. But there were pleasures, too, as I have tried to make clear, though such pleasures as required little or no money, and many of these pleasures were ours by virtue of folk inheritance. On cold winter nights a family might entertain itself by telling riddles, not realizing that some were 500 or 1000 years old, having been handed down generation after generation.

Still, it was a hard life in many ways, and I would not go back to it if I could. The so-called "affluent society" has bemused us all; technology has destroyed much of the old world I grew up in. But sometimes I do wonder if we--all of us--have not lost something precious: a feeling of continuity with the past and of community with our fellowman, a sense of oneness with God and with nature that charged the spirit with serenity, which retreated as technology advanced, until at last it was lost, irrevocably.