

Grant Wood in the Role of Illustrator



"Popcorn Feast." A Drawing by Grant Wood.

The first showing of the work of Grant Wood since his exhibition at the Ferargil Galleries last spring, is being held at the Walker Galleries, New York, until May 4. Eight large decorative drawings in color and twelve small humorous drawings of farm animals make up the display. All of the drawings were used as illustrations for "Farm on the Hill," a book for children by Madeline Darrough Horn, a friend of Wood, recently published by Scribner's. These are the first book illustrations made by the famous Iowan, who gained immediate recognition several years ago with his painting, "American Gothic." The same provocative quality that characterizes his oil paintings is found in these typical farm subjects.

As usual, Wood's draughtsmanship and close attention to details produce recognizable characters; the artist's sly humor and understanding observations make them genuine farm folks. Grandpop, with his whiskers trimmed like George Bernard Shaw's, enjoys a big bowl of hot popcorn, while Grandma patches Junior's pants. There is the inevitable hired man and the plain-looking hired girl and a fine collection of farm pets. For the children's appreciation there is the little boy visitor who got mixed up with a milk pail and another one who is trying out an old-fashioned churn and dasher. The illustrations should be well liked by anyone who ever has lived and enjoyed himself on a small farm.

"It will be remembered," wrote May Lambertson Becker in the New York *Herald-Tribune* book section, "that Mr. Wood seceded from the neo-meditationists of Paris because when he began to meditate he realized that 'all the really good ideas I'd ever had came to me while I was milking a cow. So I went back to Iowa.' Real farm folks are solid; they have to be. These folks are solid, sculpturesque; they do not leap nimbly about; they can and they must put weight in their work. They can also put love into it. Even the hired man looks reasonably happy. In this, of course, Mr. Wood has to go under the contradictory surface to an inner verity. The one-man farmer anywhere does not habitually look nor talk as if he were pleased, nor his hired man. But underneath this professional and perfunctory spirit of complaint—which makes a typical letter from the farm a catalogue of all the catastrophes since last writing—there is a content that is basic and beautiful."