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The Little Balkans Review, Winter 1988-89

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Janis DeChicchio

Rod Dutton

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Authors

Gene DeGruson, Shelby Horn, Ted Watts, Janis DeChicchio, Rod Dutton, Al Letner, Quinton Matson, and Robert J. Roberts

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The Little Balkans Review

A Southeast Kansas Literary and Graphics Quarterly

Vol. 5, No. 2 Winter 1988-89

$4.00

Jane Grant

Girard, Kansas
Co-Founder, *The New Yorker*

The

Little Balkans Review

A Southeast Kansas Literary and Graphics Quarterly

Vol. 5 No. 2

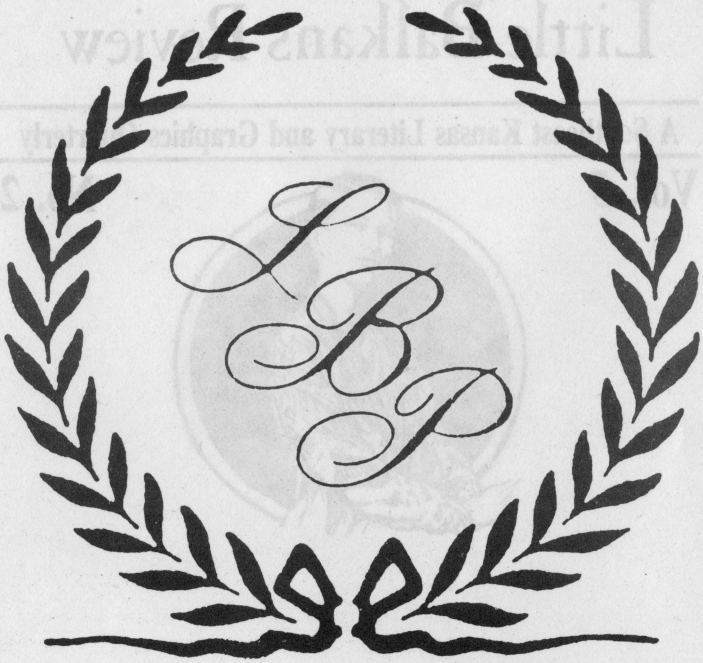
All glory comes from daring to begin.—Eugene F. Ware

The Little Balkans Press, Inc.

601 Grandview Heights Terrace

Pittsburg, Kansas 66762

Winter 1988-89



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A previously unpublished drawing of Jane Grant, circa 1926, by James Montgomery Flagg (1877-1960), reproduced through the courtesy of Miss Grant's niece, Jacqueline Scott, whose family portraits appear through this article.

Preface

This was to have been our spring issue—of three springs ago—but illness and/or heavier professional responsibilites of our volunteer staff created one delay after another. The fall of 1988 finally gave the time to put all the parts together. Our apologies to our contributors and subscribers, with thanks for their patience. We are back, intending to stay and grow.

In reorganizing the contents of this number, certain seasonal pieces have been postponed to Volume 5, No. 3, which will feature Buster Keaton, the silent film star born in Piqua, Kansas. There will be contributions by Russell Myers, the creator of Broom Hilda, and Mort Walker, who is familiar to all who follow the daily misadventures of Beetle Bailey. Although the spring issue will be one primarily of humor, you will find it balanced with sound historical articles and reminiscences. It should reach you in late April or early May.

We have been saddened since our last appearance by the death of Zula Bennington Greene, whose autobiography we have been serializing since the first issue of the LBR. (The editors are readying the rest of her manuscript for book publication.) Peggy, who was always so ready to encourage, will be sorely missed, as will be Bess Spiva Timmons, who greeted the arrival of each issue with a phone call to the editors. The cultural life of Kansas was deeply enriched by these grand ladies, and we are thankful and grateful to have been associated with them during their productive and fulfilling lives. Each in her own way was unique. No one who knew them will ever forget them.

This issue has a number of firsts in it: a nonfiction article by Elizabeth Layton, whom our readers have known from our pages and those of *Life, Art in America,* etc., as an artist and poet; our first piece of literary theory by Philip Kimball, whose fiction we shall present in the next issue; and a recipe from the Little Balkans. This latter is from a work-in-progress suggested by Shelby Horn, our new managing editor: a cookbook of regional recipes accompanied by historical notes and reminiscences. Please let us know if this proposed book would be of interest to you.

We are pleased to commemorate the retirement of Joe Saia after fifty years of service as Crawford County Commissioner, in an article written by Max McCoy, who now is devoting full time to free-lance writing. We present a chapter from Kenny Simon's forthcoming book, *My Years with Brink,* a book of columns written for the *Pittsburg Morning Sun* during the past sixty years.

Thanks again are due to Words and Pictures Corp. for allowing us to use their facilities and to Bonnie George for answering technical questions by phone late at night—questions which never arise at a reasonable hour. Most of all, we wish to thank you, our readers, for understanding our delay. It was not a vacation. We're glad to be back!

Gene DeGruson, General Editor
Shelby Horn, Managing Editor
Ted Watts, Art Editor
Janis DeChicchio, Editorial Board Member
Rod Dutton,Editoral Board Member
Al Letner, Editorial Board Member
Quinton Matson, Editorial Board Member
Robert J. Roberts, Editorial Board Member

Jane Grant:

Co-Founder of The New Yorker

By Susan L. Van Ness

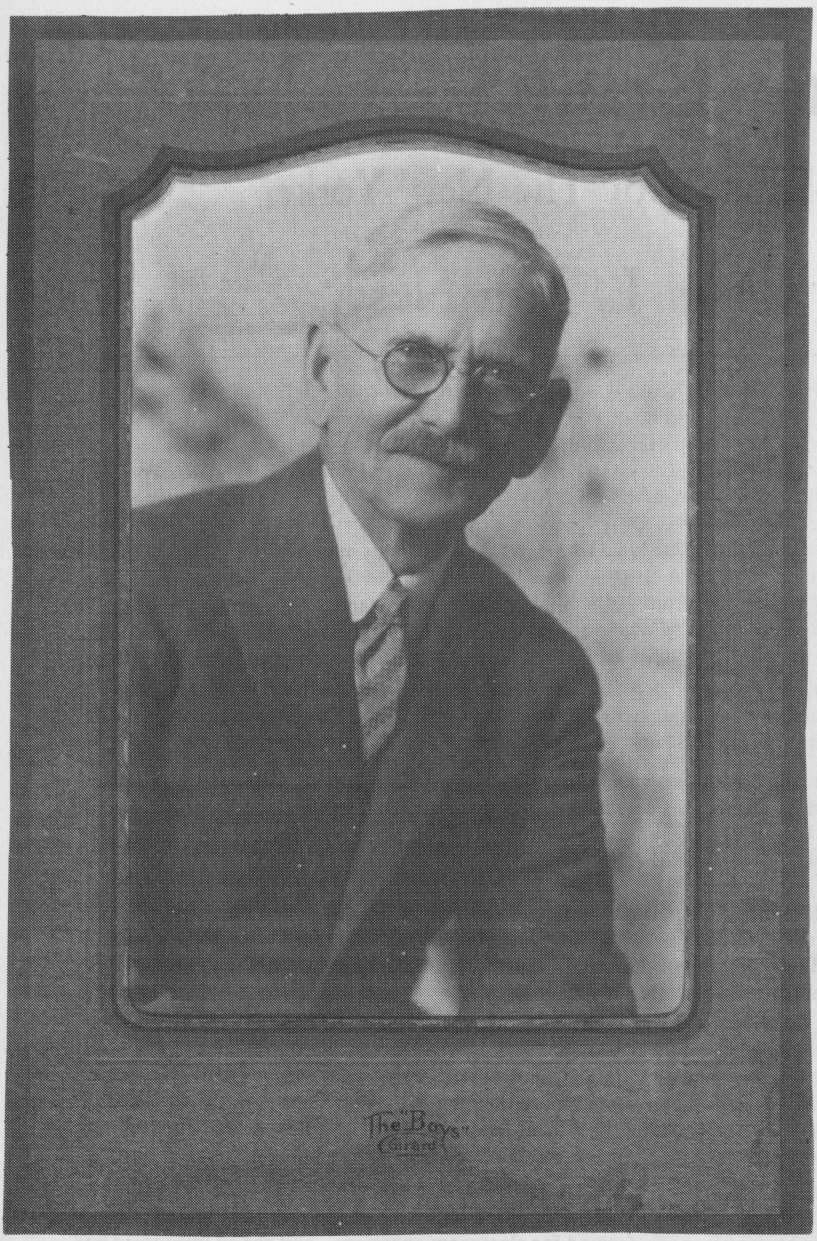
In 1945, Harold Ross, editor of *The New Yorker*, wrote of his first wife, Jane Grant, "There would be no New Yorker today if it were not for her." Few realize that it was Jane who convinced the first venture capitalist to help finance the new magazine or that it was she who recruited many of *The New Yorker*'s best-known writers. Even after her divorce from Ross, she continued to make editorial and business contributions for several decades. Yet the story of Jane's life and her role in the shaping of *The New Yorker* remains virtually untold.

Brought into life a descendant of Roger Williams and John Brown, perhaps it is only fitting that, from the beginning, Jane Grant wanted to "combat the world." She grew up in the Midwest among a family of traditional Baptists who expected her to follow the pattern set by her female relations: upon graduation from high school, she would teach and she would marry. Jane realized, however, that she desperately wanted more. And during the year she spent East studying voice in dutiful preparation for life back home, Jane knew that she would not return.

Jeanette Cole Grant was born on 29 May 1892 in Joplin, Missouri. Her father, Robert T. Grant, was an independent prospector and her mother, Sopronia Persis Cole, was a teacher in the public schools. They lived in the small mining town of Duenweg, a few miles east of Joplin, where Sophronia Grant died of pneumonia when Jane was but six years old. From that point on, "Nettie," as she was often called, and her older sister, Edith, would spend their summer vacations on their maternal grandparents' farm near Girard, Kansas. Frequently the girls would be joined by a handful of their male cousins, and Jane quickly learned to climb trees, ride horseback, wrestle, and fish.

But life was not all play. In 1903, two years after R.T. Grant married Emma Maude Gibson (they had one son, Lyle), he uprooted his family and moved it to eighty acres of land one mile north of Girard. Frustrated with mining, R.T. Grant would farm for several years before opening his grocery store on the east side of the town square. The move benefitted Jane, who would profit from the better schools and from the proximity of her mother's people.

In fact, Jane was an excellent student. Yet schoolwork was not the only area that drew praise for Jane—she was gifted with a voice. She frequently sang the offertory at church or performed for classroom exercises, and she so impressed her proud Grandpa Cole that he and the family decided Jane should deviate slightly from tradition. After graduation, she would study "vocal" in Boston for one year before returning to Girard to replace her voice teacher, Mrs. Volney Boaz. Plans were altered, however, when Mrs. Boaz's sister, Miss Willie Warner of New Jersey,



R. T. Grant, father of Jane Grant. Photograph by "The Boys," Girard, KS.

came to Girard for a visit. After a stirring audition, Jane was invited to live with Miss Willie and her husband, J.E. Kingsland, in Roselle Park, where she could commute to New York twice a week for singing lessons. The family believed in Jane's ability and wanted her to have the best possible training within their means. So at age sixteen, with a small inheritance from her mother, Jane left Girard to begin a new life.

Once settled in Miss Willie's home, Jane studied piano, voice culture, harmony, musical history, and German, and she earned twenty-five dollars a month as a soprano soloist for the First Presbyterian Church in Plainfield, New Jersey. After her allotted year of studying ended, Jane wanted to remain in the East. Her father accepted the decision and, in his own way, was proud of his "dear Nettie," but he refused to support her financially, believing she was "responsible for herself now."

After the unexpected death of Miss Willie, which came as quite a blow, Jane was truly on her own. She moved to New York and lived with Miss Willie's cousin, Grace Griswald, at the Three Arts Club, a home for girls studying music, drama, and art.

But times were not easy for Jane. She sang in cheap restaurants with a female quartet; she sang with a women's choir at church; she sang in clubs and smokers. But despite her perseverance, it wasn't long before she realized she needed more of an income than her voice could provide.

Giving up her formal pursuit of a musical career made Jane ineligible for residency at the Three Arts Club, and she moved to 340 West 84th Street. The apartment above her was occupied by Anna Marcet Haldeman, an old friend from Girard. In a letter to her mother dated 22 November 1911, Marcet wrote:

> So you know Mr. Grant hasn't sent her one single (literally) cent for a year. That except for the $150 she got for her piano, she has earned every cent herself. [Jane had written her father asking him to sell the instrument and send her the proceeds. He sent a check but never sold the piano.] I think that is wicked. . . .
>
> . . . Now she has taken the $150 dollars [sic]—& is going to business college—the fee is very small. & I believe she has only a couple of weeks more. And she has a position assured her—so she will have a comparatively easy time, but it is thanks to her own strength of character, & the fine ideals of some of the people Grace Griswold [sic] introduced her to. Nettie is now a fine strong young woman—whom her people may well be proud of & whom I am very glad to call my friend—but Mr. Grant is without exception the most unnatural father I ever heard of.

Jane had enrolled in business school on the advice of her landlady, Miss Florence Williams, who was secretary to the managing editor of the *New York Times*, Carr Van Anda. Miss Williams, who had guaranteed Jane a position at the newspaper upon graduation, remained true to her promise, and, before long, Jane was working as a secretary in the society department. "The day I applied for the job," Jane wrote, "Mr. Van Anda assured me that there would be no advancement, that, in effect, women were merely tolerated at the *Times*." She earned ten dollars a week.

Jane quickly realized that she was working among a group of exceptionally intelligent and articulate people, and, with the help of her friends, she attempted to

piece together the college education she never had. Marcet Haldeman taught her English composition and described Jane as a "most satisfactory pupil as she makes remarkable progress & put[s] her whole heart into her lessons." Jane also received instruction from Richard Purdy, whom she had met through Grace Griswald. Purdy was a Shakespearean scholar, and he assigned books to read and themes to write. More than anything, Purdy instilled in Jane a sense of confidence, and he encouraged her to take on more responsibility at the office.

"As time passed," Jane recalled, "the excitement of newspaper work got into my bones." She received a two dollar a week raise and augmented her salary with income from occasional pieces published in one of the Sunday sections of the *Times* and her old themes for Purdy, which she reworked into stories for the Western Newspaper Alliance.

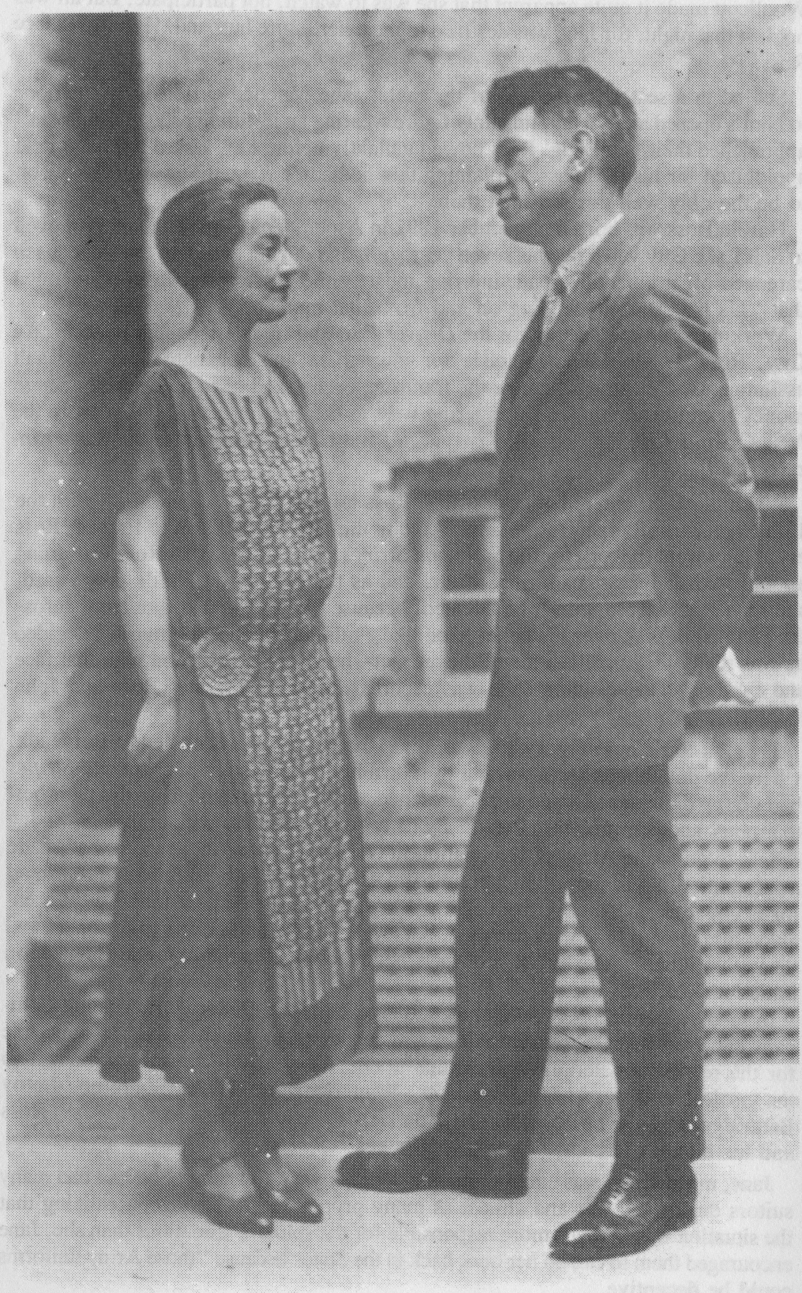
Reporting, however, was not the only thing Jane learned at the *Times*. Her colleagues, who had given her the nickname "Fluff," taught her how to shoot craps and how to swear. She, in turn, taught them how to fox trot, with Alexander Woollcott (soon to be promoted to dramatic critic) being her most zealous pupil. Practical jokes were played incessantly. Jane had her share of fun, and, of course, many of the laughs were on her. She remembers that every April Fools' Day during the social reign of Mrs. Stuyvesant Fish, the society department would get a call giving the address where Mrs. Fish was entertaining. Dashing out to cover the story, Jane would inevitably end up at the East River or the Aquarium.

"But with all their cruelty," Jane said, "the reporters at the *Times* were wonderful to me, and that included Aleck [Alexander Woollcott]. They not only helped me at the office, answering the phone for me, helping me with stories, but they furnished much of my sustenance and social life."

In 1917, however, Jane found herself missing at least one of her companions at the *Times*. The United States had declared war against Germany on 6 April and, in July, Woollcott sailed for France. Jane and Woollcott exchanged letters frequently, but the extent of their relationship remains unclear. In her book, *Ross, The New Yorker and Me,* Jane makes no mention of a serious relationship, saying only that she and Woollcott would go to the theater or attend dances at Hamilton College together. "During the years we had been closely associated at the *Times* and in our social life," Jane said. "Aleck and I quarreled and made up so many times, had shared so many secrets and events that I came to regard him much as a close relative. I would berate him to his face and behind his back, yet I would defend him hotly when others criticized him."

In September 1918, about a year after Woollcott's departure, Jane took a short leave of absence from the *Times* to work as a clerk with the YMCA Community Motion Picture Bureau in France. "When I arrived in Paris," Jane said, "I went at once to the office of the *Stars and Stripes* in search of Aleck. . . . I was mighty young then and mighty lonely and as Aleck was the only person I knew in Paris I made going to the office of the paper a regular stint until I was detailed to Tours." Her work there lasted only a few months. By November, indebted to Woollcott for pulling the right strings, Jane was on her way back to Paris to transfer to the Entertainment Bureau. As a singer, she would perform in a unit of three that would play the hospitals and camps around the Paris area.

The night after her arrival, Woollcott took Jane to dinner at Nini's—a little bistro in Montmartre—where the staff members of *Stars and Stripes* played their weekly poker game. "Dinner with me," Jane said, "was only incidental for him," and



Jane Grant and Harold Ross, co-founders of *The New Yorker* magazine.

Woollcott made it quite apparent that she was to watch, not participate. But all was not lost that night, for Jane was destined to meet her future husband, Harold Wallace Ross.

Settled in a seat near the end of the table, Jane watched curiously as the door to Nini's opened and "a tall, ungainly figure wearing an ill-fitting private's uniform" approached their gathering. Ross bowed gallantly before her, kissed her hand, and apologized for his tardiness, explaining that he hadn't wanted Sergeant Woollcott to be the only well-dressed man there.

Harold Ross was born 6 November 1892 in Aspen, Colorado. His family moved to Salt Lake City when he was seven years old, and during their trip the stagecoach careened off a mountain road, injuring most of the passengers. Ross maintained that "his hair started standing on end from that moment."

Working as an errand boy for the *Denver Post* and two newspapers in Salt Lake City, Ross developed a real taste for journalism and began to take on small assignments. He came to idolize the tramp reporters, and once he'd saved enough money became one himself, wandering west to the *Sacramento Union,* east to the *New Orleans Item* and the *Brooklyn Eagle,* and back west again to the *San Francisco Call.*

When the U.S. entered World War I, Ross left the *Call* and joined up with the 18th Engineers (Railway) Regiment. Among the first 25,000 sent to France, Ross eventually went to work for the *Stars and Stripes.* Jane learned that Ross was doing an exceptional job as managing editor, and as the evening at Nini's progressed, she surmised that Ross must be talented, because "as I peered at him from across the table, slumping over his poker hand like a misshapen question mark, I decided he was really the homeliest man I'd ever met—he'd have to be good with that face and figure." That evening Jane was escorted home by Privates Ross and John Winterich.

Jane left Paris in February 1919 to join a five-person unit detailed to Bordeaux, where the doughboys were waiting to return home. The staff of *Stars and Stripes* had grown quite accustomed to her presence, and Woollcott and Ross did their best to arrange another transfer to Paris. By early April, Jane was back in Paris, awaiting orders to go to the Army of Occupation in Germany. Ross, meanwhile, had made a substantial sum of money on a brainstorm called *Yank Talk,* a booklet of reprinted jokes culled from other Army outfit publications, and this new-found wealth enabled him to woo Jane with perfume, corsages, candy, and tickets to the opera and theatre until her troupe left in late April. Jane remained in the Army of Occupation until June 1919.

In Jane's absence a new development had taken place. Butterick Publishing Company had great plans to transform *Stars and Stripes* into a weekly American magazine for the returning veterans. After much doubt, Ross finally committed himself to the project and persuaded Woollcott, Winterich, Albian A. Wallgren, Leroy Baldridge, Phillip von Blon, and Hudson Hawley to join him. In early May, Ross and his buddies left for New York to begin *The Home Sector.*

Jane, meanwhile, was entertaining the doughboys in Germany. She had had many suitors during the war and almost as many proposals of marriage. Realizing that the situation was perhaps more responsible for the soldiers' attentions than she, Jane encouraged them to call on her once back in the States because "those Army uniforms could be deceptive.

"But with Ross it was different," Jane reflected. "He couldn't have looked much worse than he did in his uniform. After the first shock at meeting him, his widely

spaced teeth, his unruly hair, his awkward figure and his nervous habits only added to his charm. He was a stimulating and unusual companion and I enjoyed being with him more than with any of the others." In less than one year, she and Ross would be married.

Jane sailed for home in late July 1919, and Ralph Graves, city editor of the *New York Times,* welcomed her with a small raise, an expense account, and a promotion to hotel reporter. On her first day back, Woollcott told Jane he'd found a new eating place and even bought her lunch at the Algonquin Hotel. So began Jane's long association as a member of the Round Table.

Ross, however, was miffed. Determined to remain independent for at least a short while, Jane had neglected to inform him—or anyone, for that matter—that she was returning to New York. After an appropriate period of sulking, Ross forgave her and once again became quite attentive. The courtship lasted eight months. During that time, it became increasingly obvious to Ross and the staff of *The Home Sector* that their magazine was on the verge of collapse.

The Home Sector's competitor, the *American Legion Weekly,* was thriving, however. Its editor, Marquis James, who wanted only to write, was tiring of the job and looking for a successor. Ross was offered the position for ten thousand dollars a year.

With his income secure at last, Ross and Jane decided to marry. He suggested an engagement, but Jane, who didn't "want to be tagged for future delivery" and whose work in the society department had left her disliking convention, refused. They would be wed that weekend, on Saturday, 27 March 1920.

A few years later, after visiting Ross and Jane, Marcet Haldeman-Julius wrote an article for the *Haldeman-Julius Weekly,* describing their home at 412 West Forty-Seventh Street: "From the outside the house looked almost like all the other nondescript ones in the row, but the moment one entered the small vestibule, America seemed to fall away." The servants, Marie and Arthur Treadwell, and the son, Junior, who would be dedicated to Ross and Jane for years to come, added a quaint European touch. The house was furnished tastefully and decorated with unusual fireplaces, tapestries, an old concert grand, and a Spanish patio complete with a fountain. Marcet found the entire household "startlingly lovely."

Today 412 West Forty-Seventh Street is the Fountain House Federation, Inc., a club for convalescent patients discharged from mental institutions. It was once, however, a gathering place for many of the personalities who gave the 1920s its roar. Ethel Barrymore, Edna St. Vincent Millay, F. Scott Fitzgerald, George Gershwin, Irving Berlin, and Harpo Marx were all visitors there, and Robert Benchly, Franklin P. Adams, Heywood Broun, Marc Connelly, Robert E. Sherwood, George S. Kaufman, Brock and Murdock Pemberton, Neysa McMein, Edna Ferber, and Dorothy Parker made regular appearances.

It was Jane's responsibility to manage this unique household, and she did everything from organizing the dinner parties to making the regular twenty-gallon batch of gin. And despite her domestic duties, she continued to pursue her career in journalism. Jane worked diligently for the *New York Times,* reporting to the office at one p.m. and working well into the evening, taking only a short break for dinner. Her efforts paid off. Not only was Ross able to save his entire salary for their publishing dream, but Jane was making a name for herself.

She received her first by-line in 1921 when an article titled "The Serious Opinions of Charles Chaplin" appeared in the *New York Times Book Review and Magazine*

section. Besides her regular contributions to the *Times,* within two years she was writing four syndicated columns a week: one on social personalities, one on beauty, one on actresses, and a short fiction column for the Western Newspaper Alliance. "The Beautiful Woman," a series on health, diet, and exercise, began syndication on 20 August 1923 and appeared in twelve papers across the country.

Jane Grant and Harold Ross, Phalanx, New Jersey, 1920

Jane was elected to the membership of the Author's League of America, Inc., in May 1922, and Otto Liveright, one of the most reputable agents of the time, became her representative. Jane remembered his voice as being "music to my ears" when he called her to say that the *Saturday Evening Post* had accepted "Lead, Kindly Light," a story written by Jane and a friend, Katherine Sproehnle, about the business of choir singing. Jane said, however, that "at that moment the money loomed much bigger in my eyes than the satisfaction of achievement." They received a check for four hundred dollars as payment.

Meanwhile, Ross was becoming increasingly restless at the *American Legion Weekly.* With encouragement from Jane, he began to put his different publishing ideas on paper—ideas for a high-class tabloid, a shipping paper, an adless newspaper with an attractive advertising insert, paperback books, and a New York humor magazine.

Discouraged by the amount of money necessary to start the tabloid—Carr Van Anda told Jane that it would take millions—and not as keen on the schemes to publish inexpensive paperback books or the adless newspaper—Ross favored a shipping paper. Jane, however, remained partial to the weekly city magazine. Years later, during an appearance on the *Today* television show, Jane explained why the idea of publishing a city magazine lacked appeal for Ross: ". . . He felt he wasn't up

to it because he didn't know New York very well. He wasn't a New Yorker. . . . He always talked about how terrible New York was. But I persisted. I just couldn't believe that he couldn't do it. I said: 'My word. You've learned so many things on your own. You certainly can learn about New York and get out a magazine'."

After days and nights of hard work, Ross certainly did get out the magazine. And by early spring of 1925, after the first few issues had appeared on the newsstands, Jane explained to George Horace Lorimer that she would no longer be able to contribute as often to the *Saturday Evening Post* because she was spending more time on their new magazine. The great editor warned her that she was making a mistake. *The New Yorker,* he said, whose first issue he had thrown across the room in disgust, would never amount to anything.

* * *

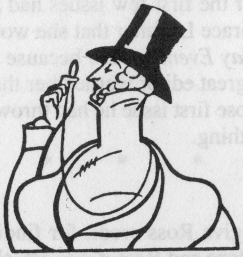
Although several sources give Ross credit for finding the money to begin their magazine, according to both Jane and Ross it was actually Jane who convinced Raoul Fleischmann, the Fleischmann's Yeast heir, to invest in their publishing venture. It happened one night when she and Ross attended a party given by Fleishmann and his wife Ruth. While other guests played bridge, Jane and her host talked of the "unborn magazine," of Fleischmann's increasing boredom with the baking business, and of his admiration for their literary pursuits. "I must have been particularly persuasive that evening—a mingling of desperation and inspiration," Jane wrote, noting that after she had explained that they needed only twenty-five thousand more dollars, Fleischmann said he thought he could risk the money.

Based upon that promise, Ross and Jane liquidated their assets, and opened their new office on 25 West Forty-Fifth Street. Aside from the editor himself, there was a secretary, Helen Mears; a friend from the war, Roy Kirk; a general helper, Philip Wylie, who later gained popularity as a novelist; the art editor of *Life,* who would act as a consultant, Rea Irvin; and, of course, the unofficial staff member but all-around contributor, Jane Grant.

As for the name of their magazine, Ross and Jane picked the brains of their every acquaintance. And though they had many suggestions—*Manhattan, New York Weekly, New York Life, Truth,* and *Our Town*—none quite fit the image of their publication, or, if it did, the name had already been used. John Toohey, who, according to Jane's book, began the Algonquin Round Table ritual years earlier with Murdock Pemberton, is given credit for coining the title, *The New Yorker.* He suggested it one day between bites of his lunch, and Ross and Jane were delighted.

The first issue of *The New Yorker* was dated 21 Feburary 1925, and the cover sported a "cavalier boulevardier" named Eustace Tilley inspecting a butterfly through his monocle. Jane was too busy with her job at the *Times* and her free-lance writing to spend much time at the office, but Ross brought her homework on a regular basis. Although she read manuscripts and was responsible for making and keeping contacts, perhaps one of Jane's greatest contributions to the magazine was suggesting talent for specific departments. It was Jane's idea, for example, to ask Janet Flanner to write the "Letter from Paris." Flanner had worked for the *New York Sun* before moving to France to write and live on her "hopes and good bistro food on the Left Bank." She and Jane had met years before as a result of their newspaper

work, and, as time passed, they became friends. They corresponded regularly and Jane thought that Flanner would be the perfect person to write a column as her letters were so "gay and attractive." The first "Letter from Paris" appeared in the 10 October 1925 issue, signed "Genet," apparently Ross' "frenchification" of *Janet*.



Eustace Tilley, the New Yorker, got his name from a resident of Camp 50, Kansas—no doubt a customer at the R.T. Grant store in Girard.

However, despite the growing staff and the improved content, it would still take time for *The New Yorker* to plant its feet on firm financial ground. By the spring of 1925, the original capital had been depleted, and Ross and Jane suffered an additional setback when Ross lost twenty-nine thousand dollars in a poker game. Needless to say, Ross and Jane were in desperate need of money, and as Ross refused to take the initiative—he loathed the business aspect of publishing—the responsibility fell to Jane. As before, she began her search close to home.

Hawley Truax, an old college buddy of Woollcott's, who had been skeptical of Ross' ability the first time around, now felt confident enough to make a small contribution to the magazine. He also managed to convince his brother-in-law, lawyer Lloyd Stryker, to give additional financial support. As usual, whatever money Jane managed to raise, Fleischmann would match with his own. *The New Yorker* dragged on for several more weeks.

Yet the situation continued to worsen. The ailing magazine was facing summer, the low season for any publication, and Fleischmann was growing increasingly concerned about his losses. After several discussions with John Hanrahan, a magazine consultant, Fleischmann decided to suspend publication until the fall.

On the morning of 9 May 1925, just two and a half months after the first issue had appeared, Fleischmann and Hanrahan broke the news to Ross and Truax at the Princeton Club in New York. Circulation had not risen much above ten thousand, they said, and each issue had only a handful of paid advertisements. They saw no other choice.

Jane, who believed that suspension would inevitably mean death for the magazine, refused to give up. She convinced Ross to talk to Patterson McNutt, a young playwright who was a great friend of Edgar B. Davis, a Texas oil tycoon. McNutt presented their case to Davis. *The New Yorker* needed $100,000, and Ross and Jane were ecstatic to find that Davis, thinking that the investment sounded "like a nice adventure," was interested.

Jane Grant sports a boyish bob, ca. 1925.

Fleischman was surprised to learn that Jane and Ross had found that much money in such a short period of time, and with a new burst of confidence he asked Ross to give him a few days to think the situation over. On 25 May 1925 Fleischmann informed Ross and Jane that they would not need Davis's money after all. Although rumor passed among friends that one of Fleischmann's rich uncles had died, Fleischmann, in fact, had gotten the $100,000 from his mother. *The New Yorker* was safe—at least through the summer.

Even with temporary financial security, there was still no money for a badly needed subscription campaign. Once again Jane was forced to be resourceful, and her past experience in the *Times* society department proved most helpful. Working from the social register—a gold mine for the magazine's snobbish and sophisticated appeal—Jane and Elsie Dick (Ross' new secretary) compiled the first list of potential subscribers, and for a long while Jane and Elsie were the subscription department. As the magazine's first circulation manager, Jane hired young debutantes and college girls to do telephone sales work. Subscriptions mounted and advertising increased as well.

As the years passed, Jane recalled, the "acceptance of *The New Yorker* began to exceed our most sanguine hopes." Yet, as their magazine began its steady uphill climb, the wear on Ross and Jane's personal lives began to show. Ross' father died in 1926; his own ulcers were getting worse, and neither the ten-day rest at the Battle Creek Sanatorium (where Ross spent most of his time attempting to sneak forbidden cigarettes) nor the weekends Jane planned at Atlantic City or Neshobe Island in Vermont, did much good.

The Christmas season of 1927 marked "the beginning of the end of our marriage," Jane said. She had been alarmed for two years by Ross' increasing nervousness and encouraged him to see a neurologist. "Mother Ross," as Jane called her, shared her concern, writing in a letter of 12 April 1928, "I have been worried ever since he has been on that mag. that there was danger of a nervous breakdown as I know how he works his brain on things he undertakes." And almost one month later, after a visit with her son, Mother Ross wrote to Jane: "My heart ached for Harold, he seemed so nervous and the Dr. told me that he was dreadfully overworked and I think that New Yorker was too much strain on him and on you both."

By the spring of 1928, after months of separation, the relationship between Ross and Jane began to improve. They spent time together playing cribbage, sharing an occasional meal, or discussing *The New Yorker,* and their friends hoped for a reconciliation. When Jane learned from Dr. Edward Kellogg, the famous cancer specialist, that she would have to undergo surgery, Ross called in three more specialists who only confirmed Jane's need for immediate attention. He summoned her sister, Edith, from Joplin, Missouri, and when a second operation proved less than successful, he insisted that Jane recuperate for six months in Palm Beach before a third was attempted. During her long absence, Ross continued to be attentive, sending Jane flowers and presents and often calling to discuss the latest problems of the magazine.

Jane recuperated, and though her health continued to give her problems through the years, she remained active for decades to come. Her marriage, however, could not be saved. From her correspondence, it appears that after their divorce in September 1929 Jane devoted most of her energy to her reporting career at the *Times,* and there is little evidence to show that she played an active part in *The New Yorker* again before the 1940s. However, just as Ross and Jane's divorce did not bring an end to their friendship, it also did not bring an end to her involvement in their magazine.

The first sign of renewed participation in *The New Yorker*'s affairs came during World War II, when Jane became increasingly concerned about the drop in advertising. In 1943 the passing of a quarterly dividend caused even greater commotion, and Jane was among a handful of stockholders who thought that the business department, under Fleischmann, was not working to its full potential. "The fight—led by Jane Grant—was a brisk one," Dale Kramer states in *Ross and The New Yorker,*

"and for a while there was a strong possibility that Fleischmann would be removed. But in the end a compromise was reached, with Hawley Truax, long a director, coming into the business department as treasurer and keeper of the peace. Dividend payments were resumed before the year was out."

Jane Grant, 1968.

On 23 June 1943, Jane launched another venture that would prove to be one of her greatest contributions to the magazine—she telephoned managing editor Ik Shuman and suggested that *The New Yorker* print a "pony edition" for the soldiers overseas. In addition to the work she did for this edition, she also conceived the idea of producing for servicemen collections from various departments of *The New Yorker*. The Army accepted her ideas and six such anthologies were distributed from March through September 1946. By the end of the war, about twenty-five million copies of the pony edition and about 1,500,000 special books of excerpts had been circulated. The promotion was invaluable, and although most other magazine publishers were not making a profit with their overseas editions, Jane's efforts earned an additional seventy-five thousand dollars for the publishing corporation.

In December 1945 Jane was offered employment as a consultant for *The New Yorker* at five thousand dollars a year for ten years, with the understanding that the contract was renewable for additional ten-year periods as long as she lived. The amount was not acceptable to Jane, however, and negotiations continued. By early 1946, Jane and the corporation reached an agreement—the company would employ her at $7,500 a year for ten years, the contract being renewable for the rest of her

life. Jane, in turn, agreed to apply her income to the dividends of her stock, thereby cancelling Ross and Jane's separation agreement for a ten thousand dollar guaranteed income and thus alleviating Ross from further financial responsibility.

Jane worked solidly for more than two decades, making valuable contributions during that time, and though she had seen *The New Yorker* through many a crisis, none compared to the loss of its editor, Harold Ross. On the evening of 6 December 1951 a friend called to inform Jane that Ross had died of an embolism on the operating table. "It seemed right," she recalled, "that my eyes should fill with tears and overflow."

* * *

As a journalist, Jane Grant should be acknowledged not only for her importance to *The New Yorker* but also for her long career with the *New York Times.* Though in 1912 she began as a secretary with no promise of advancement, by the mid-1920s she became the first woman reporter to serve on the general staff. Although her illness around the time of her divorce from Ross did slow her career somewhat, in 1934 she traveled around the world for seven months as a *Times* correspondent. Armed with letters of introduction, she set off for Hawaii. From there she went to Japan and China, where she became the first woman to interview Emperor Pu Yi, who under the reign name of Kang Teh had become the sole ruler of the Japanese puppet state, Manchukuo.

Jane left the Orient and arrived in Germany shortly after the death of President von Hindenburg. Adolf Hitler had become the absolute dictator of the country, and Jane interviewed Dr. Ernst Franz Sedgwick Hanfstaengl, director of the Nazi Foreign Press Bureau, who told her that Hitler understood "that the power destiny has placed in his hands is possibly greater than that of any man in the world. . . ."

After spending time in Russia and other European countries, Jane returned to New York in the fall. In 1935 the newspaper sent her again to Russia; in 1936 she went to Greece; and in 1937 Jane traveled through and reported on Albania and Yugoslavia.

From the lack of correspondence and newspaper clippings in the Jane C. Grant Papers at the University of Oregon, Eugene, it appears that this trip to southern Europe may have been her last reporting assignment for the *Times.* And while Jane could have been pursuing a radio career or writing free-lance articles, there is no concrete evidence to suggest exactly how she passed the years between 1937 and 1943 when she once again became actively involved in *The New Yorker.*

In June 1939 Jane married William B. Harris, an editor of *Fortune* magazine. In an interview after Jane's death, Harris remembered her as "one of the first real women's liberationists," and in an article written for *The American Mercury* in 1943, Jane had said, "It must be true that I'm a feminist, for all my friends say so. You drift into a thing like that."

For Jane, the "drifting" had begun long before, in 1920, when she became one of the founders of the Lucy Stone League, an organization of men and women whose object was to "protect, instruct and encourage those women who wish to continue their own names after marriage." By late spring 1921, the Lucy Stone League had adopted a constitution and formed an executive committee, with Ruth Hale as president and Jane Grant as secretary and treasurer. Membership continued to rise and some of the well-known women who joined the effort were Janet Flanner, Marcet Haldeman-Julius, Neysa McMein, Alice Duer Miller, Louella Parsons, and Gertrude Stein. Ross, Heywood Broun, E.L. Bernays, and E. Haldeman-Julius were among the several men who supported the organization.

Jane Grant's second husband, William B. Harris, ca. 1948.

The League's activities subsided in the 1940s when World War II became the issue of priority. Yet Jane remained an active proponent of women's rights. She was an outspoken supporter of the Equal Rights Amendment as early as 1944, and throughout her life she made her opinions known through letters to senators, Presidents and their wives, to the *New York Times* editorial department, and to magazine editors, authors of books, college administrators, and even to Emily Post.

In 1950 Jane revived the League as a result of the many inquiries she had received during the years. This time, however, the League's objectives were broadened to include activities to "instruct in, safeguard and extend the civil and social rights of women." Jane became president. By the time she resigned her duties in 1968, membership had increased to more than five thousand, and the League could boast of many accomplishments: the State Department had ruled that it would issue passports to women in their own names; the Comptroller General ruled that women could sign their own names to the payroll; the Hotel Association permitted a woman's name to appear on a hotel register with that of her husband. The League also sponsored scholarships for universities and colleges that admitted women to their undergraduate and professional schools; it organized and supported a memorial library in a New York high school, dedicating it to Anna M. Zenger, the "mother of press freedom"; and the League maintained archives as a center of research and information on the status of women.

In the early 1960s Jane and her friend Doris Stevens concluded that "the problems of woman were destined to remain unclear to those who thought seriously about them, for no studies . . . had ever been made." After discussing this with various university academicians, Jane and Stevens established the Harvard-Radcliffe Fund for the Study of Woman. The purpose of the fund was "to promote research and instruction in the problems of woman in present and past societies anywhere. The

field is a new sub-discipline of sociology, psychology, and anthropology, not to be confused with or limited to the problems that confront woman in her marriage and family relationship, which have been ably and widely studied for years." Jane donated several thousand dollars to the fund, and when her book, *Ross, The New Yorker and Me,* was published by Reynal and Company in 1968, Jane arranged for all the royalties to go to the Harvard-Radcliffe Fund for the Study of Woman.

Publishing her autobiography and handling the publicity that followed (Jane made several appearances on radio and television and granted many interviews) was perhaps the last major effort of Jane's life. At seventy-six years of age, her health was deteriorating, and she spent an increasing amount of time at White Flower Farm, her and Harris's country retreat and retail plant and seed operation, in Litchfield, Connecticut.

In November 1971 Jane received a letter from the Graphic Arts Club of Pittsburg State University in Pittsburg, Kansas, asking her to be the speaker at a dinner banquet to be held in conjunction with International Printing Week. Because of her ill health, Jane could not accept the invitation, and several months later William Harris returned the letter with the following note: "I just came upon this letter and remembered Miss Grant's pleasure and answer. 'I've made it!' she said, 'but too late,' as she handed this to me. She died of cancer March 16 [1972]."

Bibliographical Note

The greatest and most valuable source of information about Jane Grant came from the Jane C. Grant Papers, a special collection of the University of Oregon Library in Eugene, Oregon. The collection, comprised largely of personal and business correspondence, provided a wealth of information. I was the first researcher to use this collection.

Information about her childhood came from various letters and newspaper articles in the special collections department of the Leonard H. Axe Library of Pittsburg State University, Pittsburg, Kansas.

Personal memories of Jane, as recollected by two of her old friends from Girard, Kansas, Fletah Sourdry and Sue Haldeman-Julius, were most helpful. Not only did my 13 November 1982 Girard interview provide insights into Jane's youth, it also enabled me to sense Jane's aliveness—to see her more as a person rather than as a name on a printed page, or, to borrow from William Lindsay White, Jane skipped out of dim library stacks and began to play, sing, and dance. A phone conversation with Jane's niece, Jacquelyn Scott, of Joplin, Missouri, on 6 March 1983 also helped bring Jane to life for me.

In addition, Jane's book, *Ross, The New Yorker and Me* (New York: Reynal & Co., in association with William Morrow & Co., 1968), was an immensely helpful research tool. Dale Kramer's *Ross and The New Yorker* (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1951) provided useful background material about the magazine, while also reinforcing much of the information found in Jane's book. James Thurber's *The Years with Ross* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1959) provided a delightful and humorous account of the editor. While James R. Gaine's *Wit's End* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1977) did not go into much detail about Ross, Jane, or *The New Yorker,* its many pictures, anecdotes, and its lively portrayal of the Algonquin Round Table and of the spirit of the 1920s were most beneficial.

Other books I consulted were Arthur F. Kinney's *Dorothy Parker* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1978), Brendan Gill's *Here at The New Yorker* (New York: Random

House, 1975), Ishbel Ross' *Ladies of the Press* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1936), and Edwin P. Hoyt's *Alexander Woollcott: The Man Who Came to Dinner* (New York: Abelard-Shuman, 1968). However, the most valuable source of biographical information about Woollcott was Samuel Hopkins Adam's *A. Woollcott* (New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1945), which not only told of his life in detail, but also provided an insight into his relationship with Jane and Ross.

Transcripts of two interviews with Jane Grant—one of the *Today Show,* 4 April 1968 (WNBC/TV, New York) and one of the *Casper Citron Show,* (WRFM, New York)—were made available to me, compliments of The New Yorker Magazine, Inc. The interviews were a promotion for *Ross. The New Yorker and Me.*

This article is a condensation of my "Jane C. Grant: Co-Founder of *The New Yorker,*" an unpublished master's thesis submitted to the School of Journalism and the Faculty of the Graduate School of the University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, 1983. Full documentation of this article may be found therein.

A DISCOVERY IN WINTER

Scott Allegrucci

How clearly I see
The fence that is the limit
To where we walked as kids
Frightened by the woods
Now proper and smaller
In the snow.
And majestic.
I think I wish
For snow to fall
Between the two of us.
How clearly we might see
Into our eyes' hearts
Through the lies we hold
To keep us safe
But dark
Wishing all the while
For them to fall like leaves,
Risking the cold
Until the snow could
Surprise us with our truths.

Transverse Shadows

By Elizabeth Layton

Dear Editors—If you should use "Transverse Shadows," it should probably have a date—it was written so long ago. I presume I wrote it in 1959, as it was first sent out then. (I think all amateur writers try Reader's Digest *fist as a sure bet. Aren't we stupid?) It was then sent to* Ladies Home Journal *on August 1, 1960, and then to* Cosmopolitan *September 24, 1960, and finally to* McCall's *January 15, 1962.*

I enclose two clippings from the KC Star† *in case you don't get it, about shock treatments. Not that I know anything about what is being done, but I don't want you to publish "Transverse Shadows" & land in the midst of a controversy unknowingly. Maybe you would rather be safe than fighting, though I doubt that!*

Time & things do change. Then drugs were the coming thing, full of promise. Still, they give us an artificial feeling. Perhaps shock helps at times. Who am I to say? This was just my own private experience. The main thing is that as patients we sign our names—get rid of the stigma attached.—Love, Elizabeth Layton.

I lay rigid on the hard thin matress.

Pale moonlight glimmering through the high barred window traced a row of narrow transverse shadows on the stiff white coverlet.

I was a little girl again, in her own bedroom at home, lying motionless in sheer panic, listening for the repetition of the unknown terror of a half-heard sound. Dim gaslight flickering through the foot of the great old iron bedstead etched a barrier of shadows across the soft white coverlet. Even the slight movement of breathing might bring the hidden *fee fie foe fum* lunging through the shafts to pounce upon and swallow up a defenseless child in the night.

†Jean Dietz. "Friend or foe? Renewed interest leads to shock therapy dispute." *Kansas City Star* 20 Jan. 1985, p. 4F, cols. 1-3.

Judy Foreman. "New hope in fighting depression. Doctors promote therapies, drugs." *Kansas City Star* 20 Jan. 1985, p. 1F, col. 6; p. 4F, cols. 1-3.

Fear gripped me. The hushed sound beat with violence against my eardrums. Piercing screams zigzagged through my turbulent sleep, tearing and pulling at my conscious mind, dragging me back to the everyday world by sheer force of persistence.

The nameless terror lurked in the stifling air above, below, and around me, choking me with its intensity. It wrapped me in itself as a dreadful murderer wraps himself and his tightly clutched dagger in his dark cloak.

Absolute acquiescence was my only protection against the threatening horror. Perhaps, if I lay immobile long enough, the ghastly thing, whatever it was, would go away.

My blood froze in constricted veins. Screams kept splitting the darkness. Their frenzy was rent by an earthquake of shaking. Through this upheaval words came to me: "Please stop crying. The nurse will take you away again tonight."

I knew the voice from somewhere in the sanctity of sane moments. I wondered vaguely to whom my roommate was talking. Her presence began to dispel the terror, but it must still be hidden in the room. Its victim kept screaming.

Perhaps it was hiding in the dark corner behind the crack where our door opened into the hall. The glare from the bare bulb on the corridor ceiling thrust a razor blade of light into this open space, but not into our room. Shadows nearest the light are blackest, so that would be its logical hiding place.

Suddenly this sliver of light exploded into a blinding flame, spewed out by a black monster which charged my cot in a violent onslaught. Something hit a stinging blow across my face.

The weapon felt like the back of a hand—firm and powerful. When my eyes adjusted to the brightness of the flashlight I could not only feel but see this danger, so I was not afraid of it.

"Shut up," it said. "Do you want to wake up all the patients?"

No need to lie rigid now. This new menace had driven away the unseen horror.

I clawed at my assailant. I beat at it. Its strong hands held my arms tightly. This imprisonment made me madder. I put my head against the muscular forearm, pushed until I worked my face against it. Instantly I gave a jerk with wide open mouth and clamped my teeth with all my might into the hard flesh.

Blood gushed into my mouth. It sickened me, and I could not hold back the nausea. With my arms pinned behind my back the night nurse marched me through our room, down the chasm to the elevator.

At the third floor we made our way through a maze of wriggling white cots. I felt myself forced onto a cot that was not squirming. I knew the comfort of wide straps as they were tightened about my wrists and ankles, and the peace of blackout.

I awoke on a hospital stretcher. Above me I saw the upside-down face of the orderly.

"Hello," it said. "We're going for a ride."

Through partly opened doors I caught glimpses of rooms with unfamiliar equipment.

"Where are we going?"

"Your doctor wants to see you. Nobody will hurt you. . . . Here we are."

"Move her onto the table," another voice of authority said.

Again straps were fastened about my wrists and ankles, and several across my body. I tried to turn my head but clamps prohibited any movement.

I began to panic.

"Don't get excited. We're just going to give you another electro-shock treatment. This is your thirteenth. Two more should do it. You're much better."

The doctor must have seen the flinching in my eyes.

"Don't you want to get well so you can go home?"

"I don't know." My teeth chattered so the words came out in pieces. Great shudders racked my body.

Home? What was home?

"You won't feel this at all," an intern said as he gave me an injection.

Nothingness struck me instantaneously.

Even before I opened my eyes I could feel it—a familiar sensation, harking back to my childhood days.

For years I have sought to grab out and seize that feeling, to pin it down in order to dissect and destroy it. But like the unknown terror by night it is too evasive. Never have I been able to put my finger on the feel of it.

I do not know what it is—but one thing I know it is not—and that is pain. Pain lingers on after relief. At any moment it can be refelt in its entirety. Hence, pain can be held and examined while the search for words to describe it goes on.

This familiar feeling which came to me now cannot be recalled. It comes unbidden, of its own accord, so I cannot describe it in words.

While it is not a painful sensation, neither is it pleasurable. It is a little like coming out of the foyer of a strange movie theater, and not knowing which way is home. Part of it is fighting cobwebs with no way out. The heart thumps and pounds so hard and fast it will break at any moment.

The pressure from inside is beyond endurance, while a terrific pressure from outside is unbearable—everlasting torture—still it does not hurt.

Neither does one pressure relieve the other. The chest is bursting, crushed by a tremendous weight, yet without agony. No breath can be drawn, still one breathes on with ease.

The walls of the bedroom of a feverish child—of a neurological hospital recovery room—are closing in.

Once I ran across the word "disjointed." There, I thought, that is almost the word I have hunted for.

"Disjointed!" That is the reason why there is no pain: the head is completely severed from the body. The body lies here on this cot and the walls push in on it. It writhes and thrashes, the legs stiffen, the hands clench, the back arches, the head rolls, the sightless eyeballs turn inward, tangled hair becomes more and more matted, and froth cascades in white bubbles from the mouth.

All the while the walls push in and in—slowly and inexorably. Soon the body will burst from the intensity of the pressure of those indestructible walls.

If it does not, it will pop from the irrevocable force of the heart beats.

During this battle the head floats airily just above the corner of the ceilingless room. It is detached and lazy, calmly interested yet not affected by what it sees.

It floats there on its nimbus in a tranquillizing sky. It is one of Henri Krock's celestial cherubim heads, in his *Birth of Christ,* held in space by its two cherubic wings, part of, yet passive to, the scene it casually observes. Or it could be one of Giordano's cherubs at the *Adoration of the Shepherds.*

Were the artists conscious of this sensation, so that they depicted it by these little bodiless heads with their baby wings?

Is the spirit so much one with God that though the body is bound to the earth the soul can depart at will?

Is, perhaps, after all, the disoriented person the one who is sane?

Eventually, the walls recede, the pressures lift, the head comes back to its earthly home as "the sailor comes home from the sea."

I called out, "Nurse!"

She came. She cleaned off my mouth, wiped the tears from my face, and unstrapped me from my cot. I sat up and looked about me. I had in actuality been in the middle of a sea—an ocean of struggling, white-capped waves, each one a disjointed person, a headless being clothed in a white hospital gown and strapped to a narrow but sturdy and steadfast cot.

The nurse said, "You're fine now. Come, we'll go to your room."

We did, and it was good to be home.

Before long some thoughts of my real home came to me—just a few at first and then more and more—until I was sick with longing for home.

At last I was dismissed to go home "cured." I was confused, for complete healing takes a very long while.

To all outward appearances I was well, and definitely I would have been the first to say so. I gave all the expected answers glibly.

These easy responses were unrelated to my inner feelings. Like "Little Audrey" I laughed and laughed because I knew all the time that black is not black. Black is white. Sometimes it is a beautiful royal purple or a soft mauve tint. I know the answers by rote but not by faith. I was a disbeliever, a "lip-Christian."

Strange thoughts came into my head. I knew, with the soundness of good reasoning faculties, they were not normal, but I could not combat them.

One morning, alone in my home, I sat on the stairway, halfway up, where one of these ideas had struck me:

"I must kill my husband."

I had no cause whatsoever, and there was absolutely no logic for such a compulsion. It had come, and it stayed. I argued:

"I must warn him, so they can lock me up again."

"I don't want to go back to the hospital."

"I have to warn him."

"I must kill him. Soon."

Before evening the feeling passed, but I sat there on the steps and pondered whether to tell him. I decided against it.

Miraculously, that compulsion never returned. But the necessity to do away with myself kept repeating itself. Fortunately for me, the will to live was stronger, for all my attempts were foiled. It wasn't that I longed for *death,* it was that I felt unworthy for *life.*

Often today, when I read in the news of an emotional or mental crack-up, with a resulting murder or suicide, I breathe that time-proven prayer, "There, but for the Grace of God, go I."

Besides these urgent compulsions, loss of memory worried me. When I tried to delve into my past I remembered people, and how to do things, but I could not place either in any relationship to my life. In a foreign country, I knew where but not why. Each new day a few memories sifted through thin cracks in the barricade.

Between the compulsions and the tug-of-war with my stupid brain, deep depressions came over me. Self-degradation was my ultimate motive.

Knowing myself unworthy of love or happiness I clamped my lips shut for days on end, or took the path of destruction—smashing, tearing, burning, thrusting aside all I had once held dear.

These seem childish, hateful, cruel acts—but not a one was done for meanness'

sake. To me then these were the *just* things, and it was my duty to carry out my self-imposed punishment.

Desperate depressions came less and less often. Only rarely did the terror by night threaten me. But the days came when I welcomed the return of the old despair, and even the terror.

This was because, unless in desperation or fright, I was overwhelmed by a narcosis of emotion. In this apathy was no love, no hate, no joy, no sorrow or grief, no anger, no sympathy.

I was cold hard marble. Despair and fear are at least feelings, and very intense ones. Any affection is better than none. Having once been sensitive, I recalled the sensations, and as with pain, I could and did hold and examine them. Now I was unable to experience them.

In this vacuum I wanted to make dejection and fear my friends, the way a person in unbearable suffering makes friends with his pain, until he is enveloped in it completely, and is ready to welcome more and more pain, groping the way to death.

I wanted to feel my way back to life, even if I had to endure death to do it.

Dry-eyed, I longed for the solace of comforting tears, and wondered if ever again I would care enough about anything at all in the world to laugh or to cry.

Four years ago today I lay in despondency, hiding myself from the world by an arm across my eyes, like a baby hides himself at peek-a-boo by covering his eyes with chubby fingers—or like an ostrich escapes the enemy by burying its head in the sand.

Thus hidden, I heard my husband come up the stairs. He spoke once, my name, softly. He set something on the bedside table. He left, discouragement echoing in his footsteps.

Peeking out, I saw the base of a clear crystal vase. My gaze followed its slender line upward. It held a tall, straight, green stem. At the very top a vibrant golden-red bloom proudly dared me to remain in my gloom of despair. It defied me to return to a stupor of death-in-life.

It was our first tulip—harbinger of a glorious spring.

Great tears rolled down my cheeks. The spring torrents had come, and already a silver edge began to outline the darkness of the clouds.

In the intervening four years wonder drugs have taken over the curative power of electro-shock treatment, and the more dangerous insulin-shock. Marvelous new drugs are continually being discovered for quicker, easier diagnosis and treatment of mental illness.

Today, much is being done for the emotionally and mentally disturbed and for their families. Many vital needs remain, and one of the greatest of these is for understanding.

My story has no well-laid plot, no dramatic action, no dangerous adventure to excite you. It is not a rousing expose of any wicked or evil condition.

I have simply tried to set down for you some of my feelings as a disoriented person, so you may understand these things with me:

Help may be needed even after the cure is pronounced.

The strict discipline drives away the terror by night.

Confining straps and bars are security, not cruelty, either to body or self-respect.

Nameless, I would break faith with all who feel pointed at. Signing my real name is the very beginning necessity of our new relationship.

Now we are no longer strangers. Understanding can lift the transverse shadows.

Mushrooms in the Salad

I tried on your bones,
but they were too small.
My skin sagged in pools at my feet.
So I picked mushrooms in the garden
and sliced them thin
like Chinese fans
the way you used to.
I added lettuce and cherry tomatoes
and mixed them in a big woven bowl,
but my skin only shrunk a little,
and there were still pools at my feet.
So I threw out John Denver
and the Carpenters and Abba,
replaced them with Beethoven and Mozart.
I quit voting democrat
and starting playing the piano
and took ballet lessons,
but the bones were still too small.
So I gave them back to you
and took a long look in the mirror,
and she wasn't too bad, you know,
so Monday I retrieved John Denver,
Abba on Tuesday,
and by the weekend I'd given up mushrooms.

Donna Turner

A Pack of Gaidas

By Bill Martino

Here in Kathmandu, Nepal, where I'm now living I go out around eight o'clock almost every morning and buy a pack of Gaidas. In the Nepali language *gaida* means "rhinoceros" but *gaida* is also the brand name of a strong, non-filtered Nepali cigarette. This is what I buy and this is what I smoke all day long—cigarettes, not rhinos.

I step out onto the sidewalk just in front of the Tushita Rest House where I live and walk down Kantipath, one of the main traffic ways in Kathmandu, and the traffic is picking up: taxis, multicolored rickshaws, bicycles, pedestrians, motorcycles, porters carrying two-hundred-pound loads on their backs, dogs, cows, and an occasional herd of mountain goats. I get the impression that everything and everybody is here in Kathmandu, all combined to form a sort of mobile madness that I do not understand and probably never will.

As I head south I notice that all the regulars who do business on the sidewalk along Kantipath are setting up their respective shops. Ah yes, here's that same familiar beggar getting situated for the day. He lives nearby and rolls himself to work on a small skateboard-type device, this because he has no legs. I give him fifty *paisa*, about two and a half cents American, each day when I pass and he blesses me for my questionable generosity. Then I come to the old Sherpa porter. He got both his hands and feet frozen on a mountain climbing expedition years back and as a result he lost parts of his feet and all of his fingers. I give him fifty *paisa*, too, and he salutes me with a stub of a hand. Then I come to the woman who sells oranges, apples, and peanuts. Some days I buy from her, some days I don't. And then I come to the stall of my favorite street vendor, Prakash Takori.

Prakash sets up shop on a small table about the size of an average American coffee table, only his table has longer legs. He spreads his sparse inventory across the table—cigarettes, matches, a few candles, some candy and nuts. He sits behind his table on a small wooden box from about seven in the morning until well after dark every day except religious holidays.

For his time and a capital investment of about ten dollars, Prakash will earn maybe forty dollars per month. Of this forty he spends fifteen renting a tiny two-room apartment which has no running water, electricity, or sanitary facilities. He lives in this apartment with his wife and three children. He spends another twenty dollars on food, and the remainder of his income is spent on clothing and medicine.

"*Namaste,* Prakash," I say, which means literally "I salute the God within you, Prakash." In reality it means "Good morning."

"*Namaste,*" Prakash says and makes the gesture which usually accompanies this particular greeting, pressing his palms together beneath his chin as though praying.

Then we exchange the usual pleasantries—how is your health, wife and children okay, did you sleep well last night?

As strange as it might sound, everything with Prakash is fine. Even though he is living in squalor, barely holding starvation at bay, with two sick children at home, Prakash is fine. He is happy.

Under conditions like these it is difficult for an American like me to understand how anybody could be happy; yet . . . Prakash is happy. You can see it in his eyes, and it is reflected in his broad white-toothed grin. Life is different in Nepal, the value system, the philosophy, the human condition, and perhaps that is one of the reasons I am here . . . to try to learn something.

Then, just as I am ready to place the order for my pack of Gaidas, a young man passing by stops in front of Prakash's stall. He is perhaps twenty-five years old, blonde, curly haired, six feet, strongly built.

"Well, I'm damned," the young man says. "A pack of bloody Russian cigarettes here in Kathmandu. Would you bloody well believe it?"

I judge by the emblazoned T-shirt the young man is wearing (*Everest Expedition—Austrialia, Nov. 1984*) and by his accent that he is Australian so I say, "You're Australian?"

"Yes," the young man answers, not looking at me but toward the pack of Russian cigarettes which look suspiciously like a pack of Marlboros with Russian writing. "And you?"

"American."

The young Australian picks up the pack of cigarettes, examines them closely, and says, "Last time I smoked a pack of these I was in Moscow with me girlfriend." Suddenly he looks at me with an almost urgent expression on his face and asks, "Have you ever been to Moscow?"

I shake my head.

"You really ought to go, you know," he says, "even though you are American. Moscow is downright breath-taking in the winter."

"That's not for me," I say. "I don't like cold weather anymore, and that's one of the reasons I'm here. It never gets really cold."

The Australian sort of nods off my answer and then turns to Prakash. "I'll have these cigarettes, storekeeper. How much?"

"Twelve," Prakash says.

"Twelve, aye," the Australian says. "That's a bit dear [sixty cents American] for a pack of Russian cigarettes, but I'll have the bloody things anyway."

The Australian hands Prakash a twenty *rupee* note and Prakash gives him back the proper change along with a broad smile.

"What brought you to Kathmandu?" the Australian asks me as he opens his pack of Russians. "Are you trekking?"

"No, not trekking," I say. "I came here to learn and to write about the place."

"Ah," the Australian nods. He sticks one of the ciagarettes in his mouth and then offers me one.

"Thanks. I've never smoked a Russian cigarette before."

We light up. The Russian cigarette is dry and strong. Gaidas are better.

I point at the Australian's T-shirt and ask, "Your expedition. It went well?"

"Not well at all," the Australian says, his voice suddenly becoming almost a whisper. Then he looks off toward the northeast, toward Everest, *Sacarmatha* in Nepali, and says, "We lost two of seven."

He turns back almost apologetically. "It started well. We were all in fine physical shape, our equipment was tops, and so were the Climbing Sherpas who were with us. We'd made over twenty-five thousand feet with no trouble at all, and then we came upon this crevasse. The damned thing looked routine so we just laid our ladder across it and started crawling over, one by one. When I went over I looked down and it scared me. The damned thing was so deep it was blue and green inside, the light reflecting back and forth like a bloody diamond. Then, when the fifth member of our team started across—for no damned reason, it seemed—the ladder slipped. Another team member who was holding one end of the ladder tried to hang on, but . . . the two . . . ."

Suddenly tears well up in the Australian's eyes and I notice his hands have started trembling. I look down at the sidewalk and say softly, "Sorry."

I would like to say something more. I would like to tell the young man that I, too, have lost friends and that the heart will heal in time, but I say nothing. Then for a moment I am almost compelled to put my arms around the young man and try to comfort him as I might my own son, but I don't. My American upbringing says that men do not do such things. So I stare down at the dirty sidewalk and say nothing and do nothing. Finally, I look up and the Australian is watching me, waiting in silence for me to ask the question that I must ask.

"The two you lost," I say slowly. "Friends?"

"Yes," the Australian says, dropping his half-smoked cigarette onto the sidewalk. He steps on the cigarette with concentrated purpose and attention, and then looks back at me. "One we lost was me girlfriend, the one who was with me in Moscow. We were to be married. . . ."

"I'm awfully sorry," I say.

"Yes," the Australian says, shaking his head. "Well, got to be going. Been nice talking with you, Yank."

I watch the young Australian walk away and then I turn and head back to the Tushita, and as I walk a chilly wind kicks up. I pull my sweater close around myself. It is the first time I have ever felt really cold in Kathmandu.

Margaret E. Haughawout's Scotch Short Bread

1 lb. butter
1 cup lard
2 cups powdered sugar
6½ cups flour

Sift flour and sugar separately before measuring. Mix with butter and lard to a soft paste. Add flour a little at a time. Bake in a moderate oven (350°) for ten minutes.

[Miss Haughawout would cut the baked pastry into squares and store in a tin container. It was served with tea to those whose conversation she enjoyed.]

Care

Boarding the plane to Wichita,
he remembers his mother
putting him on a train.

She kissed him,
spit-polished his chin,
and tied two nickles
in a handkerchief.
Passengers smile
the miles to Wichita

where he goes now
to choose his mother's coffin and
to make sure they put her in
the blue dress.

Jo McDougall

What Is Fiction?
By Philip Kimball

(Based on a talk delivered 26 April 1985 at the Kansas Writers Association Festival in Pittsburg, Kansas)

I will start with the specific and work my way to the general. When I began writing *Harvesting Ballads* I was interested in developing a literary style from the story telling tradition of the shortgrass prairie community where I was born. The first and most obvious thing about this oral tradition is that everybody is a storyteller, inventing and repeating tales involving themselves and their friends and family in the day-to-day adventures of their lives. In this way the history of the community is kept, its identity formed and reformed, the individual's role within the group established.

What was interesting to me in my attempts to adapt this to the printed page is the way these stories are told: in no temporal or logical sequence, they come in a random order, provoked by the day's events; a sudden thunderstorm, a blacksnake discovered in the chicken coop, a flat tire on the way to the church ice cream social will trigger a tale—"I never see a lug nut I don't think of the time Red Dog and I were. . ."—and one story will almost always lead to another. So the history is not told, but compiled from the raw material by all those who repeat and revise and listen: the yarn how a man saved the kitchen linoleum when the house on the west place burned, spun today, supplies the motive for the story of a second cousin's elopement heard five years ago and leads to the realization whose daughter it was carried the goose feathers around in the trunk of her '39 Packard you've known about since you were a kid. Everyone in town is both creator and curator in the stream of communal consciousness.

Thinking of the multiple and sometimes complex problems of representing this oral tradition in printed text inevitably leads to the broader question: what is fiction? The answer would no doubt be different for everyone you asked, but that only makes the question all the more interesting, and my answer is naturally informed of my interest in the oral tradition as the source for literature. The first distinction you have to make is between producer and consumer: what fiction seems to the one bears little resemblance to what it is for the other. In the oral tradition you have the performer: the Yugoslavian teller of tales, the Mississippi blues singer, the shortgrass story spinner; a physical presence whose purpose is, as my brother Steven, a choral director in Coffeyville, Kansas, puts it, to decorate time, to make our common passage more pleasant, more beautiful than it necessarily is, using every tool at [our] command, voice modulations, volume and timbre, facial expressions, gestures and body movement as well as language to conjure up meaning and sense. And you have the listener, the spectator of the performance, without whom it does not happen; there is no literature. It is a shared event, a communal invocation.

When literature is transferred to the printed page there are subtle changes with profound implications. Some people claim fiction should be an uninterrupted dream. Nothing could be further from the truth (for the writer, a nightmare maybe, but never a dream). Once a work has been committed to print it is done, and cannot be done again. It's like the comedian discovered by television, very successful on the various club circuits, doing and redoing a polished routine. One night on the

Johnny Carson show and all the good material is gone, eighty million people have heard it, and to avoid bombing the next time out, all new stuff must be found. But the content of literature, that which is meaningful and interesting to the human community is limited; check the tale type and motif indices: there just aren't any new stories to tell. This seems to leave the writer with a subtle, but pervasive, emphasis on formal, structural innovation. An isolated, lonely task.

The reader too is alone, but not dreaming; it is a physical, external object in the hand, pages to turn, lighting to adjust, pillows, chairs, bedspreads to smooth; and always aware who it is that wrote this book, what critics or friends or the dust jacket have said, how many more pages before we can get up and take a piss. There is no such thing as an invisible style that transports us; we are processing words and in our mind we re-create from the minimal cues of fixed letters a fictive world. It's an active project, takes work and thought, not dreams.

What of the common conjuring of the oral tradition—is it now lost in print? It would seem so: the writer sitting years alone at the desk, the reader in a quiet room, both with their separate agenda and relationship to the text, the writer may even be dead by now. But fiction is more than that; I believe it remains a communal, cultural process as it always was, though now not readily apparent; it is a method of inquiry.

A writer begins a work of fiction with a set of initial hypotheses, definitions, axioms, much as a mathematician or scientist does. In the case of the fiction writer, it can be a set of characters, a situation, landscape or plot, and assumptions about human nature and relationships. As the work progresses the writer then discovers corollaries and implications which lead to the further development of the work, to discoveries only vaguely understood at the start, or never imagined before; the full range of implications in the work is never grasped by the writer or anyone else and is fertile ground for interpretation and explication by subsequent generations of readers, much in the same way mathematical ideas remain fruitful for centuries and with totally unexpected applications long after the death of the people who formulated them. Once the work of fiction is published it has taken on a culture life of its own.

How does the method of inquiry used in fiction differ from the scientific method? To answer this question we must first consider the nature of ideas. To put it simply: an idea is a pattern; a pattern is an idea. A musician puts sounds together in patterns to produce musical ideas, a painter fills an area with shape, color, line, tone, and texture to get pictorial ideas, dancers fill space with music, movement, and gesture. Writers manipulate phonemes, words, syntax, sentences, and paragraphs; but they also use much more than that for their fictional ideas: rhythms, alliterations, assonances, images, scenes, plots, allusions, and rhymes. Fiction, at its most profound level, is a non-verbal form of communication, nested in language.

Scientists couch their ideas in mathematical expressions, also a non-verbal form. So where is the difference? The world scientists are investigating is external; they are trying to discover the way the physical world *is;* hypotheses can be tested against this physical world and can be proved right or wrong. The world which writers are interested in is internal, the product of the mind nested in the physical world; they are trying to discover how this cultural habitat *should* be, and any attempt to test hypotheses against it is recursive, a self-reference, so they can never be proved right or wrong. Quality is something everyone knows exists, but can never be defined, in fact must be constantly redefined, because of the tautological nature of human culture. Literature then is one of the most powerful tools for what at bottom is a moral task.

And this suggests the reason why we spend those long hours alone at the desk. The illusion of the lonely hero artist is really a powerful fraud; we do not work alone, it is not the power of our imagination; look at anything we write, the source of it is plain—that line from Chuck Berry, this image a Tabu magazine ad, that character Aunt Martha, this scene a Rilke poem, that story overheard in Bloomington Hardware—not to mention the numerous friends and editors whose advice and criticism have direct effect on the final form of the text. It is a common project we are engaging in: the evolution of culture. And language is the glue that holds it together.

The argument that speech developed out of the necessities of the hunt, economic necessities, always seemed suspect to me; hand signals and grunts would have been sufficient to the task. It seems more likely that social interaction exerted the significant evolutionary pressure; bands of hunter-gatherers spend the majority of their lives just hanging out together and only about fifteen per cent of the time collecting the necessities of existence, and I think language—storytelling, spellbinding, incantation, and song—is the social cement to bond this pack of churlish apes together, the tool to define each individual's place within the group. It is clear the human brain, the mind and language it makes possible (another nesting), has evolved far beyond any evolutionary necessity, and the only mechanism that explains how this happened is sexual selection: she just liked the way the boy could talk! Not out of necessity, but the pure joy of creating communal substance from thin air.

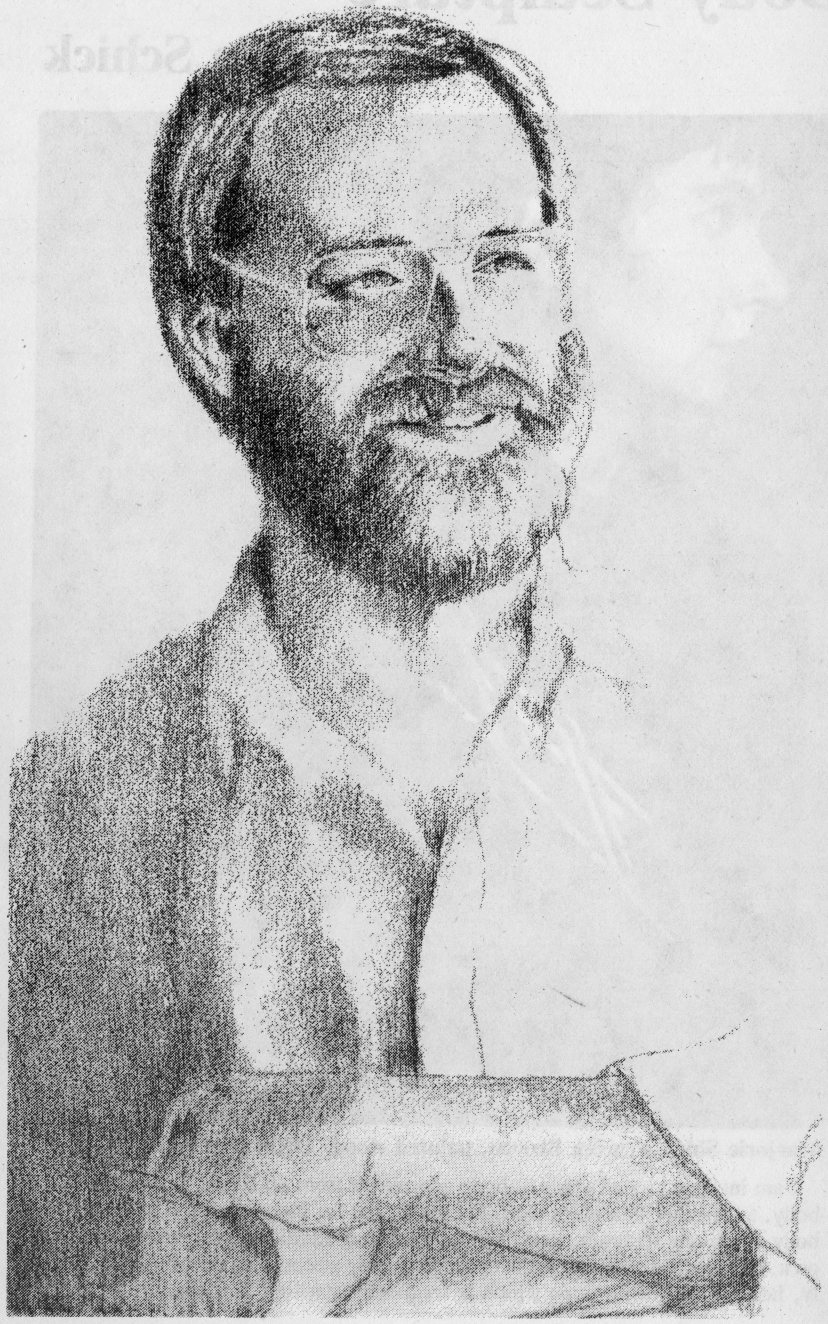
The termite *Macrotermes bellicosus* builds enormous mounds that regulate microclimatic conditions within a narrow range of temperature, humidity, and carbon dioxide. Driven by the metabolic heat of the tribe, convection currents circulate the air from the central core of the nest through the larger upper chamber, then out to a flat capillary-like network of rooms to the thin, dry outer wall, where it is cooled and freshened by the diffusion of gasses. The termites build these nests, establish, maintain, and harvest fungus gardens. Where is the blueprint? Pattern? Plan? Language is like this, all of human culture, far more complex than any termite, wasp, or bee colony. A superorganism. And it is greater than the sum of its parts. Like a biological organism, the patterns for its further evolution are contained within--chemical patterns encoded in RNA and DNA in animal and plant; and mental patterns, ideas, encoded in language in culture. We could call them *supergenes*. So complicated that we don't even realize that we are part of an organization, that nested levels of organization exist greater than we will ever comprehend, an ever-expanding horizon beyond our grasp and vision. All of us chewing away blindly at our chunk of cellulose, nosing pebbles and fecal pellets around. *Stigmergy*, they say about the termites: the work itself gives impetus to and instruction for further work.

And what a piece of work it is.

Diary Entry, 19 March 1928, by Margaret E. Haughawout

It's not the wholesome, healthy, happy days that make me grow, but the sleepless, irritating nights—caused by too much coffee and salad—that show me who I am and irritate me into doing something.

Right: Friend (pencil on gesso-covered canvas), by Rod Dutton, 1985.

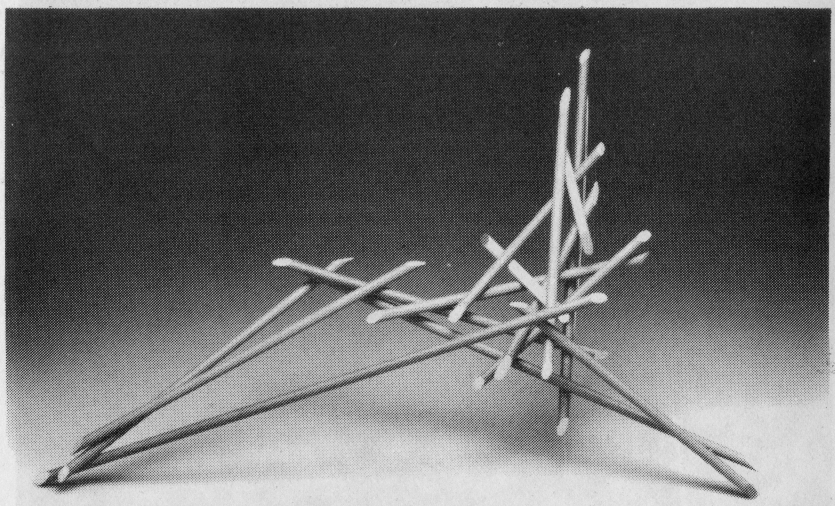


Body Sculpture

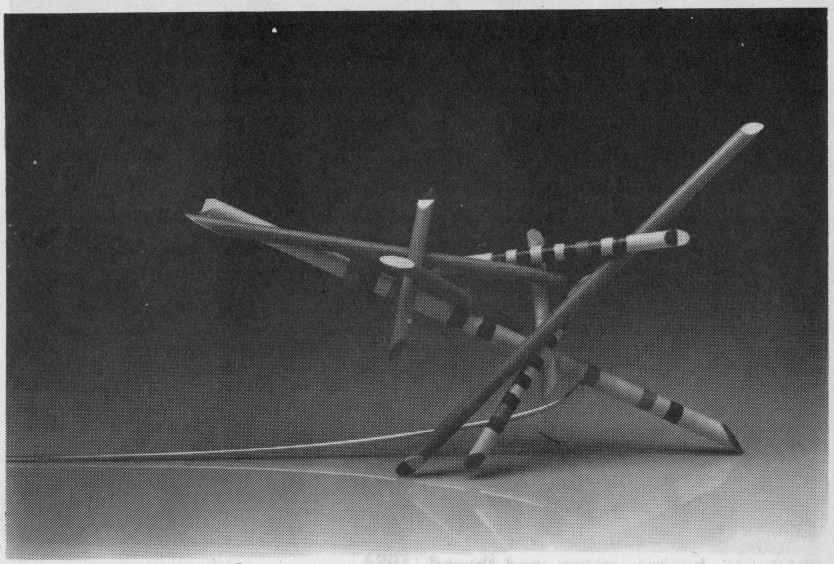
By Marjorie Schick

Marjorie Shick wearing Brooch, painted wood, 1983. 17¾"x2½"x1".

I am intrigued by all types of body adornment from art forms incorporating the body, to fashion, to articles worn for rituals and for protection. I view the human body as a living sculpture, and I enjoy developing additional sculptures to be worn on it. I believe the body is capable of carrying large pieces, both visually and physically, hence I work in a scale which is frequently startling to some.

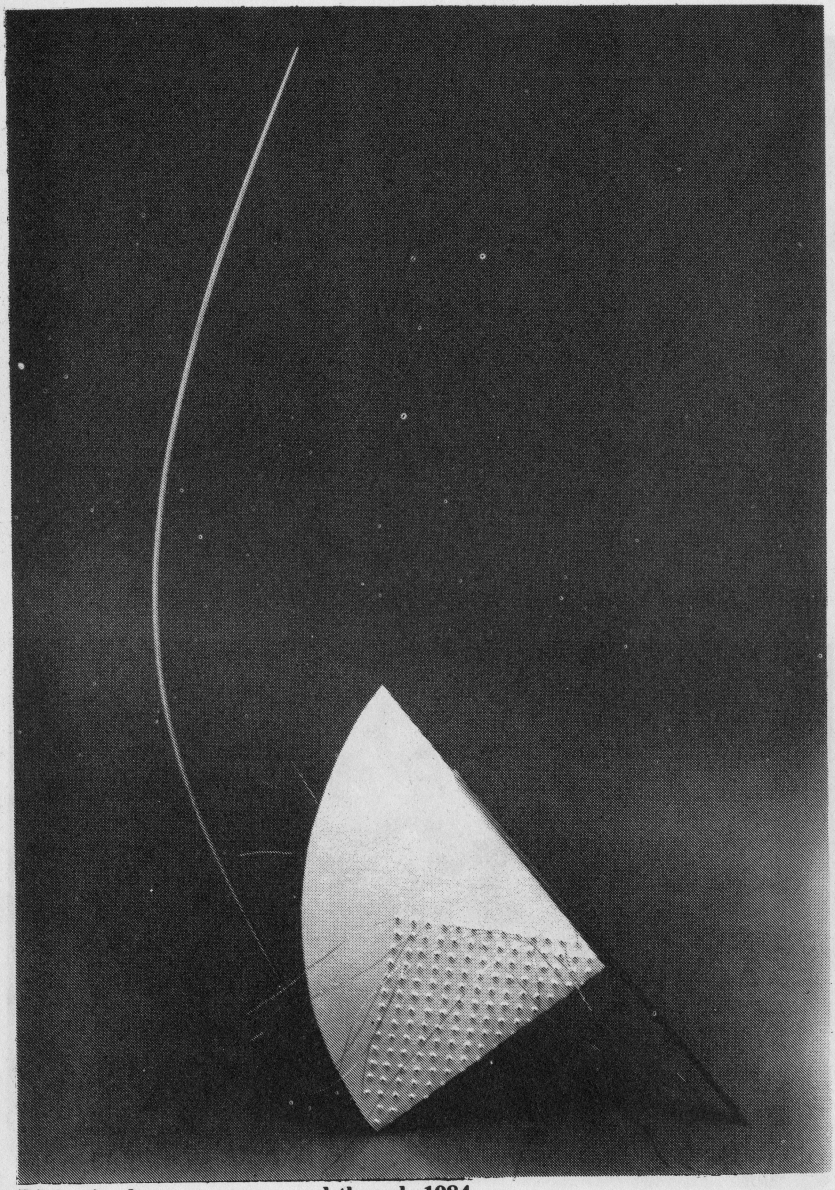


Brooch, painted wood, 1983. 8½"x13"x2¼".



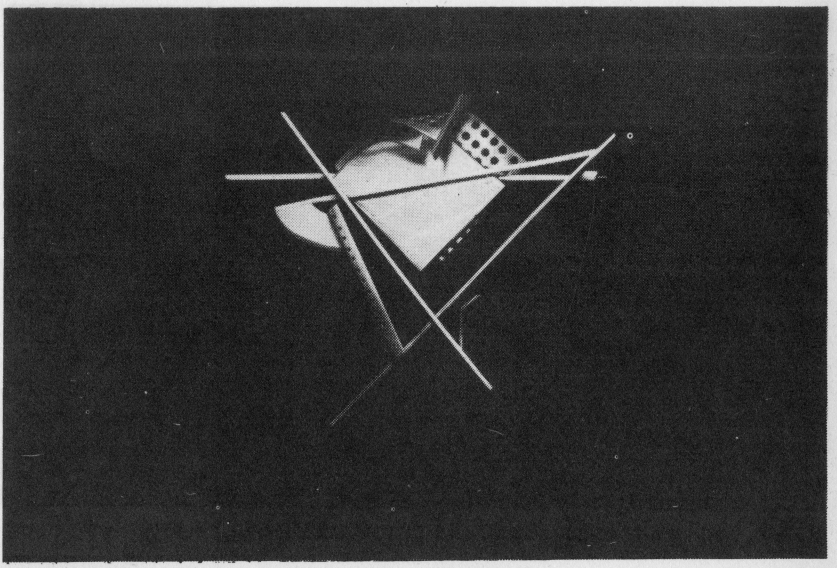
Stick pin, painted wood and nickel, 1984. 11¼"x4¼"x1".

A drawing is a series of marks and lines on a picture plane. I am putting together lines in space and consider my painted wood pieces as sculptural "stick drawings" to wear. I trust, throughout the process of making each piece, it will retain an element of spontaneity and liveliness. I like finding solutions throughout the process of making each form and usually do not "predesign." I work from an idea.

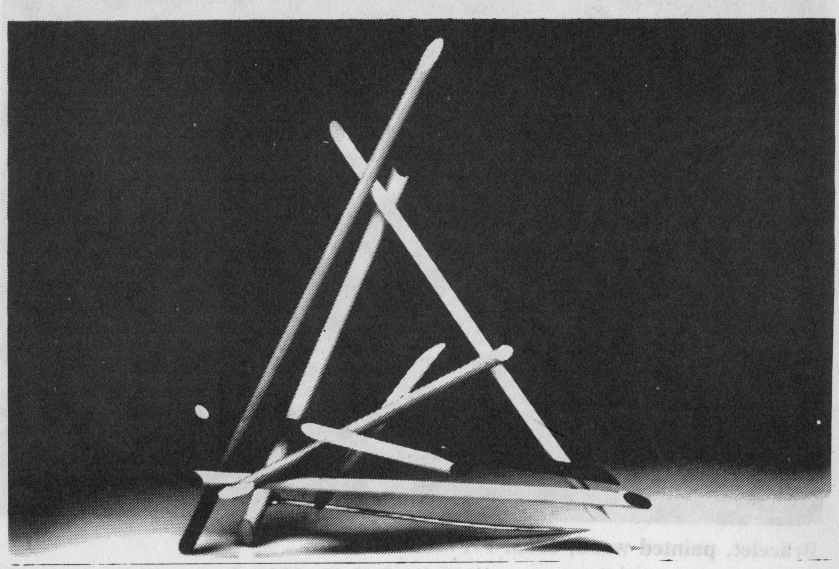


Stick pin, bronze, paper, and thread, 1984.

Frequently I combine materials that are unlikely, such as rubber hose on a brass container. Not only do I like to put together uncommon materials, but I like to work with different ideas, such as creating a necklace which comes up high enough in front of the face that the wearer can look out through the piece. I frequently tell my students that jewelry making is magic, albeit "hard work" magic.

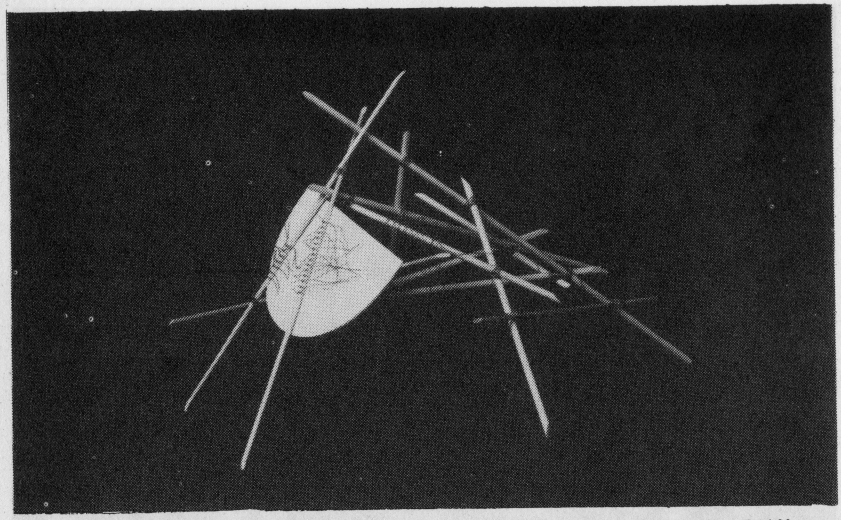


Brooch, brass and nickel, 1982. 6¼" x 6" x 1½".

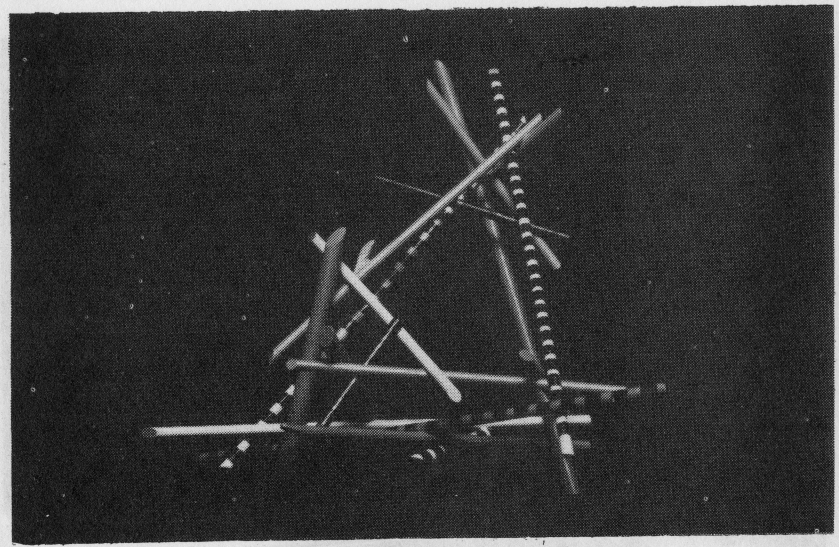


Brooch, painted wood, 1983. 7¾"x7½"x1¼".

In my most recent work, I have experimented with creating a sense of visual tension among these elements and set a line against a shape or manipulate various directional forces against each other. I like to stretch the idea of the function of jewelry, whether it is a brooch that extends into space beyond the wearer's shoulder or a series of painted lines that hang from one's ear.



Brooch and stand, wood, paper, and thread, 1983. 13¼" x 11½" x 9½".



Bracelet, painted wood, 1983. 9½" x 9½" x 5".

My painted wood forms are of riveted wood which I construct as sculptures. I develop each jewelry piece to be complete as a form when it is off the human body; however, each piece is studied *on* the body throughout its construction since it exists primarily because *of* the body. I paint the forms after they are constructed and then add a nickel pin stem and hook to each brooch.

Bracelet, painted wood, 1983. 9¼" x 7¾" x 3½".

My goal is that my work should have an aesthetic presence about it. The idea and the aesthetics of each piece are paramount to me. The techniques and tools I use are simple, but the process of putting lines, shapes, spaces, and colors together into a form which is somehow extraordinary but still wearable—if even for only a short period of time—is what I find exciting.

Zula Bennington Greene in her Grecian dress. Photograph by Crooks, 1918.

Marriage

By Zula Bennington Greene

Willard and I—it was no longer Mr. Greene—were married on June 26 in our home with a few friends and neighbors present and no attendants. Willard had a new navy blue suit that was his "best" for years afterward. My white georgette crepe dress from Franklin Simon in New York had a tiered skirt and a square-neck blouse. I wore a white georgette hat made over a wide wire frame and trimmed with a few flowers. A friend sang two songs, "I Love You Truly" and "O Promise Me." My mother made the wedding cake with rice flour—it was 1918 and there was a war. Willard came a couple of days before the wedding and brought a bridal bouquet of lilies of the valley which I kept under my bed and looked at every few hours, as though by willing I could keep it fresh. Colorado weather was cool and we had no need for a refrigerator.

No photographs were taken and I have no newspaper clippings. Gifts included a set of Community plate silver, Adam pattern, cut glass, china, and other pieces. My pupils at school had brought me orange wrappers, which I sent away and got, with a small amount of money, a set of orange blossom silverware. Mindful of the Missouri bridal dowry, my father gave Willard a hundred dollars and said he should buy a mattress. The club of unmarried women, called locally the Old Maids Club, followed its custom of giving a dozen salad forks, utensils not in common family use and a hopeful step forward into the niceties of living.

My trousseau was not elaborate. I had my apple green suit and my navy-cerise dress, a green and gold striped silk skirt, and white silk stockings that had green clocks, and I had my Grecian dress, a romantic indulgence. It was pale pink crepe de Chine with flowing sleeves and a bodice confined with long bands of beaded crystal that crossed in front, then went to the back and returned to fall in a looped tie. I have a photograph of myself wearing it.

What I would do with a Grecian dress in Center was not clear to my sensible mother and is not at all clear to me now. Later I ripped it up, dyed it a brighter pink and converted it into an only slightly more appropriate dress with wide bands of blue embroidery, copying a dress I had seen in a magazine. Nor is it at all clear to me now what I did with it in the little cattle town of Bazaar, Kansas.

My shoes were high-topped, white, laced kid with a curving heel. They met the skirt halfway up the lower leg over stockings supposed to match the color of the dress. The favored undergarment was the all-in-one "teddy bear" or "ted." I made several, the most elaborate being one of a violet print trimmed in lace. My special nightgown was a long white nainsook, Sears' best grade, attached to a wide crochetted lace yoke.

We were married simply and after the ice cream and cake we prepared to go to Wagonwheel Gap in the mountains for a short stay. Uncle Frank and Aunt Jessie were to drive us and we would return by train. We lingered, but when it came time to say good-bye I found my father out in the yard. "Now you take care, Hon," he said, "and write to us."

Uncle Frank and Aunt Jessie spent the night at the Gap in another cabin at a discreet distance. They were the ones who nine months later became the parents of a daughter. It was the earnest hope of brides to keep from becoming pregnant for at least a year and they exchanged what meager and unreliable information they had.

At the Gap we swam in the pool, walked in the mountains, ate at the lodge, and began our new relationship as husband and wife. It seemed strange to be called by my new name, though I had said it many times to myself and had ordered calling cards imprinted with *Mrs. M. Willard Greene.* What need I would have for calling cards does not now come to mind.

We returned, packed the wedding gifts, visited another day or two, and left for Kansas on a train, taking a Pullman, since we would be traveling overnight. Morning found us in Garden City, Kansas, where we got off the train to have breakfast at the Harvey House and transferred from the Pullman to the day coach. A Pullman was for sleeping. The night was over.

Willard's parents met us in Strong City, on the main line of the Santa Fe. I had visited in their home one Christmas and met his parents and his two brothers, Dwight and Churchill. One summer Willard had driven his mother to Colorado for a short vacation. His father said she needed a rest. I thought it likely, too, that she wanted a look at the Benningtons.

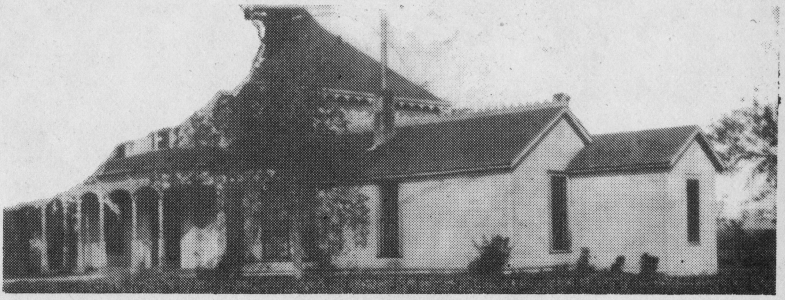
About a mile from Strong City and across the Cottonwood River was another town, Cottonwood Falls, which had a waterfall and an old mill, used in early days to grind grain. The towns were called twin cities, competitive twins—Strong City had the main line depot, Cottonwood Falls the courthouse. It stood high at the end of main street, a perfect picture-book old limestone in Renaissance style, as surprising and pleasing as rounding a bend in a river and coming on to a castle. Its style and elegance dominated the business buildings on each side of the broad street of the town, as it stood alone, a testament to someone's love for beauty.

We lived in the house with Willard's parents. Churchill was in France in military service with the 35th Infantry Division, along with many other young men in the community. Willard's father had urged him to give up teaching, temporarily he thought, to help with work on the farm. So he had given up his position as superintendent of schools in Tarpon Springs, Florida, and was taking charge of the farm.

The house had a large kitchen with a wood-burning range, a sink with a cistern pump, a zinc-topped work table, cupboards, and a big pantry. Off the kitchen a dining room with wide bay windows opened into the front hall, beyond which were double parlors, one with a fireplace. At the back of the house were a library and large bedroom occupied by Willard's parents. There was a bathroom with a zinc tub, but no water; a basement with a furnace. Upstairs were four bedrooms and all over the house were solid walnut, marble-topped furniture, beds with high carved heads, and two love seats with matching chairs.

Willard's father was the third Elisha Barton Greene. Two deep concerns had brought him from Zanesville, Ohio, to Kansas in the spring of 1902: land and prohibition. Though his family had been townspeople for several generations, he had a yearning for the land. A staunch Presbyterian and a strict prohibitionist, he did not want his five sons and three daughters growing up in a state where alcoholic liquors were sold. Kansas had a prohibition law.

So at age fifty-three he sold his interest in the iron business, loaded his household goods on a freight train, and moved his family to Emporia, Kansas, a town chosen because it had a Presbyterian college. He rented a house, put his children in school, and looked for a farm. He was shown a farm in Chase County with a five hundred-



"This is likely too torn to be of any use. The small addition at the right was the pantry, the next the kitchen. The rest was the main house, four bedrooms upstairs and six rooms down, counting the front hall."—ZBG

acre pasture, some four hundred acres of farming land, and a creek, the South Fork of the Cottonwood River. Even more important was the big rambling house.

"I'll take it," he decided. "That house will hold all my children." An orphaned nephew and niece were sometimes members of his household.

The deed was signed March 31, 1902, giving him "920 acres more or less" for sixteen thousand dollars.

He farmed by the book, subscribed to *Hoard's Dairyman* and kept up a correspondence with the Kansas State Agricultural College in Manhattan, Kansas, which issued bulletins on everything from wheat rust to chicken pip. In an area where grazing beef cattle was the main occupation, he had a dairy herd of Holsteins, had installed milking machines and a Delco electric plant to provide power. He shipped the cream to a creamery and fed the skim milk to hogs. In addition he farmed his several hundrd acres of land and rented the five hundrd-acre pasture.

This was the Flint Hills of Kansas, a large area of grazing land, of rolling hills covered with native bluestem grass which holds nutrients that will fatten cattle without additional grain. Flinty limestone is just beneath the surface, making the land unsuitable for cultivation. Pasture once plowed up does not return to native grass, nor is the land desirable for crops. The farming land lies along the streams.

The little town of Bazaar, a quarter of a mile from our place, was the end of the railroad and all the cattle pastured in the area were shipped there by rail, fattened during the summer, then sent to market. In early years they came on cattle drives. Now they arrive in trucks and step right out into tall grass.

Bazaar was a thriving small town, with two grocery stores, a hardware store, post office, and telephone exchange, which was operated by the Henry McCracken family. You rang and asked for a name, not a number, and might be told, "She's not at home. I saw her go past a few minutes ago." Or, if the ring had no answer, "This is Ladies' Aid day. She always goes." Another time an unanswered ring might be explained, "I expect she's at her daughter's. The little girl's not well. They were talking to the doctor this morning." Where, in this maze of area codes, dialing, and multiple digits can anyone get such service any more?

I was the new girl in town and was meeting the neighbors. Will and Jessie Olds, an elderly couple with no children, ran a neat farm just across a field and we were soon good friends. They would invite us over to hear operatic records on their Victrola—Caruso, Farrar, Schumann-Heink, John McCormick—and sometimes we went on picnics.

"Virginia Moore [Greene], Milton Greene's mother, and her brother for whom he was named, John Milton Moore (who was to become the father of Marianne Moore, the poet)."—ZBG

My new in-laws took pleasure telling me about the family. I learned that the first Greene in this country was Surgeon John Greene, who with his wife, Joan Tattersall, sailed from Southampton, England, April 6, 1635, and arrived in Boston June 3, after fifty-eight days in a sailing ship. Further back was Alexander, the great grandson of one of the Norman nobles who had invaded England in 1066 with William the Conqueror.

Willard's mother, Virginia Moore, gave birth to nine children during her first nineteen years of marriage. All lived but the first, a boy named Fred, whose picture is on the dial of a watch now owned by our daughter. Many of the stories were about her father, William Moore, of Portsmouth, Ohio, whose ship, the steamer *Hope,* had plied the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers from Portsmouth to New Orleans. On these trips he often took his family with him.

The Civil War found them in Mississippi, where they were detained by the Confederate government, and it was there, at Yazoo, Mississippi, that Virginia was born. The prize family heirloom, kept in a sack in the bathroom, hanging under old coats, was a large coin silver pitcher, inscribed: "To Capt. William Moore from the Hamer Rifles." There was also some china from the *Hope* and it was rumored that one of his daughters, in her later years, would wander about town handing a few pieces to people she met.

William Moore, a great reader, had a large library that included first editions of Audubon. Every creature, he claimed, had a right to live and he would kill none, not even a fly, which he tried to liberate outside the house. Described as "tall, solemn looking, in a dark suit, usually a Prince Albert with a silk hat," he was a dignified figure. Grandchildren were awed in his presence.

When he was old and ill, a grandchild brought to visit found him in a tall four-poster. The conversation was meager and halting, but the boy remembererd a startling bit of advice given him that day: "Willie, always be careful about choosing your friends. I never met anyone I thought was worth having for a friend, so I never had any."

I was told about Mother Greene's sister, Aunt Louisiana Richter, whose sons were all doing so well. Then there was Aunt Macey, the spinster sister, who enjoyed visiting cemeteries and would recite dates and causes of death and supply details of final illnesses. I heard about Cousin Will Moore, who was doing well in Washington and who in later years corresponded with Willard.

Willard, whose full name was Milton Willard Greene, was named for Frances E. Willard, the famous temperance leader, and for his mother's brother, Milton Moore, the father of the poet, Marianne Moore. Willard had a natural lively wit that embellished his mother's lengthy recitatives of family history.

The four of us lived in the house that summer and Churchill, in France, was an unseen fifth. With newspapers and maps, his father charted each location of the 35th and waited eagerly for letters. The word came that he was in a hospital. In the battle of the Argonne Forest, shrapnel had hit his knee, news that brought both concern and relief.

The neighborhood women met at our house to sew outing flannel pajamas for the soldiers and I was asked to run the sewing machine, which had been fitted with a little electric motor which was pushed under the wheel and powered by the Delco plant. We turned them out by the dozens and I learned to make a neat welt seam. With several other women, I took a Red Cross course in nursing.

Willard got up early and with the help of a man employed on the farm would milk the cows, separate the milk, and feed the hogs before breakfast. I would wake at the alarm, sorry to have him go. Breakfast was a hearty meal. There was oatmeal, put on the night before in a double boiler, followed by bacon and eggs or ham and eggs, with either pancakes or toast. Thick fresh cream was brought in and whole milk to drink. All of us drank milk.

But before breakfast there were Bible reading and prayer. The family gathered in the dining room and Father Greene read from the Bible, sometimes dipping into the old Prophets, but the Psalms—he gave the word a short *a*—were his favorite

and the words rolled out in all the majesty of the King James version. With earnest faith he lifted his eyes to the hills, sure that strength would be coming from the Lord who made heaven and earth.

The reading was followed by prayer and the prayers were always the same. No pleas were made for good crops or needed rain or better markets. No personal favors were asked. The prayers were for the salvation of mankind. No matter if hay was down and rain threatened or the threshers were due, nothing interfered with or hastened morning worship and any hired man or woman helper in the house was expected to kneel with the family.

Father Greene never sat down to eat, not even on the hottest day, without first putting on his coat, a thin gray alpaca which he kept hanging on the back of his chair. He served the food as he had done when his table was surrounded by children. His sons addressed him as *Sir* and gave him respectful attention. Nobody called him by his first name, nor did he address anybody by a first name except young people and his farm employees.

Though the Greene family was friendly with their neighbors, it was soon learned that their ways were different. In a farm community Sunday is a day for visiting, but for the Greenes it was a day for church and quiet contemplation. Cooking was kept to a minimum and no farm work was done except the necessary attention to animals. Willard said that when they were children they spent Sunday afternoons sitting in a circle, reading in turn from the Bible.

Father Greene lived by his beliefs—in the Bible, the Presbyterian Church, and the system of supply and demand. He disagreed with local opinion that an abstract villain called Wall Street was responsible for the low prices of farm products. Always forward looking and progressive, he was the first in the community to have silos and a telephone, stretching a wire on fence posts to bring the service to his house.

At his own expense he dragged the dirt roads after a rain. He was an early owner of a car. When he was learning to drive, he entered the garage, found he could not stop and went on through the back wall of the old shed where the car was kept. Without any fuss he circled around, entered again, and stopped promptly.

He accorded his wife and all women the greatest consideration and courtesy, but expected them to stay put in their God-ordained places, which did not include the pulpit or the voting booth. No word of swearing, however mild, was heard in the house, no tobacco in any form was used, nor any reference made to any garment not visible or any part of the body thought to be indelicate. Mother Greene, if it became necessary to refer to the bull, called him "the gentleman cow."

Fitting ourselves into this pattern of living, Willard and I had a life of our own, almost as clandestine as though we were not married—quick kisses as we washed the cream separator, making a game of counting the disks, touching of hands, looks. What he could say with those great brown eyes, deep set in his face, had no need to be translated into meter or music.

Our room was our world, where we lived evenings and Sundays. It had bird's-eye maple furniture, with much tatting on dresser scarves done by Mother Greene. Nothing in it was particularly our own, but its furnishings were of scant importance. We were there and it was ours.

I often went to the barn at milking time and sometimes walked to the field with Willard. I loved the dear little newborn calves, made sketches of them for registration, and was sad when they were sold for veal.

On pleasant Sunday afternoons Willard and I sometimes walked in the woods along the creek that circled the corn field, hand in hand, or sat on a rock and watched the water flowing. Once we had a little adventure.

Rains had flooded the creek and set it rampaging, so that trees normally on the banks were now standing in water. We got into a square, homemade boat for a little ride and were swished down the creek faster than we could manage the boat. Only by catching hold of overhanging branches could we slow our progress and only by bracing the boat with the oars and pulling ourselves upstream by the branches could we get back.

It was a hot summer. Every animal sought the shade. Chickens drooped their wings and held their mouths open. Mother Greene would sit calmly in the bay window tatting and saying periodically, "I think there's a little breeze coming in now." Willard would come in from the field wet with sweat and gray with dust. I endured the days, wanting only for them to hurry toward evening when the scorching sun would be gone. There was no bathroom or shower, no cool summer clothing. Long skirts had been gone only three or four years; shorts and sandals were far in the future.

Willard and I moved a big old steel cot into the back yard and abandoned our hot bedroom. Supper would often be noon dinner leftovers with fresh fruit and vegetables. We washed the dishes and the cream separator and sat on the back porch as dusk settled down. Then in the cool darkness we would slip into the cot under the trees and into each other's arms and, with the shrill cicadas dropping into a slower cadence, went to sleep.

This was the real honeymoon, not those few awkward days at Wagonwheel Gap.

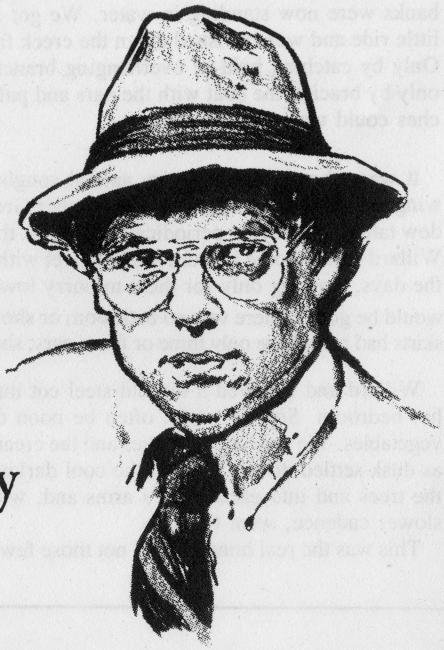
An Autograph from Marianne Moore

my signature. I wish
it were something better —
something more befitting than a signature
Marianne Moore
(i.e. Marianne Craig Moore)

who was born in Missouri
and will always have an interest
in "the mid-west".

March 28, 1957

The Education of Papa Joe



By Max McCoy

Papa Joe Saia's age is catching up with him, but you can't tell it by looking at his hands. The face, yes. That broad Sicilian face with the salt-and-pepper mustache is growing tighter against his eighty-year-old skull. But the hands are still large and olive-colored, with stubby broad fingers and thick nails. They are laborer's hands, meant for digging in the good rich earth. They are hands that have, since 1938, fought for the helm of Crawford County government, have pounded in anger for the rights of women and the poor, that have knocked a fellow county commissioner to the floor for calling Saia a "black Dago."

Saia is the Little Balkans' most recognized politician and easily the most investigated. But despite the alleged backroom deals, the rumored kickbacks and payoffs, Saia is legally as innocent as the day he was born. Saia is one whom longtime residents in the Second Commission District—all of the northeastern corner of Crawford County, plus Arma, Frontenac, and part of north Pittsburg—turn to when they have a problem. Some call it favoritism; Saia calls it help.

He says he is the longest tenured county commissioner in the nation. That claim, however, cannot be substantiated—there appears to be a county commissioner in Texas who has Saia beat by at least a decade. But it's a cinch that Saia has the state title wrapped up, and that he has wielded more power in national politics than any other rural county official is likely to see in a lifetime. The surviving Kennedy brother sends personal best wishes on birthdays. Saia is an institution, a living symbol of the area's independence and defiance. His language is earthy, like that of the immigrant coal mining stock from which he sprang. His walk is a little unsteadier these days, his oratorical thunder not quite so focused, and his critics say his effective days in government are over, that his style of politics is dead. Perhaps. But it's not a good philosophy to discuss with some of the older residents in northeastern Crawford County.

Joe Saia, 1985. **Photograph by Ray Brecheisen.**

* * *

David Joseph Saia was born 2 May 1904 on the Italian side of the Chicopee coal camp to Phillip and Elizabeth Piraro Saia. His father died when Saia was five years old, reportedly of liver disease, but Saia says his father didn't drink enough to justify the diagnosis. He now suspects it was more due to the diabetes that runs in the family. Saia himself takes twenty-five units of insulin daily.

His mother later remarried, and the family moved to Frontenac, where little David Joseph played first base with a sandlot baseball team called the "Giants" and at night feared the mob-style violence which ruled the coal camps. He remembers that his uncle, Sam Piraro, was shot dead while sitting with a companion on some railroad tracks, drinking wine and playing the mandolin. The companion was later found burned to death in the Capaldo waterworks. Saia never asked questions about the deaths.

Times were hard. When Saia was thirteen years old he quit school and accompanied his stepfather into the mines, at half pay. Saia recalls that working in the mines was one of the toughest things he would ever do. But he believed he had only two options—work in the mines or join the Army, as his older full brother Vincent had done.

His stepfather, Joe Cicero, tried to talk him out of it, to keep him in school. It didn't work. The ninth grade was the last year of formal education Saia would ever see, and he now says it was a mistake that has haunted him throughout his political career. What goals could he have reached, Saia wonders, had he gone on to college? He believes the governor's office—and perhaps beyond—would not have been out of the question.

In 1919, two years after Saia followed his stepfather into the coal fields, he followed him back out. Alexander Howat of Pittsburg, president of the Fourteenth District United Mine Workers of America, called for all coal miners in the state to join

in a nationwide strike for better wages and a six-hour day. Saia, now a strapping fifteen-year-old, became a union organizer and learned from his stepfather and his friend Howat how to control a rabble and conduct a demonstration. As the strike wore on, winter approached, and the state's coal reserves neared exhaustion. Governor Henry J. Allen threw the mines into a temporary state receivership, declared martial law, and a thousand workers—mostly college students—were sent to Crawford County under National Guard protection to work the mines.

Allen then called a special session of the Legislature, which passed a "criminal syndicalism and sabotage act" and established the Court of Industrial Relations. The court denied labor unions the right to picket, boycott, or strike and provided for stiff punishment for those who defied it. Organized labor railed against the court, and labor leader Samuel Gompers likened it to "legislating men into serfdom" and "compelling them to submit to involuntary servitude."

Kansas had, for the first and only time in the nation's history, attempted to enforce compulsory arbitration of labor disputes. In 1923, the U.S. Supreme Court held that the Court of Industrial Relations was unconstitutional. The State Legislature abolished the illegal organization in 1925.

Meanwhile, Saia had trouble finding work because he was blackballed as a union activist. He drifted from coal field to coal field, spent some time mining in Missouri, and eventually came back to Kansas, where he continued his political activism on behalf of the Democratic Party. While still in the coal fields, he became a union arbitrator between company foremen and union workers.

"In Italy, power was vested in the local ruler on whom they depended to supply [vital services]," wrote Steven K. Baden in a 1975 Pittsburg State University thesis. "In Crawford County, they viewed the political leader [Saia] in the same light." For the immigrants, he had become their *padrone*.

In 1927, with work scarce and Saia suffering because of his political activity, the sheriff of Crawford County, John Turkington, used his influence to land Saia a job as a railroad detective in Kansas City. But Saia quit within two years. He could not stand to help jail those who were stealing food from boxcars in order to feed their hungry families.

In 1929, he opened a gasoline station at the corner of US 160 highway and McKay Street in Frontenac, but a year later left it to his halfbrother Charles Cicero—Saia himself had been appointed as a state "vehicle inspector" by the newly elected Governor Harry H. Woodring in return for political support. (Saia says the position was equivalent to today's highway patrolman.) But, two years later, Saia lost that job when Woodring was replaced in the executive mansion by Alf Landon.

Saia was then appointed as a relief foreman by Congressman E.W. Patterson—another political favor, this one because Saia had urged the red-headed Pittsburg lawyer to run for office and had even paid his filing fee—and Saia became active in the WPA workers' union. This put him into conflict with Dr. Allen Sandidge, a Mulberry physician and the county's Democratic Party chief, who was responsible for appointing Works Progress Administration foremen and timekeepers. Under Sandidge, if one wanted a political favor, such as a federal relief job, it would cost a twenty-five dollar "membership fee," plus a salary percentage to the central committee.

In 1934 he was elected Democratic precinct committeeman for the Fourth Ward in Frontenac. And, also that year, he became vice president of the Crawford County Democrat Central Committee—which posed a direct threat to Sandidge's organization.

In 1935 Saia ran for mayor of Frontenac, claiming he was "drafted" at a city caucus meeting. He ran on the slogan, "Down with political rings!" Although he was beaten by Henry Charosett, 438 to 349, it was a landmark election for the city, turning out a record eighty-three percent of the vote.

On 14 November 1936, he and a band of followers reveled in the defeat of Governor Alf Landon's Presidential bid by staging a "funeral" down Broadway in Pittsburg. Saia officiated by tucking a Bible under his arm and leading the parade to an accordian rendition of "Nearer, My God, to Thee," while others carried coffins representing the ousted Republican leader and his running mate, Col. Frank Knox.

In 1937, Saia pulled off his biggest victory yet by leading a hunger march on WPA headquarters in Chanute to protest $1.6 million in federal program cuts. Of the 2,037 WPA jobs in Crawford County, at least 1,300 were to be eliminated.

More than 250 men and women occupied the headquarters on and off for four days, sometimes sleeping on desks and chairs, while Saia demanded a meeting with the officials who, he claims, fled when they heard the news that the group was coming.

"That place was packed," Saia remembers. "The city attorney came over and said, 'You can't do that here.' I said, 'Oh, yes we can. We're going to stay here until they get back and try to negotiate with us. You people look at us like we're some kind of radicals, but we're not. We're people that don't know anything but digging coal. But this is a federal building, and we the people are the government, and we're only asking for [a meeting] to get our fair share."

The food they brought with them ran out the first day, but the demonstration was sustained by food donations by sympathetic townspeople. Each day of the occupation, Saia says, they gained in strength until their number reached about 350.

On the fourth day, Saia states the police chief was ordered by the county attorney to remove him. He remembers the lawman as being apologetic about having to force him out, concerned that the crowd around Saia would retaliate.

"Don't worry about that," Saia told him. "They're under my control. They'll do as I tell them. They're not mean people."

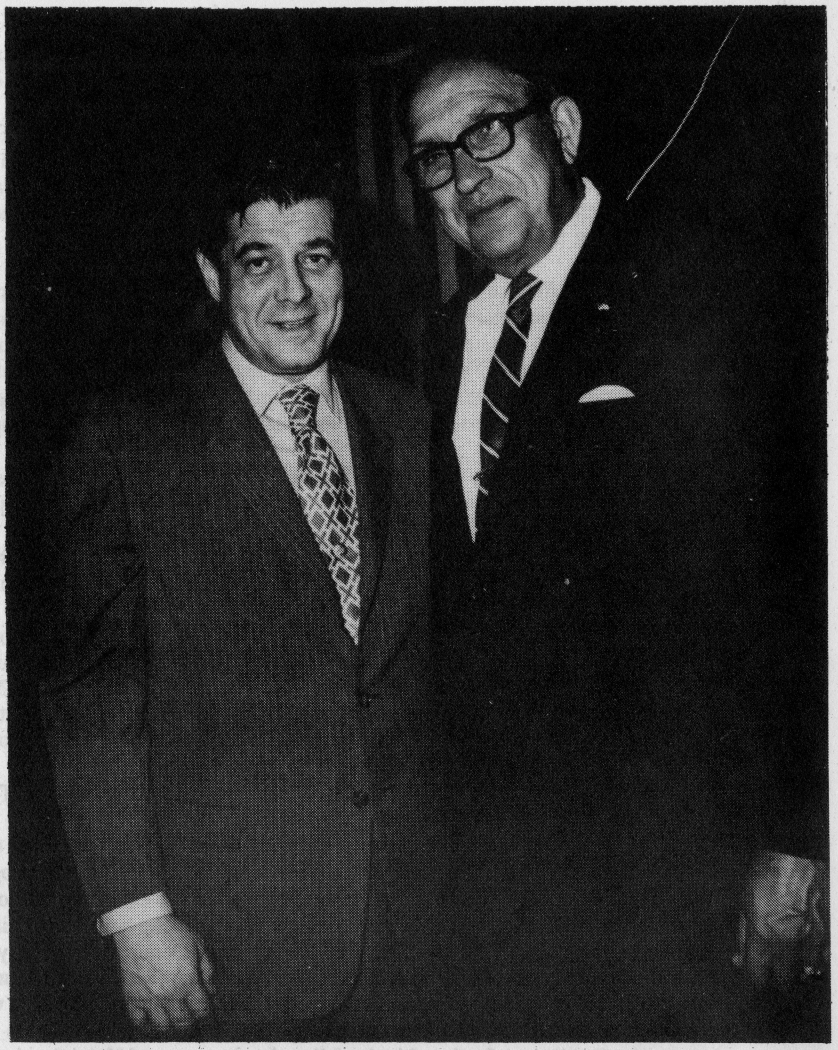
On 24 August 1937 President Franklin D. Roosevelt—conceding to protests across the nation such as the one Saia had led—agreed to no further cuts in the program.

With that victory under his belt, Saia renewed his efforts to challenge the political machine of Dr. Sandidge. Since 1938 was an election year, he began searching for a candidate to run against the Sandidge men in the county Democratic primary race.

"I had a fellow who was an outstanding WPA foreman and I asked him if he would file for county commission, and he agreed," Saia remembers. "Well, it wasn't but about a week later that he came and said, 'Joe, I just can't run. I was asked to get out by Sandidge.' So then I had a fellow by the name of Noland, who lived in Frontenac, and he was anxious to run. But that didn't work either, because they talked him out of it—they promised him a good job on the WPA."

Saia says he talked to several others, but all were either bought off or pressured out by Sandidge. At last he found a solitary man willing to run—only on the day of the filing deadline it was discovered he didn't live in the proper commission district—the Second.

By that time Saia had been fired several times by Sandidge from his job as WPA supervisor and rehired the same number of times by Congressman Patterson. He had gotten so sick of the instability, he took a position with the Joe Smith Tobacco Company, delivering beer to local taverns. On that last day to file for the 1938 election, he set out on his beer wagon route, wondering what kind of candidate he could find on such short notice.



Governor Robert Docking, left, and Joe Saia, 1966

"I started out that morning and the first stop I made was where Jim Delaney was running a beer parlor. I said, 'Mr. Delaney, how would *I* run for commissioner?'"

"'If it wasn't for Mr. Saia, none of us would have any employment,' Delaney says. 'He's been for us people all through. Everybody that comes in here says that's the man for county commission.'

"So I said, 'Well, I'm just feeling it out.'

"Then I got to Slim Ottman's, he run a joint by the *Headlight* [the Pittsburg evening newspaper]. I said, 'Slim, I'm trying to find a good candidate for commissioner, and I can't find anyone. How do you think *I'd* run?'

"'Let me tell you,' he said, 'you're the conversation of all of them. We're with you.' By the time I made another stop or two, I thought, 'Heck, I'm a candidate'."

He borrowed the nine dollars he had collected so far on his beer route, went over to the Girard courthouse, and paid the filing fee.

"When I filed, Sandidge was there, and there were two or three of his stooges there waiting to break up the vote. I don't want to mention their names because . . . some of them are still living."

Saia was a reluctant candidate. His family wanted him to keep his steady job and Saia himself was concerned that the district would not elect an Italian-American to represent them. Other Italians had previously run for office and lost. But faced with the challenge, Saia threw his heart into it. His campaign focused on three issues: equitable distribution of Social Security for old people, the hiring of women as caseworkers, and removing graft from the certification process for relief funds, then handled by the county commission.

"I believe this county is entitled to a commissioner who will see that the unemployed coal miners get their certification before their families starve to death or before they die from lack of medical attention," Saia said in a campaign speech.

Sandidge selected and financed Ed Fleming of Pittsburg to challenge Saia in the primary. Saia's budget was meager by comparison. He spent less than one hundred dollars in cash and depended on the help of his former WPA workers. He stumped frequently, taking a boydguard with him to discourage heckling.

Saia won.

After the primary battle, Saia and his band of insurgents went head-to-head with the Sandidge machine at the 20 August 1938 county convention. Sandidge was up for reelection as county chairman. The plan was to call for a secret ballot in order to allow those who owed Sandidge their WPA jobs to vote for their choice, Saia. But the more experienced Sandidge quickly outmaneuvered them by ruling that before a secret vote could be held, a roll call vote would have to be taken to approve it. Few of the Democrats chose to oppose Sandidge openly, and the secret ballot was voted down, 97 to 12. Saia had lost; Sandidge was elected for another term. (Saia learned his lesson and often in his career would use similar tactics.)

That November, Saia was elected by a margin of 762 votes over Republican Ross L. Parmenter. But as elections went that year, the Democratic victory in Crawford County's Second Commission District was the exception rather than the rule. Payne Ratner, a Parsons Republican, defeated Huxman as governor, and Clyde Reed, also of Parsons and also a Republican, claimed U.S. Senator. It was the first election defeat for the New Deal since 1932. But for Saia, it was just the first of thirteen election victories to come.

* * *

Saia was sworn into office on 9 January 1939 and immediately began a program of reforms that would help bring election victories for the next forty-five years. Dr. Sandidge would age and then fade from county politics, but Saia would wax. He would be instrumental in the gubernatorial campaigns of both George Docking, who was first elected in 1956, and son Robert, who took office ten years later. He would also meet John F. Kennedy and marshal support for the nation's first Roman Catholic President; he would later mourn his death and that of his brother, Robert.

* * *

In August 1970 Saia's political career would come full circle at a party central committee meeting in Franklin, where he would be faced with a drive by younger Democrats to remove him as county chairman.

The insurgents demanded a secret ballot, but on cue a precinct committeeman from Frontenac stood up and moved that all rules be suspended and that Saia be returned as chairman. The motion was immediately seconded, the secret ballot ignored, and a standing vote taken.

Saia had been reelected.

The years since have seen Saia investigated repeatedly for alleged corruption, but with no results. When once he was accused of not paying a contractor for a wine cellar built at his home, he replied that he had never gotten a bill. "When I get that bill, I'll pay it," Saia said. "I don't want to maybe send the boy too little money."

He and his wife, Olga, live at their modest home in Frontenac, where he makes wine and sausage and answers telephone calls from constituents. This is his last term. He's not planning on running in 1988. A hundred years from now, he says, people will remember his name. People will remember him for what he did for the poor. But he agonizes that people *might* have remembered him as governor had he done things a little differently.

Blank Verse

As I read the poets' words
  I marvel at them.
They are so simple
  Yet so powerful.
I tell myself,
  "I can write like that."
But when my pencil touches paper,
  Nothing happens.
My mind begins to sort
  Words that rhyme
(The best poems rhyme—
  Don't they?)
A ringing bell
  Shatters my thoughts.
It's time to teach again,
  And my poem's page is still blank.

Joe French

Unfamiliar Relatives

They come shuffling through the smoke
from johns or pool tables
and ease their old blood towards the bar,
hot phlegm in their lungs
bubbling close to their throats when they cough,
the beer rolling in
leaving mist over their eyes,
overcast and damp.
And you step lightly and swiftly
past their swivel stools
on your way to a younger site,
warmer bodies
that glow in the dark from cigarettes
and brighter smiles and
shining eyes amidst swollen ashtrays,
clearing throats and laughter
and glasses filling and emptying,
some that were bought by
the old men who flash a bit of gold
now and again—
who stand up, straighten, and expound,
distributing goods
like aged kings who can still shine
for an audience.
And you rise and drink, smile and approach
out of good manners
and What the hell and After all
and speak to each other
like unfamiliar relatives
at a reunion.

Joseph Hamel

F.W. Brinkerhoff. **Drawing by Ted Watts.**

My Boss, the Thunderer

By Kenneth L. Simons

It was on an evening in August 1929 that I first walked into the office of the *Pittsburg Headlight and Sun* at Seventh and Broadway in Pittsburg, Kansas. I was looking for the editor, Frederick Walter Brinkerhoff, and I wanted a job. Clyde Neibarger was at the city desk that night and he informed me that "the Boss" came back nearly every night to work.

So I spent a half hour at Ben Casey's drugstore sitting at the soda fountain. On returning to the newspaper, I saw a stocky man at his big rolltop desk. When Brinkerhoff turned toward me, I was impressed by his heavy dark eyebrows, the largest I had ever seen. There was a sense of vigor and authority about him and a hint on his face that someone had irritated him.

My interview consisted of the Boss taking me to a cluttered news room and introducing me to the news editor. My desire was to write sports in a college town and perhaps move to a larger newspaper later. Brink told me that there was an opening for a full time sports editor by fall. I was hired to handle the sports for both the morning and afternoon papers. FWB described in glowing terms how I might actually become a sports authority in the Kansas College Conference.

The Moore Brothers—J.T. ("Doc") and George Moore—owned the newspaper at that time, but Brinkerhoff not only edited it, but established its policies as well. His enforcement of those policies gained him the name of the "Thunderer."

The Thunderer's opinions were unchangeable, and he expected his staff to abide by them to the letter. When workers followed his rules, he was completely loyal to them and would do almost anything for his staff. There were some areas that the Boss was quite unreasonable about with the staff: raises and vacation time.

The staff learned that FWB never expected them to work at anything that he was not prepared to do himself. Following World War II, I became managing editor when Louis Stroup left to become public relations director for the Kansas Turnpike. There was hardly a Sunday in those days that both FWB and I did not spend some time working in the news room preparing for the week ahead. I believe that his output of editorials was probably unmatched anywhere in the nation. Brink often averaged one hundred a month and at the same time kept his hand on a myriad of details in the management of the papers.

FWB conducted a daily crusade against error on the printed page to a degree seldom equaled anywhere. Errors were usually caught first by the Thunderer. For many years in the news room there was a bulletin board labeled the "Boner Board." It was the Brinkerhoff version of the well known "Winners and Sinners" critique conducted by Theodore M. Bernstein in the news room of the *New York Times*. The difference between the New York and the Pittsburg papers was that there were no winners. The Boner Board was devoted exclusively to "sinners," and the penalties were embarrassment and humiliation. On the Boner Board there were clippings of

miscues circled in black pencil and accompanied in bold Brinkerhoffian scrawl by crisp comments excoriating faults of style, form, and proof reading. An error was not merely an error; it was a misdemeanor. And once on the Boner Board, it seemed to stay suspended by a thumb tack forever.

One of the first things the staff told each new reporter on the *Headlight-Sun* concerned the spelling of that historic stream, the Marais des Cygnes, which flows near the boyhood home of the editor. No matter how hard we tried, the name was slaughtered in sundry ways by the reporters and desk men. For many years in a prominent place in the news room the name of this river, in four-inch high type, properly spelled and capitalized, was posted.

Brinkerhoff was a native of Franklin County, Kansas. While still in high school at Ottawa, FWB began writing news for the *Ottawa Herald.* Brink attended Ottawa University and the University of Kansas and worked on newspapers at Fort Scott, Chanute, and Kansas City before he came to the Pittsburg paper in 1911.

Brink served in many posts outside the Pittsburg community. He was president of the Kansas Press Association, chairman of the Kansas Associated Press, president of the Kansas State Historical Society, chairman of the nominating committee of the Associated Press, and a member of the jury for the Pulitzer Prize Awards. In 1956 FWB was honored by the Journalistic Award of Merit of the William Allen White Foundation.

In Pittsburg Brink had been president of the Chamber of Commerce and chairman of the Pittsburg Industrial Commission. The Boss was an ardent participant in fraternal organizations, namely, the Elks Lodge, and he was Potentate of the Mirza Shrine.

If there was anything in life more important to FWB than politics it was seldom evident. His political views were clear and set: he was a lifelong Republican and had an undying hatred for Socialism. People in important political positions sought him out because he was always attuned to the vagaries of politics.

FWB began his political speaking in behalf of the Republican Party even before he was old enough to vote. Those early experiences helped the Thunderer develop self-confidence and abilities so much so that he was prominent on the GOP whistle stop campaigns. Brink battled futilely for such Presidential aspirants as Wendell Willkie and Alfred M. Landon. In the 1936 campaign the Boss never doubted even on the morning of the election that Landon would roundly defeat Roosevelt.

I remember FWB relating the most spectacular and exciting political campaign in which he was ever engaged. That was about three years after he had arrived in Pittsburg as a young editor of the *Headlight.* It was the year that Crawford County Republicans recovered the county from the Socialists, who had won in 1912. District Judge Andrew J. Curran, Democrat, was the principal object of the attack by the Socialists, and the Republicans made his reelection a big issue. The campaign was unusual, FWB related, in that the Republicans never mentioned the Democrats—never discussed anything except Socialism.

The speaking campaign was conducted by FWB and many meetings were held over the county, devoted entirely to the campaign against the Socialists. The Thunderer estimated that he spoke to at least thirty meetings. Thousands of copies of a booklet attacking Socialism were printed and distributed. Democrats quite generally gave their support to the anti-Socialism campaign. Brink fought as if it were the battle of Armageddon.

Brinkerhoff served in almost every major Republican Party office on the district and state level as well as president of the Kansas Day Club and as a delegate to the national conventions. But the prize that FWB wanted most escaped him—that of governor.

But for an unexpected turn of events in the "smoke filled room" that ruled the Kansas Republican Party, Brink might have been his party's nominee for governor in 1950. In those days the Kansas GOP usually elected its nominee. The Thunderer was led to believe that he would be his party's nominee for governor. The selection of Edward Arn was the biggest disappointment I ever saw Brink endure in all the years I knew my boss. Some insiders said later that Senator Andrew Schoeppel, a political leader long befriended by Brinkerhoff, decided the issue when he declined to take a side in an Arn/Brinkerhoff standoff.

Then there was the incident of the reporter in the alley.

FWB believed in the virtues of wearing out shoe leather on the news beat. He thought a reporter ought to spend his time where the news is, and made that plain in stentorian tones. The Thunderer was walking through the business district one day when he came upon one of his reporters emerging from an alley. This man was not long on the news staff.

Of course, that reporter was not John Hay, who has served the newspapers and the city diligently for nearly half a century. John liked people and really wanted to talk to them. FWB liked that. When it came to keeping confidences of his news sources, John took seriously his responsibilities as a reporter. FWB liked that, too. He could never have been an investigative reporter, nor did FWB seem to want one. John traveled a beat as routinely as the clock ticks, and Pittsburg people with news knew where and when to find him. That was the Brinkerhoff system.

Louis Stroup operated the newspapers as managing editor under the Brinkerhoff system for many years, and did it so successfully that FWB almost wept when Stroup went to greener pastures as information director of the Kansas Turnpike. Brink could never bear to lose men who were doing well under him, no matter what opportunity opened up for them elsewhere.

Brinkerhoff had his group of good friends and enjoyed himself socially with them. He was selective, however, about those he really embraced. He was no teetotaler himself, but he had a fierce dislike for the drunk driver, whom he considered on a par with a lunatic firing a deer rifle down a crowded highway.

The first Brinkerhoff commandment was that stories of arrests for drunk driving were to be displayed prominently on page one, no matter the social standing of the wrong doer. Nor did it matter whether the offender was the biggest advertiser, a public official, or one of Brink's cronies.

Brinkerhoff also always insisted on sharp eyed proofreaders. He would brook no less, and he wanted them familiar with the area and its residents. I am thinking of his satisfaction in having the likes of Florence McLean, Leah Schommer, Virginia Kennedy, Treva Van Becelaere, and Beverly Kuplen, all of whom knew Pittsburg and the community as well as anyone on the staff.

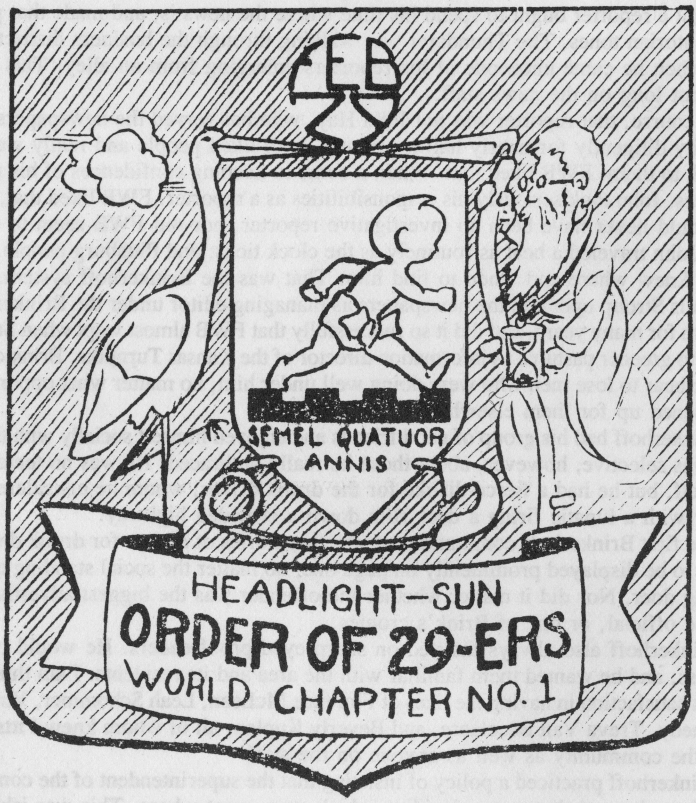
Brinkerhoff practiced a policy of insisting that the superintendent of the composing room lay out the pages, deciding which story went where. This was irksome to managing and news editors, but none seemed to dare to challenge the policy.

In the operation of the newspaper and the maintenance of several aged linotypes, no one was closer to Brink than August Simion, the composing room chief. Like Brinkerhoff, Simion was at the plant nearly every Sunday. His ability to keep the

machinery running was exceptional, and his efforts seemed to be beyond the call. He died of a heart attack one morning while working on a linotype machine.

As I said, local news had first priority with Brinkerhoff. In that respect he operated the Pittsburg newspapers in a way similar to that of his close friend, Rolla Clymer of the *El Dorado Times:* "The front page revealed the devotion of the editor to his home folks and their institutions. It took a very big wire story to be as important as a tale in which the activities or plans or homes or dreams of El Dorado or Butler County or Bluestem men and women were reported."

Brinkhoff and Clymer both doted on history. Together they participated in the centennial celebrations of Abraham Lincoln's speech-making tour of Kansas. They once traveled together in a buggy similar to the one Lincoln used, dressed in the garb of that time. Occasionally they revived the Lincoln-Douglas debates, with Brinkerhoff taking the role of Stephen A. Douglas and Clymer often using the very words of Lincoln.



Logo of the Order of 29-ers. **Drawing by John Hay.**

Another feature about Brinkerhoff and Clymer attracted interest of the readers of their editorial pages: no one could make good-natured banter more interesting than that pair of wordsmiths.

The Boss was never known as a humorist, yet at times amusing incidents dotted his writing. I am sure his tongue-in-cheek defense of his own version of the abbreviation for *Kansas* must have been one of them that gave him pleasure. FWB led an unsuccessful battle with the Associated Press over the abbreviation of the name of his native state. The AP preferred *Kan.*, but Brink took up the cudgel—and vehmently—for *Kas.* (That was long before the two-letter abbreviation for states was made official.)

One of Brink's ideas which took hold like wildfire was his Number One Order of 29ers. One Leap Year Day he decided that those unfortunate persons born on 29 February deserved a better break than they had been receiving. So FWB established the exclusive order, open only to those who have birthdays every four years. The Thunderer set up the managing editor as the executive secretary of the clan who met in mythical "grand conclave" every four years. An attractive scroll was designed by reporter John Hay and was sent free of charge to all who applied showing proof of their birth on that date. More than ten thousand members joined.

Before Groundhog Day in 1921, Brink filed this story for the Associated Press:

> MONMOUTH, KAS. (AP)—John Willhelmer long has been skeptical about that groundhog theory. But, being a conservative in politics and modest in personal conduct, Willhelmer has not openly found fault with the time-honored principle that the groundhog regulated the length of winter.
>
> A year ago, after listening to hot arguments in the town store, he pledged himself to give the idea a fair and thorough test. He bought five groundhogs and established them in a home on Lightning Creek. From a hidden observation point Willhelmer will keep close watch on the groundhogs tomorrow.
>
> "I intend to settle this thing for myself anyway," Willhelmer said today.

Then things began to happen. Brink got calls from AP member newspapers all over the country, including the *New York Tribune.* Newspapers wanted special stories on Willhelmer's experiment.

Brink pondered his problem. He was equal to the occasion. He tapped out this story to get himself off the hook:

> MONMOUTH, KAS. (AP)—John Willhelmer's experiment with the groundhog theory ended in failure today. After standing in his observation tower near the billet which he had established for five groundhogs last fall, Willhelmer received a visit from his 14 year old son, John Willhelmer, Jr.
>
> "I'm sorry, dad," young Willhelmer said, "I didn't mean to do anything wrong. But there won't be any groundhogs sticking their noses out of that den today. Last fall some fellows were out here hunting and said they wanted some possums. Sam Willits and I sacked up those groundhogs and sold them to the fellows for $2.00 apiece as possums."
>
> Willhelmer reluctantly left his Lightning Creek observation tower.

This story also hit the front pages of the newspapers all over the country. Yet there is one more chapter to the story.

Brink learned that batches of letters had arrived for Willhelmer at Monmouth. Lena Wylie, the postmistress of Monmouth, was asked by the Boss for the letters, but Wylie took her official duties seriously and would not turn them over to anyone but Willhelmer. No matter how hard Brink tried, he never got the letters. FWB confessed the hoax to the postal inspector, who chuckled at the joke and promised help. But when the inspector went to the Monmouth Post Office he found Wylie had stamped each letter "Addressee Unknown" and sent them to the proper department.

Issues concerning highways were hotly debated then and now, and the Thunderer was always in the middle of these battles. One of Brink's crusades concerned the improvement of US 69. FWB was instrumental in the formation and ongoing activity of the US 69 Association. Meetings were held regularly at such places as Fort Scott and Pleasanton and nearly always Brink took along his own reporter, Harold O. Taylor.

The highway case that caused the biggest explosion and is best remembered by Brinkerhoff Watchers had to do with US 160, particularly a stretch of it between Parsons and Pittsburg, which Brink belittled by calling it the "Playboy Road" unto the last day he lived.

US 160 had always run east from Parsons across the Neosho River in a northeasterly direction at Strauss, passing through McCune on its way east through Pittsburg and Frontenac. When it was proposed to change the route to run directly east from Strauss to the five-mile corner south of Pittsburg, as it does now, Brink thundered. FWB expected backing from Governor Payne Ratner, whom he had supported politically. The governor, in this case, overruled the editor. The hatchet was never buried.

Brink fought and lost. Then, as he was wont to do, looked for a way to slap back. So he dubbed the stretch "Playboy Road." His idea was to stress that Parsons people were influenced nonsensically by their desire to go to the playboy area around Joplin without the necessity of passing through McCune and Pittsburg.

It is doubtful that the Playboy slap really had the effect the Thunderer desired for it. Most people did not know the reason for the label, and those who did know did not care much. Then there were those who actually liked the name.

Many people, even myself, often misjudged him. His brusk manner concealed a warm heart. The staff realized the deep and faithful love that Brink expressed for his wife, Pearl. She was an invalid in her last years, and the Thunderer cared for his wife with a tenderness which moved us all. Even with the staff, there were expressions of affection. I was surprised and touched when I noticed tears in the Thunderer's eyes as I was leaving for the Army in 1941.

Although the Thunderer died in 1966, his legend is not forgotten. Authorities, as well as the man on the street, will agree that the Boss was one of the great influences on this, the Little Balkans area, where his thunder still resounds.

Diary Entry, 2 February 1928, by Margaret E. Haughawout

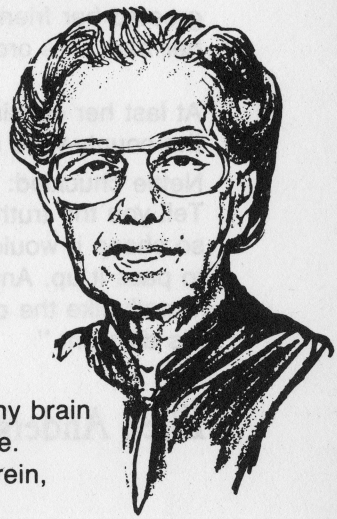
What is the use of manual labor when it is not productive! Washing windows! Bah! How go the explorations, Richard Byrd? Cold down there? What do you find? Are all of them—chaste? A vagabonding star has gone off again into his own orbit after crossing an ellipse.

The 14th Kansas Poetry Contest

Judged by Ossie E. Tranbarger and Gene DeGruson

A year ago this past October the fourteenth annual Kansas Poetry Contest deadline was reached, its winners originally scheduled to be published in the spring issue of the 1985 *Little Balkans Review.* Belatedly, it is appearing in this winter issue. To capture a bit of the original season, however, illustrations for the poems have been reproduced from the Spring 1975 issue of *The Garden Book of White Flower Farm,* edited by its late co-owner Jane Grant. We hope you enjoy these pen-and-ink drawings by Nils Hogner.

To introduce the winners of the 1985 contest, we would like to submit a poem of the contest's sponsor and manager, Ossie E. Tranbarger, which presents the poet's creative processes in a way which we think our readers will find both entertaining and instructive.



Iambus

While sleeping: iambs jockey through my brain
And offer no excuse why they are there.
They move about without restraint, or rein,
With manner soverign and debonair.
I try to pen them in a proper place,
Into a sonnet, Shakespearean form.
Around, around they still pursue their race
All through my brain as though arena-born
For laps uncounted, or on holiday.
But suddenly I cry "Enough! Enough!"
The sharpness in my voice is their dismay
At my audacity to call their bluff.
They jockey a maneuver, but they lose.
I pen the iambs in the form I choose.

Ossie E. Tranbarger

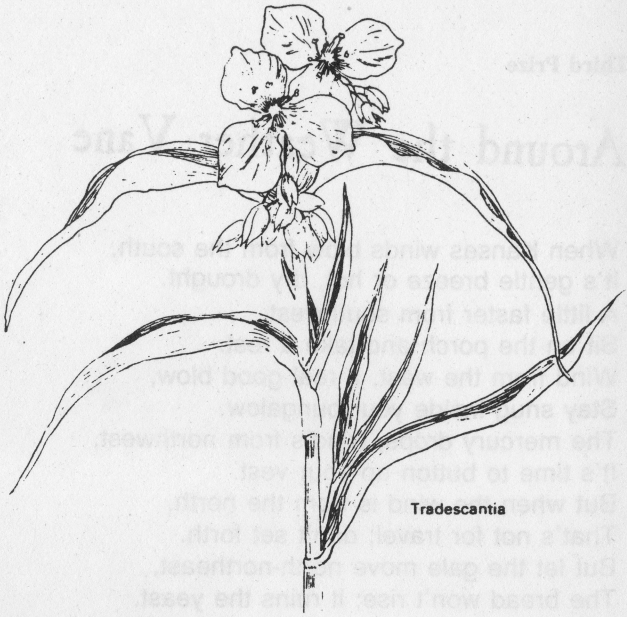
County Scandal

When Miz Williams painted her barn pink
she was the scandal of the county.
The neighbors asked each other
what got into her, and shook their heads.
First they thought the pink was just the primer
but after a couple of months they knew
she meant the color to be pink.
Of course she went to church as usual,
sang mustily in her warm contralto,
greeted her friends and smiled as though
her barn was ordinary red.

At last her cousin Reba couldn't stand
the county-wide suspense and called to ask why pink?
Nettie chuckled: "Worries people, doesn't it?
Tell you the truth, I got pink paint
so cheap it would've been a sin
to pass it up. And now, you know,
I really like the color of my barn.
It's different."

Ellen Anderson

Exbury Azalea



Tradescantia

Negative Pegs

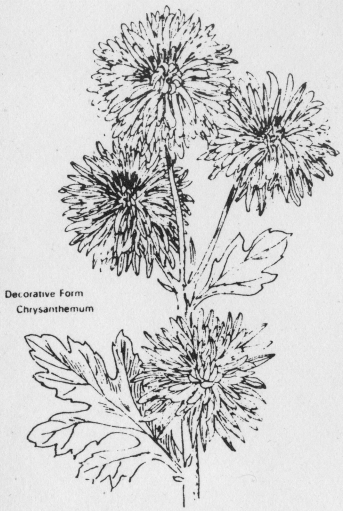
Old houses settle
into their cellars, with corners
braced by spiders.
Pushed through each beam
are termite tunnels—
negative pegs from which
imagination may cast positives,
as memory brings in furniture
and silence creates steps.

Meredith S. Carson

Third Prize

Around the Weather Vane

When Kansas winds blow from the south,
It's gentle breeze or hot, dry drought.
A little faster from southwest,
Sit on the porch and take a rest.
Wind from the west, a real good blow,
Stay snug inside your bungalow.
The mercury drops, wind's from northwest,
It's time to button up your vest.
But when the wind is from the north,
That's not for travel; don't set forth.
But let the gale move north-northeast,
The bread won't rise; it ruins the yeast.
With wind from east, be on your guard,
The rain will flood the whole backyard.
From southeast, that's a gullysplash,
Frog choking rain—a splatterdash!


Decorative Form
Chrysanthemum

Betty Jane Simpson

First Honorable Mention

Fouling the Nest

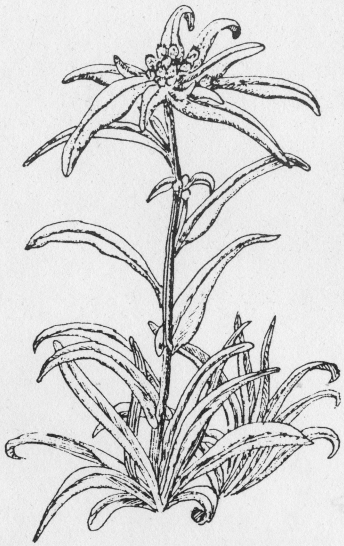
A Bavarian summer of plenty
surrounds the walls of the house
perched high on the hillside

Fragments of conversations
drift through windows
with warm, lusty air
and
I am uncomfortable with both;
fluent in neither

Wild raspberries choke
the solitary elm in the garden,
sealing off the protective island;
a mighty Teutonic castle
fortressed by differences

The German instructor
braves the moat,
intruding upon the isolation;
armed with textbooks, language tapes
and a well-tuned ear
for lonely expatriates
of hearty American appetites
and

unfamiliar with ration cards



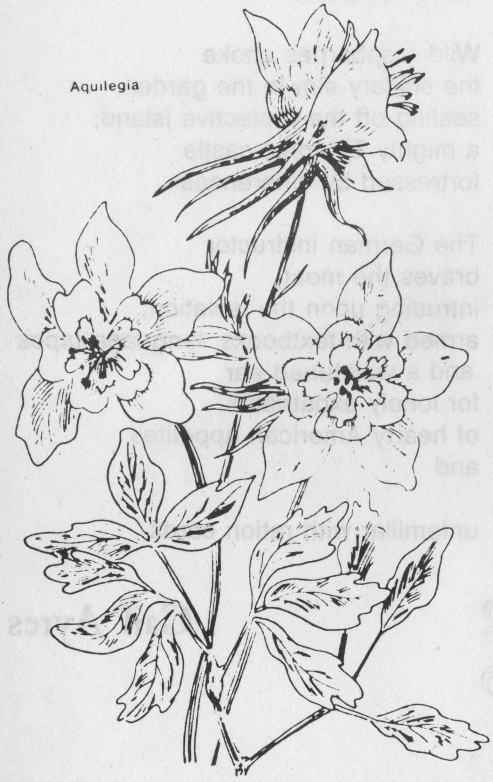
Gail Ayres

Second Honorable Mention

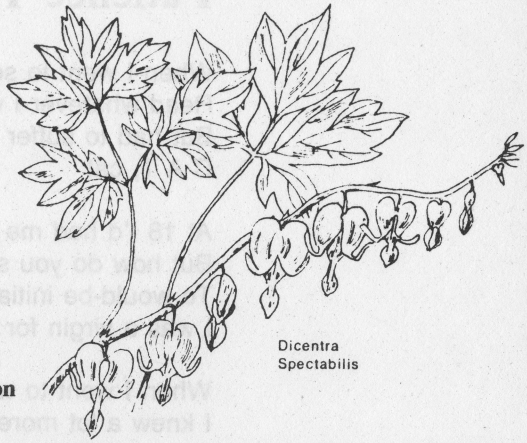
Final Decree

Now in the night
my reaching hand
touches
the snow-stark plain
of your absence.
The firefly of sleep
winks on and off
eluding me
And the dark bird
of tomorrow
brushes my soul
with wings
of loss.

Louise Hajek



Aquilegia



Dicentra
Spectabilis

Third Honorable Mention

Summertime

While a green lizard snoozes
On the red clay bank behind them,
Dragonflies with stained-glass wings
Skate on the turgid water
Below the heat-drenched skies in Kansas.
Willows bend in green cages
Along the perimeter of the pasture pond
Enclosing patches of shade
For small blue-jeanned boys,
Roiling the water with a stick
And scaring tadpoles and crawdads
From their hiding places.

I meant to call them from their play
To fetch cold water from the spring,
But went myself instead.
The summer days of childhood
Slip by like clouds,
And tadpoles and crawdads
Are in short supply.

Evelyn Bachmann

Fourth Honorable Mention

Patience Please

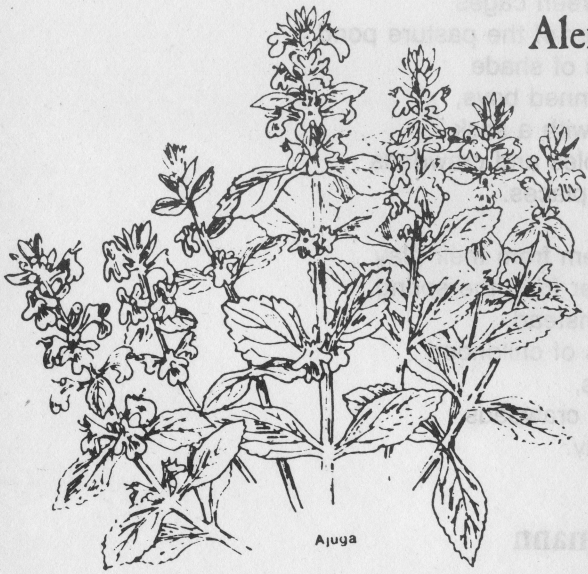
When I went to school, I could
Read whatever I wanted to
But had to suffer
C A T, cat

At 18 I'd had me a good many lovers
But how do you say no thanks
To would-be initiators
I was a virgin for years and years

When I went to work
I knew a lot more than my boss did
Boy, don't try to rush things
We all have to take our turn

And now that I am finally age-idled
I find myself fuming
Damn it, Death
How long would you have me wait

Alexander Frazier



Haiku

Elizabeth House

First Prize

A cardboard coffin
releases a single flea—
a last sign of life.

Blanche Clark Nevers

Second Prize

JANUARY DAY
ROUND BIRDS ON ICE-COVERED BOUGH
NO HEADS TAILS OR FEET

Magdalene Collums

Third Prize

They passed this morning,
A volley of honking geese,
Pulling in winter.

Nida E. Jones Ingram

First Honorable Mention

Balmy spring twilight—
The wood thrush transports its song . . .
To a higher limb.

Japanese Iris

Avalyn Olson

Second Honorable Mention

Opening the drapes
to a bare elm and brown grass . . .
a snowman stares in

Clara Gehron Willis

Third Honorable Mention

February snow—
showcase window displaying
bareback bridal gown.

Dictamnus

Lenard D. Moore

Fourth Honorable Mention

Pulling the line in,
his old bamboo pole bending
in summer moonlight

Jessie L. Green

Fifth Honorable Mention

Smooth water dappled
by one small spiny, black bass
mouthing a tadpole

Louise Brooks Among the Stars

A swatch of crepe de chine 1920s dress material depicting actors of the period, including Charlie Chaplin and Louise Brooks, originally from Cherryvale. Reproduced from Special Collections, Pittsburg State University, gift of Dr. James G. Ruggles.

Lyman Underwood Humphrey (1844-1915), Independence Republican who served as Lieutenant Governor from 6 Nov. 1877 to Jan. 1881 and as Governor from 4 Jan. 1889 to 9 Jan. 1893.

The Governors and Lieutenant Governors

from Southeast Kansas

By Thomas R. Walther

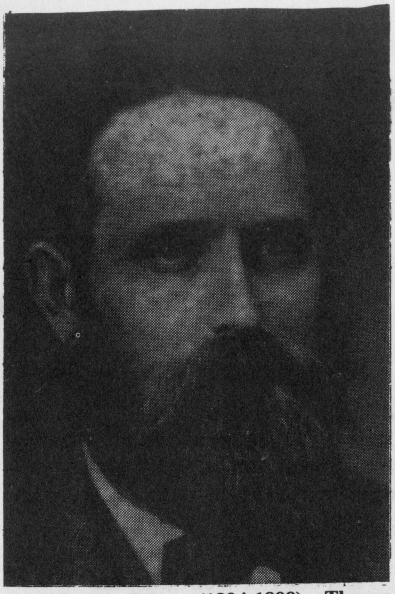
On 17 November 1930 Fred W. Brinkerhoff editorialized in the *Pittsburg Headlight* on "The 'Governor Belt,'" noting that "Kansas has formed the habit of coming to southeastern Kansas for its governors. It started the custom in 1922." Brinkerhoff's editorial was in the same issue that announced the election of Harry H. Woodring of Neodesha. The editorial went on to suggest:

> Take the map and find Chanute . . . and describe a circle on the map with Chanute as the center. [He used a thirty-mile radius.] Within that circle are the homes of the present governor of Kansas [Clyde M. Reed, Parsons], his two immediate predecessors [Ben S. Paulen, Fredonia, and Jonathan M. Davis, Bronson] and his successor-elect. And the circle, with a diameter of 60 miles, is contained entirely within the northwest corner of the old region of Southeast Kansas, Inc. . . . To show that there is nothing partisan in its selection, Kansas has picked two Republicans and two Democrats from the circle.

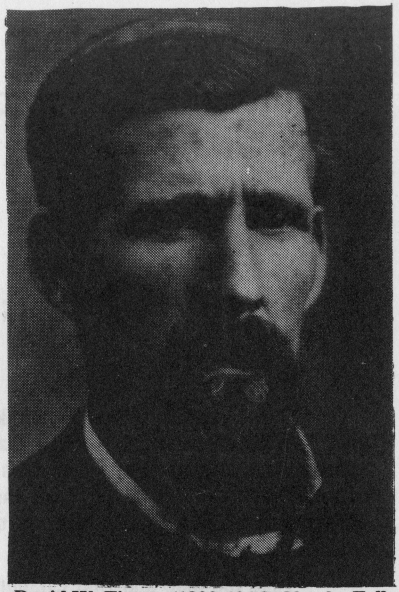
If we define the region a little more broadly to include the nine counties in the southeast corner of the state, then Brinkerhoff missed one governor from the region. Lyman Underwood Humphrey, a Republican from Independence, was the first governor from the southeastern corner of the state. He served two terms from 14 January 1889 to 9 January 1893. When he left the office, the incoming lieutenant governor Percy Daniels, a Populist, was from Girard, so southeast Kansas was still represented in high state office.

Since the beginning of statehood, Kansas has had forty governors and forty-four lieutenant governors. Seven of the governors and eight of the lieutenant governors came from the southeast corner of the state. That about twenty percent of the governors came from the area sounds impressive, but actually this bit of data is probably not terribly surprising. Settlement had begun in the region before the Civil War and more rapid development came in the postwar period. Farther west in central Kansas, settlement started just after the Civil War, and the western third of the state was in the pioneer stage when the first five men from southeast Kansas had served in the top two executive positions.

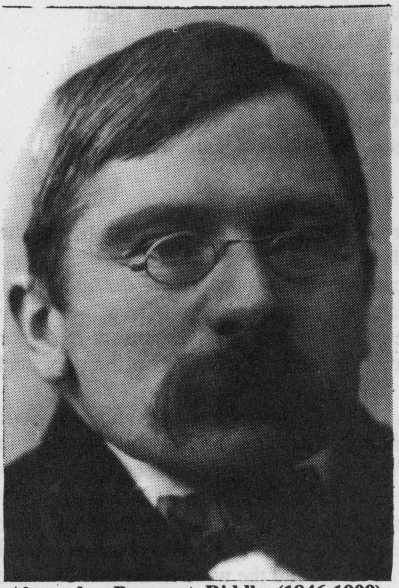
One interesting coincidence does appear. All the governors and lieutenant governors served in two periods of about twenty years each. Looking at lieutenant governors, the region was first represented by Melville J. Salter of Thayer from January



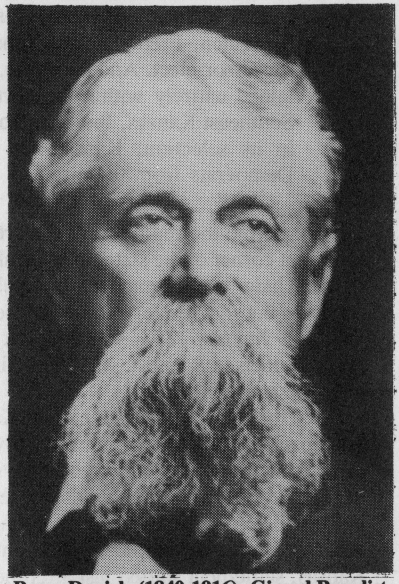
Melville J. Salter (1834-1899), Thayer Republican, Jan. 1875-10 July 1877.



David W. Finney (1839-1916), Neosho Falls Republican, Jan. 1881-Jan. 1885.

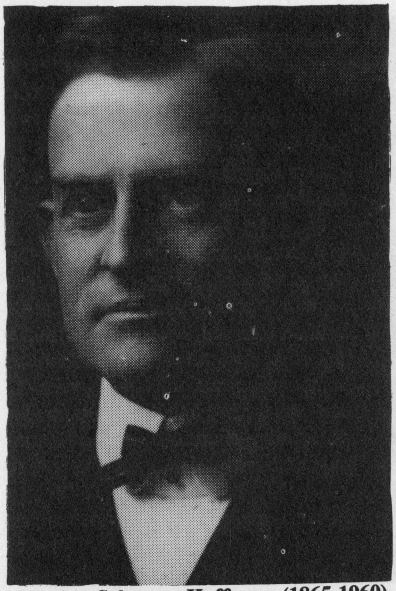


Alexander Pancoast Riddle (1846-1909), Girard Republican, Jan. 1885-Jan. 1889.



Percy Daniels (1840-1916), Girard Populist, Jan. 1893-Jan. 1895.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNORS FROM SOUTHEAST KANSAS, 1875-1895.



Charles Solomon Huffman (1865-1960), Columbus Republican, Jan. 1919-Jan. 1923.

William M. Lindsay (1880-1957), Pittsburg Democrat, Jan. 1937-Jan. 1939.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNORS FROM SOUTHEAST KANSAS, 1919-1939.

1875 to 10 July 1877; then Humphrey from 6 November 1877 to January 1881; David W. Finney of Neosho Falls was next, serving from January 1881 to January 1885; and then Alexander P. Riddle of Girard, who served from January 1885 until January 1889. Governor Humphrey (1889 to 1893) and Lieutenant Governor Daniels (1893 to 1895) round out the first period. So in the two decades from January 1875 to January 1895, Southeast Kansas held either the governship or the lieutenant governship of Kansas.

The second period, which includes the governors mentioned in Brinkerhoff's editorial, saw more governors from the region than the first. Woodring was defeated for reelection in 1932, but went on to serve as Secretary of War in Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration from 1936 to 1940. The man who defeated Woodring in 1932 was Alf M. Landon, Republican from Independence (thus preserving the string of governors that had started with Jonathan Davis). Landon, who was elected in a year the Democrats carried nationally, is perhaps best known as the Republican Presidential candidate who lost in the landslide of 1936.

Although Landon left the governor's office in January 1937, Southeast Kansas was to be represented in the lieutenant governorship by W.M. Lindsay of Pittsburg, who served until January 1939. At that date Payne Ratner of Parsons began his two terms in the governor's office which lasted until January 1943. So once again there was a streak, this one lasting from the lieutenant governorship of Dr. Charles S. Huffman of Columbus (January 1919) until the end of Ratner's term (January 1943)—or twenty-four years.

In the first eighty-two years of statehood one or the other of the offices had been occupied by a Southeast Kansas politician half the time.

Jonathan McMillan Davis (1871-1943), Bronson Democrat, 1923-1925.

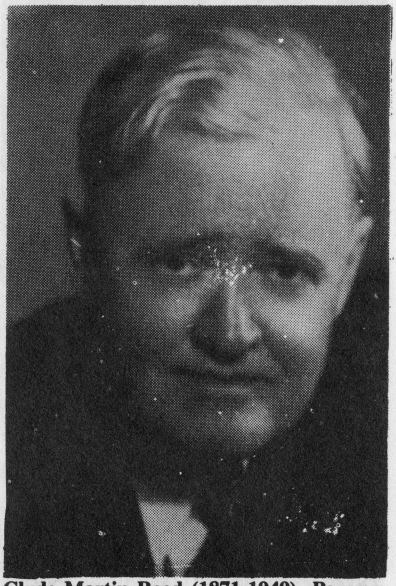
Ben Sanford Paulen (1869-1961), Fredonia Republican, Lieut. Gov., Jan. 1923-Jan. 1924; Gov., 1925-1929.

GOVERNORS FROM SOUTHEAST KANSAS, 1923-1929.

These men came from eight of the nine counties in Southeast Kansas under consideration. Montgomery County provided two governors and one lieutenant governor—Humphrey and Landon both came from Independence. Labette County sent two governors—Reed and Ratner from Parsons. The two governors and one lieutenant governor from Wilson County were Paulen from Fredonia and Woodring from Neodesha. The other governor from the region was Davis, whose home was in Bronson, Bourbon County. Four other counties were represented by lieutenant governors. Crawford County led with three—Riddle and Daniels of Girard and Lindsay of Pittsburg. Cherokee County was represented by Huffman of Columbus; Neosho County by Salter of Thayer; and Woodson County by Finney of Neosho Falls. The only one of the nine counties not to have a representative in this listing was Allen County, which boasts the home of General Frederick Funston, whose father served in the U.S. Congress.

To be brutally honest, lieutenant governors have not really had a chance to make major contributions to Kansas from their office. Therefore, I will deal only with the seven gubernatorial administrations.

The first was that of Lyman Underwood Humphrey, a Civil War veteran, who served in both houses of the Legislature, as lieutenant governor from November 1877 until January 1881, and as governor from 1889 to 1893. He was a lawyer and newspaperman from Independence. As a politician, Humphrey was considered one of Cyrus Leland's men. Leland, a Republican from Troy in the northeast corner of the state, was one of the most influential members of the party from 1878 until his death in 1917. Humphrey was governor at the time of the rise of the Populist movement in Kansas. In his second administration "Humphrey urged passage of



Clyde Martin Reed (1871-1949), Parsons Republican, 1929-1931.

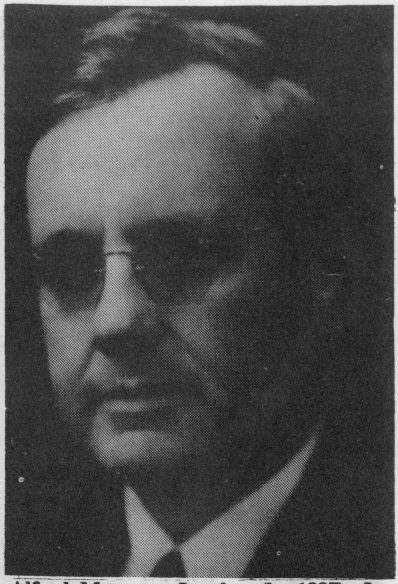
Harry Hines Woodring (1887-1967), Neodesha Democrat, 1931-1933.

GOVERNORS FROM SOUTHEAST KANSAS, 1929-1933.

a law making the first Monday of September, Labor Day, a legal holiday, which was promptly done, and it is pleasing to know that most of the states of the Union have followed Kansas in this matter. Governor Humphrey was the first chief executive of the United States to thus speak [sic] in behalf of labor." Other progressive measures were also legislated by the Populist-oriented legislature during Humphrey's tenure.

Southeast Kansas was not to have another governor until Jonathon McMillan Davis, a Democrat from Bronson, who served one term from 1923 to 1925. Davis faced a Republican legislature during his two years in office, which resulted in only one of his sixty-one proposals being legislated into law. Davis, an educated farmer, had served in the Legislature. As a governor he urged relief for a farm economy which was already moving toward the depressed condition usually thought of in relation to the 1930s. His administration was also marked by two well-publicized feuds. One involved the removal of the chancellor of the University of Kansas, which later led to the establishment of the Board of Regents in 1925. The other feud was with the Board of Health.

Ben Sanford Paulen, a Republican banker from Fredonia, succeeded Davis in office. He served two terms from 1925 to 1929. The election of 1924 saw an active part taken by Emporia newspaperman William Allen White, who felt that neither Davis nor Paulen would fight the Ku Klux Klan in Kansas. This independent candidacy brought the Klan problem into the open and in January 1925 the State Supreme Court ruled that the Klan needed a charter to operate in the state. No charters were given by the attorney general's office, and the Klan's influence waned. Although Paulen was conservative, his administration did see the establishment of a modern



Alfred Mossman Landon (b. 1887), Independence Republican, 1933-1937.

Payne Harry Ratner (1896-1974), Parsons Republican, 1939-1943.

GOVERNORS FROM SOUTHEAST KANSAS, 1933-1943.

highway commission and the legalization of cigarette sales in the state. The tax on motor fuels and tobacco added to the state's revenues.

Another Republican, Clyde Martin Reed, a newspaperman from Parsons, served from 1929 to 1931. Reed was a friend of Governor Henry J. Allen and had served on the infamous Industrial Court and as secretary to Allen. Although described as a conservative, Reed did call for a state income tax and tax equalization for Kansas. Reed was not to be reelected because the Republicans had to face the problems of continuing farm depression and the impact of the stock market crash of 1929. Reed lost the Republican nomination to the well-known Frank "Chief" Haucke, the state commander of the American Legion.

The election of 1930 is notable in Kansas history as the "goat gland campaign" of Dr. John R. Brinkley, the type of demogogue often found in troubled times such as the Great Depression of the thirties. However, the man elected that year was Harry Hines Woodring, a young, retired banker from Neodesha. Woodring, a Democrat, had also been prominent in the American Legion—as local post commander, chairman of the state membership committee, and later as state commander. Woodring wanted to bring his businessman's approach to the state office, but he was hampered by a Republican legislature. By early 1931, Woodring became a supporter of the Presidential aspirations of Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt of New York. Indeed, Woodring possibly neglected his own reelection bid during the campaign of 1932. Once again a three-man race occurred, but Woodring lost to Alfred M. Landon. Woodring later served as Assistant Secretary and Secretary of War in the Roosevelt administration.

Landon, Republican oilman from Independence, served two terms (1933 to 1937). The Democrats had seventeen state senators and sixty representatives in Kansas during

Landon's first administration. The economic situation was so critical by this time that the Legislature gave Landon "almost dictatorial power over banks, trust companies, insurance compies, and building and loan associations," according to one Kansas historian. Landon was to have so little opposition that by 1934 he was the only Republican govenor reelected in the nation. Indeed, much of Landon's program and administration might even be called "New Dealish." But in 1936 Landon was nominated by the Republican Party to face Franklin Roosevelt for the Presidency of the United States. In this election Landon failled to carry even Kansas while going down to a crushing defeat nationally. He continued as an elder stateman in the Republican Party until his death in 1987. He lived to see his daughter, Nancy Landon Kassebaum, elected to the U. S. Senate in 1978.

Another gubernatorial administration led by a Southeast Kansan was that of Payne Ratner of Parsons, 1939 to 1943. The 1938 election in Kansas saw a former Democratic governor, Jonathan Davis, run as an independent candidate, thus pulling votes from the Democratic incumbant, Walter Huxman. Ratner's terms in office came at the beginning of World War II. Ratner, who had been a practicing attorney in Parsons before his election, instituted several reforms in Topeka during his first term. The State Board of Regents became bipartisan and systems of collecting taxes and fees were improved in the state. During the election of 1940 in which Ratner was reelected, Southeast Kansas was again represented on the national Republican ticket by Wendell Willkie, who had once taught school in Coffeyville.

Ratner was the last governor or lieutenant governor to date from the nine county area; however, Robert Docking, from nearby Arkansas City, is often claimed by the region. His father, George Docking, whose home was Lawrence, served from 1957 to 1961, thus becoming the first Democrat to serve two terms in the Statehouse. Robert Docking holds the distinction of being the only candidate of either party to win election to the highest state office four consecutive times. He held the Statehouse from 1967 to 1975. In 1982, Robert Docking's son, Thomas R. Docking, was elected lieutenant governor of the state. Although a Wichita resident, Tom Docking did attend elementary school in Arkansas City. Thus, this one family, which has close connections with Southeast Kansas, will have accounted for sixteen years service in the two highest executive positions in the state.

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The Bender Hills Mystery

By Leroy Dick, as told to Jean McEwen

Chapter 12:

Mrs. McCann returned from her third trip to Michigan in 1888 with valuable information for Labette County authorities. She reported her findings to the county attorney. He sent her to me. I had heard nothing of the Benders since their escape into the Texas colony. I knew nothing of their early history. Naturally, Mrs. McCann's story sounded fantastic to me.

"A case of mistaken identity," I declared with conviction. I told her of their successful flight. "They're still in that colony. They wouldn't dare leave."

She was equally firm. "They've been back in Michigan for years, indulging in their unspeakable vices. . . . I'm ashamed to think I'm that old fiend's granddaughter. Yet I can't prove I am not. Just the same, she is guilty of the death of my parents. I'm going to see that she is punished."

However Labette County authorities took no steps toward prosecution at that time. I confess I did not encourage it. I now see how obtuse I was and regret the disappointment our skepticism brought that plucky little woman. Still, she persevered. She made her fourth journey to Michigan to unearth still more convincing evidence. She came again to Parsons in '89. Bill Porter was county treasurer. What she had to say impressed him.

Meantime, I had sold my claim and was living in Parsons. I had a paying contract to stonefloor the stockyards. Mrs. McCann came down there to talk with me.

"Mrs. Griffith and Eliza are in jail in Berrien Springs, Michigan," she said. "I want someone who knew them here to go to Berrien Springs and identify them as part of the Bender gang. If that evidence is introduced in their trial up there, they can be brought back here and convicted. You are the logical one to go, Mr. Dick, because you know both of them."

"I can't possibly get away now," I objected. "I have this job on my hands. Anyway, I don't believe the Benders ever left the Texas colony."

I have apologized to Mrs. McCann since for my attitude that day. Yet I was thoroughly sincere. . . . I can see her still, as she sat in the buggy, tears of disappointment streaming down her cheeks.

"I have just returned from Berrien. I know they are there. I saw them with my own eyes. I want you to go, Mr. Dick."

Still I was unconvinced.

Wilson, the sheriff, was too old to make the trip. His son, Bud, a deputy, heard the talk about someone being sent. He liked the idea of the trip and the inevitable notoriety to one who could bring the Benders to justice. So his father appointed him in his stead and made out the papers in his name. Bud showed the photograph of the old woman which Mrs. McCann had given to several old neighbors in the mound district. They identified it as Mrs. Bender. Bud made preparations to leave for Michigan.

Mrs. McCann still objected. "Wilson doesn't know enough about the case. Mr. Dick should go. He can identify both Eliza and Mrs. Griffith."

The county attorney dropped me a line from Oswego, the county seat: "Come on down. I want you."

I knocked off work and went just as I was—and mad as a bumble bee. I told him in straight language why the Benders were in Texas.

Instead of arguing he switched the subject. "Look here. My wife has a lot of pictures of nice old ladies. I have them here. I'm going to lay them out on my desk and see if you know any of them." He laid them in a row. I thought he was crazy.

Well, I had to look them over. And to my surprise I did know one of them. "That's old Mrs. Bender," I said, picking it up.

"That," the county attorney said, "is Mrs. Almira Griffith. If it is also Mrs. Bender, then we have a case. . . . Now listen, Dick. You get up to Berrien Springs and investigate those two women in jail. If they're the right ones, we'll bring them here for trial. . . . How much money will you need?"

That settled it. The matter of funds was arranged by Bill Porter. The Berrien county officers were advised by telegraph that I was coming. I left the next morning. I took the papers that had been made out for Bud Wilson and used that name throughout the trip, as I didn't want it generally known that I was from Kansas till I found out how the land lay.

I arrived in Niles, a small town in the logging district of Michigan, on Saturday evening. I went right to the county attorney, whom I took into my confidence regarding my alias.

"I'm glad you came," he said. "We'll have the Griffith trial Monday. You can get a train for Berrien tonight, if you like. I'll wire Sheriff Wrenn you're coming."

* * *

Sheriff Wrenn met me at the station and invited me to his home for the night. While we were at supper we went over the situation sifting the facts.

"Bender was only an assumed name for that Kansas outfit," he told me. "This old woman and her daughters are a bad lot. They've drifted here and there all through this lumber district—Duwojack, Buchanan, Three Rivers, White Pigeon. Been driven out of all of them time and again for lewdness. We've never been able to pin any crime on them, though a few years back Flora, the third girl, spilled something that put us hot on their trail. She was the weakling of the lot. . . . She would talk. . . . Well, soon afterward she disappeared. We suspicioned the old woman did her in to shut her up, though we couldn't prove it."

"How does it happen that you have them in jail now?" I asked.

"Well, when Mrs. McCann was here the last time making investigations, old Mrs. Griffith was living in a shack on the edge of Niles; she got wind somehow that her name was being linked with the Bender outrage in Kansas and she got scared. So she trumped up a fake charge against Eliza just to get her in the hands of the law."

"What was the charge?"

"That when Eliza took unto herself her seventh husband and moved to Lansing, she stole some of the old woman's things—a frying pan, some pewter plates, some baby stockings. Eliza swore her mother gave her the things. The trial was only a sham. We had to let them go, though we suspicioned there was more to it than met the eye. They disappeared. When Morrison wired you were coming, I started after them. I finally landed them up the St. Joe River and brought them back to jail, pending your arrival. Eliza swears her mother tried to kill her several times on that river trip. But you can't believe what they say."

"I don't understand why the old woman brought that charge."

"Well, she figured that if an attempt were made to prove she was Mrs. Bender, she'd just beat the law by testifying Eliza, not she, was the real Kate Bender and dump all the Kansas crimes on the girl. . . . At least that's my theory."

"Why, the old fiend!" I burst out. "Kate Bender was only a kid. . . . Though they did both go under the name of Kate—just as the two men called themselves John."

I'll confess I felt my doubts of their identity weakening under his convincing statements. Yet how would they have dared leave the outlaw colony?

My host rose. "I'm gong to make my nightly round of the jail. Want to come along?"

"I'd rather find out whether they really are the Benders before they see me," I objected.

"I can fix that. The cells open off a circular corridor on the second floor. While I'm attending to things, you can stand outside on the stairs where it's dark and observe them without their seeing you."

"That's just the chance I've been hoping for," I agreed. "If they aren't my quarry, I can go right back home and nobody will be the wiser."

* * *

I waited on the stairs as he had suggested. He unlocked the cell door and went in. I saw the younger woman bounce up and begin playing up to him—laughing and joking, fingering his coat lapel. The older sat and looked on, her back to me. Wrenn took his time, giving me a chance for observation. Presently, for some reason—perhaps I made a slight sound—the old woman turned and peered in my direction. . . .

Well—I was so astounded I all but lost my balance on the stairs. It wasn't only that her face was familiar. The clumsy, rolling motion of that heavy old figure, that peculiar squint as she peered out were too characteristic to allow me any further doubt. It was old Mrs. Bender, sure as shootin'.

"How easily I've been fooling myself," I thought. "Still, it was plain foolhardy for them to stick their noses out in the open. . . ."

I was still inwardly bemoaning my stupidity when the sheriff came out.

We walked home.

"Well, have we got the right women?" he asked.

"You have. They're the Benders without a doubt."

"By golly, that's great. Say, maybe we'll stick the pair of 'em now."

"We certainly shall," I agreed grimly. I was madder than ever, thinking how dumb I had been.

Sheriff and Mrs. Wrenn and I lingered over breakfast Sunday morning while I recounted to them the main points of the Bender atrocities. They were deeply interested. When I had finished, the sheriff said, "Mr. Wilson, I think we'll take the trail today and dig up all the evidence we can concerning those women."

"That's a good idea," I said.

We drove to Buchanan, White Pigeon, Three Rivers, but uncovered no evidence except that they were an unholy crew.

I went to the jail with Sheriff Wrenn that evening. He introduced me to the two prisoners as "Mr. Wilson, a county commissioner from St. Joseph."

The old woman eyed me shrewdly. "Mr. Wilson, did you ever know a man named Peck in St. Joseph?"

I had to think fast. She either recognized me or had me confused with someone else. "The name sounds familiar," I parried. Sheriff Wrenn and I both saw Kate

and her mother exchange some kind of sign language on the sly. About me, we suspected.

As we were leaving the old woman halted me. "I'd like to talk to you privately, Mr. Wilson."

I was somewhat taken aback. "Certainly, if the sheriff doesn't object."

"Mr. Sheriff," she said, "can Mr. Wilson and I step out and have a little chat?"

"Yes, if he is willing."

She led the way into a small storeroom opening off the corridor. She looked at me earnestly. "Mr. Wilson, you get Sheriff Wrenn to let me have a private room."

"But why? You have two beds—"

"That's not it. It's this bad girl of mine. I've always had to watch her. She lies. She steals. I can't trust her. Why, listen—I can't even sleep nights, I'm so afraid she'll poison me."

"But why should she do that?"

"Well, you've heard of the famous Bender murders? Now I'm going to tell you the truth. She is that very Kate Bender. But she's trying to lay it onto me."

"That is a terrible accusation for a mother to make against her own daughter." I had to shudder, she was so diabolical, so cold-blooded about it. "What do you know about the Benders?"

"Nothing but what she told me—and this—" She reached down and drew from her stocking a folded slip of newspaper. I opened it. It was an old clipping from a Kansas daily, concerning the finding of Dr. York's body. I handed it back to her.

I'll talk to the sheriff about changing your room," I promised.

We went back to the cell. She looked at Kate and laughed. "Ah, Eliza, this is one time your mammy got ahead of you talkin' to a good-looking man."

"Huh! Maybe I can talk to you too, Mr. Wilson?"

"It's all right with me."

She picked up her baby—a beautiful little girl about a year and a half old whom she kept in the cell with her—and I followed her to the same storeroom.

"What I want," she whispered, "is for you to get me and my baby out of here."

"You do? Why?"

"Because I know my mother is trying to kill me and the baby. She nearly got me the other night. I woke up—maybe she made a little noise. I felt something on my lips. I wiped my hand across them—I saw a white powder on my fingers. Poison. I spit it all out. There was none on the baby. But mother means to do away with us. She tried to kill me several times on that trip up the St. Joe River. . . . I can't sleep nights. I'm afraid for myself and the kid."

"But why should she want to kill you?"

"Of course you've heard about the Bender murders in Kansas. Well, she's telling that I'm guilty of those crimes. But before God, Mr. Wilson, I wasn't even there. All I know about that is what she told me and what I read in the newspapers. She's that Kate Bender herself. . . ."

"I'll ask the sheriff to give you two separate rooms," I reiterated. It was not to our advantage to have them trying to kill each other—and perhaps succeeding.

We went back to the cell. Sheriff Wrenn was talking to the old woman about the recent murder of a prominent man in that county. He asked her whether she had known the man.

"I did," Kate spoke up. "I had to testify how I knew him. I told 'em I slept with him the night before he was killed." She and her mother both laughed.

"You must have been pretty jolly in your youth," I told her.

"Yes, I always liked fun."

"You liked fun when you attended my singing school, didn't you?"

The laughter died out of her eyes. Her face lost its glow—like a coal graying to ashes.

"What singing school?"

"In Kansas. At Harmony Grove schoolhouse. I'm the man who led the singing. You know me."

"I don't."

"Well, I know you."

She looked so stricken I felt sorry for her in spite of myself. Her mother looked like she could slay me.

"Eliza," the old woman piped up after a telling silence. "I had a feeling this man was from Kansas when I first saw him—and that he knew you when you was there."

"When you was there, you mean," Kate stormed back at her.

The old hell-cat actually looked grieved. She shook her head reprovingly. "You know I wasn't there, Eliza. But I do remember what you told me about the Kansas people."

Kate was so over-wrought she broke down and cried. To restore peace I changed the subject by repeating their requests for separate cells. The sheriff gave Kate another room and we left.

"A fine idea," I told him. "It will keep them from quarreling."

He agreed it would.

Chapter 13:

On Monday morning the sheriff and I put Kate, her mother and the baby in a buggy to drive to Niles for the opening of the trial. Quite a crowd had gathered around the jail. Much curiosity had been aroused in Berrien Springs, for everybody knew the awful old woman. The courtroom at Niles was also filled when we got there.

Mrs. McCann attended the trial at least part of the time. I talked to her briefly, as I was aware that, like myself, she did not want her identity revealed. So we rather avoided each other to keep from arousing suspicion.

I didn't want it generally known that a Kansas representative was there, as I was afraid they would insist on holding me and conducting the Bender trial in Niles. This would involve a lot of expense for me—and also for Labette County—because we should have to bring witnesses and lawyers up there. We preferred to bring only charges of theft at this time, prove Mrs. Griffith was the elder Kate Bender, and bring the two to trial in Labette County.

Kate's case came up. I shall never forget the district attorney who conducted it. He was a tall man with long, angular arms. There were no witnesses but the two women. He called Mrs. Griffith to the stand. After the usual preliminaries, he came to the point of the case.

"Your name?"

"Almira Griffith."

"What valuation do you place on the articles you claim your daughter stole from you?"

"I guess fifty cents would cover 'em."

A laugh went round the room at the trivial sum. The attorney quizzed her a bit more, then called Eliza.

"What have to say in answer to this charge of theft?"

"My mother's lying. She gave me those things when I was married and moved to Lansing. . . . She don't want me here for that. She wants to get me mixed up in that Bender scrape in Kansas."

The old woman looked horribly shocked. "Judge," she broke in, "she's lying. She's that Kate Bender herself."

"It's a lie. Mother's that Kate Bender. All I know about it is what she told me."

"We won't go into that now," the attorney cut in. He called her mother back to the stand.

"Mrs. Griffith, when and to whom were you married?"

"To George Griffith. I was fourteen or fifteen, I guess."

"What is Mr. Griffith's occupation?"

"He was an ax handle maker. . . . He dropped dead one day when my youngest child was a baby."

"How did that happen?"

"Well, he wasn't very strong. He'd get awful wheezy with quinsy at times. He was rocking the cradle. I asked him to get some wood. He got up and fell and hit his head on the cradle. He died right there."

"Where were you living then?"

"In Ionia."

That was her story about the old man, and she stuck to it. After I came back from Michigan I met Jim Mapes one day in Parsons. He had lived in Ionia at the time, was one of the neighbor men who helped dress Griffith's body for burial. There was a bad place on his head, all right, but Mr. Mapes said he and the other men examined it and thought it looked mightily like the dent of an ax handle. They talked among themselves. Their bet was that instead of his falling, the old woman flew into one of her rages and struck him a fatal blow. But no accusations were made.

The district attorney kept quizzing her. Had she married again? . . . Yes, a man named So-and-so at a certain logging camp near Grass Lake.

"Is he dead?"

"I don't know. We drifted apart."

"You married again?"

Yes, she had married a logger at Jackson and someone else at Dowagiac.

"And after that? Any more husbands?"

Oh, sure! She'd married two different men at St. Joseph, another at Flint, still another at Saginaw, and yet another at Muskegon. Finally the attorney checked up. Twelve in all.

"Seems to me, Almira Griffith, you've been muchly married."

"Yes, I've had my share, I guess. But," she grinned at him, "I'm still in the market, Judge."

That brought a big laugh from the crowd.

The attorney quizzed, questioned, and cross-examined. But she stuck to her first story. Always she had married a certain man at a certain place in a certain year. He couldn't shake her.

Suddenly he leaned across his desk and fixed her with a stony eye and a long, bony finger.

"Now look here. You say you married this husband and that one—which one of them— was a German?"

She deliberated a little longer before answering that one. "I don't remember any of 'em being German. I never liked Germans. I can't talk to 'em very well."

He went back over her testimony, checking up. This one at Grass Lake, that one at Saginaw, and on through the list. Then he sprang the question about the German again. But she wouldn't own up. That finished the trial for Monday.

* * *

I decided that I would have to prove her alliance with old John Bender, the German. Wrenn and I talked it over. We arranged that he should take the women back to the Berrien jail for the night while I went to Grass Lake and Jackson to investigate the records of her alleged marriages there. . . . She had lied. I found no marriage licenses recorded in either place. But I did find out from city officers that she and her girls had been driven out of both towns for lewdness.

I also learned something of greater importance. . . . A constable told me that the old woman had served a penitentiary term in the state prison at Jackson. It seemed that the oldest boy, William, had brought his young wife, who was soon to become a mother, to the family home in Ionia. One morning after he had gone to work, the old woman had some argument with her and as usual flew into a fit of temper and struck her a blow that killed the unborn child and resulted in the girl's death.

The old woman was arrested for that, convicted of murder, and sentenced to nineteen years in the pen. She served seventeen months. Then by some conniving she got a shyster lawyer to unearth some alleged new evidence for another trial, and the old terror was actually freed—to continue her career of blood-spilling.

* * *

Tuesday's proceedings were mainly a repetition of Monday's—the charge of theft against Kate, the quiz concerning Mrs. Griffith's numerous marriages, the bitterness between the two leaping to the surface continually when each charged the other with being the original Kate Bender of Kansas.

"Judge," the old woman said once, "I raised twelve children. They were good children—all but this one. She was always a bad girl. I was terribly hurt when she told me how she lived in Kansas."

Kate got so angry she cried. Though when she came to the witness stand she hardened against her mother. I sat and listened. It was terrible, yet fascinating, to watch them fighting as desperately as two reptiles, each struggling to escape the web the law was spinning around her, each attempting to entagle the other therein.

"Mother's testimony is all a pack of lies," Kate declared fiercely. "She met a German in a logging camp above St. Joseph. They went to Aurora in the fall of 1870. He went on to Kansas. She waited in Aurora till he sent for her to come there. She told me all about it."

"That's a hard accusation for a daughter to make against her mother," the attorney said. "The consequences will be serious if she is proven to be Mrs. Bender."

"She deserves it!" Kate flared out. "She ought to hang for what she's done to me. She's threatened my life ever since I was a kid."

"What do you mean?"

"Well, I'll tell about that. When we lived in Ionia—I was ten, I guess—a little nigger girl used to come to play with Ella and Myra, my younger sisters. One day mother got mad—she's a hellcat when she's mad—and struck the kid and killed her."

"Yes, go on."

"She hid her till night. Then she hitched our horse to the cart and put the body in. She made me go along and help. We drove out to a swamp—an awful quiet place—and she dumped the kid into a deep hole in the middle of the slough. I was scared stiff. She said if I told she'd do the same to me. She would have, too. I never told till now—I didn't dare. But she's always held it over me."

Maybe that didn't create a sensation in the courtroom. The old woman looked at Kate like a rattler ready to strike. But of course she couldn't do anything but

storm and call her a liar. The attorney had a time quieting them. That was all the new evidence for Tuesday.

* * *

Afterward, when I talked to Mr. Mapes in Parsons about old Mr. Griffith's burial at Iona, I mentioned this story.

"Why, I remember that swamp," he said. "I never heard of a colored child being missed, but Kate was probably telling the truth. It is entirely plausible. That was an isolated region and the hole was there, all right. And deep. The rest of the swamp sometimes dried up in summer, but that hole was always full of water.

* * *

Tuesday evening Wrenn and I drove over to Dowagiac to check up on the farmer the old woman claimed to have married there.

We found no license, but the justice of the peace told us another startling chapter in her history.

Mrs. Griffith and her oldest daughters were hanging around the logging camp there, engaged in baby farming and other lewd practices too revolting to describe, when she met this farmer. She lived with him on his farm, taking none of her children with her but her younger boy, who, as she put it, "had fits." The farmer soon disappeared. She cried and carried on about it. Even drove around the country looking for him. Said he must have met foul play on his way back from town. Of course, no traces were found of him and, after a time, she advertised a sale of his farm, stock, and personal property. The sale netted her a tidy sum of money. She made preparations to move to Niles.

Before she got away, however, two hunters happened to pass an abandoned well on the farmer's property. Peering into it, they saw what appeared to be an old garment floating on top of the water. Their suspicions were aroused and they investigated. The garment proved to be nothing less than the coat of the corpse in the dank stench of that old well. They immediately notified the neighbors. And the body, when lifted to the light, was that of the missing farmer.

The bereaved widow's moving activities were rudely halted by the arrival of the law at the farm house. She loudly proclaimed her innocence. But she was arrested, indicted for murder, and confined to the Dowagiac jail. Her epileptic son, a boy of fifteen, was also detained in the same cell with her, as a witness in the case, in spite of her insistence that he couldn't stand confinement. "When he gets a fit," she told the sheriff, "he has to have a doctor quick."

"That's all right," he assured her. "If he needs a doctor, I'll hustle around and get one."

He had to keep that promise the night before the trial was scheduled to come up. For, about midnight, the boy was actually seized with violent convulsions. The doctor couldn't do him any good. It would have taken more than medical skill to save him that time. He died before morning in terrible agony. . . . The trial had to be put off till after the funeral. And though the community was up in arms against the old woman, nothing could be proven against her now that the boy, the chief witness, was dead. So she was freed for lack of evidence. The killer was again at large.

I talked to an old citizen of the town that night. He told me that people all over the community were convinced she killed the farmer, though they couldn't prove it. There always seemed to be a special 'Hell's providence" that helped her to slip the noose.

I told the attorney this story. So on Wednesday, the third day of the trial, after the usual routine about the old woman's husbands, he sprang the surprise.

"You say you married a farmer in Dowagiac?"

"That's right."

He pointed his bony finger at her accusingly. "But you didn't tell us he was afterwards found in a well, murdered, and that you were arrested for the crime."

She put on a long face. "They were mean enough to say that about me. . . . But I wouldn't a-harmed a hair on his head. He was such a good man."

Kate told a different story. She said the epileptic boy knew his mother killed the farmer . . . so she could inherit his property. "And she poisoned the kid in jail that night because she was afraid he'd break down under cross-examination in the trial next day."

"She's crazy. She's lying," the old woman kept interrupting.

"Judge," Kate came back fiercely, "she's killed a lot of people. She helped old man Bender slaughter those people out in Kansas. They made a lot of money."

And the two were at it again. It curdled my blood. Each knew the attorney was trying to incriminate her in the Kansas affair. It was the merciless life and death combat of two unscrupulous fiends. We watched them struggle while we wove the net even more tightly about them.

I had never believed that crime paid. If I had, I should have been disillusioned there and then. These degraded creatures had defied all law and decency. Now the law called for a reckioning, and each was fighting to escape it by remorselessly sacrificing the other.

(To be continued)

From Kansas Journeys, by Mil Penner and Carol Schmidt

Mil and I went in search of abandoned underground mines. We were curious and wanted the excitement of being in a mine shaft. What we found, instead, was an eighty-five-year-old man who had worked in one. He seemed happy to be alive, and, as he talked, I understood why. Life in the mines was not filled with excitement but with hard work and danger. He described picking at the coal vein under a three-foot-high ceiling and then shoving the coal out with his feet. I looked into the old gentleman's eyes, and I thought of a line from the country music song *Sixteen Tons:* "St. Peter, don't you call me 'cause I can't go; I owe my soul to the company store."

There are no shaft mines left in Southeast Kansas, but, through the man we met, I felt as if I had experienced what life must have been like for him and his fellow workers and their families. I understood the strikes for more pay and better working conditions and the march of the Amazon Army (a miners' wives' protest); I wondered why I had never recognized this version of "Bleeding Kansas." People here did not bleed only over the issue of slavery; they bled in the mine fields and in the zinc and lead smelting plants. The very soil of Kansas bled with the extraction of coal in the early twentieth century.

Later, as I sat by a brook that babbled over rocks, I reflected on the former mining towns we had seen in the area, skeletons like Brutus. Where are the grandsons and granddaughters of the miners now? Have we learned and progressed because of the miners' experience in the coal fields?

* * * *

Hoaxmobile 4 versus Troglodyte 6

By E. Haldeman-Julius

As I review the whole unfortunate series of incidents and the rather painful climax, I feel that the trouble commenced because Perry, my auto-intoxicated neighbor, had a month's start, and that his choice fell to a Hoaxmobile Four, while I, refusing all help from salesmen, shoemakers, and chimney sweepers, decided to bank my fate and fortune on a Troglodyte Six. I realize now, meditating here before my inviting steam radiator, that there is a terrible conflict of emotions when one's neighbor has had his car for thirty days and one decides to get a gas wagon of *another* make.

Perry—one of the town's best lawyers—had just helped an injured coal miner get justice from a Kansas capitalist. After an all-day's fight in Girard's courthouse, Perry got the jury to come in with an award of fifteen hundred. It was a great victory for the miner, everybody agreed, and Perry was so happy that he decided to spend his share for a Hoaxmobile, which cost eleven hundred.

This Perry was *always* anxious to help people. He decided to take me in hand as soon as he bought his car. "It's a machine age," he told me, "and we must keep abreast of the times." Of course, I had been thinking about a car, and decided I'd get one, but just what sort I didn't know. One thing was certain—I didn't intend to get a Hoaxmobile Four. Not that I had any prejudices, but I didn't want it said that I was imitating my neighbor to the north.

I went down to Pittsburg—Kansas, not Pennsylvania—and looked up the man who had his name on many of the mileposts. He took me aside and told me I wanted a Troglodyte Six and I agreed with him. It would cost me only ten-seventy, and I would find it miserly in one respect—it would refuse to burn up much gasoline. I thought that a very good line—a fine talking point, in fact— and, wanting to see if he was telling the truth, I took my first lesson. I paid for the stingy rascal and drove him home.

I didn't look at the engine. The carburetor drew no questions. I was not interested in the length of its wheelbase nor whether its ignition was the dual system with distributor and storage battery. (These technical terms are coming right out of a well printed folder.)

All I knew was that it looked pretty good to me, that it was new because several parts were still covered with paper, that there were a few tags attached at strategic places—and because, finally, there were two awfully cute foot mats, one attached to each running board. That, I concluded, was a remarkable improvement. I reflected how muddy a car gets in rainy weather and how different things would now be with the aid of those mats.

I had further absorbed the knowledge that in order to start the car it was necessary to pull a certain button, push an object with my right foot, press another iron article with my left, and then move a long thing with my right hand, and let in some gas with my right foot; shove the left thing again; move the right lever forward once more; still another tug and at last, thank heaven, one had obtained the speed called "high." It went.

In about five minutes I had learned these rather intricate details—and from then on I refused to make a deeper study of the problems of autoing. With deep insight, I decided that there are but two important details to remember—how to start and how to stop, especially stop. Anything else may be left to the man in overalls at the garage. This was my philosophical basis, and I was happy in my ignorance.

I drove the Troglodyte Six straight to Girard—about fourteen miles—and on the way I learned how to do a few fancy stunts, such as allowing farmers' wagons only about four inches from complete annihilation, handling the steering wheel with one hand, and feeding gasoline with my legs crossed so that I might enjoy comfort on future long drives. When I reached home I felt sort of experty. I could back up, turn around, avoid bumps, and blow the horn. It was lots of fun and I wondered how I had been living almost thirty years without owning a car.

And then I saw Perry—or, rather, he saw me. He came over and started to speak—no, he didn't speak—he seemed to be pleading an imaginary case before an imaginary jury.

"Whatcha got there?" he asked

"Troglodyte Six," I answered nonchalantly as I stopped the engine, got out, and viewed my little glory.

"Why didn'tcha get a Hoaxmobile Four?" he demanded.

"I don't know," I answered. "I thought this would suit me all right."

Perry pulled up the hood and remarked: "Hmmm. Where's your multiple disc dry plate clutch? And I betcha you haven't a Hotchkiss drive nor a double universal joint. The most *antiquated* oiling system in the market! If you'd done as I did, you'd have had a hollow crank shaft oiling system."

I hadn't noticed any particular need for a hollow crank shaft oiling system during my fourteen-mile drive. In fact, I hadn't even missed it. For all I knew, it might be tucked away somewhere beyond his view. But, then, I didn't intend to go hunting it up for him. If he couldn't find what he wanted, that was his lookout, not mine. Besides, I didn't intend to let a clutter of technical detail spoil the pleasure of flying about.

But I was positive of an important matter. Mine was a Troglodyte Six while his was a Hoaxmobile Four, so I knew there was a difference or two somewhere, just where I wasn't certain. But no one could deny the difference, so I apologized with "I thought I'd better buy a six than a four."

"There's one born every minute," said the frankly superior Perry. "Don't you know that all the racing cars are made with *four?* If six were better than four, then you can bet your last spondulix that those racers wouldn't be without them. Take a Stutz. Did you know they're fours, and that they cost more than twice as much as that Troglodyte Six?"

I didn't see the point at all. Why should I try to compete with *racers?* Every man in his own field, I thought.

"Well, you're stung, so you may as well make the most of it and get as much as you can while you have it."

I was beginning to get discouraged.

Then followed a discussion on another subject. I had decided to leave my car with Upham, the garage man. I thought him a nice sort of chap, and I thought his rate of five dollars a month pretty reasonable.

"Some people are hopeless," said Perry. "It's as simple as one-two-three that you want to build yourself a little *garage* just like mine. Here's how it works."

And then he explained it, proving each statement in figures that were drawn on the back of an envelope. A garage would cost me four hundred dollars, while a year's rental would be sixty dollars. I'd be paying about fifteen percent on my money when I could have my own place for only five percent. So I told Perry I'd look into the matter and thanked him for the tip.

The next time I saw Perry he asked me if I had insured my car. Of course, I hadn't. I had been too busy riding. No man can go seven hundred miles in three days and bother about insurance.

"You go over and see Flint right away and have him insure it for you," he practically commanded. There was nothing to do but obey. Perry always impressed me as being a human subpoena. So I hunted up Flint and paid him twelve and a half to guard me against the theft of a thousand dollars' worth of Troglodyte Six.

When I met Perry again that night, I was sure we could meet on equal ground. I was beginning to feel like a real autoist.

"Well," said I, as I handed him one of my cigars, "I took your advice and got the car insured against theft."

"Is that *all?*" he asked, shaking his head and looking at me as though I were impossible. "What about *fire?*"

"By Jove, I never thought of that."

"Don't you know there's always that danger to contend with? There's self-ignition—that's something. There's the chance of an explosion in the garage."

So I gave Flint another twelve-fifty and saved another thousand dollars of Troglodyte against danger.

And still Perry wasn't satisfied. Why, I had forgotten the greatest danger of all—liability. What if I should hit a farmer's wagon? Who would pay the damages? I or the company? Of course, I preferred it should be the company. Suppose the car were ruined in a wreck and I injured severely? Who would pay all costs? The company, to be sure. So twelve-fifty more went to Flint.

After I had left my three documents in the bank, I learned that Perry had never put a penny into insurance. He didn't need it. No one could steal his car because he always locked it when he left it standing. There couldn't be much of a fire because he always had Sprayine ready. And, furthermore, there couldn't be any liability because he was such a careful driver. However, I didn't mind because I derived new pleasure from my Troglodyte Six. When I flew about the country, I didn't worry about railroad trains or drunken chauffeurs. Why should I? The company would pay. Nor did I hestitate to smoke my cigar while the gasoline tank was being filled. I should worry about fire. As for theft—bah! I left my car anywhere. On nice nights I let it stand in front of my door until daylight. The company would pay.

The next time Perry approached me, I could see by his fat, red face that he was going to put me through some new paces.

"Tell me! What is your motor number?"

"I didn't know the motor had a number."

"I thought so. What's the number on the body near the hood?"

"Why should I bother about fine print? I don't know."

"Now, then, what's your license number?"

"One-one-eight one. . . . No, one-one-*naught*-eight-one. . . . Well—I'm not sure. It's right except the third number, and that's either a *one* or a *naught.*"

"Just like an amachure."

Perry was beginning to lose faith in me, I could see.

"Have you learned how to fix your car?" he next cross-examined me.

"No. Why should I? Nothing's happened."

Perry was losing patience.

"Nothing's happened! Oh! *Oh!* Some night you'll get stuck two miles out of town and then what'll you do?"

"Phone to Upham," I shot back at him.

"That's *not* the right way. Look at me—I've learned how to *fix* my car. Do you know, I was up until three o'clock this morning repairing my transmission."

Perry's face glowed. He was chockful of new pride.

"I was up until three o'clock this morning *autoing,*" I shot back at him. I tell you, I was getting in my blows, only Perry wouldn't see them.

"Until three o'clock this morning?" he repeated. "Autoing where?"

"To Joplin and back. One hundred miles and never a bump. My first trip there and I made it at night without asking the road of a single farmer.

"What's that? Anybody can find the roads. Suppose you do miss one once in a while; that's nothing. It's tires that count. Do you know you're taking big chances on a *blowout?*"

Perry was beginning to make me mad, but I kept my temper down.

"I don't see why I should have a blowout."

"Then what about a puncture?"

"But I have an extra tire."

"What's that? Only *one* tire. Suppose you get two punctures? What'd you do then?"

I didn't know. But why expect two punctures? Wasn't one enough?

"You'll learn someday," he prophesied grimly. "You'll learn by the school of hard knocks and pieces of glass. *Get yourself another tire right away.*"

That afternoon I obeyed Perry and spent twenty-eight dollars for a second tire and one-seventy-five for some straps to hold it against the first extra. When I made my next trip to Joplin, I heard that *whuh-huh-huh-huh-huh!* and I knew instinctively what had happened. It was a puncture. And Perry was right! I didn't know how to put on that extra tire. Even worse, I had no jack.

But, in less than a minute, there came along a good soul in another Troglodyte Six and he stopped. "Need any help?" he asked. Of course, I did. "Someone's stolen my jack and I don't know what to do," I confessed. That traveling Christian sprang out, put his own tools to work, got off the old tire, and put on a new one in about ten minutes. During the wait I had a good chance to observe the scenery and take another smoke.

From then on I decided to trust in humanity. Whenever I get a puncture, I told myself, I'll just sit and wait until someone comes along, and then appeal to his heart and conscience. It has never failed, and though I have thousands of miles to my credit, I've never once rolled up a sleeve.

Perry was all out of patience with me. Here I was chasing up and down the country having lots of fun and giving absolutely no regard to the dark chances facing me. I was headed for a fall, he warned me. I was certain to have some sad experiences. Look at him—he took his Hoaxmobile Four seriously. He considered all the risks and the problems that beset autoists. He was sending to Detroit for a rear axle today and some springs tomorrow. He couldn't drive on Monday because his valves needed grinding and he kept his car out of commission on Tuesday because there was a little carbon in the cylinders. And all along, with Perry giving me object lessons every day—showing me his own car to prove what my constant perils were—I was rolling up the mileage.

"It's beginner's luck," he insisted.

But I must not be too hard on Perry. He has gone to his rest. Some months later, after he had given me up as a hopeless case, he decided he would try one of those Joplin night trips. And he did. It appeared that he was watching the roads so intently that he didn't notice a bed of glass, with the result that he got four punctures at one shot. And as they went down simultaneously, he didn't realize that he was riding on his rims. Then he bumped into a rock and rolled over a precipice, and while on this downward journey inflammatory self-ignition set it.

I was sorry, of course. But in one respect I can't help being glad Perry is gone. It happens that my new neighbor to the south—Collins—is buying a little car, and I want to give him some good advice. If Perry were around I wouldn't have the courage to open my mouth, but now I may be able to induce Collins to buy a Troglodyte Six and have him get all sorts of insurance, memorize the numbers of things that I know nothing about, and prepare for the other risks that one must be ever ready to face. I feel that my neighbor needs me, and if he isn't stupid he will learn a *great* deal.

The Day Before Winter

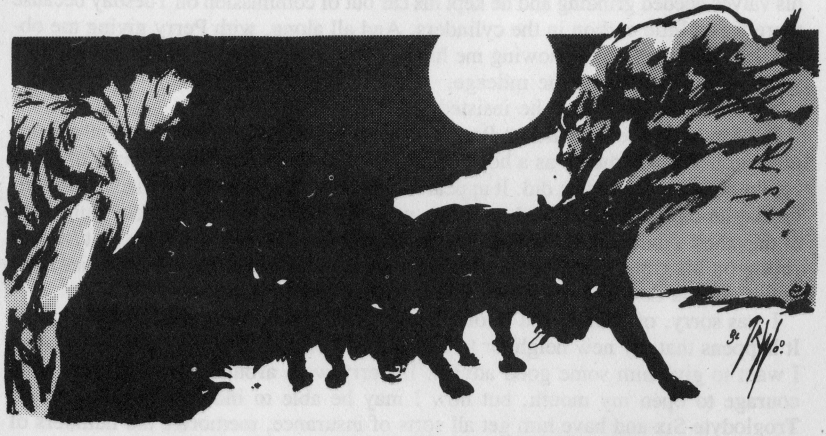
Leaves scatter in tight winds,
and the grackle sketches a bouncing line
across the picket fence
to a place on the lawn.

There is little movement, even
among the neighbors,
who may with a november chin
dropped to their chests
wedge a foot into the back door
and with the tip of a broom
sweep yesterday in a flutter down the steps.

Al Ortolani

The Jackals of the Night:

A Lebanese Folktale



Collected from Pete Murry by Pat Kuhel

In the old country, there were jackals that roamed around at night in certain places where people were not supposed to go. These weren't ordinary animals; they could change their shapes. Sometimes they had ears three feet long, and sometimes they had a big head with a small body, and sometimes they walked on two feet like men. These animals could talk, and they could put spells on you. They protected certain areas, and no one could walk into those places. Some of the animals could fly, and you were in danger if you ever came to the sandy, hilly, stony part of the country where these animals lived. Sometimes the Devil himself would take the form of one of these animals and try to steal people's souls.

One time a young man, who was a stranger to this part of the country, wandered into the forbidden area and was captured by the Devil. He was a very good young man and the Devil wanted his soul, but the man was so good that the Devil had to give him a chance to free himself from his clutches. So the Devil told the young man that for three nights he must stay alone in the desert, and if he could conquer the jackals of the night, who were the servants of the Devil, he would be free. However, if he did not conquer them, the Devil would take the young man back to Hell with him.

The young man was very frightened, and after the Devil left he began to cry and pray. While he was praying, an old man appeared and told him he would help the boy defeat the jackals of the night if the young man would do everything he was told without question. The young man agreed. The old man told him he would need to take a cross with him that night when he went out into the desert. He told the young man not to take anything else, and under no circumstances was he to go to sleep.

That night, the young man—armed only with a cross—spent the night in the desert. As soon as it got dark, he could see the fiery eyes of the jackals of the night as they surrounded him. He held up the cross and the jackals stayed away from him, but remained close around him in a circle. Whenever he started to doze off, he would be roused by the hot breath of the jackals as they closed in on him. The young man had a hard time staying awake, but he did and, when the sun came up, the jackals went back where they came from.

When daylight came, the old man returned, and the young man said to him, "It is true that the cross held off the jackals, but the Devil said that I must conquer them. How am I do to that?" And he started to cry and pray again. The old man told him, "Be patient. Tonight when you go into the desert, you must take with you some pieces of meat. When the jackals come, you must throw the meat at them. This will cause them to fight among themselves, and you will not be harmed."

That night, the young man did as the old man told him. When the jackals came, he threw the pieces of meat among them, and they began to fight over who was to get the biggest piece. They fought so long that the sun had come up and they had to leave before the meat was divided, so the young man was safe for another night. Again, when the sun came up, the old man appeared, and again the young man began to cry and pray. "It is true, old man, that the jackals were held off for another night, but I still have not conquered them. What shall I do? Tonight is the last night, and if I fail the Devil will take me to Hell."

The old man replied, "Be patient. Tonight you will conquer the jackals and you will be greatly rewarded. Tonight you must take with you only a handful of black sesame seeds. When the jackals come close to you, sprinkle the seeds around you and have faith."

That night, the young man did as the old man had told him. He went back to the desert and took with him only a handful of black sesame seeds. As soon as the sun went down, the jackals began creeping up on the young man. They were led this time by the Devil himself in the form of a large jackal. He was sure of his prize and had come to take possession of the young man's soul. When the jackals began to close in, the young man sprinkled the sesame seeds around himself in a large circle. No sooner had he dropped the last seed than the seeds became armed soldiers who turned on the jackals and killed every one—except the Devil, who can be killed by no one. The Devil, seeing that his servants were killed, turned and fled, cursing the young man as he went.

When the sun came up again, the old man reappeared and told the young man to go to the shrine nearby and get holy water and bless the place so that the Devil and the jackals of the night could never return. The young man did, and the desert in that part of the country has never been bothered by evil spirits again. The people of the surrounding towns heard what the young man had done, and they rewarded him greatly. He married the beautiful daughter of the richest and most important man in that part of the country, and he became very rich and very famous and very happy.

Diary Entry, 4 February 1928, by Margaret E. Haughawout

I like life when things get so thick that I must get myself in hand or *bust!* Is it that—instead of forgetting you, as expediency counsels—that I keep my hold on you—and cannot let you go? For you always *stir the pool!*

Contributors

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sas • **Jo McDougall** (510 W. Euclid, Pittsburg, KS 66762) teaches creative writing at Pittsburg State University. Her most recent book is *The Woman in the Next Booth* (Kansas City: BookMark Press, 1987) • Bill Martino (1255 Gretna, Springfield, MO 65804) was last heard of in Kathmandu • **Leonard D. Moore** (2225 N. Hills Dr., Raleigh, NC 27612), USA Acting Advisor for the *Pacific Quarterly Moana,* is the first-place winner of the 1985 North Carolina Haiku Society Contest. He is the author of a book of haiku, *The Open Eyes* • **Marianne Moore** (1887-1972), librarian and former editor of *The Dial* (1925-1929), won the 1951 Pulitzer Prize for her *Collected Poems* • **Blanche Clark Nevers** (79 Wibird St., Apt. Z, Portsmouth, NH 03801), a native of Canada, states, "I have been writing since I can remember, before taking courses and treating it seriously" • **Avalyn Olson** (13096 Blackbird, No. 141, Garden Grove, CA 92643) • **Al Ortolani** (1010 S. Catalpa, Pittsburg, KS 66762) is the most recent winner of the Gross Memorial Manuscript Award for *The Last Hippie of Camp 50* (Topeka, Kan.: Woodley Press, 1988) • **Mil Penner and Carol Schmidt** (Rt. 1, Inman, KS 67546) are the authors of *Kansas Journeys* (Inman, Kan.: The Sounds of Kansas, 1985), a 128-page hardbound photographic essay which represents all of the geological regions of the state. A marvelous banquet of words and photographs, "*Kansas Journeys* is not a travel guide or promotional book for the state," says Penner. Although we know of several who are using it as a guidebook (and it certainly promotes the state, even if its authors didn't mean that to be its prime thrust), we agree: it is a work of art • **Marjorie Schick** (607 W. Euclid, Pittsburg, KS 66762) is a professor of art at Pittsburg State University. During the summer of 1984 she was artist-in-residence at the Sir John Cass School of Art, City of London Polytechnic • **Kenneth L. Simons** (517 Utah, Pittsburg, KS 66762) has just completed *My Years with Brink,* to be published by the Little Balkans Press • **Betty Jane Simpson** (2410 Anderson Ave., Newton, KS 67114) continues to win poetry awards! • **Ossie E. Tranbarger** (619 W. Main, Independence, KS 67301) is now sponsoring a haiku contest, after fifteen years of sponsoring the Kansas Poetry Contest • **Donna Turner** (620 6th Ave. S.W., Apt. 3, Minot, ND 58701) has an undergraduate degree in biology from Pittsburg State, a masters in education from Minot State, and is currently pursuing a master's in creative writing. • **Susan L. Van Ness** now **Susan Johnston** (2727 Abejorro, Carlsbad, CA) is preparing to move to Australia as the LBR goes to press • **Thomas R. Walther** (2702 Knollview, Pittsburg, KS 66762) is chair of the history department at Pittsburg State University • **Ted Watts** (Box 303, Oswego, KS 67356) recently completed a montage of Mickey Mantle, as well as one for the Little Balkans Foundation • **Clara Gehron Willis** (Rt. 2, 1601 W. Alpine, Siloam Springs, AR 72761) is the author of *Six Month Summer,* published in December 1984.

Books from the Little Balkans

The Little Balkans Press, Inc., is now offering for sale certain books by Southeast Kansas and Kansas authors, including Upton Sinclair's classic, The Jungle, which created a national stir in 1906 and which is creating a sensation today, not only in America but throughout the world. The new Peachtree Publishers, Ltd., edition is edited by Gene DeGruson of Pittsburg State University and is the only available edition which contains the original text of 36 chapters. Our readers may obtain a copy, signed by the editor, through the press at $21.95 (subscribers: $19.75), plus $2.00 postage and handling. Goat's House, by DeGruson, which won the 1986 Woodley Press Award for poetry, is available for $5.00, plus $1.00 postage and handling. The Last Hippie of Camp 50, by Al Ortolani, Jr., won the 1988 Award and is available at the same costs. More books available from the Press will be offered in our next issue.

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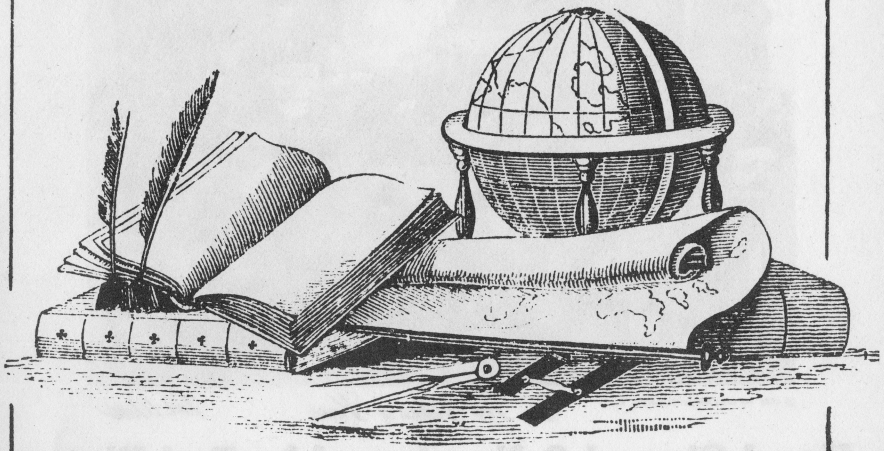

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The Annals of Harold Bell Wright in Pittsburg Kansas, 1898-1903 is available for a limited time from the Little Balkans Heritage Preservation Guild, 406 West Euclid, Pittsburg, KS 66762, for $5.00. All proceeds are to be used in restoring the Harold Bell Wright home at 401 West Kansas. Please add $1.00 for postage and handling.

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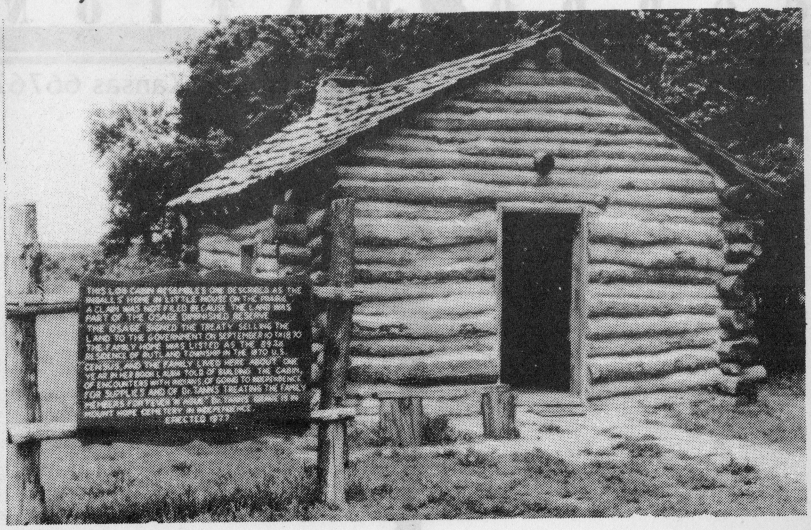
The Little House on the Prairie

by Edna Lemon Clay



Thirteen miles southwest of Independence, Montgomery County, is a reconstructed log cabin on the original site of the childhood home of Laura Ingalls Wilder and her family. Wilder tells of the building of their home in her book, Little House on the Prairie. **The family lived there from 1869 to 1870.**

The marker at the entrance reads: ". . . a claim was not filed because the land was part of the Osage Diminished Reserve. The Osage signed the treaty selling the land to the government on September 10th, 1870. The family home was listed as the 89th residence of Rutland Township in the 1870 U.S. census. . . . In her book Laura told of the building of the cabin, of encounters with Indians, of going to Independence for supplies and of Dr. Tann's treating the family members for 'fever 'n' ague.' . . . Erected in 1977."

Independence PRIDE volunteers constructed and furnished the cabin as the Wilders might have had it. Nearby are a restored one-room schoolhouse and an early-day rural post office. The buildings are open from May 15 through September 15. Admission is by donation.

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