

Critic's Corner

N.C. Author's Novel Uses 'Camera' View

By JOE DePRIEST

From an airplane the face of the earth seems very small and toylike. Towns appear as dollhouses and their tiny inhabitants trot about the daily business of living and dying.

In her second novel, "Tenants of the House," North Carolina author Heather Ross Miller pilots, as it were, a low flying plane equipped with a camera and zoom lens and pauses briefly above the fictional town of Johnsboro, N. C., recording vignettes of the residents. It is a special camera Mrs. Miller employs: one that sees not only the present—which, in the novel, is during World War II, but the past as well, and at all times the thoughts and feelings of the people.

"Tenants of the House" is a laconic prose-poem that spins a deft and evocative portrait of a southern town and a handful of its inhabitants. A southern novel — yes. But stripped of its southernisms, Johnsboro could be any town and the people anybody.

It is amazing how much Mrs. Miller accomplishes in this slender little novel.

Chapter One looks into the past to the founder of Johnsboro — Preacher Murdock who lived to see "His place" — his "new Canaan" overruled by the worldly and who died an "unhappy spirit" alone on Murdock Hill which overlooks the village of Johnsboro.

Then the aluminum factory came to Johnsboro and so did the workers who lived in little numbered houses.

"Johnsboro looked very much like a doll town made of dollhouses. But its people were very much imperfect, as real people should surely be. And so was the God who beheld them," Mrs. Miller writes.

Who are the people? There was Michael and Linda Earl Glenn who sit out most of the war safely because Michael has an eye defect. But he is finally accepted by the Service, crosses the ocean and nev-

er returns. There is Mrs. Byrd, whom the Negroes suspect is a witch because she smokes cigarettes and is an Unbeliever. And there is Mrs. Byrd's daughter Rebecca whom Gene Boyette had fallen in love with the night he saw her standing naked in her home. Young Boyette goes to the war too, bearing the silence of his love within him, returns, finds Johnsboro unchanged. There are the Negroes: the fat Beatrice and her 99-year-old mother who drowns in a drainage ditch; the children Christa and sassy Sunday Jo.

None of these people is portrayed in full. Mrs. Miller's "camera" sweeps, records certain scenes, and she edits them together into a minor fresco that suggests rather than explores.

"Never fear: 'Tenants of the House' is not a mere hodgepodge of what William Styron once called 'Dixie baby-talk.' It is a true song of life and death, the young and the old. Mrs. Miller's prose is clean, rhythmical and captures elusive emotional qualities and natural settings in dew drop compression. The dialogue is realistic — earthy when the occasion calls for it.

"Tenants of the House," unlike Mrs. Miller's first novel, "The Edge of the Woods," incorporates more characters, a greater span of time but undertakes to do so in the same small number of pages. Some may complain that the novel suffers as a result. Perhaps so. The nearest thing to a thread of story comes from Gene Boyette's love for Rebecca Byrd which culminates one night shortly after the war in Preacher Murdock's old cabin on Murdock Hill.

But the novel's brevity saves it from the tedium that it could easily have fallen into if it were twice as long. As is, "Tenants of the House" moves swiftly, capturing reader interest, evoking the mood of a small town in the early 1940's — blackouts, arrivals,

departures — and ends, much to the reader's regret, just like a life ends, when a person least expects or wants it to end. About the people of Johnsboro, Mrs. Miller writes: "Tomorrow they would be melted, sucked up in the light to make more clouds and more rain."

This reader hopes that on her next "flight" Mrs. Miller will linger for a longer time over the town and people she chooses to use her magic "aerial photography" on. And maybe she will land her craft and set out on foot for an even closer look into the joy, mystery and abiding sadness of things.

Violist Will Play Here

Paul Doktor, internationally-known violist, will be the featured performer of the North Carolina String Festival, which will take place here June 8-12.

Doktor and the North Carolina String Quartet will take part in a program of public concerts, private lessons and master classes which are especially planned for teachers, high school and college students and other interested string musicians.

The Daily Tar Heel

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WUNC-TV

Channel 4

- 8:55 News
- 9:00 U. S. History
- 9:30 Phys. Science
- 10:00 World History
- 10:30 Mathematics
- 11:00 Science
- 11:30 Spectrum
- 12:00 Aspect
- 12:30 Mid-Day News
- 12:45 Sign Off
- 3:30 French-Teacher
- 4:00 Industrial Ed
- 5:00 What's New
- 5:30 Aspect
- 6:00 News
- 6:15 Discovery
- 6:45 Friendly Giant
- 7:00 Nutrition
- 7:30 What's News
- 8:00 USA: Poetry
- 8:30 French Chef
- 9:00 Chess
- 9:30 Max Lerner
- 10:00 Sign Off

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

USA: POETRY — NET "Gary Snyder and Philip Whalen" The two poets under study for this program both look more toward the Orient than toward Europe as a framework for relating their poetic experiences. Mr. Snyder is interviewed at the UCLA Berkeley Poets' Conference and in his studio. His friend Mr. Whalen is filmed in his home in Portland, Oregon, and in the courtyard of the California Palace of the Legion of Honor in San Francisco, where he reads his "Homage to Rodin," standing beside the sculptor's famous statue, "Thinker."

THE FRENCH CHEF — NET "Cheese Souffle" Julia Child prepares this special recipe for a dish that stands on its own — a non-collapsible cheese souffle that can be removed from the baking dish and served on a serving platter.

KOLTANOWSKI ON CHESS — ETS "The Game of Kings" This is the first in a series of 20 programs offering practical advice on the game of chess to both the intermediate

Television Schedule

and expert player — drawn from the experience and knowledge of Belgium expert George Koltanowski who has been awarded the title of Master from the International Chess Federation. On each program Mr. Koltanowski demonstrates some of the more significant combinations and games and at conclusion of the program he presents a problem for the audience to solve before the following week's program, at which time he gives the solution. In addition, he relates amusing and interesting sidelights about the often eccentric heroes of the chess world. During this opening program Mr. Koltanowski discusses the origins of chess, the oldest game known, other than the game of dice; and he demonstrates the first recorded combination, significantly revealing the knowledge of early masters. He also suggests certain procedures for beginners who wish to learn and recommends that interested members of his audience bring pencil and paper to record positions. The program is concluded with a tale of Robespierre's game with the fiancée of a man about to be beheaded — a game with a head as a stake.

- 4:00 The Lone Ranger
- 4:30 Early Show
- THE LAWFESS GAIL RUSSELL
- 6:00 Dateline
- 6:20 ABC News
- 6:30 Viewpoint with Jesse Helms
- 6:40 Atlantic Weather
- 6:45 Ray Beeve with Sports
- 7:00 My Three Sons
- 7:30 Combat
- 8:30 Billy Graham
- 9:30 Peyton Place
- 10:00 The Fugitive
- 11:00 Dateline, Sports & Weather
- 11:30 Starlight Theater: MAMMY: Al Olson

THE FUGITIVE — 10 p.m. — Kimble's sister has received a letter from an Army officer who says he saw the one-armed man in Kimble's neighborhood.

WTVD-TV

Channel 11

- 6:00 Aspect
- 6:30 Homer Briarhopper Today Show (c)
- 7:00 Captain Kangaroo
- 9:00 Eye Guess (c)
- 10:30 Real McCoy
- 11:00 Andy of Mayberry
- 11:30 Paradise Bay (c)
- 12:00 Love of Life
- 12:25 CBS News

- 12:30 Search Tomorrow
- 12:45 The Guiding Light
- 1:00 Peggy Mann
- 1:30 As World Turns
- 2:00 Password
- 2:30 House Party
- 3:00 Another World
- 3:30 Edge of Night
- 4:00 Secret Storm
- 4:30 Match Game (c)
- 5:00 Woody Woodpecker (c)
- 5:30 News Perspective
- 6:30 CBS Evening News (c)
- 7:00 The Munsters (c)
- 7:30 Daktari (c)
- 8:30 Red Skelton (c)
- 9:30 Petticoat Junction (c)
- 10:00 Andy Williams (c)
- 11:00 NEWS: FIRST HAND
- 11:30 Tonight Show (c)

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	49. Calendar abbreviation																											
	DOWN	1. Somersault	2. Consumed	3. Something for the birds	4. Seize	5. Greek warmonger	6. Canter	7. Scriptures	9. See 16	10. Stage	12. Fencing sword	15. Survive	19. American poet	22. Disfigure	24. Lizard genus	26. Minceed oath	27. Hit	28. What the post-vacationer does	29. Crazy	31. Comb	32. Sultan's decree	33. Infirm	36. Sobs	39. Eskers	43. Ovum	45. Narrow inlet		

Yesterday's Answer

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SPECIAL DURHAM INTERVIEWS FOR COLLEGE SENIORS

Washington, D. C. area Civilian Career Opportunities with U.S. Navy Bureau of Yards and Docks.

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