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AN ANALYSIS OF THE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES AND VIEWS OF
JESSE STUART

East Tennessee State University

Ed.D.

1979

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AN ANALYSIS OF THE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES
AND VIEWS OF JESSE STUART

A Dissertation
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of Supervision and Administration
East Tennessee State University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

by
Jack Richard Garland
December 1979

APPROVAL

This is to certify that the Advanced Graduate Committee of

JACK RICHARD GARLAND

met on the

28 day of November, 1979.

The committee read and examined his dissertation, supervised his defense of it in an oral examination and decided to recommend that his study be submitted to the Graduate Council and the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Education.

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Signed on behalf of
the Graduate Council

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Dean, School of Graduate Studies

Abstract

AN ANALYSIS OF THE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES
AND VIEWS OF JESSE STUART

by

Jack R. Garland

The purpose of this study was to analyze the educational experiences and views of Jesse Stuart through selected writings, speeches, and the educational positions that he held. Stuart, over a time span of fifty years, held over nine different educational positions. They were: teacher at Cane Creek Elementary School, Greenup County, Kentucky, 1924; teacher at Warnock High School, Greenup County, Kentucky, 1929-1930; principal of Greenup City High School, Greenup, Kentucky, 1930-1931; Superintendent of the Greenup County School System, 1932-1933; principal of McKell High School in Greenup County, Kentucky, 1933-1937; teacher of Remedial English at South Shore High School in Portsmouth, Ohio, 1939-1939; Superintendent of the Greenup City School System from 1941-1943; principal of McKell High School, 1957-1958; and Visiting Professor to American University in Cairo, Egypt, 1960-1961.

Stuart, during this same time period, wrote three books that dealt with his educational experiences and views. These books were: The Thread That Runs So True, Mr. Gallion's School, and To Teach, To Love.

A total of 27 people were contacted and interviewed concerning their knowledge of Stuart's educational experience and views. Two of these individuals were Jesse Stuart and his wife, Naomi Dean Stuart. The other 25 individuals were identified in one of the following categories: former student of Stuart, professional colleague, close friend, casual acquaintance, or a student of his literary works.

Selected writings, speeches, and educational positions were analyzed in order to report the views which were held by Stuart concerning education in general and teaching specifically. Various libraries were utilized in researching the topic.

The conclusions drawn from the study were: 1) Stuart was a major influence in curricular change in the schools that he served; 2) his publications informed a great number of American readers of the plight of education in rural Eastern Kentucky; 3) he was a popular speaker for educational change in not only his own immediate area but also on a national scale.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer wishes to express his appreciation to his committee chairman, Dr. Clyde L. Orr, for his cooperation and constant guidance and to the other committee members, Dr. Charles Burkett, Dr. Floyd Edwards, Dr. Gem Kate Greninger, and Dr. James McKee, for their professional and personal assistance.

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Appreciation is also expressed to Mrs. Joyce Guinn for her encouragement and to Miss Martha Littleford who typed the dissertation.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the writer's wife, Carole Evonne Crabtree Garland, who has served as both an inspiration and assistant in the study.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Jesse Stuart has been recognized as a national figure for his contributions to American literature. A native of Greenup, Kentucky, Stuart wrote and published over fifty books of poems, short stories, novels and autobiographies, and was recognized in 1974 as "one of the forty-four American novelists selected from the first half of the twentieth century in American Fiction 1900-1950."¹ He was presented, in 1960, with the Outstanding Poet Award from the Academy of American Poets. Stuart's book, The Man with the Bull-Tongue Plow, published in 1934, was chosen as a literary masterpiece, and in 1946 it was "selected as one of the 100 Great Books in America and one of the 1,000 Great Books of the World."² Another book, Taps for Private Tussie, sold over a million copies after its publication in 1943, when it was chosen as a Book of the Month selection. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer bought the movie rights to the book in 1944 for \$50,000.00. The Thread That Runs So True was published in 1949 and was selected by the National Education Association as the Best Book of the Year. The Year of My Rebirth, published in 1956, was selected as one of the 100 best books published that year.

Recognizing the numerous honors given to Stuart, the United States Information Service of the State Department chose him to serve as a

¹Ruel E. Foster, Jesse Stuart (New York: Twayne, 1968), p. 37.

²John Gilpin, Jr., The Man . . . Jesse Stuart (Ashland, Kentucky: Economy Printers, 1977), p. 28.

roving ambassador to countries in the Far East, Middle East and Europe. Stuart visited Egypt, Greece, Lebanon, Iran, West Pakistan, Bangladesh, Taiwan, Formosa, and the Phillipines. Stuart carried to these countries the message of how a poor farm boy could receive fame and fortune through hard work and a good education.

Dissertations written about Jesse Stuart and his literary creations brought him further recognition. Numerous Master's theses were completed on the characterizations and implications of his books. Several colleges and universities honored him with the presentation of Honorary Degrees. He received an Honorary Doctor of Humanities degree from Lincoln Memorial University in 1950; Honorary Doctor of Literature degrees from, respectively: Marietta College in 1952, Berea College in 1966, University of Louisville in 1974, and Morehead State University in 1975; an Honorary Doctor of Pedagogy degree from Murray State University in 1968 and from Pfeiffer College in 1969; and an Honorary Doctor of Law degree from Ball State University in 1975.

Jesse Stuart was recognized in 1954, by the Kentucky State Legislature, as the Poet Laureate of Kentucky. One year later, he was honored by his hometown and county. A statue was erected on the courthouse square in recognition of all the publicity that Stuart had brought to Greenup. The following words were written on the statue: "Jesse Stuart, Poet, Novelist and Educator."³ Kentucky Governor Lawrence Weatherby made the activity a statewide celebration by officially proclaiming the day "Jesse Stuart Day."

³ Jesse Stuart, To Teach, To Love (New York: World, 1970), p. 107.

Jesse Stuart has been, throughout his life, deeply involved in education. He told a close friend that "he was a writer who loved to teach."⁴ Stuart was proud of his educational experiences. Three of his major books, The Thread That Runs So True, Mr. Gallion's School, and To Teach, To Love were all drawn from his classroom activities as either a student, teacher or an administrator. His educational experiences ranged from a teacher in a one-room school in rural Kentucky to visiting professor at American University in Cairo, Egypt. He was principal of three different schools covering five assignments, and he served as Superintendent of Schools in both a rural and a city school system. He spoke to hundreds of educationally concerned groups about the need for a quality education for all students, not only in Kentucky, but also in the nation and in the world. He wrote, "Schools all over America needed plenty done for them. In one year I made eighty-nine talks in thirty-nine states."⁵ He proudly told his audiences of the value of education and of the dedication of the true educator. He continually repeated, "Teachers constitute the only profession I have ever seen or that I have ever known in my life, who would work without pay."⁶

Stuart received scores of honors for his literary abilities, and he became a revered figure in the field of education. He held the educational position of teacher, principal, superintendent of schools, and college professor. He proudly proclaimed, "The teaching profession

⁴Foster, p. 153.

⁵Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 8.

⁶Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 300.

is the greatest profession in the world because all professions stem from it."⁷ He spent a great amount of his personal time visiting and talking about the value of the best educational experiences for students and the benefits that America receives from an educated citizenry.

The experiences that Jesse Stuart had in the field of education and educational administration were many. He served as a principal of a one-room school, a rural high school, and a city high school. He was assigned the arduous task of leading a rural school system as its superintendent through one of the worst economic crises that this nation had ever faced. Stuart's philosophy of hard work and the worth of the individual were central to his writings and lectures. His dedication to education and his philosophy of building educational strength through character development have won him many converts to education.

The Problem

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to analyze the educational experiences and views of Jesse Stuart through selected writings, speeches, and the educational positions which he held.

Significance of the Study

There had not been, to date, a major study of Jesse Stuart's educational experiences and views. All major research projects on Jesse Stuart had dealt with him and his literary contributions.

The significance of this study is that only his educational

⁷Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 301.

experiences and views were studied and analyzed. Observations were drawn concerning both the role that his educational experiences and views on education played in the writings and activities of Jesse Stuart, and the role that he played in broadening the philosophical and curricular areas of education.

Definitions of Terms

The following terms and names were defined or explained in terms of their application to the study in order to reduce ambiguity with regard to terminology or personalities.

W-Hollow

W-Hollow was the rural community where Jesse Stuart was born on November 22, 1907. Stuart drew his subject matter and color from the associations that he had or experienced here as a boy, adolescent, and adult. W-Hollow contained approximately 1,000 acres of untouched forests, meadows, and pasture land under the control of Stuart and his family.

Plum Grove School

Plum Grove School, located near W-Hollow, was a one-room school for all the children who lived near the school. Stuart spent approximately twenty-two months receiving formalized education within its walls and, under some remarkable teachers, learned to love the value of education.

Greenup High School

Fifteen-year-old Jesse Stuart gave up a well paying job as a construction worker to enter this school to complete his secondary

education. He attended school there from 1922-1926. He returned to the school as principal in 1930.

Lonesome Valley Elementary School

Stuart took the Teacher's Examination and received a second-class certificate during his senior year at Greenup High School. He was then assigned the teaching and administrative duties of this rural Greenup County School. Jesse Stuart later drew from this experience the theme for The Thread That Runs So True. Stuart was seventeen when he assumed this position.

Winston High School

Winston High School, a one-room school located in Greenup County, served as Stuart's first major educational assignment. He was assigned the teaching and administrative leadership of this school, which had a student body of 14. Stuart served this school during the 1929-1930 academic year. This school also served as a central setting for several of Stuart's writings.

Beyond Dark Hills

Beyond Dark Hills, an autobiography published in 1938, gave Jesse Stuart immediate recognition as an American literary great. The book explained Stuart's formative years and the activities of his family in W-Hollow and it gave a pictorial description of the realities of life around and among mountainous Eastern Kentucky.

Taps for Private Tussie

Published in 1943 by E. P. Dutton and Company, this novel was chosen

as a Book of the Month selection. Stuart received the prestigious Thomas Jefferson Southern Memorial Award for this novel. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer bought the movie rights to the book; subsequently, Taps became a very successful movie.

The Thread That Runs So True

The Thread That Runs So True, an autobiography published in 1949 by Charles Scribner's Sons of New York, became an instant success. The National Education Association chose this book as the outstanding book of 1949, and Stuart thereafter became a national voice in educational circles.

The Year of My Rebirth

Jesse Stuart suffered a massive heart attack in 1954 while delivering an address at Murray State University. He was restricted to a hospital bed for several months and then taken to his home at W-Hollow where he was placed under strict medical care. He spent his days and nights dictating a diary to his wife. This manuscript was published in 1956 and became another popular book. Stuart wrote of the beauty of nature and of the multitude of earthly things that man took for granted that were critical to a happy and prosperous life.

Mr. Gallion's School

Mr. Gallion's School was written by Stuart in 1959 after he had served as principal of McKell High School, South Shore, in Greenup County. This book told of the fictitious principal, Mr. Gallion, and of his adventures in trying to recover from a major heart attack and trying to control the academic and personal problems of those students who were in

McKell High School. Mr. Gallion, as a result of the book, became a symbol in the educational world of a man of strong character, honesty, and dedication.

To Teach, To Love

To Teach, To Love was the last of Stuart's attempts to explain his educational philosophy and activities. One of the main reasons for the writing of this book was to emphasize the importance of education to the future growth of America.

Limitations of the Study

As of December 1978, Jesse Stuart had written and published fifty-two books. The total consisted of twelve novels, twelve short stories, nine books of poetry, eight books of juvenile interest, five autobiographies, one biography, two books co-authored, three anthologies, and a number of books in manuscript form. The study was limited to choosing only those writings that pertained to Stuart's educational experiences and views. In particular, three of Stuart's autobiographies were examined in detail for a comprehensive analysis of his educational experiences and views. Those autobiographies were: The Thread That Runs So True, Mr. Gallion's School, and To Teach, To Love.

The rationale for the selection of these three books as central to the research process was based on the time period that each represents. The Thread That Runs So True, published in 1949, recounts the educational experiences and views of Jesse Stuart from his first educational position in 1924 to his resignation from active educational activity in 1939. Mr. Gallion's School, published in 1967, recounted the state of education

in rural Kentucky, as Stuart saw it, during the 1940's and 1950's. To Teach, To Love, published in 1970, was Stuart's last major attempt to depict the posture and promise of American education. Thus, these three books give an insight into the educational experiences and views of Jesse Stuart from three distinct time intervals.

The educational experiences analyzed were those activities that were official educational positions. Stuart, over a time span of fifty years, held nine different educational positions. They were: teacher at Cane Creek Elementary School, Greenup County, Kentucky, 1924; teacher at Warnock High School, Greenup County, Kentucky, in 1929-1930; principal of Greenup City High School, Greenup, Kentucky, in 1930-1931; Superintendent of Schools of the Greenup County School System in 1932-1933; principal of McKell High School in Greenup County, Kentucky, from 1933-1937; teacher of remedial English at South Shore High School in Portsmouth, Ohio, in 1938-1939; Superintendent of Schools of the Greenup City School System from 1941-1943; principal of McKell High School in 1957-1958; and visiting professor to American University in Cairo, Egypt in 1960-1961. The study was limited to his experiences and views as they were related to these specific assignments.

A Condensed Review of Literature

Beyond Dark Hills

Beyond Dark Hills was originally published in 1938 and has become a classic in American literature. Dr. Edwin Mims, a Vanderbilt English professor, assigned a short term paper in his literature class. Eleven days later Stuart turned in an autobiography of approximately three

hundred pages. Dr. Mims later recalled, "That was, of course, the most remarkable term paper I ever got from a student."⁸ Stuart poured into his paper a flood of memories of his childhood, his family and the strange vital people of the mountains. Stuart revealed in this book the educational avenues that he traveled from the one-room school at Plum Grove to the sophistication of graduate school at Vanderbilt University. The theme of educational purpose and usefulness stood out throughout the book as a major force in building and maintaining what he considered the true spirit of American life. This book brought Jesse Stuart some national publicity as well as some local hostility. The hostility resulted from a mistaken belief that Jesse Stuart was making fun of the hill people in Eastern Kentucky. Many times, old friends and acquaintances turned their backs in scorn for what they took as an attack upon them and their folk customs. Stuart was in no way attempting to bring criticism to people of his own background. He was simply reporting the realities of life as he saw them as he grew up in rural Kentucky.

Beyond Dark Hills became a classic in American literature in the same mold as Thomas Wolfe's Look Homeward Angel and William Faulkner's The Reavers. Stuart established himself, with this book, as a writer of prominence and importance.

The Thread That Runs So True

The Thread That Runs So True, an autobiography, was published in 1949 and was received with acclaim by American educators. Dr. Jay Elmer

⁸Everetta Love Blair, Jesse Stuart: His Life and Works (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1967), p. 97.

Morgan, founder and president of the National Education Association, wrote, "The Thread That Runs So True is the best book on education written in the last fifty years."⁹ The book was based on an old schoolyard game called "The Thread That Runs So True." Stuart recounted in this book his first teaching experience in Lonesome Valley, his year at Winston High School, his principalship of Landsburg High School, his year of Superintendent of Schools in Greenup County, his four years at Maxwell High School, and his years at Dartmouth High School.

One of the central themes in the Thread was the long-held Stuart belief that education was the answer to most of the problems that America, and the world, faced. He wrote, "The real problem of mass education in the United States today is how to get a good teacher into each classroom."¹⁰ Stuart described the crisis in education in which professionals were treated as pawns in the political maneuverings of local and county officials. Stuart felt that, "underpaid, overworked, lacking tenure, the teachers knew themselves to be viciously exploited."¹¹ The imagery of "children walking barefoot in the snow, leaving blood on the frost-hard ground,"¹² was a cry from Stuart, the teacher, to awake the consciousness of America to the needs of the rural and urban children for a better educational program.

⁹Dick Perry, Reflections of Jesse Stuart: On a Land of Many Moods (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969), p. 33.

¹⁰Jesse Stuart, The Thread That Runs So True (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949), p. 78.

¹¹Stuart, Thread, p. 95.

¹²Stuart, Thread, p. 107.

Mr. Gallion's School

Mr. Gallion's School, an episodic novel published in 1967, recounted the year that Stuart spent as principal of Kensington High School. Mr. Gallion, as had Jesse Stuart, was recovering from a heart attack when he was approached by several prominent citizens and was offered the position of administrative leader of the school. Gallion had served the same school twenty years previously and, upon assuming the new position found that not only the school but also the student's personalities had drastically changed. "Stuart's passionate belief in education as America's only hope comes through as clearly as ever."¹³ He discovered that the vast majority of his problems was adult-centered, and did not come from the students. The book is a revisited Thread.

Jesse Stuart, by Ruel E. Foster

Published in 1968, this book was an attempt to analyze the writings of Jesse Stuart. Foster divided the chapters into Autobiographical Writings, Poetry, Short Stories, Major Novels, and conclusions on the literary merits of Stuart and on his writing techniques. The reviewer was both praiser and critic as he digested the themes and lines of Stuart's works. The book gave an excellent synopsis of each book and of the technical as well as philosophical leaning of the writer, Jesse Stuart.

The Man . . . Jesse Stuart,
by John R. Gilpin, Jr.

The author of this book gave his reader a condensed and personal

¹³Jesse Stuart, Mr. Gallion's School (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), p. 300.

view of Jesse Stuart. Historical data about Stuart's early life, educational endeavors, teaching experiences, publications and awards were presented in both pictorial and written form. The Stuart family, both past and present, was discussed. A listing of Jesse Stuart's publications through January 31, 1977 was presented.

Jesse Stuart: A Bibliography,
by Hensley C. Woodbridge

This bibliography provided information about all the Stuart publications and with articles about the author until January 1976. Dr. Woodbridge, a former librarian at Lincoln Memorial University and presently Librarian at Ohio University, has compiled the most up-to-date listing of Stuart's writings and publications that is available.

Reflections on Jesse Stuart: On
a Land of Many Moods, by Dick Perry

This book was the result of the author's visiting Stuart at W-Hollow for a week. Perry attempted, through organized as well as informal conversations, to present the personality, philosophy and presence of Jesse Stuart.

Sources of Data

Jesse Stuart wrote a number of autobiographical books that served as primary material for this study. The Thread That Runs So True, Mr. Gallion's School, and To Teach, To Love are available to be used in the research process. Stuart gave his full support to this study and volunteered to serve as a referral agent in trying to find other primary and secondary sources. The researcher was invited to visit Jesse Stuart

at his home in W-Hollow in Greenup, Kentucky, and to record a formal interview pertaining to Stuart's philosophy of education, educational experiences and views. The Jesse Stuart papers were donated to the Murray State University library and served as a major source for the research. The University of Kentucky library in Lexington has accumulated a large amount of information and material on Jesse Stuart, and these resources were analyzed.

Other primary sources were utilized for the collection and compiling of data. The Louisville Courier-Journal and the Greenup County News, a local newspaper, continually covered the activities of Jesse Stuart. Stuart's publications in various magazines also provided primary material as well as a large number of literary reactions to his publications.

A selected number of individuals was contacted and interviewed relative to the educational contributions of Jesse Stuart. These individuals were identified through the following criteria: (1) personal friends of Stuart, (2) professional colleagues of Stuart, and (3) contemporary educators who are cognizant of the educational history of Kentucky and the experiences and publications of Jesse Stuart.

Secondary sources were drawn from the dissertations and theses that have been written about Stuart and from biographies that have been written in the last decade. Other secondary sources that became available were in the collection of data if such information pertained to the educational experiences and views of Jesse Stuart.

Procedure for Recording Data

The nature of this study required that both written information and oral interviews be utilized. All relative written sources that were

available on the campus at East Tennessee State University and on the campus of Murray State University were researched for information that pertained to Stuart's educational experiences and views. The University of Kentucky library was also researched for the same information. In particular, the research was directed toward the official educational positions that Stuart held and his views on: (1) consolidation, (2) local and state funding patterns for public schools, (3) politics in education, (4) school-community relations, (5) student involvement in the educational decision-making process, (6) compulsory attendance, (7) curriculum, and (8) discipline. For each source from which material was secured, complete information was filed and appropriately marked for further reference.

Information secured through personal interviews was tape recorded whenever possible. An interview guide was used for each interview session (see Appendices A and B). Information that could be recorded in tabular form is listed in the Tables. Pertinent information was transcribed immediately after the interview.

Organization of the Study

The chapters of this study were organized into six distinct segments that, when combined, presented an analysis of the educational experiences and views of Jesse Stuart.

Chapter 1 contains the statement of the problem, significance of the study, definitions of terms, limitations of the study, review of related literature, sources of data, procedures for recording the data, and organization and analysis of data.

Chapter 2 encompasses a review of related literature.

Chapter 3 includes a chronological analysis of the educational experiences and views of Jesse Stuart from 1924-1939.

Chapter 4 consists of a chronological analysis of the educational experiences and views of Jesse Stuart from 1940-1977.

Chapter 5 contains the results of personal interviews with Jesse Stuart and selected individuals on the former's educational experiences and views.

Chapter 6, the final chapter, is devoted to the summary and conclusions.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The review of literature was divided into two sections: Primary Sources and Secondary Sources. Each section is discussed in a chronological manner.

Primary Sources

The first book Stuart wrote and had published which made references to his educational experiences and views was the autobiography, Beyond Dark Hills. This book was the end product of a classroom assignment at Vanderbilt University in 1932. Stuart was working toward his M.A. degree. Dr. Edwin Mims, Professor of English, had assigned a short term paper for his students in his Victorian Poetry class. Stuart, in a twelve-day period, wrote a 322 page paper about the people and events that he had known or witnessed in his native Greenup County. Mims would later recall, "I have been teaching school for forty years. I have never read anything so crudely written and yet beautiful, tremendous and powerful as that term paper."¹

With the encouragement of Dr. Mims, Stuart refined the manuscript, and it was published by the E. P. Dutton Publishing Company of New York in April 1938. Beyond Dark Hills was Stuart's first major literary success. This autobiography covered the first twenty-five years of

¹Ruel E. Foster, Jesse Stuart (New York: Twayne, 1968), p. 17.

Stuart's life. One literary critic wrote, "This episodic and anecdotal book might be called the education of Jesse Stuart."²

Stuart's second autobiography, The Thread That Runs So True, was a sequel to Beyond Dark Hills. The time frame of that book covered the first teaching assignment that Stuart had in the one-room school at Cane Creek Elementary School in 1924 to his voluntary removal from active educational activities in 1939. Dr. Clarence Poe, editor of the Progressive Farmer in 1940, suggested to Stuart that the former teacher should write an article for the Progressive Farmer. Poe, like Stuart, was concerned with the large number of southern teachers leaving the profession for better paying positions and felt that the experiences that Jesse Stuart had might be the basis for the development of an "esprit de corps" in the educational world. Stuart wrote, "When I got this letter, I realized what I had to say was more than an article."³ From 1947-1948, Stuart worked on this manuscript and by October of the latter year, it was finished. Charles Scribner's Sons of New York published the book in 1949. The Thread became one of the most popular Stuart books and is highly regarded in the field of education. Dr. Jay Elmer Morgan, founder and president of the National Education Association wrote, "The Thread That Runs So True is the best book on education written in the last fifty years."⁴

Mr. Gallion's School, an episodic novel, was published by McGraw-Hill of New York in 1967. This novel told of the fictitious Mr. Gallion's fight

²Foster, p. 18.

³Foster, p. 27.

⁴Foster, p. 27.

to reinstate sound educational practices and procedures in a city high school that had fallen into educational and administrative anarchy. Although it was received by a number of literary critics as below the Stuart standard, the educational experiences and philosophy of Jesse Stuart helped provide continuity to Stuart's thinking. In this book, "Stuart's passionate belief in education as America's only hope comes through as clearly as ever."⁵

God's Oddling was the only biography that Jesse Stuart wrote. This book was published in 1960 by McGraw-Hill Publishers of New York. Mitchell Stuart, the formally uneducated father of Jesse Stuart, had always referred to his son as the oddling. The father felt that young Jesse's writing activities were a waste of time and wished his son would be more active in farming and more manly pursuits. The elder Stuart, as seen by his son, was an educated man of nature. He was able to use the land in producing abundant crops for the home and market. He was able to identify the animals and reptiles of the earth and water in what Jesse Stuart described as the natural environment classroom. After the elder Stuart died in 1954, Jesse sought to pay him tribute of love and respect and thus wrote the book about his father. Of all the books that Stuart had written and published, he felt more strongly about this one. He wrote, "This is the one book I have wanted most to write all my life."⁶ One critic wrote of the book, "It is really a kind of "Life with Father" [sic] suffused with humor and touched with the somberness of the hard

⁵Foster, p. 148.

⁶Jesse Stuart, God's Oddling, The Story of Mitch Stuart, My Father (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960), p. i.

life of the hills."⁷

To Teach, To Love was published in 1970 by the World Publishing Company of New York. To date, this was the most contemporary of Stuart's educational writings. He attempted to provide an educational overview of his life as to the people who helped him develop a love for education and at the same time emphasized what he saw as his contributions to education. In the preface of To Teach, To Love, Stuart wrote, "I still love schools and teaching, as I love my memories of one-room schoolhouses and walks in the Kentucky hills with my students."⁸ The time period of the book ranges across the entire educational experiences of Stuart. In many cases, Stuart recounts actions or activities that he had earlier explained in The Thread That Runs So True and Mr. Gallion's School.

Contemporary newspapers such as the Louisville Courier-Journal and the Greenup County News constantly reported on the activities of Jesse Stuart as an author, world traveler, lecturer, and educator. Other contemporary publications by Jesse Stuart can be found in Today's Education, The PTA Magazine, Scholastic Magazine, Saturday Review of Literature, Education Digest, American Forests and Kentucky School Journal. A wide selection of Jesse Stuart papers, manuscripts, letters and other memorabilia can be found in the Jesse Stuart Room located in the Murray State University Library on the campus of Murray State University in Murray, Kentucky.

⁷Foster, p. 44.

⁸Jesse Stuart, To Teach, To Love (New York: World, 1970), p. 7.

Secondary Sources

The most complete analysis of Jesse Stuart's publications can be credited to Dr. Hensley C. Woodbridge. Woodbridge is currently the Librarian at Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville, Illinois. For two decades, he accumulated the most comprehensive listing of publications by and about Jesse Stuart. As the designated bibliographer of the Stuart papers, Woodbridge published three books listing the works not only of Jesse Stuart but also of Stuart's daughter, Jessica Jane Stuart. The first bibliography was published in 1960 by the Lincoln Memorial University Press in Harrogate, Tennessee. This first publication was titled: Jesse Stuart A Bibliography. In 1969, Woodbridge published a revised edition that included Jane Stuart's publications. The bibliography was titled Jesse and Jane Stuart: A Bibliography. This edition was published by the Murray State University Press. In 1977, Woodbridge published the Stuart bibliography which is the most contemporary listing of both Jesse and Jane Stuart's numerous publications. This edition was also published by the Murray State University Press.

Dr. Mary Washington Clarke's Jesse Stuart's Kentucky was published by the McGraw-Hill Publishing Company in 1968. "Clarke received her Ph.D. degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1960 and her research dissertation was titled 'The Folklore of the Cumberlands as Reflected in the Writings of Jesse Stuart.'"⁹

On the basis of her findings, Dr. Clarke sought to place Stuart in what she considered to be his position as one of America's most talented

⁹Mary Washington Clarke, Jesse Stuart's Kentucky (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968), p. 223.

authors. She was at this writing an Emeritus Professor of Literature at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, Kentucky. She viewed Stuart as an insider, the man who knew. [In comparison to other great writers,] Clarke wrote, "Like Chaucer and Mark Twain and ever so many other great writers before him, he [Stuart] revels in the language and lore of the whole spectrum of humanity as he sees it."¹⁰ Chapter 6 of this book is titled "Kentucky Hill Schools." This chapter discussed the educational environment and activities of Stuart as a child, a young educator, secondary administrator and school superintendent.

Clarke wrote about an honor that was paid to Stuart by his fellow Kentuckians. On the Greenup County Court House lawn is a monument that was erected in 1954 by the citizens of the county to honor Jesse Stuart. The plaque beneath the sculptured face of Stuart reads, Poet-Novelist-Educator. Clarke wrote, "He takes great pride in the title educator."¹¹

Jesse Stuart, by Ruel E. Foster, was published by Twayne Publishers of New York in 1968. This study was a book-length literary assessment of Jesse Stuart. A comprehensive analysis of The Thread That Runs So True and Mr. Gallion's School was made by Foster. He commented on Stuart's love for education and educators: "These are not abstractions to him but living modes of being for which he has fought and agonized and been beaten and bloodied and exiled."¹² Foster saw Stuart primarily as a writer of the same stature as Mark Twain, Edward Lee Masters, and Thomas Wolfe, and credited Jesse Stuart for his numerous services to education. He

¹⁰Clarke, p. 4.

¹¹Clarke, p. 151.

¹²Foster, Jesse Stuart, pp. 153-154.

wrote, "No other single individual in the last thirty years has accomplished in this country so wide-scale an improvement in education as has Jesse Stuart."¹³

Jesse Stuart: His Life and Works was published by the University of South Carolina press in 1967. The author, Everetta Love Blair, met Jesse Stuart during the second world war and has become one of the foremost experts of Stuart's life and writings. Her research began as a thesis topic at South Carolina when she was a candidate for the M.A. degree. Her thesis "Jesse Stuart and His Works: A Critical Study" was accepted by that University in 1954. As a doctoral candidate at the same University, she continued her research of Jesse Stuart as a doctoral dissertation topic. In 1965, Blair was awarded the Ph.D. degree from South Carolina and her dissertation was titled "Jesse Stuart--A Survey of His Life and Works." In her published book, chapter six was titled "The Poet as Teacher." In this chapter, Blair highlighted the educational contributions of Jesse Stuart through his numerous lectures and through the educational impact of The Thread That Runs So True. Blair wrote, "Jesse Stuart's career in the field of education paralleling his career in literature, has kept him in constant touch with life."¹⁴ She added further, "The poet has inspired the schoolmaster, and the schoolmaster has brought to the poet powerful material straight from life."¹⁵

Another book that highlighted the educational experiences of Stuart

¹³Foster, p. 154.

¹⁴Everetta Love Blair, Jesse Stuart: His Life and Works (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1967), p. 210.

¹⁵Blair, p. 210.

was The Man . . . Jesse Stuart. This book was a limited biography vignette of Stuart's publications and a condensed chronology of his life. The author, John R. Gilpin, Jr., knew Jesse Stuart almost all of his life. Both were Greenup County natives who were interested in publications. In the foreword, Gilpin summarized his feelings on Jesse Stuart. Gilpin wrote, "Only most rarely does God raise up a down-to-earth person who through inspiration of his writings lifts-up-to-Heaven his fellow human being."¹⁶

The Dark Hills of Jesse Stuart: A Consideration of Symbolism and Vision in the Novels of Jesse Stuart was written by Lee Pennington. Pennington, a former pupil of Jesse Stuart, studied the literary symbolism of the Stuart works and proclaimed that his mentor was more than a regional writer. The former student also gave Stuart high praise as a teacher and a molder of young minds. Pennington wrote, "If there is any doubt left in someone's mind as to the symbol which Stuart is most interested in . . . the accent is on youth."¹⁷

Reflections of Jesse Stuart: On a Land of Many Moods was written by Dick Perry and published by McGraw-Hill Publishers in 1971. This book was the result of a visit that Perry made to Stuart's W-Hollow home. Perry sought to give an analysis of Stuart and his writings that the average person could read and reflect upon. One contemporary told Stuart, "Now Jesse, I know there have been scholarly books about you, but

¹⁶ John Gilpin, Jr., The Man . . . Jesse Stuart (Ashland, Kentucky: Economy Printers, 1977), p. iii.

¹⁷ Lee Pennington, The Dark Hills of Jesse Stuart: A Consideration of Symbolism and Vision in the Novels of Jesse Stuart (Cincinnati: Harvest Press, 1967), p. 133.

what about the man in the street? How well do your neighbors actually know you?"¹⁸ Perry spent sometime talking to Jesse Stuart about writing, farming, politics and a multitude of other subjects that gave some pertinent insights to the creative genius at W-Hollow.

"Jesse Stuart and Education" was the title of an unpublished thesis written by Mae Dittbenner Dixon in 1952. Dixon was a student at Western Kentucky State College in Bowling Green, Kentucky and wrote this thesis in pursuit of her M.A. degree in education. In the preface of the thesis, Dixon wrote, "The purpose of this study is to bring to the attention of the public the educational life and contributions of Jesse Stuart."¹⁹ This thesis was an excellent survey of Stuart's life immediately prior to his near-fatal heart attack at Murray State College in 1954.

Dr. Frank Hartwell wrote his dissertation on Jesse Stuart while the former was a student at Vanderbilt University in 1966. Hartwell's title was "The Literary Career of Jesse Stuart." This unpublished dissertation is an excellent source for studying the literary growth and development of Stuart as a writer.

Two older unpublished master theses that gave insight into the literary personality and career of Jesse Stuart were Beulah Mitchell's "A Study of the Life and Works of Jesse Stuart" and Lee Oly Ramey's "An Inquiry into the Life of Jesse Stuart as Related to His Literary Development and a Critical Study of His Works." The Mitchell study was done at

¹⁸ Dick Perry, Reflections of Jesse Stuart: On a Land of Many Moods (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969), p. viii.

¹⁹ Mae Dittbenner Dixon, "Jesse Stuart and Education" (M.A. thesis, Western Kentucky State College, 1952), p. iv.

East Texas State Teacher's College in 1952. The Ramey study was done at Ohio University in 1941.

Dr. J. R. LeMaster, Director of the American Studies Department at Baylor University, in Waco, Texas, wrote and/or edited three books on Jesse Stuart. Jesse Stuart: Selected Criticism was published by Valkyrie Press of St. Petersburg, Florida in 1978. Jesse Stuart: Essays on His Works was published by the University Press of Kentucky in Lexington, Kentucky in 1978. The third book, Jesse Stuart: A Reference Guide, was published by G. K. Hall and Company of Boston in 1978.

Chapter 3

EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES AND VIEWS OF JESSE STUART (1924-1939)

Jesse Stuart's first teaching assignment was at Cane Creek Elementary School in Greenup County, Kentucky.¹ This one-room school was located in one of the most remote geographical areas of the county. Stuart was sixteen years old and had just finished his junior year at Greenup High School. His older sister, Sophia, had returned to her home from a shortened teaching career at Cane Creek. A bully had physically beaten the young Stuart girl into abandoning her teaching endeavors and she returned to her home. Jesse Stuart took the Kentucky Teacher's examination at Greenup High. He wrote, "Superintendent Harley Staggers, who didn't know all his teachers, mistook me for a rural teacher and an idea came to me."² He took the test and received a second class certificate. Shortly after he was certificated Stuart wrote, "After I'd seen the way my sister was beaten up, I begged to go to Lonesome Valley."³ As a result of contacting the local school trustee, and the County Superintendent, Stuart was assigned as the teacher at Cane Creek.

Stuart found the Cane Creek school to be an old and worn down building

¹Cane Creek Elementary School was fictiously called Lonesome Valley Elementary School in Stuart's autobiography The Thread That Runs So True.

²Jesse Stuart, The Thread That Runs So True (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949), p. 2.

³Stuart, Thread, p. 2.

and proceeded to enlist local support in remodeling it. He believed that the schoolroom should be made a place of beauty. He wrote, "The school and classroom should be prettier and cleaner than any of the homes the pupils came from, so they would love the house and the surroundings."⁴ The academic year of his school ran from July through October. The main reason for this schedule was that this farming community could not afford to lose its children during the active farming period from late winter until the crops were laid by. Another reason was, "Rural schools began early because coal was an added expense for winter months."⁵ Stuart found the farm children eager to return to school but ill-equipped for academics. Stuart later wrote, "I had never known that youth could be so poorly trained in school as were my Lonesome Valley pupils."⁶ He found also that most of the students did not have textbooks or school supplies. The young teacher discovered that, "At that time, the textbooks were not furnished by the state."⁷ Some of the children would have to await the selling of tobacco crops before they could buy either school or personal items. Even though a number of his students were older than he was, Stuart was resolved to be a success at Lonesome Valley. He was convinced, "But unless I was chased out of the schools as my sister had been, I was determined to give them the best I had."⁸

⁴Mae Dittbenner Dixon, "Jesse Stuart and Education" (M.A. thesis, Western Kentucky State College, 1952), p. 16.

⁵Stuart, Thread, p. 7.

⁶Stuart, Thread, p. 10.

⁷Stuart, Thread, p. 5.

⁸Stuart, Thread, p. 10.

It was not long before Stuart had to face the bully who had chased his older sister from Cane Creek. Stuart described his opponent, "I looked at his face. It was red as a sliced beet. Fire danced on his pale-blue, elongated eyes. I knew that I had to face him and to fight."⁹ After a short but violent fight, a successful Stuart looked upon his defeated opponent and reflected, "My hands ached. My heart pounded. If this is teaching school, I thought, if this goes with it, then I remember vaguely I had asked for this school. I would take no other."¹⁰

The most immediate result of the fight was that the mountain people had a new respect for the young teacher. Stuart later wrote, "Not any of the rules of cleanliness I had suggested for my pupils, not any knowledge I was trying to give them, nor anything I could do at Lonesome Valley, would give me the reputation this fight gave me."¹¹ He proudly wrote, "Never was any teacher more respected by everybody in his community than I was now."¹²

A problem that could not be so easily defeated was the instructional process of educating children who ranged from age five to twenty and were grades apart in ability and training. Stuart felt that his students were not receiving the individual attention that they needed. "They needed more attention than I would give them, and many of them fell asleep in the hot schoolroom."¹³ He would not punish the child who fell asleep. He simply let the student sleep and tried to continue with other students.

⁹Stuart, Thread, p. 13.

¹⁰Stuart, Thread, p. 15.

¹¹Stuart, Thread, pp. 17-18.

¹²Stuart, Thread, p. 18.

¹³Stuart, Thread, p. 37.

What else can I do when I was trying to hear fifty-four classes recite in six hours, give them new assignments, grade their papers . . . do janitorial work, paint my house, keep the toilets sanitary, the yard cleaned of splintered glass and rubbish, and try to make our school home more beautiful and more attractive than the homes the pupils lived in.¹⁴

The answer to this problem came from an old school yard game named "the needle's eye." Stuart concluded that the needle's eye was the teacher and that the thread that runs so true was play. He later wrote, "My beginners should play. Their work should be play. I should make them think they were playing while they learned to read, while they learned to count."¹⁵ Stuart, a person who was very familiar with animals, recalled that the animals of the mountains learned self-protection through play.

Another issue that came to Stuart's attention at Cane Creek and proved to be a critical hindrance to professional growth and betterment for all teachers in the county and state of Kentucky was the School Trustee system. Stuart later wrote, "If I ever got to a position high enough in education, if I was ever elected any kind of legislator, so help me God, I would abolish the abominable trustee system if I could."¹⁶ According to the prevalent Kentucky state law, each school district in the county or school division should have an appointed and/or elected school trustee. Stuart wrote, "Trustees ruled little marked-off districts like a dictator."¹⁷

Stuart felt that a teacher was expected to remain aloof from the petty religious and/or political groups within his school community so

¹⁴Stuart, Thread, p. 37.

¹⁵Stuart, Thread, p. 40.

¹⁶Stuart, Thread, p. 38.

¹⁷Stuart, Thread, p. 38.

that his actions or ideas would not be challenged as reflecting a specific dogma or group following. He attempted to remain neutral in the various factional disputes.

Stuart did believe that as the result of winning a number of academic contests with another Greenup County rural school, he was able to build the educational expectations and aspirations of his students and their parents. One of Stuart's biographers wrote about the influence that Stuart had on the educational climate in the Cane Creek Community. They wrote, "Stuart stimulated such an enthusiasm for education that a few students struggled to go to high school, and one went beyond high school to college."¹⁸ In the fall of 1924, he left that mountain school to return to his home and to his senior year at Greenup High School.

Stuart finished his senior year at Greenup High School and enrolled at Lincoln Memorial University. Stuart graduated from Lincoln Memorial three years later. He proudly wrote, "I graduated from that school while working my way to buying my books and clothes."¹⁹ Stuart's mother, upon his returning home, told him how proud she was of him and the fact that her son was the first of her family to graduate from college. She also told Jesse, "Larry Anderson is the new superintendent of Greenup County rural schools, and he's holding a good job for you."²⁰ Stuart had not planned to return to the classroom. He believed that his future was in the business world. He wrote, "America was on the boom, and the opportunities for a young ambitious man willing to work and to strive were

¹⁸Dixon, p. 18.

¹⁹Dixon, p. 10.

²⁰Stuart, Thread, p. 69.

unlimited."²¹ Stuart's mother pleaded with her son. She told him of the prestige of being a teacher and how he could help his family and neighbors in the classroom. She told Jesse, "I want you to teach school."²² Following his mother's advice, Stuart sought and received a teaching position in the county school system. He was assigned the one-room school at Warnock. This school had a student enrollment of fourteen; Stuart's salary was \$100.00 a month. The school was a former lodge hall that had been abandoned many years prior to Stuart's arrival. Stuart wrote, "This squat, ugly little structure stood though tumbling with decay."²³

Stuart, using local assistance, cleaned the school, school yard and out-door privies and readied them for the students. This new student body gave Stuart a problem that he had never experienced before. They were exceptionally bright and interested in acquiring all the education they could. Stuart soon found out that, "I had to go home and work long hours in the evenings. I had to know my lessons. If I didn't, my pupils taught me."²⁴ He was caught up in the enthusiasm of educational purpose and direction as a result of the enthusiasm that his students showed for acquiring new knowledge. He wrote,

If every teacher in America, could inspire his pupils, if he could teach them as they had never been taught before, if he could put ambition in their brains and hearts, that would be a great way to make a generation of the greatest citizenry America has ever had.²⁵

²¹Stuart, Thread, p. 70.

²²Stuart, Thread, p. 71.

²³Stuart, Thread, p. 74.

²⁴Stuart, Thread, p. 77.

²⁵Stuart, Thread, p. 87.

Stuart, at this time, felt that teaching was the greatest profession of all professions. He wrote, "The classroom was the gateway to all the problems of humanity."²⁶ His two major reservations about one's accepting the field of education as a vocation were salary and social prestige. Comparing his present position at Warnock to a blacksmith's position at a local steel mill, Stuart sarcastically wrote,

And I believed deep in my heart that I was a member of the greatest profession of mankind, even if I couldn't make as much salary shaping the destiny of fourteen future citizens of America as I could if I were a blacksmith with little education at the Auckland Steel Mills.²⁷

He served Warnock during the 1929-30 academic year. At the end of that academic year, he was asked to return to Greenup City High School, his alma mater, to be that school's new principal. Stuart later wrote, "I was so successful with these fourteen students, eight of whom later finished college, that upon the resignation of Greenup High School's principal, I was employed to replace him."²⁸ Greenup High was the most prestigious school in the county. Stuart assumed the leadership of this school at the age of twenty-two. To prepare for this new assignment, Stuart attended summer school at George Peabody College in Nashville, Tennessee. Peabody had been recommended to Stuart by a colleague as the "Columbia University of the South." Stuart later wrote of the experience, "There were teachers, principals, city and county school superintendents in my classes. I met many of these educators and sat under the famous

²⁶Stuart, Thread, p. 87.

²⁷Stuart, Thread, p. 87.

²⁸Jesse Stuart, My World (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1975), p. 13.

'tree of education' and discussed high-school management and high-school problems."²⁹

After that summer of preparation, Stuart returned to Greenup to begin the process of selecting his professional staff. To his surprise, this process had already been completed by the superintendent and school board. Stuart later wrote, "I had been told at Peabody College by a famous teacher and educator that a principal should recommend his teachers, since he had to work with them."³⁰ Stuart was also surprised to find out that none of his teachers were natives of Greenup County. Stuart, as a result of an inadequate salary, was forced to live at his parents' home in the county and walk the five miles to work. He did not mind the walk but had to be careful to keep his clothes clean as he walked the country road.

One of the first things that Stuart changed at Greenup High School was a painted sign placed on the school lawn warning the students to stay off the grass or expect punishment. Stuart felt that this negative approach to changing behavior encouraged a negative student reaction. He asked his maintenance man to erect a new sign to read: Please, Protect the Grass. Stuart wrote, "My pupils reacted well to the new sign. They knew that we were working for and not against them. They understood the difference between threatening and leading."³¹ Stuart also felt that the student's home life must be supportive of the school in a cooperative effort to further the student as well as the school's educational growth.

²⁹Stuart, Thread, p. 117.

³⁰Stuart, Thread, p. 117.

³¹Stuart, Thread, p. 121.

The student was expected to assume the major responsibility of attending school and abiding by the rules and regulations of that school.

Two of the most persistent infractions of school rules were student tardiness and gambling. Stuart had attempted several remedies to curb the large number of students who were continually late for school and involved in gambling on school grounds. For various reasons he had moved into the town of Greenup and rented a room on main street. His major reason for making this change of residence came from a group of concerned citizens who felt that their principal lived too far from the school and community. From his new residence on main street, he began to realize that his discipline problems at school were related to the night life of the town. From dusk to midnight, Greenup came to life with laughter and activity. Stuart wrote, "At this late hour I saw my Landsburgh pupils walking the streets."³² He estimated that 30 percent of the people on the street were his pupils. These were the same ones that were tardy and making low grades in their classes.

To combat this dual problem of tardiness and gambling, Stuart took advantage of a gambling incident to address the Parent-Teacher organization. He told the assembled parents, "We are part of you. Every man, woman, and child in this community is part of Landsburgh High School. Our success here depends largely on you."³³ As a result of this, parents became more involved in supervising the activities of the young people.

For the rest of that school year, the problems of the school were minimal. Stuart reapplied for the principalship of Greenup High School

³²Stuart, Thread, p. 131.

³³Stuart, Thread, p. 131.

for the upcoming school year. He had asked for a raise in his salary from \$1,200 to \$1,500. When this request was turned down by the school board, Stuart resigned. Stuart later wrote, "I knew that school teaching was a great profession, and that I loved it. But I would not teach again."³⁴

After a summer of working on the family farm, Stuart entered Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee. He wanted to study under such popular writers as Robert Penn Warren and Donald Davidson, known as the Fugitives. He left Vanderbilt in the spring of 1932 without his M.A. degree. Stuart felt that his writing style and the Fugitive style of writing were not totally compatible. He was able to use that time at Vanderbilt to write Beyond Dark Hills. This book was the end product of a classroom assignment.

He returned to the family farm to continue his writing and farming. In July, 1932, he was approached by three members of the Greenup County School Board. They wanted him to apply for the vacant position of County Superintendent of Schools. Stuart later wrote, "I was barely twenty-five, youngest county school superintendent ever to serve in Kentucky."³⁵ His mother and father were very proud of him and his accomplishments. Stuart's mother gave him advice prior to his taking the office of superintendent. She said, "Be honest in all things, Jesse. You're going into the biggest job in this county."³⁶ At the same time she warned him, "The county school superintendent's office has been the graveyard for many a man's reputation. I'll pray for you."³⁷

³⁴Stuart, Thread, p. 148.

³⁵Stuart, My World, p. 13.

³⁶Stuart, Thread, p. 156.

³⁷Stuart, Thread, p. 156.

Stuart, upon assuming the leadership of the county school system, found out that the town of Greenup and its schools had withdrawn from the county and had declared itself an independent school system. This action had split the county school system into two distinct geographical areas separated by the independent school system. A prior agreement by both school boards required that the county system would pay a specific amount of money to the city system for allowing the eastern section students to attend school there. Stuart felt that this agreement would handicap the financial conditions of the county. He suggested a bus be purchased to haul those students to a rural school. This move would necessitate the bypassing of the city school. Reaction to the county decision was almost immediate.

The city's educational leaders initiated a lawsuit to block the busing of county students through the city. Stuart and his school board were able to defeat this move in court, but several of his old friends and classmates in Greenup city refused to associate with him.

Stuart also created a major controversy by asking his school board to eliminate the power and influence of the school district trustees. The Kentucky state legislature, in 1931, passed a law establishing three trustees for each school district. Stuart wrote, "Why the schoolteachers and the educators and thinking citizens had ever allowed this bill to pass was beyond me, for this gave each teacher of the little rural school nine bosses: three trustees, five county school board members, and the county superintendent."³⁸ In Greenup County, there were 246 district

³⁸Stuart, Thread, p. 159.

school trustees. At his earliest chance, Stuart asked the school board to oppose the state law and eliminate the power and position of the trustees. Their reaction was immediate and negative. All five school board members voted against the superintendent's motion.

Stuart was continually involved in legal activities during that 1932-33 academic year. In all, his school system was involved in thirty-two lawsuits. Stuart later wrote, "We won thirty-one and one-half. For us, justice had prevailed over the petty, flimsy, nonessential school laws."³⁹

An economic problem that almost every school superintendent faced during the 1932-1933 academic year was the effects of the Great Depression on school funds. Banks all over America were closing their doors, and individuals as well as public institutions lost their savings accounts. Stuart wrote, "Now we faced the greatest problem we had ever had to face. We were entirely without funds."⁴⁰ Stuart felt that the entire county school system would collapse as a result of the economic calamity that America was facing. To his surprise, the Greenup County school system continued to operate. He proudly wrote, "The members of the most underpaid profession in the United States did not whimper nor ask too many questions about their salaries. They kept on working."⁴¹ He drew an analogy between George Washington and the Revolutionary soldiers at Valley Forge and his teachers. He wrote, "We lived on scant rations, wore the best clothes we could afford, worked on and on without a promise

³⁹Stuart, Thread, p. 185.

⁴⁰Stuart, Thread, p. 214.

⁴¹Stuart, Thread, p. 215.

of a dime for our labors, and kept our big school system from collapsing."⁴² He credited the teachers for serving the needs of both the students and the school system during this critical period of time. He wrote, "By speeches, persuasion, and the help of excellent teachers, we kept the schools going without money."⁴³

Stuart's main source of income during that year of the depression was from his published writings. From these royalties, Stuart purchased office supplies and miscellaneous items. It was during these economically uncertain days that Stuart drew up a four-point school reform program he felt would alleviate some of the inequities that he had seen and experienced as an educator.

He attacked the dual school system in Kentucky where rich communities provided better educational outlets for students as compared to the poor systems. To replace this dual system, Stuart called for a county unit plan where all schools were placed in a geographical county system with equal salaries and revenues for all personnel. Stuart strongly supported seniority rights for teachers as a result of seeing too many older teachers being mistreated by rural school district trustees. He also sought old-age pensions for retired and retiring educators. Stuart wrote, "Others had fought before me. But not anyone of these fighters had been more dynamic in his fighting than I had been."⁴⁴ His strongest reform issue was the elimination of the school trustee system.

At the end of Stuart's first year as county superintendent, he decided

⁴²Stuart, Thread, p. 215.

⁴³Stuart, My World, p. 14.

⁴⁴Stuart, Thread, p. 230.

to resign from that position. His tactics of by-passing the city school system as well as other actions had made a large number of enemies for himself and his board members. One board member told him, "You've done too much good in too little time."⁴⁵ His last official action was to appoint himself as the new principal of the county's only high school, McKell High School in Kentucky.

Stuart spent four years as the principal of this school from 1933-1937. He inaugurated a number of educational innovations at that school which substantially aided the academic credentials of the school. With the permission of the superintendent, Stuart opened the doors of McKell High School to any person regardless of age. Stuart wanted to make McKell a model school, "I wanted to make this high school a beacon of light to eradicate the illiteracy of the older people and to educate the young."⁴⁶ Ages at that school, while Stuart was principal, ranged from thirteen to sixty-seven. He made use of the older students as peer teachers for various classes.

While he was the principal at McKell, Stuart was pleased to see several changes made that he had advocated many years earlier. The Kentucky legislature passed a bill to restrict the power of local school trustees in 1933. Greenup County's new superintendent took advantage of the groundwork that Stuart had built in trying to dissolve the power of the school trustee. Under the new superintendent and a reconstituted school board, the power of the school trustee was almost eliminated by an official board action.

⁴⁵Stuart, Thread, p. 231.

⁴⁶Stuart, Thread, p. 241.

The Greenup County School Board was the first educational body in Kentucky to do this. Three of the new board members were former students of Stuart who had as students back at Greenup High School discussed the school trustee situation. Stuart later wrote of phasing out of the trustee system, "Thus ended, for us a school system worthy of the Dark Ages."⁴⁷ Stuart was also able to witness the creation of a teacher tenure law and a teacher retirement law, and felt that he had played a minor part in these needed changes.

In 1937, Stuart was awarded a Guggenheim Literary Award Fellowship by the Guggenheim Society. A professor suggested to Stuart that he should apply for this fellowship when the latter was a graduate student at George Peabody College. By that time, Stuart had published Harvest of Youth, Man with a Bull-Tongue Plow, and Head O' W-Hollow. He received permission from the superintendent and school board to take a one-year leave of absence to travel to Europe. After traveling in twenty-eight countries in fourteen months, Stuart returned to Greenup County to resume his principalship position. To his surprise, his position was occupied by another person.

A popular election had been held and the board members favorable to Stuart were reelected, but through legal maneuverings that eventually ended up in the Kentucky Court of Appeals, a minority group took over the control of the Greenup County School Board. This group fired the superintendent and named a new leader to that position. Thus, Stuart's agreement of returning to his old position at McKell High School was

⁴⁷Stuart, Thread, p. 255.

discarded. In spite of losing his job at McKell High School, Stuart wrote, "The four years from 1933 to 1937 were wonderful years."⁴⁸

Stuart was not able to find a position within this political framework, and after a short period of time accepted a teaching position in Ohio. He later wrote, "I was following the road sixty thousand Kentuckians followed annually."⁴⁹ His new assignment was as a remedial English teacher at Portsmouth High School in Portsmouth, Ohio. "I was employed at Portsmouth High School, Portsmouth, Ohio where I taught the first remedial English, according to record, ever taught in America."⁵⁰ Stuart enjoyed teaching students at Portsmouth but he felt that the school was too large and impersonal for creating the right environment for educational growth. He wrote of the experience, "In the big school only a few could squeeze through to the top, while hundreds could never know the light of glory in achievements that often develops youth."⁵¹ He disliked the highly structured schedule that each student faced as he/she entered the school. Lunches were served in three different shifts and thus, Stuart felt the important social contact that was needed for total educational growth was eliminated. Stuart wrote, "Each of us--teacher and pupil--became a little, unknown part of a vast educational assembly line. Our pupils were like young crowded trees growing up in a vast forest."⁵²

In Stuart's English class, he tried to inject as much personal contact as possible with every student. His class, as a result of the

⁴⁸Stuart, My World, p. 14.

⁴⁹Stuart, Thread, p. 288.

⁵⁰Stuart, My World, p. 15.

⁵¹Stuart, Thread, p. 295.

⁵²Stuart, Thread, p. 295.

remedial nature of the class, had students that had academic and personal problems in other classes in the school. Stuart attempted to bring the human touch to this class and thus to the students. He wrote,

I took time out to talk to these youth about the art of living. Each life was important; each life was "the kingdom of God within you." Human life was the dearest, the most precious, the most valuable possession in the world. It must be helped. It must not be hurt. It certainly must never be mentally and morally destroyed.⁵³

Stuart would eventually find that his individualized style of teaching would come into conflict with the structured organization of the school. He was reprimanded by the principal several times for having a disorganized class.

Stuart felt that this noise environment level was allowable as long as students were involved and learning. At the end of the 1938-39 academic year, Stuart decided that he would resign from the Portsmouth High School position and leave the field of education.

When Stuart left the position at Portsmouth High School, he was still enthusiastic about the challenge of teaching. He saw education as not a charity, but a profession. He amplified that sentiment when he wrote, "It is the greatest profession under the sun, I love it but I'm leaving it because it's left me."⁵⁴

Stuart returned to his Greenup County home and began a career as a farmer and a writer. He also married Naomi Deane Norris, a Greenup County teacher, whom he had been dating for several years.

⁵³Stuart, Thread, pp. 296-297.

⁵⁴Stuart, Thread, p. 308.

Summary

Jesse Stuart held six different educational positions during the 1924-1939 time span. He served as a one-room school teacher, a city high school principal, a rural superintendent, a rural high school principal, and a remedial English teacher in a large consolidated high school. Stuart was one of the youngest superintendent's that the state of Kentucky had ever had. Stuart had attempted to introduce a number of innovative approaches to the schools that he had served and thus had become a controversial person. During this fifteen-year period, Stuart was actively involved in an educational position for eight and one-half years. He also spent three years during this time span as an undergraduate student at Lincoln Memorial University and one year at Vanderbilt University as a graduate student. He also spent a year and a half as a Guggenheim Fellow as a result of being a recipient of that grant in 1937. When Stuart resigned the position as a remedial English teacher at Portsmouth High School, he felt that his career in education had come to an end and that he would spend all his future career activities in farming and writing.

Chapter 4

EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES AND VIEWS OF JESSE STUART (1940-1958)

Jesse Stuart returned to the field of education during the 1941-42 academic year as Superintendent of the Greenup City Independent School System. This was the same school system that had bitterly fought his actions and activities when he had served as Superintendent of the Greenup County School System in 1932. Stuart later wrote, "I said that I was through with teaching and schools forever . . . but education is in my blood and bones. I am a schoolman, whether I like it or not, I always come back."¹ This assignment was one of the most prestigious positions in the county. Stuart's salary was substantially higher than his rural superintendent counterpart and his responsibilities were not as many. Compared to the much larger rural school system that had scores of schools across the county, Stuart's school system consisted of three schools. In the Louisville Courier-Journal on May 20, 1942, the following information was given about Stuart and his assignment. It read, "As head of the Greenup Municipal Schools, he will have charge of the high school, as well as the grade schools for the white and negro children."²

Stuart did not remain in this position for very long. As America entered the second world war in December of 1941, Stuart grew restless

¹Jesse Stuart, To Teach, To Love (New York: World Publishing Co., 1970), p. 214.

²Mae Dittbenner Dixon, "Jesse Stuart and Education" (M.A. thesis, Western Kentucky State College, 1952), p. 40.

to serve his country in some military capacity. He resigned his position as superintendent in the spring of 1942 and joined the United States Navy. Stuart wrote about his time in the superintendent's position, "Not counting the summer months, I served a year. I was there until school was out in the following spring."³

When the war was over in 1945, Stuart returned to his W-Hollow farm and resumed his writing career. He did not become active in an educational position again until the fall of 1957. During this period of time from 1945 to 1957, Stuart wrote and had published fourteen books. Although several of these books became major successes, two of his publications brought national attention to him. Taps for Private Tussie was published in 1943 and within a couple of years had sold over a million copies. The other publication was The Thread That Runs So True. The Thread was published in 1949 and has been received as one of Stuart's greatest contributions to literature and American education. When Dr. Poe, of the Progressive Farmer had requested from Stuart an article on education, Stuart did not immediately respond to the request. In fact, a period of nine years passed before Stuart finished the Thread manuscript in 1949. In the time period between 1940-1949, Stuart served two academic years as a city superintendent and had served in World War II. When he returned to his farm in 1945, Stuart resumed his writings. He began in earnest the writing of the Thread in 1947. According to the National Education Association, in 1947, Kentucky ranked forty-ninth out of fifty states in educational quality. This image of a poor

³Dixon, p. 40.

educational environment was a detriment to developing pride in the education profession. Stuart wrote, in the Thread, that Kentucky educators facetiously repeated the phrase, "thank God for Arkansas." Stuart was aware of the overwhelming obstacles that Kentucky educators faced in trying to bring educational equality to every classroom in the state.

Kentucky was such a diverse state in geographical, economical and cultural boundaries that an attempt to make uniform the educational opportunities was a tremendous task. Stuart wrote in his book, My World, "Kentucky contains several states within its rugged, irregular boundaries."⁴ Thus the task of organizing and administering a state-wide educational system from the state capitol in Frankfort was a complicated assignment. According to the Kentucky Department of Education bulletin of 1949, "there were 589 complete high schools that offered work through the twelfth grade."⁵ A large number of these schools incorporated the seventh grade in their curriculum. Of the 589 high schools in the state in 1949, "343 were operated by county boards of education and 167 were maintained by independent school boards."⁶ The other 79 schools unaccounted for in the above statistics were schools that were organized and administered by a joint county and city board of education. In Greenup County there were two county high schools. Stuart had served as

⁴ Jesse Stuart, My World (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1975), p. 22.

⁵ Kentucky Department of Education, Educational Bulletin (Frankfort: Kentucky Department of Education, May 1949), p. 47.

⁶ Educational Bulletin, p. 47.

principal of McKell High School and had spoken to student assemblies at the other school at Wurtland. There were four independent school systems located within the boundaries of the county. They were: Greenup, Raceland, Russell, and South Portsmouth.

In attempting to bring both his own personal experiences and the educational climate of Kentucky in contemporary focus, Stuart decided to write more than an article for the Progressive Farmer. He decided to write a book on his own personal experiences as an educator. Stuart planned to make this book a work of fiction. He changed his mind as the result of an accident. He wrote, "The wind blew some of the pages away from my writing room, scattered them over my yard. . . . I regarded this as a bad omen, a wrong way to start the book, so I changed to personal experience and the truth."⁷

Stuart wrote of the educational experiences that he had from his first teaching experience in 1923 at Cane Creek rural school to 1939 when he resigned his position at South Portsmouth High School. During this period of time, Stuart held five different educational experiences that ran the range of public school administrative positions. He was both a principal of a rural and city high school, a teacher in a large city high school, a county superintendent, and a teacher-administrator of a one-room school in rural Greenup County. All but one of these assignments were in his native Greenup County.

The popularity of the Thread was such that Stuart began a new career of speaking engagements. He had spoken to many school groups prior to

⁷Ruel E. Foster, Jesse Stuart (New York: Twayne, 1968), p. 27.

the publication of the Thread, but not to the extent that occurred from 1949 through 1954. Stuart wrote about that time period, "They were good years and fruitful years . . . in one year I gave eighty-nine talks in thirty-nine states."⁸ The one thing that slowed Stuart was a massive heart attack that he suffered at Murray State College on October 8, 1954. Speaking before a full house in the college's main auditorium, Stuart spoke for over one hour and then attempted to rush off to an awaiting plane that was readied to fly him to another speaking engagement. He later wrote of that experience, "The chartered plane was waiting. I had to be on my way to carry the ball for the schoolteachers of America."⁹

The heart attack that Stuart suffered at Murray State was almost fatal. A contemporary wrote, "Here he lay close to death on a hospital bed for 48 days before he could be brought home to W-Hollow."¹⁰ Stuart was placed in his own bed in W-Hollow and was not allowed any major physical activity for over a year. He dictated his thoughts and reflections to his wife and personal secretary during this year and this journal was the base of his publication, The Year of My Rebirth, in 1956. On October 15, 1955, the Governor of Kentucky, the Honorable Lawrence Weatherby, proclaimed Jesse Stuart Day in Kentucky. In ceremonies held in the town of Greenup on that day, a monument to Stuart was unveiled. On the plaque the following words were written: "Jesse Stuart, Poet, Novelist and Educator. By your own Soul's law learn to live, And if

⁸ Jesse Stuart, The Year of My Rebirth (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1956), p. 8.

⁹ Stuart, The Year of My Rebirth, p. 8.

¹⁰ John Gilpin, Jr., The Man . . . Jesse Stuart (Ashland, Kentucky: Economy Printers, 1977), p. 11.

men thwart you, take no heed, If men hate you, have no care; Sing your song, dream your dream, Hope your hope, and pray your prayer."¹¹

In the summer of 1956, Stuart was approached by the Greenup County school superintendent and offered the principalship of McKell High School for the upcoming 1956-1957 academic year. Stuart had served as the principal of that school from 1933-1937 and had many fond memories of that experience. He had left McKell in 1937 with a leave of absence from the school board so that he might travel to Europe under a Guggenheim Fellowship. This leave of absence was later disregarded by a new school board. Thus, McKell was attractive to Stuart. He also was disturbed by what he considered to be a deterioration of educational goals and processes of the past administrations at McKell. He later wrote, "McKell had gone downhill in the years since I had been principal there."¹² Stuart asked both his wife and his doctor of their opinions on his returning to active schoolwork. The former was against the idea and the latter would allow him to return if Stuart did not physically exert himself. Stuart took the assignment. He had been away from McKell for eighteen years. One contemporary wrote about the educational environment that existed around McKell High School, "Political compromise, poor teaching conditions, and community apathy had driven away most of the faculty and very nearly destroyed the school."¹³

Upon arriving at the school for a few days prior to the opening of the academic year, Stuart found that he had only six teachers and a

¹¹Gilpin, p. 11.

¹²Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 231.

¹³Mary Washington Clarke, Jesse Stuart's Kentucky (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968), p. 149.

student body of 625. Stuart quickly recruited a number of retired teachers and was able to hire a young married couple for his staff; the McKell faculty then consisted of thirteen teachers. This problem was not new to Stuart since he had faced it twenty years prior at the same school. He quickly surveyed the academic records of the students in the senior class and selected some peer teachers. These students would serve as teachers during their own assigned study hall periods. A senior at McKell High School that year later wrote, "Mr. Stuart knew from the very first day what students excelled in their grades and placed a large degree of responsibility on those students."¹⁴ Stuart, from his first educational experiences at Cane Creek Elementary School, believed that the student must be involved in the learning process. Involvement was the key to the total educational development of the student and the school. Stuart felt that, "Youth need the security of a stable school organization administered by responsible and imaginative adults."¹⁵ When commencement time came in the spring of 1957, Stuart was satisfied with the accomplishments of his staff and student body. He wrote, "A few dedicated teachers had changed a lot of young rebels without a cause."¹⁶ Stuart tendered his resignation to the school superintendent because of his deteriorating physical condition. In fact, his doctor had ordered him to stop and his wife had never supported the idea from the beginning.

¹⁴Statement by Lee Pennington, biographer of Jesse Stuart, taped correspondence, Louisville, Kentucky, August 11, 1978.

¹⁵Clarke, p. 149.

¹⁶Jesse Stuart, Mr. Gallion's School (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), p. 191.

Stuart was able to hand pick his successor at McKell. He wanted a man who would continue a sound educational program while at the same time maintain a disciplined school. He chose one of his former students who had excelled in academics and athletics in his high school and college activities. Stuart wrote, "So after I could no longer be there, McKell High School could stand up and be counted as one of the well-planned, well-disciplined schools in the state."¹⁷ He was happy with what he had done during that one school year. Stuart later wrote, "It had been a hard year, full of hard battles, and they had taken their toll. But it was worth it. That summer I rested happy, knowing I had made a contribution."¹⁸

Stuart's novel, Mr. Gallion's School, published in 1967, depicted the experiences that he had at McKell High School in 1956. In this novel, George Gallion had suffered a severe heart attack prior to assuming the principalship of a rural high school. In the one year that Gallion served as the principal of that school, certain major ideas and observations were made that are characteristic of both Gallion and Stuart. "Gallion was not shocked or dismayed by obscenity, profanity, or insubordination; neither did he tolerate offensive behavior."¹⁹ Gallion had a tremendous amount of faith in young people. He felt that an orderly and stable school environment was critical to providing the best educational climate for the student. Gallion also strongly believed that, "The school was the symbolic citadel of modern culture."²⁰ Gallion

¹⁷Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 255.

¹⁸Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 252.

¹⁹Clarke, p. 149.

²⁰Clarke, p. 149.

strongly felt that the major element in causing student problems at his school was directly related to the home. One Stuart biographer wrote on the character of George Gallion, "His anger and frustration turned the focus again and again on the parent generation, who alone can provide the guidance youth does not know it needs."²¹

The key phrases of George Gallion as he supervised the educational process at McKell High during that one year were central to Jesse Stuart's individuality and humanistic outlook on life. Stuart was disappointed to find that the students at McKell had a new outlook on life. Phrases such as: "amount to something, love your country, and stand up and be counted,"²² was somewhat distant from the James Dean imagery then prominent on the school campus.

The Jesse Stuart of the 1950s and 1960s was philosophically different from the Stuart of the 1930s and 1940s. Stuart's optimism in The Thread That Runs So True suffered from political and physical abuses to such an extent that by the time he returned to McKell as principal his educational philosophy had matured to a combination of idealism and realism. As Thoreau had suggested, "he builds his castles in the air where they belong, and then tries vigorously to put foundations under them."²³

From 1957 to 1959, Stuart returned to his home in W-Hollow to continue his writing. He would leave his mountain retreat for only a small period of time to speak at an educational function or to receive an award. In the summer of 1958, Stuart taught in the Graduate College

²¹ Clarke, p. 149.

²² Clarke, p. 150.

²³ Clarke, p. 150.

of Education, University of Nevada, in Reno. He did not attempt to resume the speakers' circuit on the scale that he maintained prior to his heart attack at Murray State.

In the summer of 1959, Stuart received a phone call from Dr. Raymond McLain, President of American University in Cairo, Egypt. McLain asked Stuart if the latter would consider coming to Cairo to teach creative writing. McLain had heard of Stuart's concerns for education and was also impressed by The Thread That Runs So True. Stuart accepted the challenge. He told McLain, "My health is just fine. I'm over all the illnesses I've had. I'm ready to work again."²⁴ Stuart was disturbed by the rumor that he had been a recipient of a Ford or Rockefeller Foundations award to teach at American University and thus was receiving a large sum of money. This was not true. Stuart wrote, "I'd come for five thousand dollars; which is less than I'd made in 1956-1957 when I was principal of McKell High School."²⁵ The reason that Stuart gave for agreeing to spend the year in Cairo was, "to do a job in the Near East to help the people, and by doing so to buy goodwill for our country."²⁶ Stuart took his wife and daughter with him to Cairo where his wife served as a teacher and his daughter was a student.

During that academic year at American University, Stuart was vigilant in watching his actions and comments on Egyptian life and politics. He felt uncomfortable in an environment of close censorship.

²⁴Stuart, My World, p. 17.

²⁵Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 260.

²⁶Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 260.

He told one of his colleagues, "Freedom cannot be held behind a gate . . . and I'll teach school when the teaching starts."²⁷ Stuart was able to teach his own way and had a greater influence on his students. They were from almost every middle eastern nation and were considered by Stuart, to be a group of intelligent students. The Stuarts were aware of the fact that their mail had been tampered with and that their car had been followed on several occasions. Stuart felt that this close observation was a result of his teaching position and his and his wife's given names. Naomi and Jesse were Old Testament names for Hebrews.

When Stuart left American University in the spring of 1961, he did not want to leave any of his classroom notes for the Egyptian authorities. In a symbolic gesture, Stuart, "took them down to the Nile where Moses was said to have been found in the bulrushes, and here I cast my notes upon the water."²⁸

Upon returning to the United States in the summer of 1961, Stuart resumed his writing endeavors. He joined the United States Information Service's World Lecture Tour staff from September, 1962, until February, 1963. During these seven months he toured the countries of Egypt, Greece, Lebanon, Iran, West Pakistan, Bangladesh, Taiwan, Korea and the Phillipines. This trip reaffirmed to Stuart the need for expanding educational opportunities for the students of the world. He wrote, "If the youth of these countries where I visited had American teachers, with a hot lunch thrown in free, there would not be even three percent dropouts."²⁹

²⁷Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 260.

²⁸Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 296.

²⁹Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 304.

He was appalled by the statistics that revealed that almost 50 percent of all students in 1961 dropped out of school prior to high school graduation. In his travels in Europe and the Middle East, Stuart saw a different attitude toward the importance of education. He wrote, "Dropouts, unless because of sickness or poverty, are unheard of there. These youth will fight to get into school."³⁰

Comparing the educational systems that Stuart became familiar with in his world travels, Stuart was able to state unhesitatingly that the American public school approach was the best. He felt that the American emphasis on educating the masses was one of the major reasons for the power and prestige of this country in the world. He wrote, "This is a sound philosophy that has paid dividends . . . there is no question that we have the finest school system on earth."³¹

Stuart found an attitude in the underdeveloped nations toward education and educators that he felt was not as strong in his own native country. He wrote, "The schoolteacher was the most respected person on earth . . . and a lemon teacher in America is a sweet apple over there."³² He still held to his belief that educators need to challenge the student. He wrote, "Tell youth something is out there for them if they will only work for it, and ninety percent of them will."³³ He challenged the attitude in certain circles of education that more money was the most

³⁰Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 303.

³¹Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 302.

³²Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 302.

³³Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 306.

critical element missing in improving the educational environment. He wrote, "We give them everything, even money to stay in school and money to make grades. We try to buy them. Money can't turn the trick."³⁴ He wanted more student involvement in the educational process. Challenge, incentive and competition were necessary ingredients in the educational process as far as he was concerned. From his first teaching experience at Cane Creek Elementary School to his assignments in higher education, Stuart believed that involvement was the key.

Stuart felt that the American school system was in need of some major changes so that the rural and poorer school systems could benefit more from the prosperity that the United States was experiencing.

Stuart returned to his W-Hollow home in the spring of 1963 to resume his writings. He accepted the Author in Residence position at Eastern Kentucky University in Richmond, Kentucky during the 1966-1967 and 1967-1968 academic years. In the summer of 1969, Stuart taught the Jesse Stuart Creative Writing Workshop at Murray State University in Murray, Kentucky. He would continue teaching these workshops during the summers of 1970, 1971 and 1972.

Stuart's last major educational endeavor was the publication of his autobiography, To Teach, To Love. This book is a summation of Stuart's lifelong ideas and activities in education. In the preface of this book, Stuart wrote, "I still love schools and teaching, as I love my memories of one-room schoolhouses and walks in the Kentucky hills with my students."³⁵ Stuart reflected upon the worth of the individual and

³⁴Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 306.

³⁵Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 7.

the importance of education in bettering not only the individual but society. In a reflective analogy Stuart wrote, "Modern youth is a river of clean shining water that is flowing endlessly out into a vast new world. Some impure drops are bound to get into this river, but in its constant flow and surge, these impure drops will be purified in the crystal immensity of the whole."³⁶

Summary

Stuart spent a total of six academic years in an official educational position during this time span. He also taught a total of six summers creative writing workshops. His influence on educational activities came not only from his active educational assignments but also from his writings and lectures. During this time span, The Thread That Runs So True was published and the popularity of the book made Stuart a national figure in American education. The heart attack that Stuart suffered at Murray State University in October of 1954 was the deciding factor in limiting his teaching and speaking activities.

The publication of Mr. Gallion's School and To Teach, To Love would add to Stuart's reputation as a speaker for the American classroom teacher as well as education on a global scale.

³⁶Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 7.

Chapter 5

RESULTS OF INTERVIEWS WITH JESSE STUART AND SELECTED INDIVIDUALS

Jesse Stuart was interviewed, by the researcher, in his home in W-Hollow, Greenup, Kentucky on June 20, 1979. As a result of a stroke that he had suffered in March 1978, Stuart was confined to a bed and under close medical attention. He was coherent and affable during the interview and seemed pleased about the nature of the interview since he was able to reminisce and reflect upon his educational activities and views.

Stuart had a short but compact definition of education. He quoted Plato, "Education is life and life is education."¹ He reflected upon his parents and how they had no formal education, but that experience and a love of nature had provided for them as valuable an education as formal education did for other people. Stuart's roots and experience had taught him that nature was a master teacher if only the individual would observe and comprehend the intricate and delicate activities that occur naturally around him.

Stuart was disturbed by the growing militancy in labor activities of the classroom teacher. To Stuart, "Educators are special people who have a major responsibility in directing the leaders of the future."²

¹Statement by Jesse Stuart, personal interview, W-Hollow, Greenup, Kentucky, June 20, 1979.

²Stuart, Interview.

In his book To Teach, To Love, he wrote, "No joy runs deeper than the feeling that I have helped a youth stand on his own two feet."³ He held to the belief that a teacher, on whatever level, is a special person who has a distinct and honorable mission. He wrote, "This much I know: Love, a spirit of adventure and excitement, a sense of mission has to get back into the classroom. Without it our schools--and our country--will die."⁴ In answer to the question as to what Stuart saw as the present weaknesses or shortcomings of the American educational system, he felt that one problem was central to the negative aspects of American education. This problem was the lack of student responsibility. "Responsibility," Stuart felt, "was one of the most important characteristics that a young person could develop."⁵ He was concerned that other forces or factors were depriving the student from this characteristic and thus society would be the worse for a non-responsible generation. Stuart wrote, "Tell youth something is out there for them if they will only work for it, and 90 percent of them will."⁶ Stuart bemoaned the idea that the only reason to get a good education is to make money. He wrote, "I had teachers who taught me that knowledge was the greatest thing I could possess, that a college education would awaken the kingdom within me--help me expand my heart, mind, and soul."⁷ Stuart's answer to the problems that were facing the American educational system was a revival of purpose in an

³Jesse Stuart, To Teach, To Love (New York: World, 1970), p. 308.

⁴Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 8.

⁵Stuart, Interview.

⁶Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 306.

⁷Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 306.

almost evangelical sense. "Teachers, parents, and students must become ignited with a new determination to work, cooperate, compete and accept the responsibilities of not only school matters but of life itself."⁸

In answering the question of what characteristics should a person in a particular role in the educational process have, Stuart replied with one answer. He said, "Someone who loves and understands the importance of the individual."⁹ In his book To Teach, To Love, Stuart wrote, "Go beyond the textbooks into the character--stressing honesty, goodness, and making each life count for something."¹⁰

On the question of election versus appointment of school board members, Stuart again stressed the importance of the individual in the total picture. He had seen examples of both good and bad in each of those approaches to school board selection and felt that the sole criterion is to find the right person to serve the school system to the best of his knowledge. Because Stuart saw education as both a formal and structured process, he would not support a specific set of regulations for school board selection. He reflected upon the fact that some men considered his father to be poor and uneducated and any set of educational and financial criteria would have eliminated him from consideration. However, Stuart wrote, "Though Pa couldn't read and write, he served for twenty years as school trustee for the Plum Grove district. I don't believe that a man with a good education could have done better."¹¹

⁸ Stuart, Interview.

⁹ Stuart, Interview.

¹⁰ Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 308.

¹¹ Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 11

To the question on school consolidation, Stuart felt that this was one of the major reasons for Kentucky's slow growth in educational equality. As a result of actual administration and teaching experience, Stuart became a strong advocate of school consolidation. He witnessed first hand the gross inequities of salaries, supplies, and school attendance regulations for the rural school as opposed to the city school. Stuart wrote in The Thread That Runs So True, "I couldn't understand why a child born in the city or town should have a better education than a child born among the valleys or on the hills."¹²

With reference to the question asking Stuart to compare the American educational system to other educational systems in the world, he felt strongly that America has, overall, the best educational system. He was a strong supporter of the philosophy of Thomas Jefferson that there must be faith in the masses. Stuart wrote, "The fundamental philosophy of our public schools is the greatest good for the greatest number . . . is a sound philosophy that has paid dividends."¹³ Stuart also wrote, "A lemon teacher in America is a sweet apple over there."¹⁴

Stuart's answer to the question as to what had been his most important contribution to education was both simple and complex. He was proud of the fact that a large number of his former students in Greenup County had gone into the educational profession. He stressed the point "there is a young man who is a teacher today who gives me the credit for his career

¹² Jesse Stuart, The Thread That Runs So True (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949), p. 227.

¹³ Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 301.

¹⁴ Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 303.

decision as a result of my discipline and leadership at McKell High in 1957."¹⁵ He also felt that the publication of The Thread That Runs So True was a major factor in bringing to the attention of the American public the state of education in Kentucky and the nation. Stuart felt that he was a major force in American educational change as a result of his numerous lectures in forty-eight of the fifty states.

In answer to the question on how he foresaw any major change in the instructional, financial, or philosophical structure of American education, Stuart sought only to refine what he considered to be the best system presently available. "As long as the student was challenged to better himself and the American society,"¹⁶ Stuart was satisfied. He bemoaned the fact that "schoolteachers were still underpaid and probably would always be."¹⁷ However, he felt that there were nonmonetary pleasures that should sustain the dedicated educator. To him, teaching was a calling as was the ministry to other individuals. He wrote, "Teachers who don't have the calling aren't worth your good tax dollar-- and I use the word 'calling' in the old fashioned pulpit sense."¹⁸ In answer to the question as to what would be his advice to students concerning the value of education for their own personal lives, Stuart returned to what Dr. Mary Washington Clarke terms "human conservation." She defined this philosophy of education in the following manner: "As

¹⁵Stuart, Interview.

¹⁶Stuart, Interview.

¹⁷Stuart, Interview.

¹⁸Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 304.

in nature, every student would be protected and allowed to grow."¹⁹ Stuart felt that, "America and the world would be better off with citizens that act responsibly, promote confidence and self-esteem, respect the individuals, and are active in bettering society."²⁰ All these beliefs and activities were the in-product of a good educational program and a number of dedicated educators.

In the interview Stuart quickly identified himself as both a writer and an educator. He was actively involved in each of these areas during most of his adult life. In fact, he rejected the advice of his wife and doctor to assume the principalship of McKell High School in 1958 as a result of his perception that the school was in dire need of his help. Leaving his farm and the responsibilities that were there, Stuart told his wife, "Land can take care of itself more efficiently than youth. And," he added, "you and I will be human conservationists instead."²¹

From that one year at McKell, Stuart wrote the book Mr. Gallion's School. Teaching gave Stuart the material that he needed for his articles and books and at the same time the educational salaries and positions gave Stuart a chance to write. Each characteristic strengthened Stuart as he grew in experience and reputation into a national voice for education.

In the interview Stuart was asked his reaction to the following issues on education:

¹⁹ J. R. LeMaster and Mary Washington Clarke, Jesse Stuart: Essays on His Work (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 1977), p. 144.

²⁰ Stuart, Interview.

²¹ LeMaster and Clarke, p. 144.

1. Discipline: To Stuart, man is a part of the scheme of all nature and thus discipline was a necessary ingredient for survival as well as planned growth. He strongly felt that "the teacher was hired to teach and the student to learn."²² He believed the fact that the school could not deal with the student in a vacuum but must have the support of the home, church, and community to create the right learning environment. He readily admitted that he "loved to meet a problem head-on and that he settled a number of his discipline problems with his fist."²³ Discipline came as a result of respect for the individual, integrity and a worthwhile challenge for the student.

2. School Consolidation: As one of the major proponents in Kentucky for school consolidation in the 1930s, Stuart saw consolidation as a means of equalizing educational opportunity. Greenup County was divided into several individual school systems as well as the rural system when Stuart was active in an educational position. "In 1949 the total secondary school enrollment for Greenup County was 639, but there were six different high schools."²⁴ Stuart felt that because a child was born in a rural area he should not be deprived of the chance of a good education. He resented the fact that rural schools closed their doors at least one month earlier than did the town or city schools. He wrote in his book The Thread That Runs So True, that he had devised a county unit plan to do away with the rich/poor school problem. "This county unit plan contained the following points: one superintendent, equalization

²²Stuart, Interview.

²³Stuart, Interview.

²⁴Kentucky Department of Education, Educational Bulletin (Frankfort: Kentucky Department of Education, May 1949), p. 47.

of taxes for all districts, equalization of teacher salaries, equal opportunity for the students."²⁵ He wrote, "I worked days and nights on this article. After I had finished it, I could not find anyone who would print it."²⁶ Stuart also wrote in To Teach, To Love, some twenty years after the publication of the Thread, "No one fought harder than I did to see our one-room schools go in Kentucky and consolidation come."²⁷

3. School-Community Relations: Stuart, as a young educator, felt that the ability and drive in the teacher were the keys to the total educational development of the child in that schoolroom. In The Thread That Runs So True, he wrote, "Each teacher was responsible for the destiny of America, because the pupils came under his influence."²⁸ As he gained experience in working with the students and the parents, he began to realize that the classroom was only one of the major determinants of a child's educational development. In a called Parent-Teacher Association meeting in 1957, Stuart informed the group that he had believed in the past that a dedicated teacher was the answer to quality education. Experience had changed his mind to the point that he believed the home, church, and community life were essential elements in the total educational process. He told them, "This little island of humanity that is each one of you must unite with other islands and become a mainland if we are to have a successful school."²⁹

²⁵Stuart, Interview.

²⁶Stuart, Thread, p. 229.

²⁷Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 313.

²⁸Stuart, Thread, p. 87.

²⁹Stuart, Thread, p. 136.

4. School Finance: Stuart, through experience and formal training, strongly felt that there must be an equalization of educational funding statewide to bring quality education to all Kentuckians. He was born in a rural setting and the memories of those limited educational experiences at Plum Grove School were carried with him all his life. As a student at Lincoln Memorial University and Vanderbilt University, Stuart was able to pick up innovative ideas in contemporary education and one of the major issues that he identified with was the cry for reform in the fiscal allocations of state funds for education. In his speaking tours throughout the nation, Stuart witnessed the dual system of rich systems and poor systems. In Ohio, Stuart found, ". . . Rural pupils getting seven-months school, while in cities within these counties pupils were getting nine-months school."³⁰ He felt that this was not acceptable in a democratic nation. In Stuart's county-wide plan, the local school taxes would be paid to the state and in return the state would return the money on a fair and equal distribution to all the counties in the state. The local county school system would then receive a specific amount of money according to the number of students. Stuart wrote, "In this way, the wealthier counties, such as Greenwood County, would be helping one of the many pauper counties in our state which couldn't support its schools."³¹

5. Politics in Schools: From the earliest experiences that Stuart had as a teacher at Cane Creek Elementary School, he discovered the prominence of politics in education. He had received his first job as a result of contacting a local school trustee and had almost lost the same

³⁰Stuart, Thread, p. 277.

³¹Stuart, Thread, p. 229.

job because he disciplined that same trustee's daughter. He wrote in the Thread, "I had learned in my brief experience, that a schoolteacher must keep himself above the petty bickerings of prejudiced groups in his school's community."³² Stuart was able to maintain his integrity without too much trouble at Cane Creek and Warnock. However, once he assumed the principalship at Greenup High School and later the superintendency of Greenup County's school division he was forced to be involved in the politics of school and community. Many of the decisions Stuart made as superintendent of Greenup County were against the prevailing political atmosphere of the community. One school board member called for Stuart's resignation and told the superintendent, "You are leading us straight to hell."³³ As a result of the political atmosphere surrounding Stuart and his activities as superintendent, he declined to seek another year as the county's top educational leader.

Stuart saw politics in schools as an ingredient in the decision-making process. He rejected what he considered to be political activities that curbed the stability of quality education but at the same time made use of the same activities that brought progressive and needed educational changes.

Stuart was a strong supporter of student involvement in the educational process. His philosophy of student responsibility and involvement was central to the individuality of the student. However, he wrote, "The assumption that the teacher has something to give that is of value to the student--that the teacher knows more and is capable of making it

³²Stuart, Thread, p. 51.

³³Stuart, Thread, p. 167.

interesting--I still hold to be valid."³⁴ Thus, student involvement and responsibility were critical elements in Stuart's teaching and administrative experiences. He expected leadership and dedication from his faculty and educational colleagues and through inspirational teaching and direction the students would have a model to follow in developing their own life styles.

6. Compulsory Attendance: One of the most striking differences that Stuart saw in the American educational system and other systems worldwide was the dropout rate. He felt that the high number of dropouts from the American classroom was a national disgrace. In To Teach, To Love, Stuart wrote, "There is no question that we have the finest school system on earth. Then why do we have a 48 percent dropout rate."³⁵ There were many possible answers as to why students were dropping out of school, but Stuart stressed the placing of worth and responsibility on the student. In the interview, he stated, "Everything is given to the student without any reciprocity asked for."³⁶ In his book To Teach, To Love, he wrote, "We give them everything, even money to stay in school and money to make grades. We try to buy them. Money can't turn the trick."³⁷ The student must be involved in his own learning process and challenged to learn and excel. He felt that students wanted and expected to be challenged. Thus, the classroom and classroom teacher must be a vehicle to challenge and direct the mind of the student. Here again, Stuart stressed the missionary zeal of the dedicated teacher. He had a number of reservations about compulsory attendance, but the great need

³⁴Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 9.

³⁵Stuart, Interview.

³⁶Stuart, Interview.

³⁷Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 167.

of involving young people in an organized educational program was the dominant element in his support of it. The major concern that he had was to make sure that when a student does attend school he is challenged and inspired to learn.

7. Curriculum: As an educator who had teaching experience in a one-room school in rural Kentucky, a consolidated high school in a large city, and in a Middle East University, Stuart would not confine education to the inner walls of a school. He believed strongly that education was a life process and thus the school's curriculum must be as broad as possible to serve the diversity and individuality of the student. He expected discipline and organization from his teachers and students, but he went beyond the subject matter of a specific discipline.

As a teacher, Stuart took his students into the community where they measured tobacco acreages, corn crop poundage, and other items that were central to the everyday life of the community. As principal of McKell High School, Stuart opened the doors of the school to anyone who wished to continue secondary education. His student body ranged from thirteen to sixty-seven years old. He utilized students as peer teachers partly as a result of a qualified teacher shortage and also because he felt that the students should be given more responsibility in the teaching/learning process. Thus, a school's curriculum must be as broad as possible so that each individual will be able to find direction and inspiration. This type of organized endeavor to open doors to traditional approaches to education reflects the "life is education" philosophy that Stuart held during his adult life. Stuart wanted the student to assume a major role in his own educational growth. He drew this philosophy of

education from his own experiences and activities as a student, teacher and an administrator.

Interviews with Selected Individuals

Twenty-five individuals were interviewed on their knowledge of Jesse Stuart's educational activities and views. All individuals were provided with a printed copy of the interview form which contained nine questions and an accompanying explanation of question five. This question pertained to various educational schools of thought. The interviews were administered in person whenever possible, but a number of them were administered by correspondence or via telephone as a result of schedule conflicts and/or distance factors. Interview sessions were held in the homes of most of the respondents and covered a five-state region. Interviews were held in the states of Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia.

An analysis of the questions asked to the respondents was made and reported. The following information was collected from the interviews.

Question one was asked to all those individuals who were interviewed and seventeen of the twenty-five people were personally acquainted with Jesse Stuart. Eight of the respondents knew of Jesse Stuart and his works but were not personally acquainted with him. The nature of the study was such that it was expected that a majority of those interviewed would have been closely associated with him. Of the seventeen who were personally acquainted with him, eight had written and published a poem, article or book about some aspect of Stuart's life.

Table 1. Question One: Are you personally acquainted with Jesse Stuart?

Respondent	Yes	No
R1	X	
R2	X	
R3	X	
R4	X	
R5	X	
R6	X	
R7	X	
R8	X	
R9	X	
R10	X	
R11	X	
R12	X	
R13	X	
R14	X	
R15	X	
R16	X	
R17	X	
R18		X
R19		X
R20		X
R21		X
R22		X
R23		X
R24		X
R25		X
Total	17	8

Question two was a logical follow-up to the first question in that each respondent was asked how long had he known Jesse Stuart or his works. Nine of the respondents had known Stuart for over twenty years and some dated their association with Stuart to the childhoods of both individuals. Five of the respondents had known him between sixteen and twenty years. In this group were his former students and professional colleagues. Two individuals were acquainted with him from eleven to fifteen years. Both of these individuals had taken a creative writing workshop that Stuart had coordinated. Nine of the respondents were familiar with his activities from six to ten years. Several of these individuals were scholars of his literary works. (See Table 2.)

The results of question three show that those individuals who were interviewed had a wide range of personal relationships with Stuart. There were many incidents where the respondent could answer the question in two or more of the categories. An example of a multiple answer was where a former student of Stuart became a student of his works and also a close friend. Each respondent was asked to refine his answer as to what category was most appropriate for the question. Thus, the following results were derived: Two of the respondents were former students of Stuart. One was in a secondary school environment and the other was in a university graduate course.

Seven of the respondents were professional colleagues of Stuart. All of these individuals were associated with Stuart in the educational program in Greenup County. Four of them were classroom teachers at McKell High School in 1956.

Table 2. Question Two: How long have you known Jesse Stuart?

Respondent	Years					
	0-1	2-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	Over 20
R1					X	
R2						X
R3						X
R4						X
R5						X
R6					X	
R7						X
R8						X
R9				X		
R10						X
R11			X			
R12						X
R13						X
R14				X		
R15			X			
R16			X			
R17			X			
R18			X			
R19			X			
R20					X	
R21					X	
R22					X	
R23			X			
R24			X			
R25			X			
Total			9	2	5	9

Table 3. Question Three: What is your relationship with Jesse Stuart?
 1) former student of his; 2) professional colleague; 3) close friend;
 4) casual acquaintance; 5) a student of his works; 6) other.

Respondent	Relationship						Total
	Student	Colleague	Friend	Acquaintance	Works	Other	
R1	X						1
R2		X					1
R3			X				1
R4			X				1
R5			X				1
R6				X			1
R7			X				1
R8			X				1
R9	X						1
R10		X					1
R11		X					1
R12		X					1
R13		X					1
R14		X					1
R15					X		1
R16		X					1
R17					X		1
R18					X		1
R19					X		1
R20				X			1
R21				X			1
R22				X			1
R23					X		1
R24					X		1
R25					X		1
Total	2	7	5	4	7		25

Five of the respondents were close friends of Stuart who had known him most of his adult life. Four of them could trace their relationship with Stuart to Lincoln Memorial University from 1926 to 1929.

Four of the respondents were casual acquaintances of Stuart. In fact, they could also trace their relationship with Stuart to Lincoln Memorial University through Alumni Affairs or commencement activities.

Seven of the respondents were students of his literary works. Two of these individuals were eminent scholars of Stuart and his literary publications. Most of the respondents classified themselves as students of Stuart's work. Stuart had written and published fifty-two books by December 31, 1978. (See Appendix C for a complete listing of his publications, the year of publication, and a listing of all of Stuart's works classified by type.)

One potential publication that Stuart had been working on all his adult life, The Cradle of the Copperheads, was seen by him as one of his most powerful literary pieces. In a personal interview with Stuart in his W-Hollow home, this book was singled out as one that would cause some controversy among his Eastern Kentucky neighbors. It appeared, to the interviewer, that he was relishing the idea that controversy might erupt over that publication.

All respondents were asked if they had read The Thread That Runs So True, Mr. Gallion's School, and To Teach, To Love. These three books were his major educational writings. All respondents had read either part of or all of The Thread That Runs So True. Eighteen of the respondents had read either a part of or all of Mr. Gallion's School.

Table 4. Question Four: Have you read any or all of Jesse Stuart's three major educational publications: The Thread That Runs So True, Mr. Gallion's School, and To Teach, To Love?

Respondent	Publication			Total
	<u>Thread</u>	<u>Mr. Gallion's School</u>	<u>To Teach, To Love</u>	
R1	X	X	X	3
R2	X	X	X	3
R3	X	X	X	3
R4	X	X	X	3
R5	X	X	X	3
R6	X		X	2
R7	X	X	X	3
R8	X	X	X	3
R9	X	X	X	3
R10	X	X	X	3
R11	X	X	X	3
R12	X	X	X	3
R13	X	X	X	3
R14	X	X	X	3
R15	X	X	X	3
R16	X	X	X	3
R17	X	X	X	3
R18	X			1
R19	X			1
R20	X			1
R21	X			1
R22	X			1
R23	X	X	X	3
R24	X			1
R25	X	X		2
Total	25	18	18	61

Eighteen of the respondents said they had read either a part or all of To Teach, To Love. All respondents stated that The Thread was Stuart's most important educational publication. Reasons given for this statement were: this book was so well received in the educational world on a national scale; Stuart became a member of the Speakers Circuit as a result of the publication; the book was Jesse Stuart, the writer, at his very best; and the book was an inspirational and motivational shot-in-the-arm for the underpaid and frustrated classroom teacher. Mr. Gallion's School and To Teach, To Love were seen as sequels to The Thread and thus their impact was not as dramatic as that publication. One respondent who classified himself as a close friend of Stuart stated that he read every one of the writer's publications because he wanted to make sure that he was either included in or out of the publication.

The answers to question five, which dealt with the placement of Stuart in a specific school of thought, were diverse and structured according to time, place and situation in which the respondents were closely associated with him. Two of the respondents saw Stuart as a perennialist who sought to provide the same education for everyone. This interpretation of Stuart resulted from his life long endeavor to equalize the educational programs, fiscal funds, and environment for both rich and poor school systems.

Six of the respondents felt that Stuart could be classified as an essentialist. All of these individuals had at one time or another been associated with Stuart in a teacher/principal relationship. They felt that Stuart's strong stand that the teacher must be in control of the classroom and that education is a process where the student must work

Table 5. Question Five: Do you feel that Jesse Stuart can be classified as adhering to any specific school of thought? If yes, which of these five educational schools of thought would you place him: Perennialist, Essentialist, Progressive, Existentialist, Eclectic?

Respondent	School of Thought				
	Perennialist	Essentialist	Progressive	Existentialist	Eclectic
R1					X
R2	X				
R3	X				
R4			X		
R5			X		
R6			X		
R7					X
R8					X
R9					X
R10		X			
R11		X			
R12		X			
R13		X			
R14			X		
R15					X
R16		X			
R17					X
R18			X		
R19			X		
R20			X		
R21			X		
R22			X		
R23		X			
R24	X				
R25			X		
Total	3	6	10		6

hard to master certain essential facts and subjects would place Stuart in the essentialist category.

Ten of the respondents felt that Stuart's educational school of thought could be classified as progressive. Stuart was seen as a person who believed that education was a part of the cycle of life and just what holds true for teaching and/or learning today might not be the case tomorrow. Stuart wanted the student to be involved in the learning process so that responsibility and character could be developed. When Stuart was a classroom teacher in rural Greenup County, he took his students into the community and allowed them to study and develop techniques in dealing with the practical ways of life. An example of this style of teaching, cited by a respondent, was where Stuart allowed a number of his students to measure a tobacco base for a farmer. The students learned how to do this and the community was better off as a result of it.

Six of the respondents classified Stuart as an eclectic. They felt that he possessed elements of a perennialist, essentialist, and a progressive at various times of his adult experiences and that he picked characteristics from each. Stuart strongly felt that the teacher should be the dominant element in the teaching learning process. He wrote in his book To Teach, To Love: "If education is to prevail, the teacher-student relationship must remain what the words suggest. The teacher teaches, the student studies."³⁸ Stuart strongly agreed with the essentialist belief that "Learning, of its very nature, involves hard

³⁸Stuart, To Teach, To Love, p. 9.

work and often unwilling application."³⁹ His home environment in Greenup County was one of the individual's struggles against the elements of nature and he learned at a very young age that hard work and application were necessary human activities for physical survival. Stuart was also a progressive in a number of matters. He strongly adhered to the progressives' emphasis on education as life itself. He also felt that practical subjects such as farming, vocational skills and community services were important concerns of the schools.

For these as well as a number of other reasons, the six respondents felt that Stuart should be classified as an eclectic in educational schools of thought. An eclectic point of view would fit very well in this approach to individual growth and responsibility.

The responses to question six were as follows: Thirteen of the respondents felt that Stuart had made major contributions to education as a result of his educational experiences, writings or speeches. The most important contribution to education, as voiced by the respondents, was the writing and publication of The Thread That Runs So True. They felt that Stuart gained national attention with that publication and a wider audience became available for his articles, lectures and other publications. One respondent voiced an opinion that, "if Stuart had chosen education as his only career interest and stayed active in educational circles, he would have been a major educational figure."⁴⁰ Stuart

³⁹George F. Kneller, Foundations of Education (3d ed.; New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1971), p. 245.

⁴⁰Statement by Earl Hobson Smith, personal interview, Speedwell, Tennessee, May 20, 1979.

Table 6. Question Six: Do you feel that Jesse Stuart had made any major contributions to education as a result of his educational experiences, writings or speeches? If yes, please rate and explain those contributions.

Respondent	Contributions			
	Major	Moderate	Minor	None
R1	X			
R2		X		
R3		X		
R4	X			
R5	X			
R6	X			
R7	X			
R8	X			
R9	X			
R10		X		
R11		X		
R12		X		
R13		X		
R14	X			
R15	X			
R16	X			
R17	X			
R18		X		
R19	X			
R20		X		
R21		X		
R22		X		
R23		X		
R24		X		
R25	X			
Total	13	12		

divided his interests in education, writing and farming to such an extent that neither of these specific activities dominated the other.

Twelve of the respondents felt that Stuart had made moderate contributions to education through his educational experiences, writings and speeches. Again, the publication of The Thread That Runs So True was the dominant contribution as seen by these respondents. Several respondents replied that they felt that Stuart would be recognized in posterity as a literary figure and not an educator. They cited the national recognition that he had received from his two non-educational works, The Man with the Bull-Tongue Plow and Taps for Private Tussie as his two most recognized literary creations. Stuart was given credit for his numerous educational lectures which were seen as both educational as well as promotional.

None of the respondents placed Stuart's contributions in the "minor" or "none" category. All of the respondents felt that he had made a number of contributions to education and that the educational world was better as a result of his presence.

One respondent discussed the physical presence of Jesse Stuart. He stated, "Stuart had the ability to command an individual's or a group's attention and involve them in his lectures or actions."⁴¹

The answers to question seven were reflective of how the total group saw national recognition for Jesse Stuart's activities in education. Only two of the respondents felt that Stuart had received national

⁴¹Statement by Dr. William A. Bell, Jr., personal interview, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee, August 9, 1979.

Table 7. Question Seven: Do you feel that Jesse Stuart had received appropriate national attention as a result of his educational experiences, writings and speeches? Please rate and explain your answer.

Respondent	National Attention			
	Major	Moderate	Minor	None
R1		X		
R2	X			
R3	X			
R4		X		
R5		X		
R6		X		
R7		X		
R8		X		
R9			X	
R10		X		
R11		X		
R12		X		
R13		X		
R14		X		
R15			X	
R16		X		
R17		X		
R18			X	
R19			X	
R20			X	
R21			X	
R22			X	
R23		X		
R24		X		
R25		X		
Total	2	16	7	

attention. They felt that Stuart's national recognition developed when the author was recognized on national television on the show "This Is Your Life." They cited the fact that his book, The Thread That Runs So True, was recognized as the Book of the Year by the National Education Association as another example of national attention.

Sixteen of the respondents felt that Stuart had received moderate national attention as a result of his educational experiences, writings and speeches. They felt that the name Jesse Stuart was not immediately recognizable in contemporary educational circles. Several of these respondents felt that there was a growing Stuart following that might eventually bring Stuart and his experiences to the attention of contemporary educators.

Seven of the respondents felt that Stuart had received minor recognition for his educational experiences, writings and speeches. The majority of these respondents felt that Stuart had been classified as a regional figure by national literary and educational figures. The fact that most of Stuart's educational experiences were within the state of Kentucky was cited as one of the reasons that Stuart was classified as a regional figure. A number of the respondents did not know that Stuart had held a teaching position at the University of Nevada at Reno in the Graduate Education Department. Stuart had also been a visiting lecturer at the American University in Cairo, Egypt. The position at the University of Nevada at Reno was during the summer session 1958, and the position at the American University in Cairo was during the academic year of 1960-1961. Stuart spent a total of fourteen years in an active educational capacity as a teacher, principal, superintendent, or

instructor in higher education. He also spent five summers as the leader of a Creative Writing Workshop at Murray State University in Kentucky. Of the nineteen years that Stuart was active, either during the academic year or summer session, in education, eleven of them were spent in Greenup County. Only three of the educational years were spent outside the state of Kentucky. In fact, one of those assignments was in South Portsmouth, Ohio which was a short trip across the Ohio River from his home in Greenup.

None of the respondents classified Stuart in the "none" category. His publications and other work have given him some credibility in education.

Questions eight and nine asked the respondents to compare Stuart's interest in education and its effect upon his writings and vice versa. In question eight, fifteen of the respondents stated that Stuart's interest in education had a major effect upon his writings. There were a number of reasons for this classification but two major points were stressed by the respondents. The first point was that educational activities gave Stuart the raw material from which he could draw to write his stories. Stuart's publications were almost always based on personal observation. The fictional characters Stuart used in his books were almost always real contemporaries of Stuart. His strong forte in literature was that he could use the land and the people of his region as his literary personalities. All three of Stuart's educational publications were autobiographical in nature. Mr. Gallion's School was a work of fiction that was based on the 1956-57 academic year assignment that Stuart had at McKell High School.

Table 8. Question Eight: To what extent do you feel Jesse Stuart's interest in education influenced his writings? Please rate and explain your answer.

Respondent	Influence			
	Major	Moderate	Minor	None
R1	X			
R2		X		
R3		X		
R4	X			
R5	X			
R6	X			
R7	X			
R8	X			
R9		X		
R10		X		
R11		X		
R12		X		
R13		X		
R14	X			
R15	X			
R16	X			
R17	X			
R18		X		
R19		X		
R20	X			
R21	X			
R22		X		
R23	X			
R24	X			
R25	X			
Total	15	10		

Table 9. Question Nine: To what extent do you feel Jesse Stuart's writings influenced his educational activities? Please rate and explain your answer.

Respondent	Influence			
	Major	Moderate	Limited	None
R1	X			
R2	X			
R3	X			
R4	X			
R5	X			
R6		X		
R7	X			
R8	X			
R9		X		
R10		X		
R11		X		
R12		X		
R13		X		
R14	X			
R15	X			
R16	X			
R17	X			
R18		X		
R19	X			
R20	X			
R21		X		
R22		X		
R23		X		
R24		X		
R25	X			
Total	14	11		

The second point in recognizing the influence of education on his writings was that Stuart felt at home in an educational environment. During his adult life, he felt that education was one of the most important professions that a person could follow and attempted to infuse this philosophical leaning into all of his literary creations.

Ten of the respondents felt that education had only a moderate effect upon Stuart's writings. Most of these individuals saw Stuart as a complex person who had no dominant leaning in either educational or non-educational areas. Stuart was successful in both areas of concentration, and the literary and educational worlds simply balanced each other. Some of these respondents felt that Stuart could float back and forth into these two areas with neither dominating the other.

One respondent stated that it appeared to him that Stuart would become bored with one particular area and sought another for a new challenge. None of the respondents classified question eight in the "minor" and "none" categories.

In question nine the respondents were asked to compare the effect of Stuart's writings on his educational activities. Fourteen of the individuals classified the effect in the "major" category. There were several reasons for this selection, but there were two dominant opinions on this point. One view was that Stuart's writings had opened up the lecture tour and these activities allowed Stuart to see and adopt innovations or concepts in education that he could bring back to his own educational assignment. The other reason was that The Thread That Runs So True had been so successful that Stuart was placed in an active educational leadership position.

Eleven of the respondents categorized the effect of Stuart's writings on his educational activities as "moderate." Again, they saw him in a dual capacity as both a writer and an educator with neither dominating the other. One respondent voiced the opinion that Stuart had his mind made up early in his adult life about what education and educators should do and not do in reference to discipline, curriculum, and school-community relations. He felt that time and varied experiences did not change the fundamental thinking of Stuart.

As in question eight, none of the respondents selected the "limited" and "none" categories. Stuart was seen as a man who had made major or moderate contributions to education depending upon a national as opposed to a regional point of reference. All respondents felt that he had certainly made a number of notable educational and literary contributions. Tables 8 and 9 show how each respondent answered these questions.

Summary

Jesse Stuart made a number of important contributions to education as a result of his educational experiences, writings and lectures. This conclusion was the consensus of those individuals who were interviewed concerning the role that Stuart had played in education. Stuart, as a teacher, principal or school superintendent, influenced a large number of his students to remain in school and receive a good education. Some of these students chose to attend institutions of higher education and return to their home communities as teachers. Stuart, in the interview in his home, was able to name a number of his former students and describe how they were able to overcome a number of fiscal and/or family problems

to gain an education. He used the "ripple in the pond" analogy as a means of showing how the work and dedication of only a few educators helped eradicate educational poverty in Eastern Kentucky.

The publication of The Thread That Runs So True was seen as Stuart's most obvious contribution to education. This publication opened a number of lecture tour offers and appearances to Stuart that he did not have prior to that time. Stuart's books, Mr. Gallion's School and To Teach, To Love were seen by the respondents as sequels to the Thread. The majority of the respondents felt that Stuart was a major asset to the educational world because he had become a powerful and dynamic voice for needed change. Stuart, himself, felt that one of his greatest contributions to education was that he provided inspirational as well as directional leadership to a great number of students. His philosophy that education is life and that a person never outgrows the need to be involved in some form of educational activity identified Stuart as an early spokesman for adult education.

In summary, Jesse Stuart stood out as an educator who was willing to stand up and speak out against what he considered to be inequities in education. He sought quality education for all students whether they were rural or urban, rich or poor, gifted or educationally deprived.

Chapter 6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this chapter was twofold: to summarize the problem and procedures employed in this study and to draw conclusions from the study.

Summary

The Problem

The problem of this study was to analyze the educational experiences and views of Jesse Stuart.

Procedures

Following an extensive review of related literature, part of which was presented in Chapter 2, the methodology for solving the problem was selected. The first step involved collecting and categorizing the data. In this step, only the primary and/or secondary sources that explained the educational experiences and views of Jesse Stuart were utilized.

A number of higher education institution libraries were utilized for information on Jesse Stuart. The Progue Special Collections Library at Murray State University in Murray, Kentucky was a major source for collecting information on Jesse Stuart. This library had the most extensive collection of Stuart memorabilia in the world. Other libraries utilized were: Sherrod Library at East Tennessee State University; the Hutchins Library at Berea College in Berea, Kentucky; Lincoln Memorial University's Carnegie Library; the University of Kentucky's Margaret I.

King Library in Lexington, Kentucky; and the James D. Hoskins Library at University of Tennessee at Knoxville, Tennessee.

A second procedure involved the selection of a number of selected individuals to be interviewed about their knowledge of Jesse Stuart's activities and/or writings in education. An interview guide was used in each interview session and the information gathered was summarized and presented in the Appendices.

Conclusions

The most apparent conclusion drawn from the study of Stuart's experiences and views in education was that he was a major influence in curricular change in the schools that he served.

At Cane Creek Elementary School, Stuart's idea of combining the academic pursuits with recreational activities is a contemporary educational practice. At McKell High School, Stuart, as principal, opened the school doors to non-traditional students who sought to return to school. His oldest student was a sixty-seven year old woman. As Superintendent of schools for the Greenup County School Division, Stuart led the fight to improve the educational offerings of all the schools in his system and he was a major leader in the fight for school consolidation. He also was a strong advocate of a teacher retirement system and of a tenure system which would protect the classroom teacher from political reprisals. He was very influential in having the powers of the school district trustees diminished and eventually dissolved in his own county as well as the majority of counties in Kentucky. Stuart, through his writings and speeches, called for a recognition of the contributions

that the average classroom teacher provided for the students in America's classroom. He felt that he was the speaker who had been picked to "carry the ball" for America's educators. In Stuart's most famous educational publication, The Thread That Runs So True, he proudly wrote in the preface:

A great many of our leading educators have said that The Thread That Runs So True helped hurry school consolidation in this county and in this state; it helped to bring about changes in our school laws and a reapportionment of our school money to the pauper counties in Kentucky.¹

One of Stuart's biographers wrote:

He has recognized the need to gear the curriculum and activities of the schools to include special services for the gifted and the retarded students as well as the normal ones; he has promoted adult-educational programs . . . by drawing upon all the resources of schools, community and human beings for fuller and more productive living.²

Another biographer wrote:

Speaking with "homeric fire" Jesse Stuart has championed on the lecture platform, as he has in The Thread That Runs So True, the cause of educational improvements for children in America's rural areas and the cause of underpaid teachers.³

In an interview with Dick Perry, Stuart explained his philosophy of education. He saw the classroom as a means of building for the future. He believed that a teacher was an individual who was called to teach and not one who simply wanted a job. Stuart stated:

¹ Jesse Stuart, The Thread That Runs So True (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949), p. xii.

² Mary Washington Clarke, Jesse Stuart's Kentucky (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968), pp. 150-151.

³ Everetta Love Blair, Jesse Stuart: His Life and Works (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1967), p. 210.

I had a mission. I was out to save the children . . . I have this feeling when I'm in a classroom, teaching I'm the father of everybody there. I'm going to teach them and give them things in life that will help them.⁴

Jesse Stuart has been able to help an untold number of former students through his teaching, administrative leadership, writings, and lectures. He has served as a contact person for a large number of former students to attend institutions of higher learning. He has also been an inspiration to educators who were experiencing professional and/or personal uncertainties and could draw from Stuart's own personal life as a model for emulation.

The major conclusion of this study was that Jesse Stuart provided a great deal of inspiration and expertise to the educational world. He not only is a writer whose fame will live after his death, but his educational experiences and views are inspirational and directional for both contemporary and future educators.

⁴Dick Perry, Reflections of Jesse Stuart: On a Land of Many Moods (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969), pp. 10-11.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE TO JESSE STUART

JESSE STUART

Interview Guide

W-Hollow, Greenup, Kentucky

A. Introductory Remarks

B. Thirteen questions were asked that covered the major points of Stuart's educational philosophy, experience and writings.

1. What is your definition of education?
2. What are some of the present weaknesses or shortcomings of the American educational system?
3. What recommendations would you make to overcome these weaknesses or shortcomings in the American educational system?
4. What professional or personal characteristics should the following individuals possess as participants in the educational process: teacher, principal, superintendent, school board member, and college professor of education?
5. Do you feel that school board members should be elected or appointed to their position and that they should meet certain educational and financial responsibilities?
6. Do you feel that school consolidation has greatly improved the educational program for most of the students in Kentucky and the nation?
7. Since you have traveled in many countries and lectured to numerous educational and social groups, you have had the opportunity to see several educational systems in action. How does the American educational system compare with these other educational systems?
8. What do you feel have been your most important contributions to the field of education?
9. Drawing from your long and close association with education and educators, do you foresee any major changes in the instructional, financial, or philosophical structure of American education?
10. What words of advice would you give your students, if you were still serving in the capacity as a teacher, principal, or superintendent as to the value of education for their own personal lives?
11. What influences do you feel that your interest in education have had on your writing?

12. What influences do you feel that your writing has had on education?
13. What are your reactions to the following issues in education:
 - a. Discipline
 - b. School Consolidation
 - c. School-Community Relations
 - d. School Finance
 - e. Politics in Schools
 - f. Student Rights
 - g. Compulsory Attendance
 - h. Curriculum

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE ABOUT JESSE STUART

SELECTED INTERVIEWEE'S

Interview Guide

A. _____ C. _____
 Name Location
 B. _____ D. _____
 Date Identification #

A. Introductory Remarks

B. Nine questions were asked that covered the major points of Jesse Stuart's educational experiences, writings, and views.

1. Are you personally acquainted with Jesse Stuart?
2. If the answer to the above question is yes, how long have you known Jesse Stuart?
3. What is your relationship with Jesse Stuart? 1) Former student of his; 2) Professional colleague; 3) Close friend; 4) Casual acquaintance; 5) A student of his works; 6) Other.
4. Have you read any or all of Jesse Stuart's three major educational publications: The Thread That Runs So True, Mr. Gallion's School, and To Teach, To Love?
5. Do you feel that Jesse Stuart can be classified as adhering to any specific educational philosophical school of thought? If yes, which of these five philosophical schools of thought would you place him: Perennialist, Essentialist, Progressive, Existentialist, or Eclectic?
6. Do you feel that Jesse Stuart has made any major contributions to education as a result of his educational experiences, writings, or speeches? If yes, please explain those contributions.
7. Do you feel that Jesse Stuart has received appropriate national attention as a result of his experiences, writings, or speeches?
8. To what extent do you feel Jesse Stuart's interest in education influenced his writings? Please rate and explain your answer.
9. To what extent do you feel Jesse Stuart's writings influenced his educational activities? Please rate and explain your answer.

Summary of Philosophical Schools of Thought

Perennialist

1. Human nature remains the same everywhere, hence, education should be the same for everyone.
2. It is education's task to impart knowledge of eternal truth.
3. Education is a preparation for life.
4. The subject matter of perennialism should be the great works of literature, philosophy, history and science.

Essentialist

1. Learning involves hard work and often unwilling application.
2. The initiative in education should lie with the teacher rather than the pupil.
3. The heart of the educational process is the assimilation of prescribed subject matter.

Progressive

1. Education should be life itself, not a preparation for living.
2. Learning should be directly related to the interests of the child.
3. Learning through problem solving should take precedence over the inculcating of subject matter.
4. The teacher's role is not to direct but to advise.
5. Cooperation rather than competition is encouraged.

Existentialist

1. The learner is the ultimate chooser.
2. The teacher is a medium for many views on any subject.

3. Man owes nothing to nature but his existence.
4. Subject matter should be based on what the student sees as fulfilling his own needs.

Eclectic

The process of picking or selecting from various systems, doctrines, or sources of various philosophical schools of thought.

George F. Kneller, Foundations of Education, Third Edition, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1971

APPENDIX C

BOOKS BY JESSE STUART

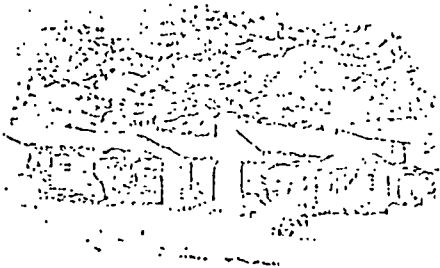
BOOKS BY JESSE STUART

1. Harvest of Youth (Poetry) 1930
2. Man with a Bull-Tongue Plow (Poetry) 1934
3. Head O' W-Hollow (Short Stories) 1936
4. Beyond Dark Hills (Autobiography) 1938
5. Trees of Heaven (Novel) 1940
6. Men of the Mountains (Short Stories) 1941
7. Taps for Private Tussie (Novel) 1943
8. Mongrel Mettle (Novel) 1944
9. Album of Destiny (Poetry) 1944
10. Foretaste of Glory (Novel) 1946
11. Tales from the Plum Grove Hills (Short Stories) 1946
12. The Thread That Runs So True (Autobiography) 1949
13. Hie to the Hunters (Novel) 1950
14. Clearing in the Sky (Short Stories) 1950
15. Kentucky is My Land (Poetry) 1952
16. The Beatinest Boy (Juvenile) 1953
17. The Good Spirit of Laurel Ridge (Novel) 1953
18. Penny's Worth of Character (Juvenile) 1954
19. Red Mule (Juvenile) 1955
20. The Year of My Rebirth (Autobiography) 1956
21. Plowshare in Heaven (Short Stories) 1958
22. Huey, the Engineer (Novel) 1960
23. The Rightful Owner (Juvenile) 1960
24. God's Oddling (Biography) 1960
25. Andy Finds a Way (Juvenile) 1961

26. Hold April (Poetry) 1962
27. A Jesse Stuart Reader (Anthology) 1963
28. Save Every Lamb (Short Stories) 1964
29. Outlooks Through Literature (Anthology) 1964
30. Daughter of the Legend (Novel) 1965
31. A Jesse Stuart Harvest (Short Stories) 1965
32. Short Stories for Discussion (Anthology) 1965
33. My Land Has a Voice (Short Stories) 1966
34. A Ride with Huey the Engineer (Juvenile) 1966
35. Mr. Gallion's School (Novel) 1967
36. Rebels with a Cause (Printed Speech) 1967
37. Come Gentle Spring (Short Stories) 1969
38. Seven by Jesse (Short Stories) 1970
39. Old Ben (Juvenile) 1970
40. To Teach, To Love (Autobiography) 1970
41. Come Back to the Farm (Short Stories) 1971
42. Autumn Love Song (Poetry) 1971
43. Come to my Tomorrow Land (Juvenile) 1971
44. Dawn of Remembered Spring (Snake Stories - Poetry) 1973
45. The Land Beyond the River (Novel) 1973
46. 32 Votes Before Breakfast (Short Stories) 1974
47. The World of Jesse Stuart (Poetry) 1975
48. Up the Hollow from Lynchburg (Co-authored) 1975
49. My World (Autobiography) 1975
50. The Seasons: Autobiography in Verse (Poetry) 1976
51. The Only Place We Live (Co-authored) 1976
52. Dandelions on the Acropolis (Short Stories) 1979

APPENDIX D

CORRESPONDENCE FROM JESSE STUART



JESSE STUART

W. Hollow

Greencamp, Kentucky 41111

Dec. 12th 1977

Dear Uac. Garland:

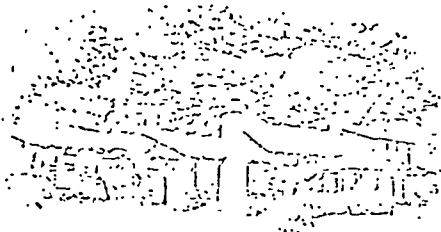
I am now replying
 your letter of Oct. 5th. This was at
 a time I was busy on a MS which
 I began Sept. 28th and finished writing
 and reviewing by Nov. 18th. It is
 being typed now.

What amazes me,
 didn't have a letter from you
 for my friend Ralph Charles, yes,
 I know him for years and
 years. He's from this area - and a
 descendant of the first families
 that populated this land. He's
 out of the Wayne Co. pioneer
 families.

This year I set my
 goal to do our MSS. But the first
 legat. at all described by James
 I did three MSS.

Sincerely,

Jesse Stuart



JESSE STUART

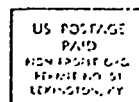
W. Hollon

Greecamp, Kentucky 40444

P.S. since I got tangled up
over correspondence, I believe
I've answered your third
letter which I thought was
your second letter until
I found this one.

Either I am relying on
reporting. I think it is better
that (not now) but in January
you interview me by telephone.
Open number is 606-473-7081
which is an unlisted number.
Person I said "not now" December
is a busy month for me. It is
my duty to autograph books
for the people who buy them -
all, not now we have 9 children
with us ages 10 and 7. They will
be here until day after Christmas
on Jan. 16th. We'll go all four
of us to Louisville where I'll
sign books at B-Dartons

The University Press of Kentucky
Lexington, Kentucky 40506



Dear Jack Harland:

on this work, ^{Miss Stuart: Essays} advertised here
as an excellent, ^{and} ^{adventurous} ^{book}
on my reading. ^{Let's} ^{ETSU's}
Liberation ^{to} ^{order} ^{the} ^{program} ^{you}
would ^{be} ^{interested} ⁱⁿ ^a ^{Ph.D.} ^{me}
by ^{of} ^{an} ^{on} ^{my} ^{contribution} ^{to}
Education - U.S.

January 3, 1975



JESSE STUART
W - Hollow
Greenup, Kentucky 41111

Jan 27th 1978

Dear Jack Garland:

After I had
a checkup Jan. 12th by
Cardiologist said I could
get out and go places with
my wife - he told me to go to the
say to the Food Market where I
would I not see many the
wanted me about getting into
Cold weather.

Next day when this storm
struck it snowed for 2 1/2 days
we got over 30 inches of snow
I was rep about the past storm
about this - we had the
same if not worse.

Since Dec. 23rd when I
was last out, I've had these
times out. Each one very hard to
get to the doctor, last time I went to
the Market and used. I also went to
the A. O. my brother - I don't
know how long - I'll be back.

C. D. WALKER, this is a University of Teachers



MISS STUART
W. Hollow
Greenup, Kentucky 41144

Mar 5th 1978

Dear Jack Garland:

I can't know a little but about what
we do. Educational Research does
change from year to year. I am
in a position to give you
information on the
near future of education.

I want
you to call us after March 13.
We have an unlisted
number (we have to loan me)
and you giving it to you.
So you can call. The number
is 606-473-7080. We had
letter discuss your coming
so you will know here.
If you want an interview
of you have questions
I'll be with you. If you
will stay. As you know
and I have an earned Ph.D.
is a lot of information and work.
It is a big thing.

Miss Stuart
Greenup, Kentucky

APPENDIX E
CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

CHRONOLOGY OF EDUCATIONAL EVENTS
RELATED TO JESSE STUART'S
EXPERIENCES AND VIEWS

- 1907 - August 8--Birth of Jesse Hilton Stuart, W-Hollow--Cedar Ripples, Greenup County, Ky. Second child--oldest son.
- 1912 - July--Entered first grade, Plum Grove School, Greenup County, Ky. Calvin Clarke, teacher.
- 1922-1923 - Academic year. Freshman, Greenup High School, Greenup, Kentucky.
- 1923-1924 - Academic year. Sophomore, Greenup High School, Greenup, Ky. Came under influence of Mrs. R. E. Hatton, teacher of English.
- 1924-1925 - Academic year. Junior, Greenup High School, Greenup, Ky.
- 1925-1926 - Academic year. Senior, Greenup High School, Greenup, Ky. First in family to graduate, May, 1926.
- 1926-1927 - Academic year. Freshman, Lincoln Memorial University, Harrogate, Tennessee.
- 1927 - Summer--Student, Lincoln Memorial University, Harrogate, Tennessee.
- 1927-1928 - Academic year. Sophomore, Lincoln Memorial University, Harrogate, Tennessee.
- 1928 - Summer--Worked for American Rolling Mills (Armco), Ashland, Ky.
- 1928-1929 - Academic year. Senior, Lincoln Memorial University, Harrogate, Tennessee.
- 1929 - Summer--Student, Lincoln Memorial University, Harrogate, Tennessee. Graduated, August, with A.B. Degree (3 academic years plus 2 summers).
- 1929-1930 - Academic year. Teacher, Warnock (Winston) High School, Greenup County, Ky. One room--14 students.
- 1930 - Summer--Graduate work, Peabody College, Nashville, Tennessee.
- 1930-1931 - Academic year. Principal, Greenup High School, Greenup, Ky.
- 1931-1932 - Academic year. Graduate work, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee.

- 1932-1933 - Academic year. Became at age 24 the youngest superintendent in the state of Kentucky, Greenup County Schools, Greenup, Kentucky.
- 1933-1934 - Academic year. Principal, McKell High School, South Shore, Greenup County, Ky.
- 1934 - Summer--Graduate work, George Peabody College, Nashville, Tennessee.
- 1934-1935 - Academic year. Principal, McKell High School, South Shore, Greenup County, Ky.
- 1935-1936 - Academic year. Principal, McKell High School, South Shore, Greenup County, Ky.
- 1936-1937 - Academic year. Principal, McKell High School, South Shore, Greenup County, Ky.
- 1938-1939 - Academic year. Teacher of Remedial English on secondary level, Portsmouth, Ohio.
- 1941-1942 - Academic year. Superintendent, Greenup City Schools, Greenup, Ky.
- 1942-1943 - Academic year. Superintendent, Greenup City Schools, Greenup, Ky.
- 1949 - The Thread That Runs So True (Autobiography) was selected as the best book in 1949 by the National Education Association.
- 1957-1958 - Academic year. Principal, McKell High School, South Shore, Greenup County, Ky.
- 1960-1961 - Academic year. Visiting lecturer, American University, Cairo, Egypt.
- 1966-1967 - Academic year. Author in Residence, Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond, Ky.
- 1967-1968 - Academic year. Author in Residence, Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond, Ky.
- 1969 - Honorary Doctor of Pedagogy, Pfeiffer College, Misenheimer, North Carolina.
- 1970 - Summer--Teacher, Jesse Stuart Creative Writing Workshop, Murray State University, Murray, Ky.
- 1971 - Summer--Teacher, Jesse Stuart Creative Writing Workshop, Murray State University, Murray, Ky.

APPENDIX F

LIST OF INDIVIDUALS INTERVIEWED

INDIVIDUALS INTERVIEWED

1. Mrs. Antoinette M. Bell
English Teacher
Middlesboro School System
Middlesboro, Kentucky
2. Dr. William A. Bell, Jr.
Department of Human Services
State Department of Human Services
Middlesboro, Kentucky
3. Mr. Richard Buchanan
Principal
Glade Spring Elementary School
Glade Springs, Virginia
4. Mrs. Ethel Bush
Retired Teacher
Greenup County School System
Greenup, Kentucky
5. Dr. Mary Washington Clarke
Emeritus Professor of English
Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, Kentucky
6. Dr. Ralph Clarke
Professor of Education, Retired
East Tennessee State University
Johnson City, Tennessee
7. Mrs. Hazel Holley Crabtree
Retired Teacher
Washington County School System (Virginia)
Abingdon, Virginia
8. Mrs. Pauline Grace
Retired Teacher
Smyth County School System (Virginia)
Marion, Virginia
9. Mr. Henry Green
Independent Businessman - Former Educator
Clinchburg, Virginia
10. Mr. Dallas Hardin, Director
Upper East Tennessee Educational Cooperative
East Tennessee State University
Johnson City, Tennessee

11. Dr. Jack Higgs
Professor of English
East Tennessee State University
Johnson City, Tennessee
12. Mrs. Thelma Justice
Guidance Counselor
Greenup County High School
Greenup, Kentucky
13. Dr. J. R. LeMaster
Director of American Studies
Baylor University
Waco, Texas
14. Mr. David McFarlane
Educator
Principal, Damascus Elementary School
Damascus, Virginia
15. Dr. Clyde Orr
Chairman, Supervision and Administration
College of Education
East Tennessee State University
Johnson City, Tennessee
16. Mr. Lee Pennington
Associate Professor of English
Jefferson Community College
Louisville, Kentucky
17. Dr. Sidney Rice
Chairman, Physical Education Department
East Tennessee State University
Johnson City, Tennessee
18. Mrs. Earl Hobson Smith
Professor of Home Economics, Retired
Lincoln Memorial University
Harrogate, Tennessee
19. Mrs. Martha Smith
Retired Educator
Washington County School System (Tennessee)
Jonesboro, Tennessee
20. Mr. Travis Smith
Retired Educator
East Tennessee State University
Johnson City, Tennessee

21. Dr. E. B. Stanley
Superintendent of Schools, Retired
Washington County School System (Virginia)
Abingdon, Virginia
22. Mr. Jesse Stuart
W-Hollow
Greenup, Kentucky
23. Mrs. Naomi Dean Stuart
W-Hollow
Greenup, Kentucky
24. Dr. Ben Wade
Superintendent of Schools
Upper Licking County School System
Pataskla, Ohio
25. Mrs. Ben Wade
Educator
Upper Licking County School System
Pataskla, Ohio
26. Mrs. Becky Vinson
Assistant Principal
Greenup County High School
Greenup, Kentucky
27. Mr. Donald L. Wright
Educator
Washington County School System (Virginia)
Abingdon, Virginia

VITA

JACK R. GARLAND

Personal Data: Date of Birth: December 22, 1943
 Place of Birth: Erwin, Tennessee
 Marital Status: Married

Education: Public Schools, Erwin, Tennessee
 Emory and Henry College, Emory, Virginia; history,
 education, B.A., 1969.
 East Tennessee State University, Johnson City,
 Tennessee; history, M.A., 1974.

Professional
Experience: Teacher, John S. Battle High School; Bristol,
 Virginia, 1969-1976.
 Acting Director, Special Services; East Tennessee
 State University, Johnson City, Tennessee, 1977-1978.
 Director, Special Services; East Tennessee State
 University, Johnson City, Tennessee, 1978-present.

Honors and
Awards: Outstanding Teacher, Washington County Education
 Association, Washington County, Virginia, 1974.
 Who's Who in the South
 Phi Delta Kappa
 Pi Gamma Mu