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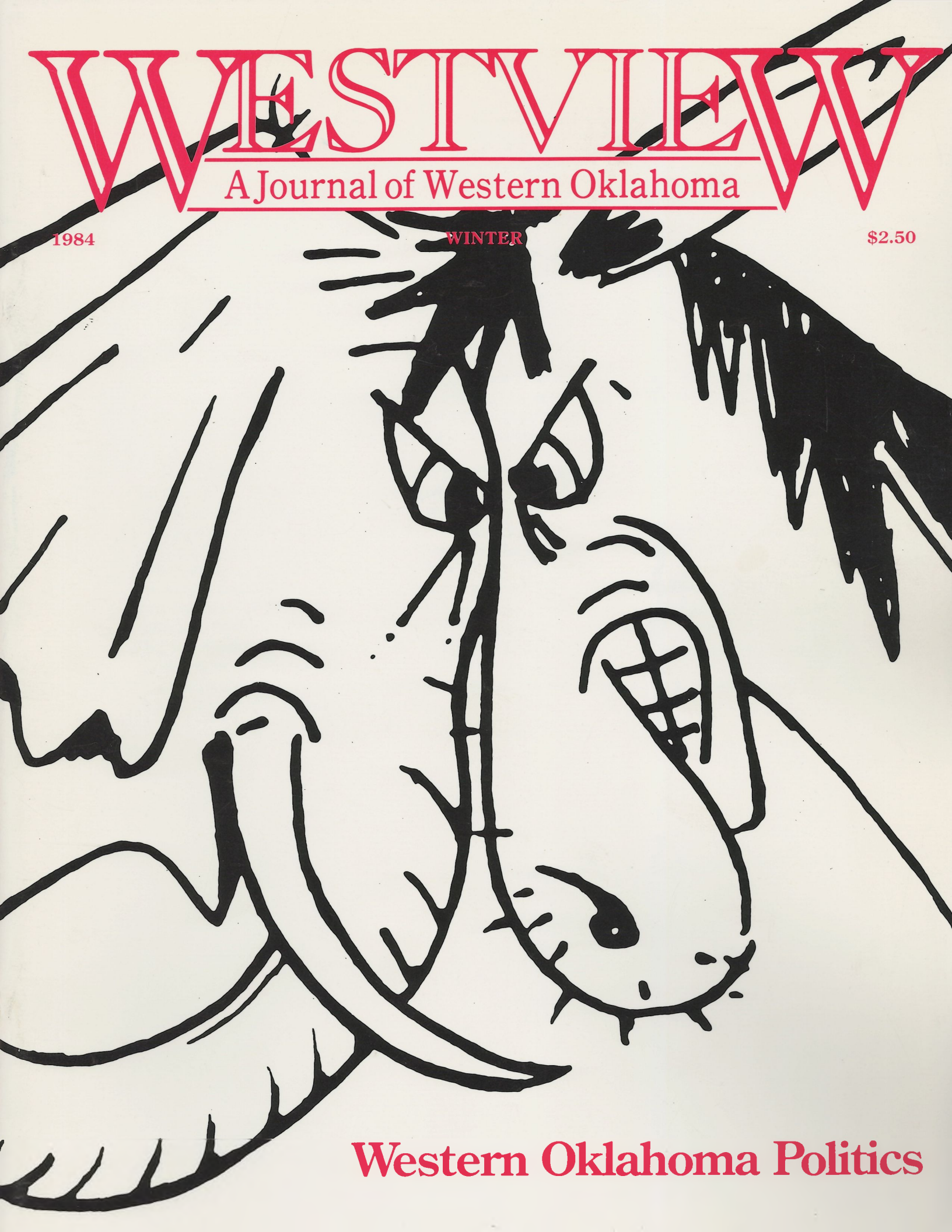
WESTVIEW

A Journal of Western Oklahoma

1984

WINTER

\$2.50



Western Oklahoma Politics

FOREWORD

T

he October 1 deadline has arrived and passed; the theme "Western Oklahoma Politics" wasn't a really popular one among our contributors. We received a few good submissions on the theme--but not many; therefore, some editorial stretching has been done. If some of the attitudes seem cynical, please consider them reflective of popular opinion.

Maybe after our readers see the article in the Fall 1984 issue about mellowing the hearts of WESTVIEW Editorial Board members, more people will be willing to pursue the elusive dream and submit something to us.

Sales are picking up; we thank our friends who sing our praises in Western Oklahoma areas and other parts of the state. One of those friends is Kent Ruth of Geary, whose commendation in the July 15 SUNDAY OKLAHOMAN has helped us much. We have received responses from people whom we had never known before. Other valued supporters are Ernestine Gravley of Shawnee, OHB Garrity of Midwest City, Kate Jackson Lewis of Purcell, Margaret Friedrich of Clinton, Joanna Thurston Roper of Weatherford, Dick Chapman of Arapaho, Inez Schneider Whitney of Arlington, Virginia, *ad infinitum*.

As was the case three years ago at our beginning, we continue to depend upon and be nourished by our friendly supporters.

— Leroy Thomas
Editor

Leroy Thomas

— Leroy Thomas
Editor

WESTVIEW

Weatherford, Oklahoma

Published by Southwestern Oklahoma State University

Winter

Volume 4

Western Oklahoma Politics

Number 2

CONTENTS

Foreword	Dr. Leroy Thomas	1
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WINTER SPECIALTY

The Attorney	Joanna Thurston Roper	4
Abandoned	Fran Merrill	7
Winter Salad	Olive DeWitt	7
Oklahoma Winter Morning	Lois Neely	8

PERSPECTIVES

Both Faces of a Pseudo God	Maggie Culver Fry	10
SS: Stylized Shorthand	Margaret Friedrich	11
Amor Mundi	Olive DeWitt	12

MEMORIES

That Thing Called Politics	Pat Kourt	14
Handy To Some	Richard Jespers	15
Any Better Way	June Hale	17

REMEDIES

Why I'm a Democrat	Inez Schneider Whitney	20
Modernistic	R. R. Chapman	21
Free Fall	Dr. Sam Lackey	22
Dear Somebody	R. R. Chapman	23
Woman Kind	Dr. Sam Lackey	24
Experience Is Not Always Pleasant	R. R. Chapman	25
Time Out	Dr. Sam Lackey	26

SPECIAL ITEMS

Book Review -- OKLAHOMA POLITICS: A HISTORY by James R. Scales	Dr. Leroy Thomas	27
Contributors		28
Future Issues		29

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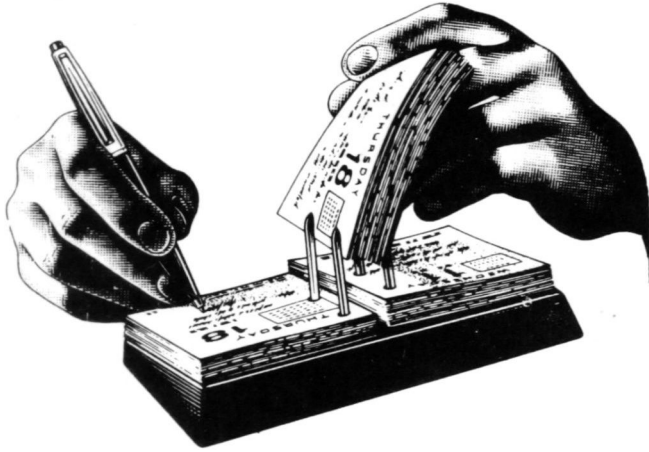
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THE ATTORNEY

— by Joanna Thurston Roper

Even when I was a little kid, I knew Pud Atkins wasn't Danny's dad. That is, I say I knew it — fact is, I didn't know it intellectually. It was just a feeling. You know the kind — when you finally find out, you say, "I was afraid of that." Even before I knew anything about it, there seemed to be something wrong. I even remember thinking back when we were in the first grade that Danny's handwriting was better than Pud's! But that didn't make me think Pud wasn't his dad — it just seemed strange.

nine feet tall. He whipped each foot out like he was marching. Nobody else in Danny's family was shaped like him, either. Even as scrawny as Pud was, he had a pretty good shape for a guy. But Danny was as flat in the rear as he was in front — well, actually, I guess he was flatter in the rear because he was a pretty good eater, and he tended to be a little pudgy. Seeing them walking along together you wouldn't just automatically think "father and son."

Someone might think, well, maybe

emn like. Danny, I guess, woke up laughing about something — at least that's the way he got to school. He was one of those fellows who had a new joke every time you saw him. But I doubt if old Pud ever laughed at one of his jokes. Not that he was gripey — he just didn't laugh much. And I can just see Mrs. Atkins smiling at him, nodding maybe. Probably making him feel good about his jokes.

Danny went out for every sport our school had — not that he was ever much good at anything. Oh, he did all right in football after he was a junior or senior in high school. By that time he'd developed a lot more strength but not much in the way of height. He could crouch over, stick his elbows out and stop nearly the whole line. Coach said he had a low center of gravity. That low gravity kept him on the bench in basketball, though. He made every practice, and he even played a few times when we'd run the score up so high he couldn't hurt us. And in track he'd come floundering in last, arms flailing, breathing hard, but when he got his breath back, cheerful as ever. In baseball, now, he was better than average — mostly, I guess it was because of that low center of gravity he could drive solid home runs across the back fence — if he ever connected with one, of course.

He was one of the guys — it never mattered that he always — nearly always — came in last. He wore his blue and silver athletic jacket with the best of them.

Of course, none of this has any bearing at all on whether or not Pud Atkins was Danny's dad or not. We



ILLUSTRATION BY JIM BAILEY

Lots of things were strange back then. Like, I look a whole lot like my dad — most guys do — shape of the nose or mouth — something like that. But not Danny. Pud was a long, lanky guy — almost seemed skinny and shrunk up. He was tall, but he didn't walk tall. Even though he wore cowboy boots, he took steps like he was trying not to step in something. Danny was a short, squatty little fellow, and he walked like he was

Danny looked like his mother. No, he wasn't like her, either. She was a good-looking, graceful lady. Slim and pretty with lots of dark brown hair and brown eyes. She was — well, just different. You couldn't look at Pud and Mrs. Atkins — always Mrs. Atkins — not Dorothy — and figure how those two had Danny.

And another thing — Danny was one cheerful fellow. Pud wasn't. Not grouchy or grumpy — just sol-

never thought about it — it probably wouldn't have mattered if we had. I sure never talked about it at school. I don't think kids analyze their friends' families — they just sort of accept them the way they are.

I think it was just in my subconscious that I knew things were different over at the Atkins'. But then there was that one morning — it was summer, the first day school was out. I remember how green and — oh — fresh and bubbly everything felt. The excitement was still new. Anyway, I had just come downstairs looking for breakfast, and Mom and Dad were out on the patio — at least Mom was, and Dad was squirting water on the roses. They were talking back and forth — a little loud because of the water and all. I wasn't listening — their kind of talk didn't usually hold my attention. I tuned in every once in a while to make sure I wasn't missing something important — like what's for my birthday next week or something. I wasn't really listening seriously when I heard Danny's name mentioned. I perked up right away because I was going to Nine Flags with the Atkins on the week end. I heard Mom say, "Do you think Danny knows who his father is?" My mind sort of froze — what about Pud, I thought. I heard Dad say, "I don't think Pud and Dorothy will ever talk about that. Where's Mack?" "He hasn't got up yet," Mom said. I heard the water go off.

By the time Mom and Dad opened the patio door, I was back in my room kicking off my jeans and shirt and diving back into bed. I hadn't had time to think about what I'd heard. I just **knew** down deep that it was one of those conversations not meant for me. I still felt like my brain was frozen down — I didn't dare touch what I'd heard. When I heard Mom coming up the stairs, I flopped over on my stomach — she'd know in a flash I wasn't asleep if she saw me lying there pretending. I never could keep my eyelids from wiggling when I tried to fool her. Today I sure didn't want

her to know I'd been awake. Or downstairs. Most of all downstairs.

I heard the door open — close softly. I felt a huge wave of relief. Mom was going to let me sleep late this first day of vacation. I didn't want to talk to anyone until I had this figured out.

That was the first time that the problem had ever come to me — face to face. It was always just in my mind before — just a vague little bother in the back of my mind. I felt like something had changed. Something about **me** had changed. First of all, I didn't really know what Dad meant. Maybe Danny was just adopted. But somehow I knew that didn't seem right. There were adopted kids in school, and we all knew it. Sometimes Mom and Dad and I talked about them, just natural like. No big deal. They never would have talked about Chuck Abernathy like that and then asked real cautious like, "Where's Mack?"

So I felt pretty sure he wasn't adopted. But the question that just sat there like a rock was where did Pud and Dorothy Atkins get Danny? How else do folks get kids unless they're born or adopted?

I don't remember what happened the rest of that day. I doubt if I learned anything because I'd sure remember that. And the big event of the summer — going to Nine Flags — is gone. Things like that, I guess, blend in with all the other good-time summers. But one thing I do remember. A morning like that summer day when I first learned for sure about Danny always brings it back. I all of a sudden feel like a little boy again with a big problem and no one to fix it.

As soon as kids in our town get big enough, they get a job for their spending money. Any kid that doesn't work, he's sort of looked down on. Kids whose parents run some business in town usually work for their folks, so everyone expected Danny to work afternoons and Saturdays for his dad down at the Good Year Tire Store. But he started mowing lawns!

That surprised everyone. Can you imagine Danny Atkins behind a lawn mower — just barely as tall and a little bit wider! His main customer was Judge Lex Wicker — he lived 'way out on South Trinity Avenue. He had a huge lawn and all kinds of shrubs and flowers and stuff. Mrs. Wicker would be out there with him, wearing a yellow straw hat with a wide brim and pointing out what to do. I had me a job sacking groceries and stocking down at Taylor's Grocery, so I couldn't understand why he'd want to go out to the Wickers and work out in the sun all summer. Of course, Mr. Wicker took Danny and his friends to the semi-pro games over in Livingston a lot of times. That was sure a big deal, but I didn't think Danny got that job just to give his friends a trip to a baseball game. Mr. Wicker was one of the big shots in the Livingston League, but I don't know what he did. It wasn't important to me — not with batting averages of guys like Sparky McMillan and Bud Patterson to be figured.

Getting jobs was good for me and my crowd. We were losing our kid look and starting to shape up. My voice would break and sputter along sometimes, but I was almost as tall as Dad, and I'd passed Mom a long time ago. And working at Taylor's and sports made me strong. But Danny, now, he hadn't grown hardly at all. He was just about as short as ever and almost as wide. And his chest and shoulders were thicker. His arms sort of stuck out from his body like one of those Mickey Mouse ballons that has too much air in it.

One day after football drill, some of us were goofing around, trading insults and swapping lies. Danny made some funny remark, and ol' Al Curtis dropped back to kick him in the rear. Then he laughed and yelled, "Hey, Atkins, you ain't got no rear to kick! You're shaped just like ol' Judge Wicker!" We went on laughing and carrying on.

continued

Looking back, it seems like it wasn't any time at all before Danny and I graduated from high school and went away to college. Most of the guys went to state universities — except Danny (Dan now) and me. He went to law school, and I went out of state to a private school. I really missed ol' Danny. Dan, I mean. When I first left home, I was miserable for awhile — I guess all freshmen are. Then I began to sort of melt in — joined a lot of organizations — ran for office — met people, made new friends. Of course, I was anxious for fall break and talking to Dan — comparing notes.

It just happened that my freshman year was the year everyone celebrated our Bicentennial — 1976. One of my history teachers assigned a research paper on our home towns, so I had to spend lots of time in the library and the newspaper office. I sat in the back room of the JOURNAL reading old crackly yellow papers, getting totally absorbed in the headlines of early-day folks around here.

One day I had got up to 1958, and I ran across a story about the 1958 high school graduates getting summer jobs. The first one mentioned was Miss Dorothy Austin working in the law offices of Wicker and Beck. Well, I thought, history repeats itself — Mrs. Atkins worked for the old man before Dan did. Funny Dan never mentioned that all those years he worked for the judge. I skimmed on through the list to find Mom's name — public library, I knew. A little further on there was a spread on the society pages about the local girls going away to college. There was a big picture of Mom and Mrs. Atkins (Austin then, of course) sitting on a bed looking at a Samsonite suitcase. They looked so prim and serious — and **young!**

Well, I kept on going, looking in the want ads and public records — even building permits and the court news.

I kept getting distracted by stories about people I knew — or stories the folks had told me about. I hadn't thought this research would take so long — of course, I never expected to read so much stuff that wasn't going to be in my paper, either.

Then in a December paper I found a notice in the marriage license report — Dorothy Austin, 19, Melvin Atkins, 29. Gosh, I thought, Pud's lots older than Mrs. Atkins! I scribbled on my paper — 1958 minus 29 — he was born in 1929 — that means he's 47 now. That's pretty old — still he looks older than that.

So help me, I had no idea what I was heading for.

Of course, since I knew that they had bought the license, I expected to find a big picture of Mrs. Atkins in her wedding dress and the usual story that families like that had. I almost missed it. It was in the big Wednesday paper with all the grocery ads. There was a little story about two inches long that said something like, "Dorothy Austin and Melvin Atkins were married Friday in Judge Duncan's quarters." Well, gollee-ee! No wedding, and it was during Christmas vacation! Even then I felt a twinge of disappointment. I felt something else, too — I didn't know what, though. That little story was so terse.

I flipped on through the book of old dailies, studying all kinds of things, comparing prices, reading minutes of council meetings — lots of interesting stuff showed up.

On March 1, 1959, there in the hospital dismissals was "Mrs. Melvin Atkins and Baby Boy." Wow! From December to March! Well, gosh! I guess that happens — at least they were married. I thought about Marge in my graduating class — she had an abortion before school was out. Oh, well, I thought — maybe that's why he doesn't have a rear — he was so premature it never developed! My little joke sounded kind of hollow

even to me.

On the front page of the next day's paper, there was a story about the Wickers. "Mr. and Mrs. Wicker Depart for Europe," it read. My mind was still on ol' Danny being born so early. Pud and Mrs. Atkins had to be foolin' around as far back as maybe July. I was figuring in the margin by the story about the Wickers. I sat there thumping my pen on the page, and just thinking about Lex Wicker made him come into my mind — short, thick chested, flat fore and aft, self assured stride — and then another image just burned itself into my brain. Danny! That's exactly what he looks like!

I groaned. I put my head down on the book. I beat my hands on the table. "Do you think Danny knows who his father is?" "You ain't got no rear to kick!" Danny working for him all those years — going to Judge Wicker's old school to be a lawyer — Danny's mom working for him back then — I felt sick.

That's just another day I'd like to forget. Not that it's ever made any difference in our friendship — it just seems like I wasted lots of my life trying to figure something out that, as it happened, I didn't want to know anyway.

Well, after college we both came back here — things haven't changed much. We're still the best of friends. I went to work for the oil field as a landman, and Dan joined the Wicker law firm. When the oil played out around here, I started with an insurance company — turns out that's what I'm best at — and of course, after Judge Wicker died, Dan took over the Wicker offices. Right after he came back, they put up a new sign down there — Wicker, Atkins, Attorneys at Law. It's still there. I guess by rights it should be Wicker, Wicker, but no one around here talks about that. Least of all, me.

Winter Salad

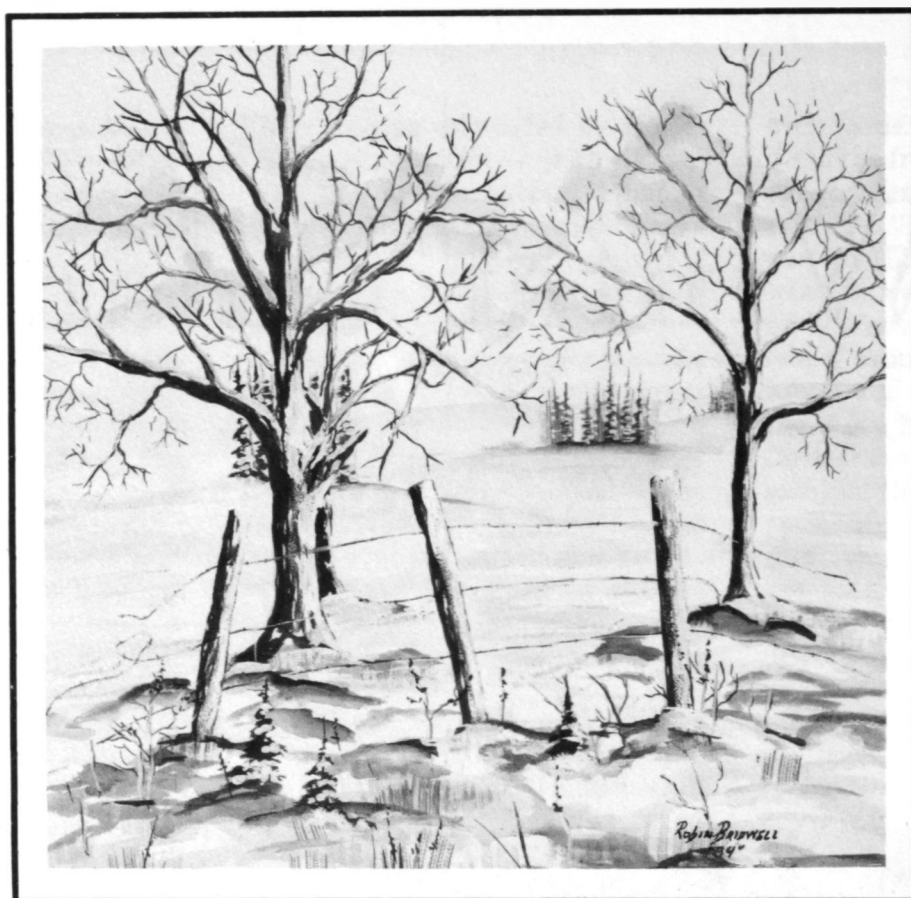
— by Olive DeWitt

Snow flakes,
Boys sleds racing,
Frozen snow men gazing,
Heads, arms, legs, coats, caps mix and match
"Supper."

Abandoned

— by Fran Merrill

**Abandoned schoolhouse
an old oak drops crisp, dead leaves
on tall, yellowed grass**



— ILLUSTRATION BY ROBIN BRIDWELL

Oklahoma Winter Morning

— by Lois Neely

The night is black before the dawn. The stars have extinguished their reassuring twinkling lights. Mother Earth lies sleeping under February skies, awaiting her daughter, Spring, who will bring warmth and life-giving rains. She is secure, for her Royal Guards, tall and stately oaks and elms, stand quietly on watch. At their feet not the scrubby cedars, in service as squires.

The winter Sun stirs in slumber, and, feeling benevolent, sends an emissary with a magic golden wand. He opens his eyes, yawns over the horizon, and smiles, for the emissary has been thorough.

Mother Earth has been wrapped in acres of ermine, embellished with an occasional emerald, the hardy yucca. Her Royal Guards, though bare of foliage, are glistening with uniforms of diamonds, some of which have fallen on the squires who stand in wonderment at their transformation. Miles and miles of once offensive barbed wire is now meticulously draped with millions of perfect, tiny chrystal icicles. The wooden fence posts proudly display transparent coats of sparkling white sapphire.

I look in awe. I want to stop and gather all the precious gems I can carry. I want to adorn myself so that I

might be as lovely as the lowly thistle which the North Wind has allowed to pause and share in Nature's benevolence. Yet I cannot stop. I am a prisoner in a box of steel and glass set in motion along a highway of ugly black asphalt. I feel resentment rising in my throat; then I look again, and Mother Earth smiles. I feel a voice whispering inside me; then, I, too, smile. I settle back in my seat of upholstered velvet, content in the knowledge that I am but a mortal and have been allowed a rare privilege as a spectator at one of Father Time's wondrous dramas.



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At the Holiday Season more than ever, our thoughts turn gratefully to those who have made our progress possible. It is in this spirit we say, simply but sincerely, . . . "Thank You and Best Wishes for the Holidays and a Happy New Year."

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BOTH FACES OF A PSEUDO GOD

by Maggie Culver Fry

*Election night: Dethroned he listens to
the blare of telecast, while screeching horns
laud his opponent; that "come lately" one.
He hears, "incumbent ousted. . .pseudo God."
The background roars like flames! Hot tongues
of praise for his brash foe. Distorted, strange,
nightmare, as orange faces on TV.
Stuttering neon; torches rouge the dark.
O effervescent past. . .**his** victory camp!
He fiddles on one string, gives alibis:
"The apathy of voters. . .bigotry. . ."
"Now play another string. . .sing for the Press".
"The winner? Oh just say I wish him well".
(He turns his falseface camerawise. It **smiles**.)*

SS: Stylized Shorthand

— by Margaret Friedrich

*Near fifty years or so ago
A new language began to
show.*

*Then we began to speak in
tongues;
Novel words exercised our
lungs.*

*IWW — “I Won’t Work,”
some said;
Strikes did not earn their
daily bread.*

*WWI aroused our people —
Farms, factories, and under
steeple.*

*The Great Depression
brought no pay.*

*Then came FDR, NRA,
CCC, and alphabet soup.
Hundreds of others followed
suit.*

*Soon WAC and WAVES
came into use*

*For women in uniforms
spruce*

*Who in WW II lent their
aid*

*And thus their contribution
made.*

*Now IRS and FBI
Help keep us honest, or they
try.*

*And there’s NATO to keep
the peace,
Watched by CIA (forced to
cease).*

*RTA and AARP
Identify the old, you see.
Our travel with AAA frees
From goofs. Or we can use
our CB’s*

*There may be in your sky
above*

*A UFO. Aim? War or love?
A modern concept: LWS
Could be romance or maybe
stress.*

*All these acronyms running
loose*

*Grow every day without
excuse.*

*Dozens of others clog our
speech.*

*There’s no dictionary to
reach.*

Amor Mundi

by Olive DeWitt

"Armor mundi,"
For love of the world for which I was born,
A citizen of the whole, a brother of all,
How can I stand alone?

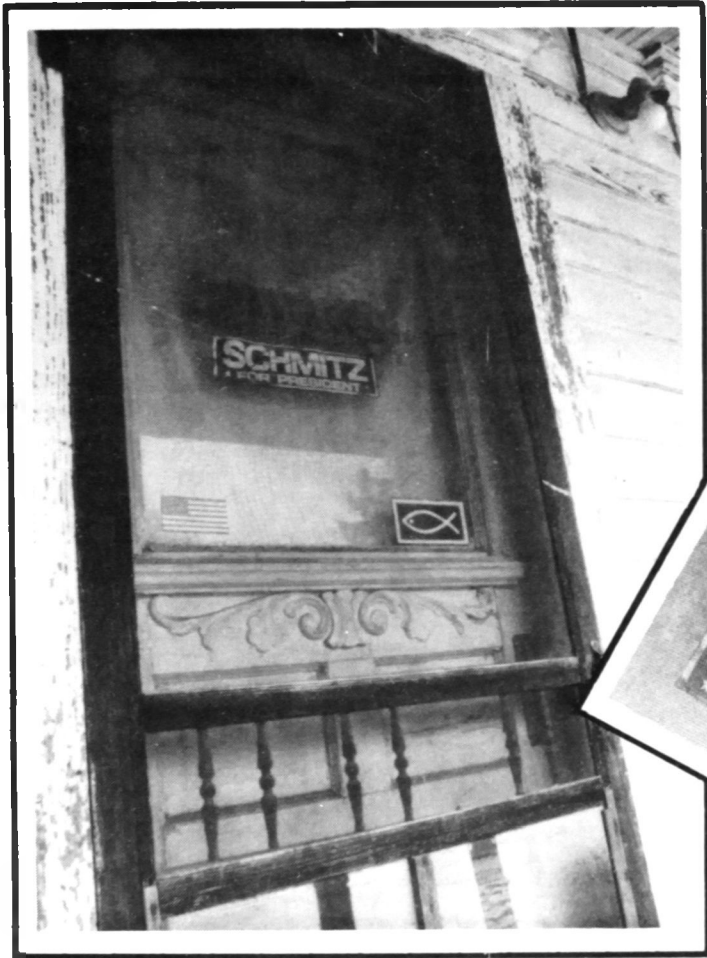
But I am alone, unique and depressed
In a world of divisions and strife —
White or black, Jew or Greek, rich or poor?
I stand alone and cry, "But I belong to all,"
For love of this world for which I was born,
"Armor mundi."

We must be united standing together,
Teaching our children, yours and mine,
To feel at peace together.
Let them mature through childhood years
In the home, and member of all
accepted by all with dignity.
A member at school, one equal with all
accepted by all with dignity.
Politic bodies, the home and the school,
a politic body of training of men
to enter a greater world,
For love of that world,
"Amor mundi."

Of one world we are citizenry,
shrinking, yes, and diversified,
But we have learned to work together;
Yes, you are rich and I am poor,
But we have learned to accept another,
standing together with dignity.
We have learned to respect one another,
standing tall with dignity all,
Citizens of our world, for love of our world,
"Amor mundi."

You stand with me though we do not agree,
We learn to peaceably disagree
for the best of all, this politic body;
We raise a hand, we lift a load,
We do not step on other's toes
to gain our own success,
For love of our world,
"Amor mundi."

I raise my head, I speak my thoughts
and you speak yours in turn.
With respect I honor my brother,
Together our differences disappear,
We are a democracy, for love of this world.
"Amor mundi."



THAT THING CALLED POLITICS

— by Pat Kourt



In the 1950's, Tuesday-evening-in-town watch night excitement gave us Western Oklahoma farm families a special feeling that we were part of the changes taking place in our county, state, and federal government.

Yes, I remember that the year when I was twelve, those moments of guessing, wondering, and waiting were fun times! Not really understanding what "watch night" meant, I mingled with sun-dress-clad girl friends, overalled farmers, and elderly cynics. We lined up in front of Sentinel's social center of that time, the Rex Theater, with American flags waving on each corner and from most buildings, and watched as a city official put up mismatched letters on the old theater marquee. Sometimes totals were just called out. New results announced winning and los-

ing candidates whenever another rural precinct was added.

"I think ol' Ike'll make it next November!"

"Yep. But Wickersham's not such a safe bet this time."

"Aw, Victor's a die-hard! He's a good feller--shook 'is hand last week over't McClung's Store."

As the county and state ballots trickled in, our young feet grew restless and sought pleasure in the cool, fan-breeze of the Boone Rexall Drug Store across the street. Icy cherry cokes and chocolate ice cream cones added a touch of celebration to the evening. A vanilla aroma hovered over the busy marble fountain as teenage soda jerks filled impatient orders.

Sultry Oklahoma night air clung to us as we returned to the waiting crowd in front of the theater. An

occasional squeal of tires brought frowns to disapproving mothers. Whispers spoke of a special late show starring Julie Addams in the newest horror film, *The Creature from the Black Lagoon*.. It began immediately after the final election results were all posted.

"Daddy, can I go, please?"

It was a night to stay up late and to forget the work of chopping cotton the next day.

The excuse-to-go-into-town evening ended with toddlers asleep on mothers' laps and with farmers worrying about higher taxes. In spite of mild pessimism about newly-elected men, I remember the fifties as a happy, especially prosperous, time for most of Washita County.

Do you suppose--was it that thing called "politics?"



Happy Holiday



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Handy to Some

— by Richard Jaspers

...In '43 the doctor...quite a different doctor than you...gave me an emergency shot in the hips. In less than an hour this shot turned me backward and inside out...I was like a drunk. As soon as I hit the car seat, I had to close my eyes. I couldn't tolerate watching the ground...it was the day Rudy died...yes, my youngest brother...

...I wonder...how many stories is that building next door...it's so tall...

...Hm? Oh, yes...my jaws go stiff. My teeth were set, and I could scarcely talk. This shot was supposed to relax my nerves. They were relaxed all right. My tongue was stiff. I yawned over and over until my mouth got tired. Saliva began to run from my lips, and at night I had to pad my pillow. Now there's a nerve or a muscle that is bothering at the sound of a noise, or at the end of a long day. I lose control of my lips, and my tongue pulls to one side. That shot was either wrong or it was too severe. I think it was a masculine hormone shot, don't you? ...Well, of course, it was fifteen years ago. I was exactly fifty then...

...That building is so tall...

...Now you're really taxing my memory...let's see...I think I was a pretty girl. Mounds of dark braids wound around my head. My broad German nose was small and pert. "Dark eyes," my father would say...

...Not much to say about him. When Fritz was small, long before he left Germany, he had brain fever and was laid out to be buried, and, for some reason was discovered to be alive.

...Oh, he was handy, sort of, with the cutting and smoking of meat, the rendering of lard, and the making of liverwurst, but...I can't help laughing...he couldn't milk a single cow in the county to save his soul. He did it the old way...the wrong way...

...Why he sat **behind** the cow, that's how! Once he nearly lost all of his teeth! But the joke was really on us, because we all learned to milk the wrong way. We learned a lot of things

wrong... Driving them cattle to and from the pasture was our responsibility, Rudy's and mine. I didn't want to do it the first time...

... "Tilde Roderick!" Fritz shouted. He called all of his six sons by their full names when he wanted, really wanted, something. Guess I was no different to him. Taking my little hand in his ugly red one, he said...in a terrible accent... "Tilde, I vahnt you to help Rudy bring in dem cattle." I jerked my hand away, shaking my head. Again I felt the flaky rawness of that hand swallow mine. "Now ged on out der' an' run dem cattle in," he said, throwing me to the ground. It seemed so natural then... I never took his hand again...yet it was too late. Already had it, didn't I? I remember, too...my hands seemed to get bigger...

...Well, for one, Fritz always insisted on giving a big long German prayer at dinner. One time it was so funny, hearing all that jibberish come out of his mouth, I laughed. In the big middle of the prayer, without missing a **Gott** or a **himmel**, he grabbed my hand and cracked it hard with a big silver spoon, the one used for dishing up potatoes. Like I said, my hand immediately seemed to puff up and get bigger...

...What? Sure it was hard work! If a calf got away, Rudy and I had to stake it out and bring it back. Sometimes, as the calves grew stronger, they'd drag us. We hung on. Didn't know any better. It was our responsibility, and Fritz had warned us...

...Yes, well, a little heffer did get away from me one time, and Fritz chased it down with his horse, Bap. When he finally got it, he made me take it all the way home with my hands tied around its smelly little neck. You can imagine...

...I can't help scratching, doctor, it itches. Hm, to think it happened a month ago already. My hand hung by...now what'd **that** doctor say... "by mere ganglia?" Made it sound so pretty...nicer 'n these big black sti-

ches...this festering flesh. My wrist is so stiff, doctor...the tendons didn't heal right, I know they didn't...

...Oh, yes, **every** day. We had to drive them cattle south about a half mile and pump a wooden trough full of water. Later, we moved three quarters of a mile south and over one mile west. We used a long black snake whip on their backs, which I know was cruel, but we were untrained kids, sometimes hungry, sick and tired...very tired after pumping water until the fingers on my hands became hard and unfit for a woman's dainty work, and muscles on my neck got large and ugly like those of an ox...oh, yes, it's true...look at 'em! Anyway, my large bony elbows would pump more. I'd grab the handle and jump up and down until my back played out and my ankle broke down. You know, I can't see modern kids, like my grandnephew Nicky, doing this, but the queer thing is we never complained!

...Yes...Nicky is the one one who found me. A darling boy, just like his grandpa, my departed Rudy Senior. Rudy Junior, Nicky's father, was building the pretty new house for me in town, and Nicky came in right after... Such a child! He ran to the door, for they were outside, Rudy and his wife, and all my nieces and nephews. It was...one of my quiet times...I'd only nod and grunt for weeks at a time...don't know why...no matter. I sat in my wheelchair, such a dolt I was for breaking my hip the month before that. I'd been helping to build the new house and fell over a board!

...Got plumb away from the subject, didn't I? My...my hand was dripping, hanging by mere ganglia, and Nicky yelled out the door, "Aunt Tilde threw up her grape juice all over the place!" **Gott**...the blood was so dark...Nicky's dangfool statement makes some sense to me now. Anyhow, I could hear Rudy Junior shout from outside, quite faintly really, "Good, now maybe she'll talk to me."

As I said, it was one of my quiet times...

...I was always afraid...I remember one time while we were still driving cattle, quite a scare came to us. We'd heard there was a mountain lion in the vicinity. It frightened me terribly. So sure enough, the devil had his fun with me. Rudy and I were as far as the broken-down bridge at Miss Lila's orchard when we saw something moving in the trees, and, of course, not being able to see plainly and afraid to move closer, we turned back home. The farther we got, the more scared we became. The lion was after us!

...I'm coming to that. Later, Helmut, our oldest brother, went to the grove, and it's so amusing now that I think of it...Helmut found a lost bull in the grove. Naturally, if we hadn't known of the lion story, we wouldn't have run away...

...How many stories 'd you say that building is? Twelve! My, my, my... Yes, I remember bolstering myself. Had to keep them cattle going. I'd say, "Now I'm one foot from the top of the hill..." I usually began to mark the distance when I was getting tired. Had I had good health, a sound mind **and** body, I could've made part of it enjoyable... In fact, I did try. I kept a diary of sorts, writing down every little thing, good and bad, that happened. Somehow I had to keep the two separate in my mind, and scribbling helped. It even went so far as...well, when I was eighteen or nineteen, I wanted to write a real book. It was to be my secret way of telling the world how dreadful Fritz was towards me...and how beautiful things were, too, of course. There was so much beauty to write of, and no one noticed it but me. Oh, Rudy saw it. He was especially sensitive, but even he didn't quite see it the way I did.

...Well, for example, spun across the road on an early June morning were the finest of spider webs, big things, twinkling with dew which spattered the wildflowers under our feet. Now Rudy walked right through it all, but not me! I crawled under the

large webs, looking at the dewey jewels, wishing I could put one of them in a fine gold ring...

...Lordy, no! I've since heard a few good jokes about people who thought they ought to write...but my feelings were no joke. I think the book was an attempt to wake up and see what was really wrong with "my world," the most rotten deal one could ever get. The tragic thing was that I forgot about the book for years and didn't wake up until I was about fifty, the year Rudy Senior died and...I got that terrible shot in the hips. Only then did I see the truth...

...The truth, you want the truth! I...I should have been a man! I **can't** leave these stiches alone. I hate these hands...I still want to get rid of 'em. They never pleased Fritz! Never were good for anything! Never did he take an interest in my crocheting, and I wasn't half bad. Really. But...now maybe...I see where I was wedged in...neither did he like my attempts at farming. Even after I learned from a neighbor how to milk a cow properly, he'd lift that snide nose of his to the sky and spit! "Dumpkiff," he'd say...I was no good...as a boy or a girl.

...Please, steady my wheelchair, I can't stop shaking. No! Not my hands...the chair, the chair!

...Mean? Yes...the old goat...sent every last stupid brother of mine to college, but **Herr Gott im Himmel**, I was the smartest! I was the only valedictorian in that family! And...what did I **get**? Sorry...my voice always does that when I'm excited...croaks like an old cow stuck in the mud...D'you have a Kleenex?

...Yes...yes...yes...I guess I should have been a man. Got the worst parts, my father's big Roderick hands, instead of Mother's dainty ones. His big German nose...I was beautiful, I know I was, but no one ever saw it except me...even I couldn't see it after awhile. All I saw were those big hands attached to my little body. They **had** been small when I was small, but...with every pump of water, every crack of that whip, with every squeezed udder...

every fencepost nailed, the joints became more prominent, the hands became wider...and they hung from my little frame exactly like the ones which hung from my father's...

...Yes, funny, isn't it? It all came to me that morning, sitting in that wheelchair, during one of my quiet times. I'd kept it inside of me, though how, I don't know. I suppose it was the photos which jarred me. Rudy Junior had put a large box of snapshots next to me, hoping to cheer me up, get me to talking again. I hadn't looked at 'em in years! He brought the pictures in from the farm, into my unfinished house in town. The floors were dusty from sanding. Sawhorses were still propped up. I...I was between two lives, and somehow I'd had enough of **that**, so I sat and chewed on it awhile...I was ever so quiet...

...Yes, as I said, it was the boy Nicky who found me. Came in and out a dozen times that morning, jabbering to his crazy Aunt Tilde as if nothing in the world was wrong with her. He...he was enchanted with the photos, especially the one of old Fritz standing on the deck of the ship...before he was thrown into steerage where he belonged. Stupid man with the fevered brain believed he's paid for First Class! There he stood in sepia, his large hand gripping the rail of that ship...my large hand gripping the arm of that wheelchair. Nicky skipped out the door, yelling for his daddy to take a look at funny old Fritz...

...I don't know...I just reached down and took the buzz saw...I could only think of those big German hands my father'd given me — and that was all he ever gave me — and I had to get rid of 'em. Of course, I only got so far as the one. Then Nicky came in and found the blood. I'll never know why he didn't see my hand nearly cut off. Anyway, when he went to the front door and spoke of grape juice...funny, I sort of believed it myself. He came back to me, said he was sorry I'd thrown up, and kissed me on the cheek! I thanked him. I was in what they call shock, but I did thank him, I know I did...

Any Better Way

— by June Hale

My daddy died before I was born, and in the nineteen-twenties in our part of Oklahoma, everybody knew that a son born after the father had died could cure thrush by blowing his breath into a sick baby's mouth. Mrs. McKay was a nurse, and she knew it. Dr. Cott knew it. When I was born, Dr. Cott tried to refuse Mama's payment for his services "so I can use your son for treating thrush. We doctors haven't been able to find any better way of treating it." But Mama knew this was a kind-hearted excuse, as well, offered because of her recent widowhood.

Later in my life, I was to learn that thrush is a fungal disease, usually striking babies, causing sores in the mouth and terrible stomach pains. Now, seldom is thrush fatal, but such threats were more to be feared before the development of modern drugs.

My daddy's nickname happened to be "Doc," though he never doctored anyone. However, soon after I was out of the diaper stage, I was "doctoring" babies all over five counties!

How vividly I remember my first "patient." Some scenes from my second-year and third-year of life are exceptionally strong; and I couldn't forget my first "doctoring"—even if I wanted to. Mama and many other people told this story so often that I

could repeat it word for word even if my memory failed to recall the scene.

Nurse McKay was Mama's best friend and lived a few blocks from us. She and Mama called each other "Kay" and "Hale" and often said they were "chosen sisters." A bit before my third birthday, "chosen sister" Mrs. McKay drove her car to our house one day. She rushed into the house without knocking, and found Mama ironing some laundry she had "taken in." "Hale, get June and let's get out to the Fullers! The Fuller baby has thrush so bad she hasn't been able to nurse for two days. Dr. Cott said he can't seem to do anything to help. He told me to 'go get Doc Hale's cotton-topped boy'."

Mama responded hurriedly, "All right, Kay. Just soon as I can clean June up and change into my good dress."

"No, Hale!" Mrs. McKay said. "We really need to get on out to the Fullers. That baby is just awful sick and crying 'till none of the family has had any rest. They're worried to death. Let's just go!"

It was a real treat for me to go for a car ride. The McKays' car was a fancy one with a real top on it and side windows and an electric starter. It put those "T-Models" to shame. I was enjoying the ride and scenery and could not understand why Mama and Mrs. McKay were so excited and serious. Mrs. McKay told Mama, "Hale, you pray while I drive." Mama began to pray, and Mrs. McKay punctuated her prayer with "yes, Lord" or "do, Lord" until Mama finally said "Amen." Mrs. McKay

echoed the "Amen," and in the same breath asked, "Hale, has June learned to blow his breath?"

Mama answered, "I think so. No, I don't know. Oh, Kay, he surely knows how to blow."

I said, "Mama, what's 'blow'?"

"Oh, no!" shrieked Mrs. McKay. "Well, I'll just have to take time to teach him how to blow when we get to the Fullers."

"Mama, what's 'blow'?" I repeated.

When we got to the Fullers, we drove up into the yard. Before we stopped, Mr. Fuller was out to the car, and he opened the door for Mama and me. "Come on in. We're so glad you came," he said. "Dr. Cott was out, but he just couldn't help." Mr. Fuller carried me quickly up the steps and through the door, after first opening it for Mama and Mrs. McKay. The Fuller kids all stood in a ring around the living-room with Mrs. Fuller in the center, holding the crying baby girl. Tears were streaming down Mrs. Fuller's face, and the older children all looked ready to cry.

"They're here! He's here! Here he is!" Mr. Fuller announced to his family. I remember Mr. Fuller's piercing brown eyes to this day. He said, "Now, Son, see this little baby? She's sick. She doesn't feel good. That's why she's crying. We want you to blow your breath into the baby's mouth. That will make her well. That will make her feel better. Won't that be nice—for you to make her well?"

I responded with, "Mama, what's 'blow'?"

Mr. Fuller's mouth fell open, and he turned from me and glared at Mama with those piercing brown eyes. More tears streamed down Mrs. Fuller's face, and she started sobbing aloud.

Mrs. McKay said, "Now--now. Let's go into the bedroom. You lay the baby down. I'll teach June to blow his breath. Hale tries hard, but she can't do everything--what with making a living and taking care of her kids all by herself," and she added, without catching a breath, "you kiddies stay

out here." All five children stood watching in the doorway, like it was the ball-park bleachers.

Mrs. Fuller lay down on the bed and held the crying baby. Then Mrs. McKay led me over to the bedside. "Now, June, see the baby's mouth? Just do your mouth like this and blow your breath into the baby's mouth."

"Mama, what's blow?"

Mrs. McKay answered for Mama again. "It's just doing like this: See? Whuuuuh. See? You can do that--can't you, June? Let's see you do that. Do it three times in the baby's mouth."

As Mrs. Fuller held the baby over to me, I puckered up...and kissed her squarely on the mouth.

"No, no, June!" Mrs. McKay said, growing impatient. "Don't kiss her. Blow your breath into her mouth like this: Whuuuuuh. Wwhuuuuuaah."

Mr. Fuller said, "Son, blow your breath into her mouth, and I'll get you some candy."

Mrs. Fuller added, sobbing, "And we'll take you for a ride in our car. And we'll come and get you tomorrow--and the next day, too, to blow in her mouth. And we'll give you some more candy." She sobbed harder, "Oh, Mrs. McKay, I do hope June can give the baby a little relief today. I know he's supposed to blow three times for three days; but the baby cried all night, and she couldn't nurse for two days. She needs help today. Just look at her sore little mouth!"

I looked closer. The baby's mouth was all white and yellow sores--and oozing blood. "I don't wanna kiss her again," I said.

Mrs. McKay responded in a frustrated tone, "Don't kiss her. Just blow your breath into her little mouth like I showed you. Now--blow!"

"Mama, what's 'blow'?"

"Hale," Mrs. McKay said, "June's nearly three years old. He should know how to blow his breath by now, especially since he's needed to cure thrush. Babies all over the county could have been using him already if he knew how to blow his breath."

"Mama, what's 'blow'?" This time

all heads turned angrily toward Mama. She made sure they were all turned completely before she responded.

I knew she was talking to me, although she was staring straight at Mrs. McKay. "'Blow' is what you do when you 'foo' your dinner when it's hot."

I said, "Sissy foos my dinner."

"You can foo. The baby's mouth hurts like when your dinner is hot and makes your mouth hot. The baby needs you to foo her mouth."

I fooed the baby's mouth.

"Now, do it again," Mama instructed, and I fooed the baby's mouth twice more. The baby's loud crying immediately quieted into sobs. Mrs. Fuller was still sobbing, too; but she began laughing while she continued to sob.

"I don't know, Hale," Mrs. McKay said. "There wasn't much breath in his blowing. I don't know whether he really got his breath into the baby's mouth. A boy his age should be able to blow his breath correctly, since he never saw his father."

Mama answered, "Ask the baby if June got his breath into her mouth."

By that time, Mrs. Fuller was nursing the baby. Mr. Fuller said, "Why, that baby is too busy with her dinner to answer you--even if she could. Towhead, I'm going to come get you and your Mama tomorrow to do that again, and we'll go downtown and get some candy and take a nice car ride."

"No," Mrs. McKay said. "You go back to your job, and I'll bring June out again tomorrow."

"All right, Mrs. McKay," Mr. Fuller said. "But, Son, come Saturday, I'll take you for a car ride."

Next morning, Mrs. McKay drove over to our house again. "The Fullers telephoned," she said, "and the baby is well! No need for you and June to go again. The thrush is completely cured."

Mama said nothing, but she and Mrs. McKay just stood facing each other a moment, and then Mrs. McKay began to cry. "Oh, Hale, I'm

so sorry," she said, and she and Mama hugged each other. I couldn't understand. If the baby was well, why was she crying and hugging Mama? Mama explained, "It's because we're 'chosen sisters'." I still didn't understand, but for a boy not quite three, one reason was as good as another.

Not long after that, Dr. Cott came to our house and brought me my first pair of bib overalls. How proud I was of them. "Oh, I had to get them for June," he said, "because I can't stand to see a boy begging to have his big brother's overall legs rolled up so he can wear them."

Well, I got car rides all over five counties--sometimes thirty-five miles out on dirt and gravel roads--to "doctor" the babies for thrush. Occasionally, grown folks or teenagers would have thrush, and I doctored them, too, always with the help of Mamas' prayers. But I never went back to any of them the second or third day as prescribed. The thrush was always well a few hours after the first doctoring. I also rubbed kids' warts, and many times--but not all times--the warts disappeared; the failures I presumed to be due to my doctoring warts without benefit of Mama's prayers.

By the time I was ten, my services for curing thrush were sought less and less often until finally I got no car rides at all to blow my breath into sick babies' mouths. Mama explained that some of the doctors said the thrush would have gotten well without my blowing in the babies' mouths, and these doctors said I never had had to go back after the first day because the babies were "due to finish the sickness anyway."

But the memories of Mama's prayers, of sick babies and their anxious parents, and remembering the release of their suffering and anxieties has dug deep in my being, forming impressions which time has eroded into canyon-like attitudes. I know we can do some things. . .no, we can do many things that can't be explained.

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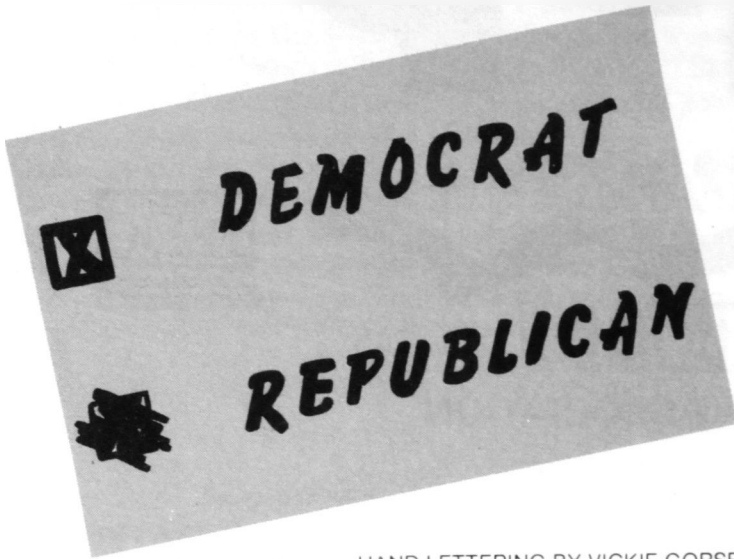
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Why I'm a Democrat



HAND LETTERING BY VICKIE GORSE

Politics often monopolized the conversation when I was growing up on our farm in Oklahoma. My Irish grandfather, Mama's father, was a Republican from Indiana. My German grandfather, Papa's father, was Democrat from Nebraska. I can hear my two grandfathers yet in heated discussions, talking louder and louder, until they were shouting at the top of their voices. Papa, who never took part in these arguments, would be off at one side muttering, "The old fools."

Mama once told me that before she and my father were married they agreed never to argue over politics since they were in complete disagreement. Mama's grandfather, a devout Republican, still lived in Indiana. He was extremely upset when Mama and her sister both married Democrats after they moved to Oklahoma.

My mother and father were married in 1901 but Oklahoma did not have full woman's suffrage until 1918 so the first presidential election in which my mother could vote was in 1920, when Warren G. Harding was the Republican nominee and James M. Cox was on the Democratic ticket.

How well I remember that election day. I was fourteen and quite proud that my mother could cast her vote for president for the first time. She was excited and looked forward to this dramatic experience. It had been raining for almost a week and that morning it was still pouring down.

Papa said, "It's a real gully washer. We can never get there in our Model T. We'd sure get stuck in the mud. I'll have to hitch up the wagon."

I watched them as they started off, sitting side by side on the wagon seat, with Mama holding the umbrella. Mama voted for Harding and Papa voted for Cox. They might as well have stayed at home but they believed

voting was a citizen's duty.

I eagerly waited for my twenty-first birthday and went the very next day to register. I had known Mrs. Jordan, the registrar, a long time since she had children my age.

She prepared the necessary papers and then asked, "Are you a Democrat or a Republican?"

"I really hadn't thought about it," I replied.

"Well, I have to put down one or the other. Would you rather come back later?"

I thought a minute. "No," I said. "Put me down as a Republican."

As soon as I reached home I handed Mama my registration slip. I knew that she would be pleased that I was now a Republican like her.

She looked at it with a frown and said, "Whatever did you do that for? You'll never be able to help elect any of the county or state officials. No Republican is ever elected to county or state offices in Oklahoma."

"But Mama, I thought you were a Republican."

"I am a Republican and always have been and always will be, but I'm registered as a Democrat. Oklahoma has closed primaries. That means that in the primaries you can vote only for a candidate in the party in which you are registered. I like to help choose the officials who run our state and country. Now you go right back and have Mrs. Jordan change your registration."

And that is what I did and I've been a Democrat ever since. That doesn't mean I vote a straight ticket. It has been great to vote in Virginia where you are not handicapped by the closed primary. I pick the person I think will do the best job regardless of party. I'm beginning to lose confidence in my judgment though. I voted for Nixon and after that fiasco voted for Carter, which was also a disaster.

Who did I vote for in 1980? Reagan of course. At least I've picked three winners. You know the old saying "The third time's a charm." The future looked brighter. If Reagan kept his promises and abolished inflation, balanced the budget, and solved the energy crisis, he'd rank next to Abraham Lincoln and Franklin D. Roosevelt. I thought I might even become a bonafide Republican, but right now I'm still a Democrat.

Postscript

In later years Republicans have been successful in running for office in Oklahoma. Although Oklahoma became a state in 1907, it was 1963 before a Republican governor, Harry Bellmon, was elected. Up to this time Oklahoma had elected only three senators and very few representatives for the Republican party.

At present the governor is a Democrat while one senator and one representative are Republicans.

MODERNISTIC

— *R. R. Chapman*

What are you doing, my little man?

Isa doin and a doin just as little as I can. I've discovered by
So doin, a resting along the way I'll receive a larger recompense
For doin half a day
If you must know, my inquiring friend, not that it's any bizz, it's
Not so much what I gets done but what's under this old frizz.
It taken me many sleepless nights
And also several days and now by cracky I'sa going to get my money
Back, the other guy shall pay!!

I understand your position, Sir,
Altho you tell it raw. It seems that what you describe is true;
It seems to be the rule that the man who works an honest day
Is just a balmy fool!!

Free Fall

— by Dr. Sam Lackey

I, rising slowly in the droning roar,
Tilt the turning spiral, rise to soar
Across the wasteful ocean of her eyes
To hunt the spectre dancing on the clouds,

Leveling then to crouch and fill the flying
Doorway of the arcing stone. I watch the
Metal struts cut slowly through the light;
Blue, green, and silver mark my universe.

Then, moving slowly round the barrier of wind --
The doorway lit with faint blue licking flames
And glare of glass-eyed sentinels of speed
and strength and air. The light drives hard.

Her hands push hard the waves of air that wash
With tidal force against the limbs that cling
Unsteadily and hold the great rock's side
A moment before flight — the drifting dance.

Sheet white, the sky tears through the day.
I, Icarus, cord down waxen clouds,
A squint-eyed reaper of the heavy winds
To plow her breath. I, pendulum of light.

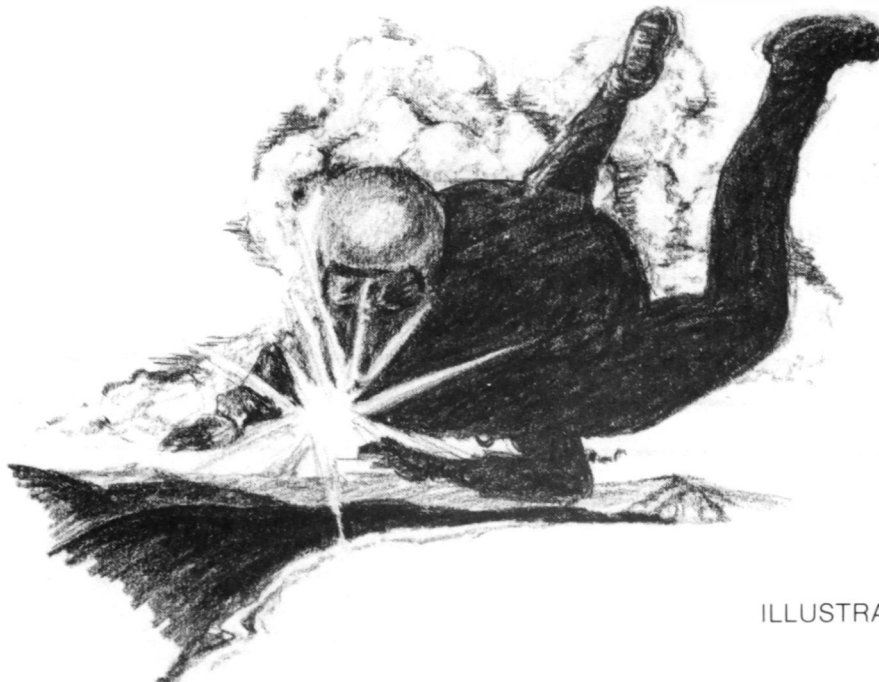


ILLUSTRATION BY GWEN COLEMAN

DEAR SOMEBODY

PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAM WALKER AND VICKIE GORSE

Dear Somebody,

I must write that letter and get it off today
If I only knew something new to say
But I think and I think and I come right back and all
I can say is the same old stuff.

The weather's worn thin, and the women and men haven't heard
Anything but trouble since I don't know when.
Someone got married and others divorced; a man stole his
Best friend's wife or his neighbor's horse.

There I spelled that word wrong; don't know whether it ends
With a see or a dee; anyhow the guy's no smarter than me
And he wouldn't know if it was a gee or a haw, all he learned
Was from his old granpaw.

Anyhow I have done the best I know how
About the neighbor or the high price of stuff, and believe
You me that's high enough.

Even this stamp is out of sight, up amongst the stars on cold
Clear night.

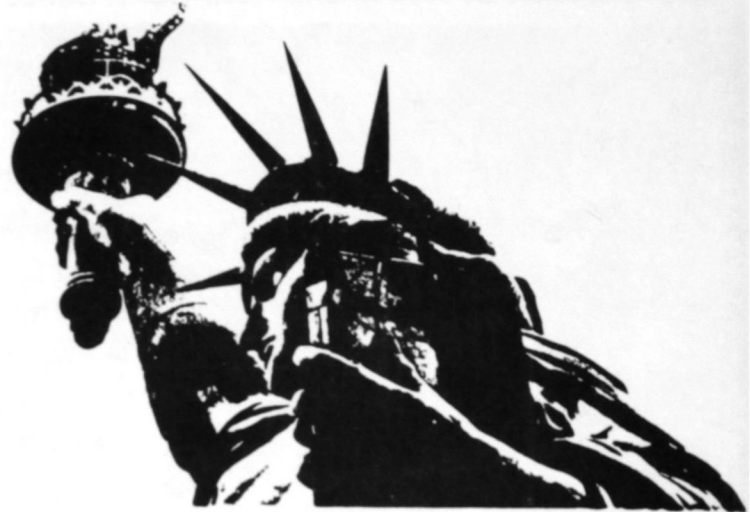
HOP ALONG,

R.R. Chapman

Somebody

WOMAN KIND

— by Dr. Sam Lackey



Flames blind and bind the silken dancer to the root
That swells the furnace children,
Burns to soot their cries of ecstasy and fear

Her ashen feet
Stand still through streams of light
Her ashen voice
Falls smoking through their outstretched arms,
Mingling laughter and the ruffled hair
That blows the waves across
Her windy blood

She dances through the eyes of man
To swim among his fears,
To draw another dancer from the flames
And fire the shouting sail

Meteors burn heavy in the dusk
Tail of the phoenix
And the saving salt of tears



ILLUSTRATIONS BY PAM WALKER AND ALAN WILLEMSEN

Experience Is Not Always Pleasant

— by R. R. Chapman

good advice for political debaters —

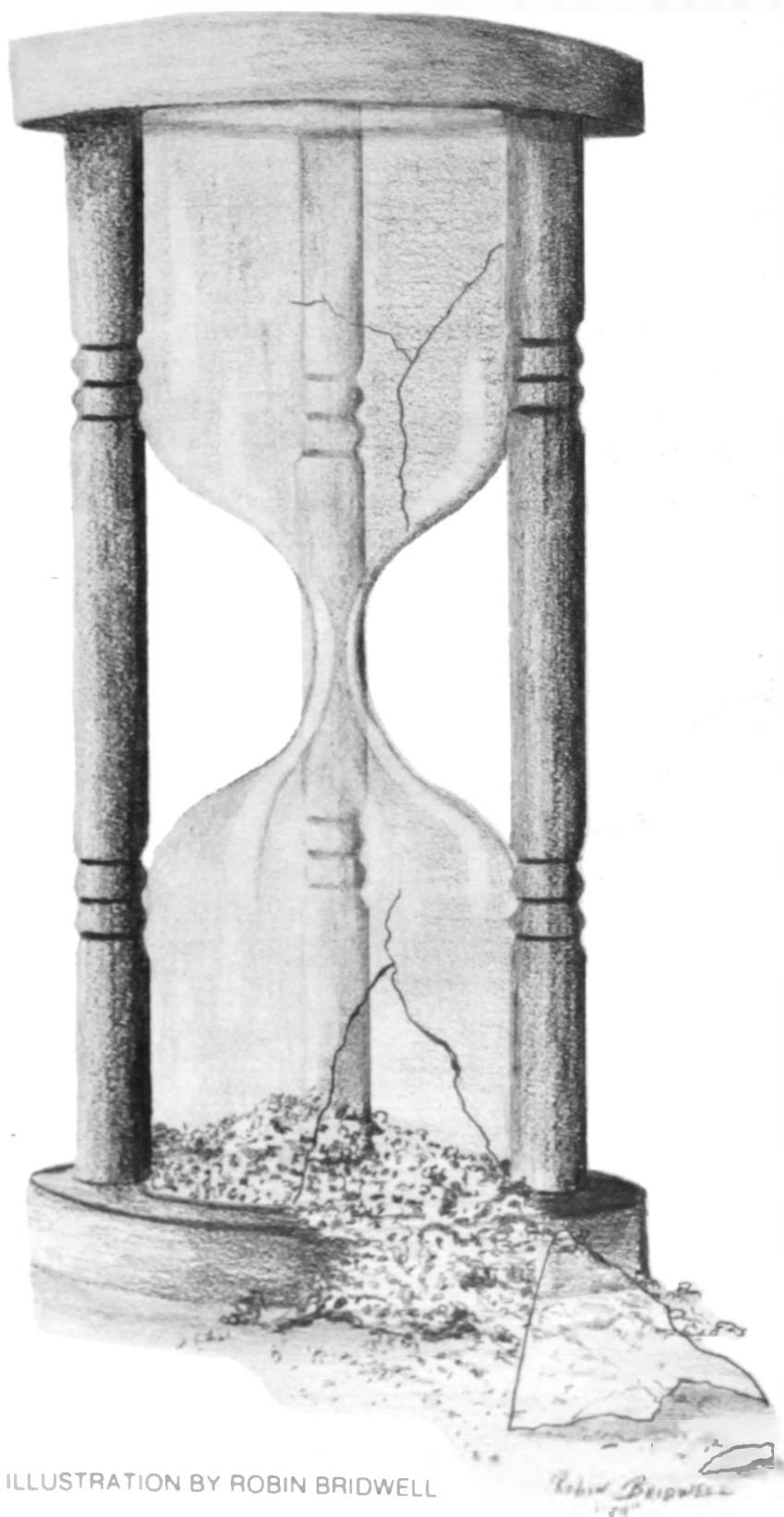
Thoughts unspoken need not be broken;
A touch that means much can be withdrawn.

A glance that's unseen tells much to
the beholder.

A word once said we may regret.
As wounds heal slowly and scars
remain, the heart responds
not quite the same.



TIME OUT



— by Dr. Sam Lackey

WHEN I WAS YOUNG,
TIME CAME like wild GEESE
Sliding in to land--
All silent, sane, all in one piece.
"Now time flows. . .glitter. . .
In a digital stream,"
Along the banks of Washita.
POOR ZENO'S CHICKEN CANNOT CROSS THE ROAD
With infinite decimal points to peck.

So we have but a thin, smooth dust
Of time--
Divided far too finely now
To scratch--and no good thing
To grind here in our craws.

Half-way to target now
Our arrows pause.
The still, sweet dawn is cracked.
The moment. . .crumbles in.

And only something
Ground far finer than our love
Can give us now, again.

(Divide and conquer Time!
Perhaps. But love?
And loneliness?)

Finer than the dust that rides the air,
Our love must sift
Into the crystal peaks and plunging valleys
Of the mind.

To level distances
Like fallen skies of snow--
Giving access over soaring drifts,
Where will could never climb--
In time to heal the deep heart's core.

No longer young now,
The peaks and valleys of the blood
Divide my time from that eternity.

The wild geese slant
Unmoving down the evening air.
And while it's up to me
(And while I'm in one piece),
They never never need to land.

— ILLUSTRATION BY ROBIN BRIDWELL



Oklahoma Politics: A History

— by Leroy Thomas

OKLAHOMA POLITICS: A HISTORY by James R. Scales and Danney Goble is as explosive in parts as the firecracker on the front cover.

The book, dedicated to Dr. Angie Debo, has enjoyed good reviews. Carl Albert, for example, says that he was fascinated by it. He cites it as “extremely interesting and important.”

The book-jacket blurb heralds OKLAHOMA POLITICS as a book which speaks to people “who seek to understand how state politics works or, on occasion, why it doesn’t work.”

OKLAHOMA POLITICS was published by OU Press in Norman and may be ordered from there. ISBN: 0-8061-1824-5.



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AUTHORS WHOSE WORKS APPEAR IN THIS ISSUE

Dick Chapman, our 97-year-old "Poet Laureate of Arapaho," is one of our most faithful promoters.

Olive Dewitt lives in retirement in Tecumseh.

Margaret Friedrich, a resident of Clinton, stays active in retirement as a devoted member of several organizations — including the Weatherford Wordhandlers.

Maggie Culver Fry of Claremore is the "Poet Laureate of Oklahoma."

June Hale, a resident of Bethany, has written about his native state of Oklahoma for many years. He is Programs Assistant in the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, Visual Services. In his spare time, he's a long-distance bicyclist.

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Joanna Thurston Roper is well known to our regular readers as a Western Oklahoma teacher and writer of long standing.

Inez Schneider Whitney, formerly of Custer City and now of Arlington, Virginia, is one of our most prolific contributors.

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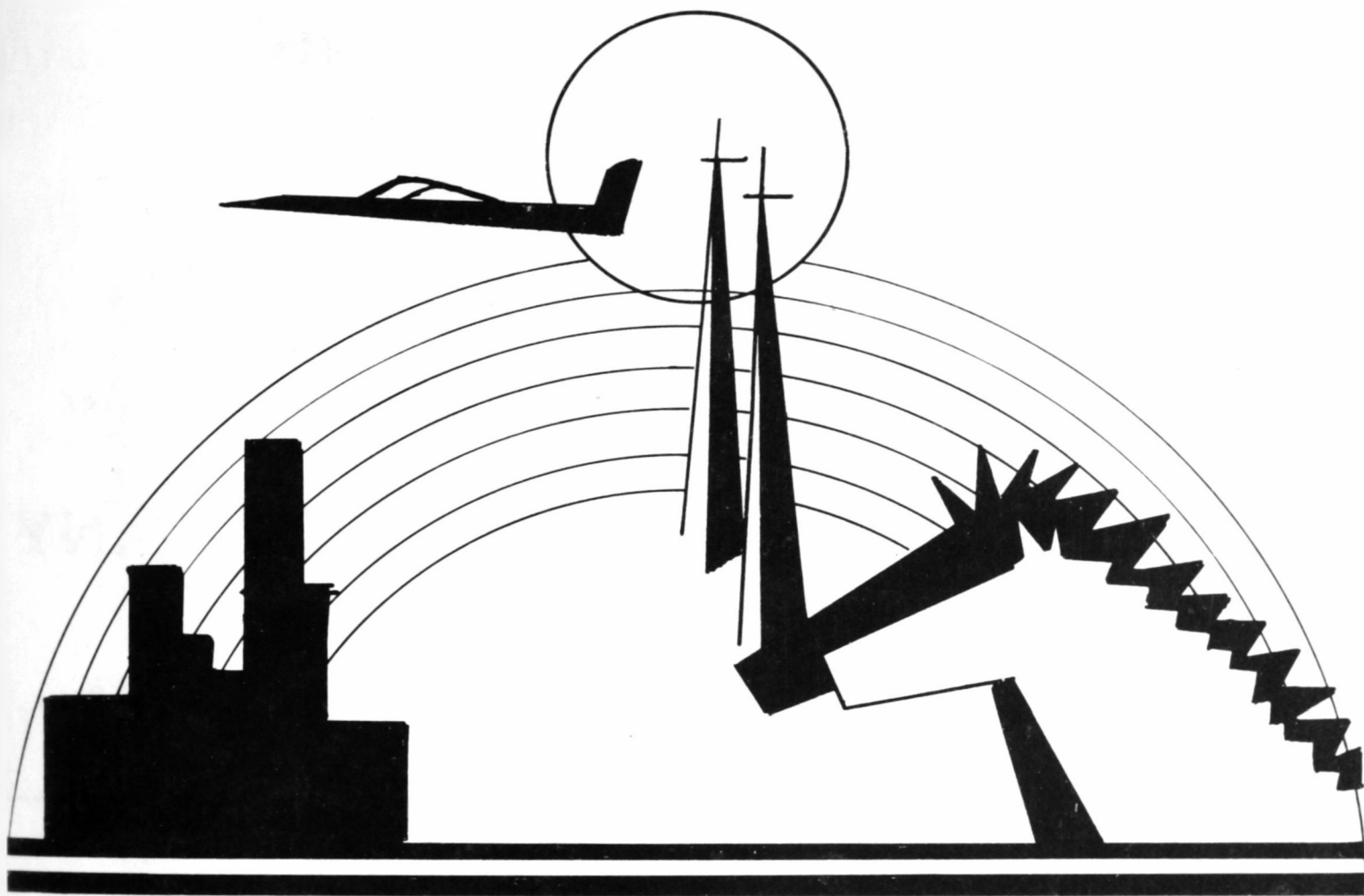
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Season's Greetings



— ILLUSTRATION BY J. VAN ORSDOL

Spring 1985

"Western Oklahoma's Promise." This issue is a promising possibility for contributors. Theme interpretation allows much creative flexibility. Deadline: January 1, 1985.

SUMMER, 1985. "Western Oklahoma's Historic Resources." To be prepared by the Oklahoma Historical Society. No other submissions being solicited.

WINTER, 1985. "Famous Western Oklahomans." This issue will honor famous Western Oklahomans in all fields. Nominate your favorite famous person in a short story, poem, article, etc. Deadline: October 1, 1985.

FALL, 1985. "Western Oklahoma Artists, Musicians, and Writers." Feature articles, poems, stories, and graphics are needed on people or activities related to the theme. Deadline: April 1, 1985.

SPRING, 1986. "Western Oklahoma Firsts." Western Oklahoma boasts the first quadruplets born in Oklahoma. Surely there are other "firsts." Deadline: January 1, 1986.



Projected future themes are "Western Oklahoma Phenomena" (Summer, 1986), "Western Oklahoma Schools" (Fall, 1986), "Western Oklahoma Events" (Winter, 1986), and "Western Oklahoma Settlers" (Spring, 1987).

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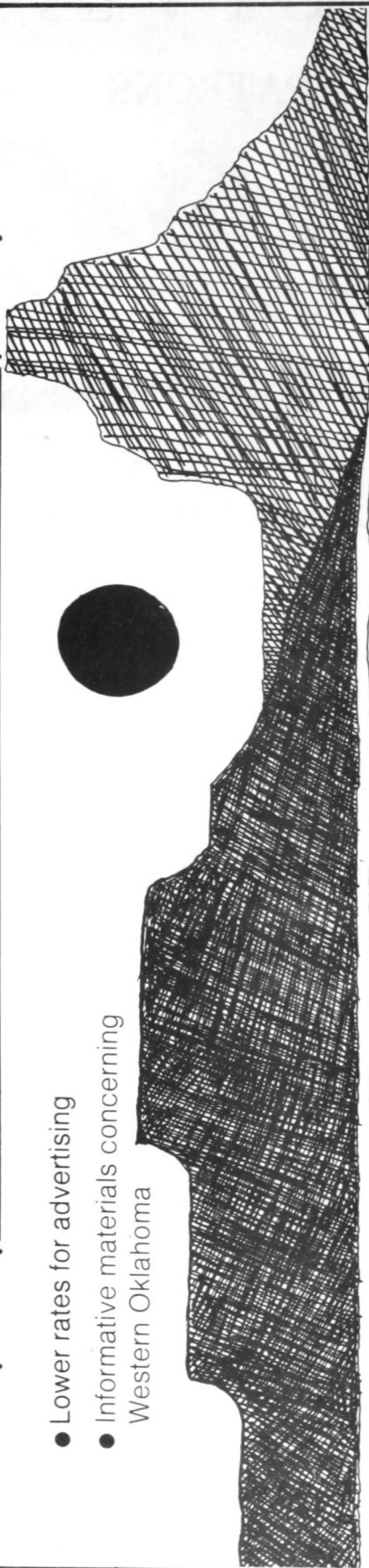
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