

**In the Bluegrass Region  
A Paradox was Born;  
The Corn was Full of Kernels,  
The Colonels Full of Corn.**







-- I forgot the name --

harvest some sort of bug or larva that the natives use for fish bait? ~~Also~~ I occasionally hear also from the tax assessor, but I craftily refer him to Papa Distillery -- thus possessing the pride of ownership without any of the ~~pangs~~ <sup>pangs</sup>. There are many other ~~things~~ <sup>letters</sup>.

I have never ~~seen~~ <sup>plot of</sup> my land in Cinchling, but some real estate people down there have been wooing me lately and I may ~~get~~ have to go down <sup>there</sup> <sup>take a</sup> look. Who knows, ~~maybe~~ <sup>there's</sup> oil in the place? Or better yet a bubbling spring of sour mash bourbon... been more engaging or

NEW PAGE ~~At~~ But of all the letters I've <sup>just</sup> ~~received~~ <sup>received</sup> because of my lot in Cinchling none has intrigued me more than <sup>the one</sup> I got last week from a doctor in Nashville. "Dear Mr. Inaver," he wrote.

[ Donna: Copy the Doc's letter word for word, changing Lynchling to Cinchling or something like that ]

AS



This letter shows me <sup>my distiller</sup> a little, and I  
browded over it for several days. If Doc's  
findings were true might not Papa start  
putting buttermilk in his bourbon? Or ~~adding~~ adding  
mineral water in his whiskey? But I finished my  
~~address~~ and yesterday took ballpoint in hand and  
wrote the good doctor as follows.

New Page

[ Here copy my letter with  
Conclary changes )

Welcome aboard, boys!



End  
11/18/68

+

THE TENNESSEE WALTZ

I draft,  
please.

earnest

The New Year <sup>season</sup> seems a singularly appropriate time to  
I am ~~not~~ <sup>never</sup> hard to please; any kind of  
potable spirits suits me fine -- just so long as it is  
sour mash bourbon. To me, <sup>sour mash</sup> ~~it is~~ the best  
hooze in the land, and I must confess I've done a lot of  
forensic research <sup>on the subject</sup> in the field. Just as Picasso went from  
his Blue period to his <sup>the pinks</sup> This period <sup>and</sup> his That period, so  
I have gone through many a phase, not to mention <sup>fifths</sup>  
in my quest for the ideal booze.

When I forsook <sup>my doctor told me</sup> swiftly during Prohibition when  
I discovered that the rings from the bath <sup>it was</sup>  
made in <sup>settled</sup> regularly under my eyes. Many were the  
fifths of brandy I killed until <sup>it became evident that</sup>  
<sup>they were</sup> ~~that~~ killing me. My Scotch phase <sup>lasted</sup> about ten years --  
doubtless because my Branny was born in Edinburgh.  
Scotch I <sup>loyally</sup> cling to, for nearly ten years -- doubtless  
because my Branny was born in Edinburgh -- until an  
epic overdose made me desert <sup>Branny and all</sup> <sup>drinking</sup> <sup>because</sup>  
of its tendency to make me <sup>drunk</sup> <sup>of this period</sup> <sup>was</sup> followed by a  
fickle and ambiguous <sup>dalliance</sup> <sup>with many drinks</sup> during which I swayed  
between Irish and Canadian hooches -- not to mention <sup>between</sup>  
the bedroom and <sup>the</sup> bathroom. Then about <sup>twelve or so</sup> years  
ago I ran across a divine Kentucky sour mash bourbon,  
and my quest was <sup>over</sup> and my hangovers were over.  
Ever since then I have <sup>loyally</sup> divided my booze <sup>drinking</sup>  
between the <sup>epicurean</sup> sour mash honeys of Kentucky and  
Tennessee.

Now I <sup>do</sup> hope no one thinks I'm <sup>being commercial and</sup> <sup>should</sup> trying to make  
recruits. Far from it, in fact. Because the supply of  
good sour mash is limited, and if all of us <sup>would</sup> <sup>be</sup> piled  
over to it there <sup>would</sup> <sup>be</sup> nearly enough to go around.  
So please <sup>in fact</sup> <sup>let</sup> <sup>me</sup> <sup>be</sup> <sup>cheerfully</sup> <sup>strictly</sup>  
confidential; you stick to your booze if I can  
stay stick with mine.

This is merely a friendly and all-around amicable exploration

mainly

photo

delict in many private lives of Nashville Air group to now on, about mid. Nov



magnanimously  
→ None, alas, has ever sent me a bottle of booze, but then I suspect there are a flock of federal laws that frown on that.

There are other reasons why I like <sup>it marginal</sup> sour mash bourbon <sup>and remain loyal to</sup> over all other booze. For one thing, the ~~unfriendly~~ people who make it are so friendly and grateful. Besides cards at Christmas they <sup>help lending me</sup> send you little dispatches and gifts all during the year -- highball glasses, folk <sup>and drinking</sup> song records, spotic new recipes, thoughtful little things like that. Even more miraculous, their salesmen invariably spring for a drink when one <sup>stumbles upon</sup> ~~encounters~~ them in public bars. To drink sour mash bourbon <sup>in shops, is to become the</sup> member of a big happy family. <sup>distiller</sup> One of them <sup>recently</sup> sent me an anonymous poem that is so purty I pass it along:

"In the Bluegrass region  
A paradox was born;  
The corn was full of kernels,  
The Colonels full of corn."

But <sup>readily</sup> my cup <sup>was and remain</sup> raneth over <sup>deeply</sup> when, just a few years ago, one of these <sup>warm-hearted</sup> sour mash distillers <sup>up and</sup> gave me a plot of ground near the site of its distillery in what I shall call Cinchburg, Tennessee. Ever since then I glow not only from their products but from a fine warm sense of camaraderie and proprietorship; at least I really belong. These days <sup>even my occasional</sup> when I surreptitiously <sup>accompanied by a</sup> drinking pantry down there is always <sup>that</sup> warm feeling that someone down there <sup>is</sup> caring and is <sup>confidently</sup> watching over me...

With <sup>the advent of</sup> my lot in Cinchburg, loneliness ~~has~~ fled and I felt <sup>I was</sup> one of the boys. Moreover, <sup>it has marvelously</sup> stimulated my correspondence, has been <sup>stimulated</sup> marvelously stimulated. Scarce a month goes by, for example, that I don't hear from the county agent down there. Am I planning on planting tobacco this season? Do I ~~leave it fallow~~ <sup>figure</sup> to remove those unsightly weeds? Is it



I get

All right for the neighbors to harvest some sort of larvae or bug, the name of which presently escapes me -- could it be a cinch bug? -- that the natives use for ~~the~~ fish bait? ~~There~~, Besides many other letters, there is <sup>also</sup> a running correspondence with the tax assessor, but I keep craftily referring him back to Papa Distillery -- thus <sup>invariably</sup> enjoying the pride of possession without ~~any~~ of its pangs.

Regrettably I have never yet seen my lot -- they call it plot -- in Cinchburg, but ~~there are~~ signs I may have to go <sup>take</sup> and look. Lately, <sup>lately</sup> some real estate people ~~have~~ <sup>woolung me</sup> down there have been <sup>rather</sup> ardently ~~working~~, and I may have to go take a look. Who knows, possibly there <sup>is</sup> oil on the place! ~~Or even~~ Better yet, maybe <sup>with</sup> a bubbling spring of pure sour mash bourbon...

NEW PAGE

But <sup>near</sup> of all the letters I have gotten because of my lot in Cinchburg none has intrigued me more than the engaging one I got last week from a doctor from ~~Frankville~~ "Dear Mr. Traver," he wrote, [Donna, here quote Doc's letter, omitting only ~~Welder~~ & changing Lynchburg to Cinchburg.]



Crickleburg down there, <sup>sheer</sup> out of love for and can <sup>therapeutically</sup>

At first his letter shook me a little, and I brooded over it for several days. If Doc's findings were true might not my distiller ~~be~~ <sup>tempted</sup> to add a little buttermilk to his bourbon? Or <sup>perhaps</sup> a wee ~~dash~~ <sup>margin of that mineral</sup> of mineral water? But then I thought of all the <sup>well</sup> things <sup>my distiller there</sup> ~~he~~ <sup>has done</sup> for me, all the warm letters he has brought me, <sup>and that of</sup> all the solace and <sup>joy</sup> ~~comfort~~ he has bestowed on the sinner man. So I banished my picky fears and yesterday took ballpoint in hand and wrote the good doctor as follows: ! <

Crackling noise to produce the hair of his customer, for

New page

"Dear Doctor: [Here copy my letter to Doc A to A, making the Crickleburg changes]"

Happy New Year to you all!



Lat 7  
11/19/68

HAPPY NEW YEAR

THE TENNESSEE WALTZ

down

one of mine.

New Year seems a singularly appropriate season to count one's blessings, so I'd like to run on a little about my favorite booze. Naturally I'm going to dilate on one's favorite booze.

I can't think just about run on about mine. Now I am not hard to please; any kind

of potable spirits ~~suits me fine~~ provided only that

good old by all odds sour mash bourbon. To me sour mash is the best booze

in all modesty I must say I've brought in the land--and I must confess I've done a lot of

~~research~~ intense to the great research on the subject. Just as the restless

~~Picasso~~ moved restlessly Picasso went from his Blue period to his This period of to

his That period, so I have gone through many a phase--not

to mention fifth--in my quest for the ideal booze.

When finally they I ~~was~~ collided into with sour mash ~~and~~ my patrician nose promptly turned purple with delight.

played the fiddle and

and ~~the~~



~~Good~~  
truth

Now I ~~do~~ hope no one thinks I'm being <sup>sordidly</sup> commercial and trying to ~~make~~ recruits. Far from it, <sup>in fact</sup>. Because <sup>the</sup> ~~supply~~ <sup>sad fact is that the</sup> supply of good sour mash is limited, and if ~~all of us~~ <sup>started guzzling</sup> piled over to it there wouldn't be nearly enough to go <sup>around.</sup> ~~This is merely a friendly and detached scientific~~ <sup>Instead simply a nostalgic year-end assessment</sup>

explanation, so please treat what I am saying as ~~strictly~~ <sup>am</sup> confidentially ~~in fact~~ <sup>magnanimously</sup> I'll cheerfully let you stick to your <sup>share</sup> booze if I can stick with mine. <sup>which I am sharing</sup>

<sup>with my loyal</sup> of my blessings. During this season of <sup>charity and</sup> ~~and compassion~~ <sup>tolerance</sup> I'll let any man stick to his booze if he'll let me stick to mine. In fact my wife has long been ~~is~~ amazed at my tolerance for booze of all kinds.

with spirit of ~~the~~ utmost confidence.



all at once it seemed <sup>that</sup> all off Cinchburg started writing me.

With the advent of my lot in Cinchburg loneliness ~~filled~~

and I felt I was one of the boys. <sup>Maneuvering</sup> ~~Maneuvering~~ has marvellous

<sup>proportions;</sup> stimulated my correspondence. Scarcely a month goes by

~~that~~ that I don't hear from the <sup>friendly</sup> county agent down there.

Am I ~~planning on~~ planting a <sup>crop</sup> tobacco this season? ~~to~~ leave the place

~~How~~ follow do I figure to remove those unsightly weeds?

~~How~~ <sup>How</sup> did Hawkins pasture his mule there?

Is it all right for ~~the~~ <sup>my</sup> neighbors to harvest some sort of

larvae or bug, the name of which ~~presently~~ escapes me--

could it be <sup>a</sup> cinchbug?--that the natives use for fish

bait? <sup>I must not forget</sup> Besides many other miscellaneous letters ~~there~~

~~there is~~ <sup>almost my lot</sup> ~~my~~ <sup>same house</sup> running correspondence with the tax assessor, a persistent soul

~~but~~ I keep craftily referring him back to Papa Distillery--

<sup>putting me being in the enviable position of</sup> thus ~~enviously~~ enjoying the pride of possession without ~~any of~~

its pangs.

<sup>In truth</sup> ~~that~~ <sup>my</sup> ~~lot~~ <sup>is Cinchburg</sup> has given me a new purpose in life; indeed it <sup>is</sup> ~~has~~ <sup>in</sup> ~~been~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~way~~ <sup>of</sup> ~~becoming~~ <sup>a</sup> ~~new~~ <sup>career.</sup>

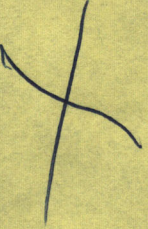




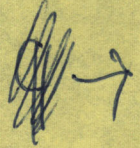




gnawing doubts assailed <sup>me,</sup> though I am old <sup>people,</sup> <sup>knave,</sup> <sup>blunderer,</sup> <sup>how long</sup>  
~~since when~~ <sup>had</sup> <sup>started</sup> <sup>mistaking</sup>  
 been taking <sup>me</sup> for an octogenarian? ~~Wasn't it~~ if  
 And when had my <sup>country</sup> <sup>estate</sup> <sup>suddenly</sup> crumbled to a mass



At first his letter shook me a little, and I brooded  
 over it for several days. ~~Doc's~~ findings were true  
 might not my distiller down there, <sup>out of sheer love</sup>  
 for and an unselfish desire to prolong the lives of  
 his customers, <sup>of course --</sup> be tempted to add a little buttermilk  
 to his bourbon? Or perhaps a wee smidgin of that <sup>magic</sup>  
 mineralized water? <sup>back on</sup> But then I thought of all the nice  
 things <sup>my</sup> <sup>distiller</sup> <sup>had</sup> done for me, <sup>over the years,</sup> all the warm  
 letters he <sup>had</sup> brought me, all the solace and joy he <sup>continued to</sup>  
 bestow on the inner man. So I banished my <sup>pick-</sup>  
 fears and yesterday took <sup>a big slug of</sup> <sup>sour mash</sup> and <sup>disloyal</sup>  
 good doctor a chin's up letter as follows:



NO! So I quit looking at my  
 tongue in the mirror and banished my  
 craven doubts, fortified myself with a  
 slug of sour mash, and wrote the  
 good doctor a chin's up letter as follows:

"I mixed in a small pile of pickings" <sup>with</sup> <sup>near</sup> <sup>Lincolnton,</sup> <sup>if</sup> <sup>wasn't</sup> <sup>it,</sup> <sup>if</sup>



3rd  
(from last typed)  
Nov. 21, '68

I find, please.

gladly THE TENNESSEE WALTZ (no number)  
respectfully I solicit your indulgence while  
holiday

Since New Year's seems an appropriate season  
to count one's blessings, and I'd like to run on a <sup>highly coveted</sup> ~~thing~~  
little about <sup>what</sup> ~~one~~ of the <sup>most</sup> ~~important~~ <sup>of mine</sup>. Now as  
my wife will tell you -- if you <sup>put</sup> her hand in a vice --  
I have never been hard to please. For example I can  
cheerfully down just about any kind of potable spirits -- provided  
only that it is sour mash bourbon whiskey. To me  
I must say in all modesty I must say I've brought <sup>that</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>some rather</sup> ~~intense~~  
research to ~~the subject~~ <sup>the subject</sup>. <sup>So audacious</sup>

I must say

very  
with my first drink

restlessly Just as the restless and curious Picasso  
moved from his Blue period to his This period on to  
his That period, so I have gone through many a  
phase -- not to mention fifth -- in my quest for the  
ideal booze. When finally I collided with sour  
mash bourbon it was a case of love at first  
sight; I felt warm <sup>all over</sup> from my toes to the tip of my  
patrician nose, which later <sup>promptly</sup> ~~turned~~  
turned, and remained <sup>a mottled</sup> ~~purple~~ <sup>out of shape</sup> with delight. Let me  
give you the top score <sup>on this</sup> ~~absorbing~~ subject.  
The subject is <sup>an</sup> ~~absorbing~~ <sup>one</sup> ~~and~~ I give you the top score.



6

Gin I <sup>gummy</sup> ~~gummy~~ <sup>stoidly</sup> forsook <sup>all</sup> <sup>in which</sup> <sup>were</sup> swiftly during Prohibition when I  
 discovered that the rings from the bathtubs it was made <sup>settling</sup> <sup>Brandy</sup> <sup>settled</sup> regularly under my eyes. <sup>Many</sup> <sup>were</sup> <sup>the</sup> <sup>fifths</sup>  
<sup>of</sup> <sup>brandy</sup> <sup>I</sup> <sup>killed</sup> until my doctor <sup>sincerely</sup> <sup>suggested</sup> <sup>it</sup> <sup>to</sup> <sup>me</sup> <sup>they</sup> <sup>were</sup>  
<sup>might</sup> <sup>be</sup> <sup>in</sup> <sup>turn</sup> <sup>be</sup> killing me. <sup>loyally</sup> Scotch I <sup>loyally</sup> clung to for nearly ten  
<sup>gloriously</sup> <sup>foggy</sup> years—doubtless because my Granny was born in Edinburgh—  
<sup>Inver</sup> until an epic overdose <sup>moved</sup> <sup>me</sup> <sup>to</sup> <sup>desert</sup> <sup>Granny</sup> <sup>and</sup> <sup>it</sup>. <sup>both</sup> <sup>dear</sup>



6

*There followed an uncertain*  
*a season of groping, an*  
This period was followed by a fickle and ambiguous

dalliance with many ~~drinks~~, during which I swayed ~~mainly~~  
*assorted* *boozes* *varieties--* *mostly*  
between Irish and Canadian ~~hoehes~~—not to mention between

the bedroom and bathroom. ~~Then~~ *when* about twelve ~~years~~ *years*

ago I ran across a ~~divine~~ *my first* Kentucky sour mash bourbon ~~and presto,~~ *presto,*

~~and presto~~ *both* my quest and ~~my~~ *my* hangovers were over.

Ever since then I have loyally divided my booze bibbing

between the ~~exquisite~~ *choice* sour mash bourbons of Kentucky and

Tennessee.



Intended  
~~Intended~~

7

Now I hope no one thinks I'm being  
sordidly commercial and trying to make recruits.  
Far from it in fact. For the sad truth is that  
the supply of good soor mash is limited, and if  
all of us started guzzling it there wouldn't be  
enough to go around. I am simply trying to throw  
a friendly life-line to those <sup>groping</sup> ~~groping~~ <sup>& pould</sup> ~~drunkards~~ who continue  
to ~~grop~~ <sup>play</sup> the field as I once did. For  
Toward those <sup>unwary</sup> ~~who~~ <sup>drinks</sup> ~~who~~ have found a different path to ~~the~~  
~~plasterhood~~ <sup>fall</sup> I have only charity and <sup>sad</sup> tolerance;  
I'll let any man stick to his booze if he'll let  
me stick to mine. In fact my wife has long been  
amazed at my tolerance for boozes of all kinds.



7

doggedly of ~~that~~

One of the reasons I like sour mash is that it is the only booze I know that I can sip straight with delight. All others must be <sup>first</sup> disguised and diluted and then tossed off ~~doggedly~~ like a man taking physic. But there are other if marginal reasons why I remain loyal to my sour mash. For one thing the people who make it are so friendly and grateful. Besides cards at Christmas <sup>and other good</sup> they keep sending me little chipatches and gifts all year round - highball glasses, folk and drinking <sup>and quaint folk</sup> song ~~phonograph~~ records, exotic new recipes, trick shot powders, thoughtful little things like that. None has yet sent me a bottle of ~~that~~ sour mash, alas, but I have magnanimously concluded ~~that~~ there must be a ~~law~~ <sup>more miraculously</sup> against that.

Even the lucky salesmen who <sup>shell for</sup> peddle the stuff invariably spring for a drink when one inadvertently lurches against them in public bars. In fact it is not excessive to say that the swigglers' sour mash ~~is to~~ become the members of a big happy family. One friendly distiller recently sent me an anonymous poem that is so purty I must pass it along.

[ Copy <sup>a quote</sup> poem from <sup>bottom of</sup> old yellow p. 5 ]















7

Of all the <sup>mail</sup> letters I have <sup>received</sup> gotten <sup>because of</sup> <sup>about</sup> my  
country <sup>people</sup> ~~state~~ in Cinchburg none has intrigued  
me more than the engaging one I ~~got~~ recently <sup>got</sup> from  
a doctor in Nashville. (At this point I think ~~it~~  
<sup>it</sup> high time to swear on my solemn New Year's  
honor that I'm not making any of this up.)

[Here take Doc's letter from old yellow p. 9]



(I think it's about  
time to  
solemnly  
New Year's honor that  
any of  
us.)

country estate

Of all the letters I have gotten because of my ~~let~~  
in Cinchburg none has intrigued me more than the engaging  
one I got last week from a doctor from Nashville.

"Dear Mr. Traver," he wrote, "For many years, I and a  
number of my colleagues in the field of geriatrics have been  
interested in the high incidence of octogenarians in the  
area surrounding ~~local~~ Cinchburg, Tennessee.

"Some months ago, Mr. ~~Yack~~ Traver, we initiated a  
~~study of the body of people~~ small informal study to  
ascertain what, if any, were contributing factors to this  
apparent phenomena. While certainly not conclusive,  
preliminary results indicate a high consumption of buttermilk  
coupled with mineral content of the water are apparently the  
most positive factors.

"While we have interviewed a number of people, there are  
many who have moved from the area in recent years. We  
understand that you have an interest in a small piece of property  
near Cinchburg and, consequently, might have some ~~part~~ pertinent  
knowledge to support or challenge our preliminary findings. If  
you do, please feel free to write me at your convenience."



for example,

and bleak questions began

At first his letter shook me, and I brooded over it for days. Gnawing doubts assailed <sup>assailing</sup> me. How long had people been taking me for an octogenarian? Since when had my <sup>sumptuous</sup> ~~luxurious~~ <sup>country</sup> retreat dwindled, in Doc's ~~words~~ <sup>words</sup>, to a "mere <sup>interest</sup> in a small piece of property near Cinchberg"? Worse yet, if Doc's findings were true might not my distiller down there -- out of sheer love for his customers, of course, and an unselfish desire to prolong their lives -- be tempted to sneak a little buttermilk into his bourbon? Or perhaps a wee smidgin of that magic mineral water?

Then I thought back on all the nice <sup>things</sup> he had done for me over the years, all the warm letters he had stimulated, ~~brought me~~, all the solace and joy he continued to bestow on the inner man. So I banished my craven doubts and quit looking at my tongue in the mirror, <sup>courageously</sup> fortified myself with a slug of sour mash, and wrote Doc a chin's up letter as follows:



7

has brought  
my drinking got me a whole

At times I feel a little  
guilty over my good fortune.

"Dear Doctor," I wrote.

"I have never laid eyes on my <sup>place</sup> lot in Cinchburg,  
and I guess the ~~only~~ reason I happen to own it is  
because it was given to me by a grateful distiller  
down there. <sup>this, as</sup> nearly as I can gather, ~~this~~ was my  
reward for a prolonged and sturdy devotion to the  
consumption of his product. <sup>most men</sup> Some loyal drinkers  
<sup>only</sup> get cirrhosis and a lot in the cemetery for  
their pains; <sup>I</sup> I got a lot in Cinchburg.

plantation

It doesn't seem fair.

"Consequently I can neither support nor challenge  
your tentative theory that the longevity of <sup>the</sup> its inhabitants  
might spring, in part at least, from their high consumption  
of buttermilk. At the same time I cannot resist expressing  
the wistful hope that ~~before you're done~~ you may also  
<sup>ultimately discover</sup> find that their high consumption of sour mash bourbon <sup>is</sup>  
<sup>significant</sup> might be a contributing factor. I say this because I <sup>happen</sup>  
<sup>to</sup> hate the former and love the latter. In fact I'd rather  
die than switch. Good luck on your research."

happen to

Happy New Year, you all!

(See attached for  
conclusion)







Written by:  
John D. Voelker  
Deer Lake Road  
Ishpeming, Michigan

THE TENNESSEE WALTZ

by

Robert Traver

Since New Year's seems an appropriate season to count one's blessings, I respectfully solicit your holiday indulgence while I run on a little about one of the more highly coveted <sup>prized</sup> of mine. Now as my wife will gladly <sup>talk to</sup> ~~tell~~ you--if you put her hand in a vise--I have never been hard to please. For example I can cheerfully down just about any kind of potable spirits--provided only that it is sour mash bourbon whiskey. To me good old sour mash is the best booze in the land--and I must say in all modesty that I've brought some rather intense research to the subject.

Just as the audacious Picasso moved restlessly from his Blue period to his This period on to his That period, so I have gone through many a phase--not to mention fifth--in my quest for the ideal booze. When finally I collided with sour mash bourbon it was a case of love at first sight; with my very first drink I felt warm all over, from my toes to the tip of my patrician nose, which latter member promptly turned, and remained, quite mottled purple out of sheer <sup>with</sup> delight. ~~The subject is an absorbing one so I give you the box score.~~

X  
Gin I swiftly forsook during Prohibition when I discovered that the rings from all the grimy bathtubs in which it was made were <sup>reappearing</sup> ~~settling~~ regularly under my eyes. Brandy I stoicly killed by the quart and the fifth until my doctor suavely suggested it might in turn be killing me. Scotch I clung to loyally for nearly ten ~~serious~~ foggy years--doubtless because my Granny Traver was born in Edinburgh--until an epic overdose moved me to desert both ~~dear~~ Granny and it.



Then followed a season of groping, an uncertain period of fickle and ambiguous dalliance with many boozes, during which I swayed mostly between assorted Irish and Canadian varieties-- not to mention between the bedroom and bathroom. When about twelve years ago I ran across my first Kentucky sour mash bourbon, presto, my quest and my hangovers were over. Ever since then I have ~~loved~~ divided my booze bibbing between the choice sour mash bourbons of Kentucky and Tennessee.

Now I hope no one thinks I'm being sordidly commercial and trying to make recruits. Far from it in fact. For the sad truth is that the supply of good sour mash is limited, and if all of us started guzzling it there wouldn't be enough to go around. Instead I am simply trying to throw a friendly life-line to those groping souls who continue to play the field as I once did. Toward those uncouth drinkers who have found a different path to plasterhood I feel only charity and ~~tolerance~~ tolerance; I'll let any man stick to his booze if he'll let me stick to mine. In fact my wife has long been amazed at my tolerance for boozes of all kinds.

One of the reasons I like sour mash is that it is the only booze I know of that I can sip straight with delight; all others I must first disguise and dilute and then doggedly toss off like a man taking physic. But there are other if marginal reasons why I remain loyal to my sour mash. For one thing the people who make it are so friendly and grateful. Besides cards at Christmas they keep sending me little dispatches and gifts all year round-- highball glasses, drinking and quaint folk song records, exotic new recipes, trick shot pourers, thoughtful little things like



that. None has yet sent me a bottle of sour mash, alas, but I have magnanimously concluded there must be a law against that.

Even more miraculous, the lucky salesmen who shill for the stuff invariably spring for a drink when one inadvertently lurches against them in public bars. In fact it is not excessive to say that the swigglers of sour mash ~~are~~<sup>are</sup> members of a big happy family. One friendly distiller recently sent me an anonymous poem that is so purty I must pass it along.

"In the Bluegrass region

A paradox was born;

The corn was full of kernels,

The Colonels full of corn."

*Dixie*  
But my <sup>^</sup>cup ~~of sour mash really~~ ranneth over when, just a few years ago, one of its warm-hearted distillers up and gave me a plot of ground near the site of his distillery in what I shall call Cinchburg, Tennessee. I was and remain deeply touched by his generous gesture; since then I glow not only from his products but from a fine sense of cameraderie and proprietorship; at last I really belong. Even my sneaky trips to the pantry for a quick one are now ~~accompanied~~<sup>accompanied</sup> by a warm feeling that someone down there is watching and cares...

With my lot in Cinchburg not only did loneliness vanish but overnight my correspondence swelled to marvelous proportions; all at once it seemed that all Cinchburg started writing me. Scarcely a month goes by, for instance, that I don't get a cheery letter from the county agent down there. Am I figuring on planting a tobacco crop this season? Or ~~should~~<sup>if</sup> I leave the place fallow do I ~~to~~<sup>aim</sup> to remove those unsightly weeds? Can Jud Hawkins pasture



his mule there? Is it all right for the neighbors to harvest some sort of bug, the name of which eludes me--could it be cinchbug?-- that the natives ~~crave~~<sup>crave</sup> for fish bait?

Then I maintain a spirited running correspondence with the local tax assessor, a courteous but persistent soul whom I keep slyly pushing off on Papa Distillery, thus ~~enviously~~<sup>giving me</sup> ~~endowing me~~ ~~with~~ all the prides of ownership without any of its pangs. In short my lot in Cinchburg has given me a new purpose in life; indeed it is by way of becoming a whole new career.

All the more strange it is, then, that I have never yet seen my exclusive country place down Cinchburg way. But lately some real estate people there have been rather ardently wooing me and I may just have to go take a look. Who knows, possibly there is oil on the place. Better yet--a man can dream, can't he?-- maybe there's a bubbling spring of pure sour mash bourbon. This last heady speculation has afforded me many a happy hour. Maybe I could build me a rustic tavern <sup>there</sup> to rival even the Long Branch, and furnish dippers. I've even dreamed up a name for the place-- the Bourbon Bonanza, of course...

Of all the nice letters I have received because of my country place in Cinchburg none has intrigued me more than the engaging one I recently got from a doctor in Nashville. (At this point I think it high time to swear on my solemn New Year's honor that I'm not making any of this up.)

"Dear Mr. Traver," he wrote, "For many years, I and a number of my colleagues in the field of geriatrics have been interested in the high incidence of octogenarians in the area surrounding Cinchburg, Tennessee.



"Some months ago, Mr. Traver, we initiated a small informal study to ascertain what, if any, were contributing factors to this apparent phenomena. While certainly not conclusive, preliminary results indicate a high consumption of buttermilk coupled with mineral content of the water are apparently the most positive factors.

"While we have interviewed a number of people, there are many who have moved from the area in recent years. We understand that you have an interest in a small piece of property near Cinchburg and, consequently, might have some pertinent knowledge to support or challenge our preliminary findings. If you do, please feel free to write me at your convenience."

At first his letter shook me, and I brooded over it for days. Gnawing doubts and bleak questions began assailing me. How long, for example, had people been taking me for an octogenarian? Since when had my luxurious southern retreat dwindled, in Doc's words, to a mere "interest in a small piece of property near Cinchburg"? Worse yet, if Doc's findings were true might not my distiller down there--out of sheer love for his customers, of course, and an unselfish desire to prolong their lives--be tempted to sneak a little buttermilk into his bourbon? Or perhaps a wee smidgin of that magic mineral water?

Then I thought back on all the nice things he had done for me over the years, all the warm letters he had stimulated, all the solace and joy he continued to bestow on the inner man. So I banished my craven doubts and quit looking at my tongue in the mirror, courageously fortified myself with a slug of sour mash, and wrote Doc a chin's up letter as follows:

^



"Dear Doctor," I wrote. "I have never laid eyes on my lot in Cinchburg. The reason I happen to own it is because it was given me by a grateful distiller down there. This, as nearly as I can gather, was my reward for a prolonged and sturdy devotion to the consumption of his product. At times I feel a little guilty over my good fortune. <sup>Some drinkers</sup> ~~Most men~~ get only cirrhosis and cemetery lots for their pains; my drinking has <sup>earned</sup> brought me a whole tobacco plantation in Cinchburg. It doesn't seem fair.

"Inasmuch as the only people I am even faintly acquainted with in Cinchburg are pen pals--such as the county agent and the local tax assessor--and moreover I am mercifully not yet an octogenarian, manifestly I can scarcely either support or refute your interesting theory that the longevity of its inhabitants might spring, in part at least, from their high consumption of buttermilk. At the same time I cannot resist expressing the wistful hope that you may ultimately discover that their reputed high consumption of sour mash bourbon is a significant contributing factor--although how they can ~~bring themselves to~~ mix the two staggers the imagination. I say this because I happen to hate the former and love the latter. In fact I'd rather die than switch. Good luck on your research. Should it confirm my growing suspicions please wire me collect and I'll move down there to be <sup>nearer</sup> near the source."

Happy New Year, <sup>g</sup> you all!



Written by:  
John D. Voelker  
Deer Lake Road  
Ishpeming, Michigan

No. 50.

THE TENNESSEE WALTZ

by

Robert Traver

Since New Year's seems an appropriate season to count one's blessings, I respectfully solicit your holiday indulgence while I run on a little about one of the more highly coveted <sup>prized</sup> of mine. Now as my wife will gladly <sup>testify--</sup> tell you--if you put her hand in a vise--I have never been hard to please. For example I can cheerfully down just about any kind of potable spirits--provided only that it is sour mash bourbon whiskey. To me good old sour mash is the best booze in the land--and I must say in all modesty that I've brought some rather intense research to the subject.

Just as the audacious Picasso moved restlessly from his Blue period to his This period on to his That period, so I have gone through many a phase--not to mention fifth--in my quest for the ideal booze. When finally I collided with sour mash bourbon it was a case of love at first sight; with my very first drink I felt warm all over, from my toes to the tip of my patrician nose, which latter member promptly turned, and remained, <sup>quite</sup> mettled purple ~~out of sheer~~ <sup>with</sup> delight. ~~The subject is an absorbing one so I give you the box seat~~

Gin I swiftly forsook during Prohibition when I discovered that the rings from all the grimy bathtubs ~~in~~ which it was made <sup>in</sup> were settling regularly under my eyes. Brandy I stoicly killed by the quart and the fifth until my doctor suavely suggested it might in turn be killing me. Scotch I clung to loyally for nearly ten <sup>gloriously</sup> foggy years--doubtless because my Granny Traver was born in Edinburgh--until an epic overdose moved me to desert both dear Granny and it.



Then followed a season of groping, an uncertain period of fickle and ambiguous dalliance with many boozes, during which I swayed mostly between assorted Irish and Canadian varieties-- not to mention between the bedroom and bathroom. When about twelve years ago I ran across my first Kentucky sour mash bourbon, presto, my quest and my hangovers were over. Ever since then I have ~~loyally~~ divided my booze bibbing between the choice sour mash bourbons of Kentucky and Tennessee.

Now I hope no one thinks I'm being sordidly commercial and trying to make recruits. Far from it in fact. For the sad truth is that the supply of good sour mash is limited, and if all of us started guzzling it there wouldn't be enough to go around. Instead I am simply trying to throw a friendly life-line to those groping souls who continue to play the field as I once did. Toward those uncouth drinkers who have found a different path to plasterhood I feel only charity and ~~tolerance~~ tolerance; I'll let any man stick to his booze if he'll let me stick to mine. In fact my wife has long been amazed at my tolerance for boozes of all kinds.

One of the reasons I like sour mash is that it is the only booze I know of that I can sip straight with delight; all others I must first disguise and dilute and then doggedly toss off like a man taking physic. But there are other if marginal reasons why I remain loyal to my sour mash. For one thing the people who make it are so friendly and grateful. Besides cards at Christmas they keep sending me little dispatches and gifts all year round-- highball glasses, drinking and quaint folk song records, exotic new recipes, trick shot pourers, thoughtful little things like



that. None has yet sent me a bottle of sour mash, alas, but I have magnanimously concluded there must be a law against that.

Even more miraculous, the lucky salesmen who shill for the stuff invariably spring for a drink when one inadvertently lurches against them in public bars. In fact it is not excessive to say that the swigglers of sour mash become <sup>are</sup> members of a big happy family. One friendly distiller recently sent me an anonymous poem that is so purty I must pass it along.

"In the Bluegrass region

A paradox was born;

The corn was full of kernels,

*Dipil* The Colonels full of corn."

But my cup ~~of sour mash~~ really ranneth over when, just a few years ago, one of <sup>these</sup> ~~its~~ warm-hearted distillers up and gave me a plot of ground near the site of his distillery in what I shall call Cinchburg, Tennessee. I was and remain deeply touched by his generous gesture; since then I glow not only from his products but from a fine sense of camaraderie and proprietorship; at last I really belong. Even my sneaky trips to the pantry for a quick one are now always accompanied by a warm feeling that someone down there is watching and cares...

With my lot in Cinchburg not only did loneliness vanish but overnight my correspondence swelled to marvelous proportions; all at once it seemed that all Cinchburg started writing me. Scarcely a month goes by, for instance, that I don't get a cheery letter from the county agent down there. Am I figuring on planting a tobacco crop this season? Or <sup>if</sup> should I leave the place fallow do I <sup>am</sup> to remove those unsightly weeds? Can Jud Hawkins pasture



his mule there? Is it all right for the neighbors to harvest some sort of bug, the name of which eludes me---could it be cinchbug?--- that the natives <sup>crave</sup> ~~carve~~ for fish bait?

Then I maintain a spirited running correspondence with the local tax assessor, a courteous but persistent soul whom I keep slyly pushing off on Papa Distillery, thus <sup>giving me!</sup> ~~enviably-endowing me~~ <sup>giving me!</sup> ~~with~~ all the prides of ownership without any of its pangs. In short my lot in Cinchburg has given me a new purpose in life; indeed it is by way of becoming a whole new career.

All the more strange it is, then, that I have never yet seen my exclusive country place down Cinchburg way. But lately some real estate people there have been rather ardently wooing me and I may just have to go take a look. Who knows, possibly there is oil on the place. Better yet---a man can dream, can't he?--- maybe there's a bubbling spring of pure sour mash bourbon. This last heady speculation has afforded me many a happy hour. Maybe I could build me a rustic tavern <sup>there</sup> to rival even the Long Branch, and furnish dippers. I've even dreamed up a name for the place--- the Bourbon Bonanza, of course...

Of all the nice letters I have received because of my country place in Cinchburg none has intrigued me more than the engaging one I recently got from a doctor in Nashville. (At this point I think it high time to swear on my solemn New Year's honor that I'm not making any of this up.)

"Dear Mr. Traver," he wrote, "For many years, I and a number of my colleagues in the field of geriatrics have been interested in the high incidence of octogenarians in the area surrounding Cinchburg, Tennessee.



"Some months ago, Mr. Traver, we initiated a small informal study to ascertain what, if any, were contributing factors to this apparent phenomena. While certainly not conclusive, preliminary results indicate a high consumption of buttermilk coupled with mineral content of the water are apparently the most positive factors.

"While we have interviewed a number of people, there are many who have moved from the area in recent years. We understand that you have an interest in a small piece of property near Cinchburg and, consequently, might have some pertinent knowledge to support or challenge our preliminary findings. If you do, please feel free to write me at your convenience."

At first his letter shook me, and I brooded over it for days. Gnawing doubts and bleak questions began assailing me. How long, for example, had people been taking me for an octogenarian? Since when had my luxurious southern retreat dwindled, in Doc's words, to a mere "interest in a small piece of property near Cinchburg"? Worse yet, if Doc's findings were true might not my distiller down there--out of sheer love for his customers, of course, and an unselfish desire to prolong their lives--be tempted to sneak a little buttermilk into his bourbon? Or perhaps a wee smidgin of that magic mineral water?

Then I thought back on all the nice things he had done for me over the years, all the warm letters he had stimulated, all the solace and joy he continued to bestow on the inner man. So I banished my craven doubts and quit looking at my tongue in the mirror, courageously fortified myself with a slug of sour mash, and wrote Doc a chin's up letter as follows:

^



"Dear Doctor," I wrote. "I have never laid eyes on my lot in Cinchburg. The reason I happen to own it is because it was given me by a grateful distiller down there. This, as nearly as I can gather, was my reward for a prolonged and sturdy devotion to the consumption of his product. At times I feel a little guilty over my good fortune. Most men get only cirrhosis and cemetery lots for their pains; <sup>Some drinkers</sup> my drinking has <sup>had earned</sup> brought me a whole tobacco plantation in Cinchburg. It doesn't seem fair.

"Inasmuch as the only people I am even faintly acquainted with in Cinchburg are pen pals--such as the county agent and the local tax assessor--and moreover I am mercifully not yet an octogenarian, manifestly I can scarcely either support or refute your interesting theory that the longevity of its inhabitants might spring, in part at least, from their high consumption of buttermilk. At the same time I cannot resist expressing the wistful hope that you may ultimately discover that their reputed high consumption of sour mash bourbon is a significant contributing factor--although how they can bring themselves to mix the two staggers the imagination. I say this because I happen to hate the former and love the latter. In fact I'd rather die than switch. Good luck on your research. Should it confirm my growing suspicions please wire me collect and I'll move down there to be <sup>nearer</sup> <sup>closer to</sup> near the source."

Happy New Year <sup>to</sup> you all!



## The Tennessee Waltz

By ROBERT TRAVER

SINCE THE BEGINNING of the new year seems an appropriate season to count one's blessings, I respectfully solicit your indulgence, while I run on a little about one of the most highly prized of mine. Now as my wife will gladly testify—if you put her hand in a vise—I have never been hard to please. For example I can cheerfully down just about any kind of potable spirits—provided only that it is sour mash bourbon whisky. To me good old sour mash is the best booze in the land—and I must say in all modesty that I've bought some rather intense research to the subject.

Just as the audacious Picasso moved restlessly from his Blue period to his This period on to his That period, so I have gone through many a phase—not to mention fifth—in my quest for the ideal booze. When finally I collided with sour mash bourbon it was a case of love at first sight; with my very first drink I felt warm all over, from my toes to the tip of my patrician nose, which latter member promptly turned, and remained, quite purple with delight.

Gin I swiftly forsook during Prohibition when I discovered that the rings from all the grimy bathtubs it was made in were settling regularly under my eyes. Brandy I stoically killed by the quart and the fifth until my doctor suavely suggested it might in turn be killing me. Scotch I clung to loyally for nearly 10 foggy years—doubtless because my Granny Traver was born in Edinburgh—until an epic overdose moved me to desert both Granny and it.

Then followed a season of groping, an uncertain period of fickle and ambiguous dalliance with many boozes, during which I swayed mostly between assorted Irish and Canadian varieties—not to mention between the bedroom and bathroom. When about 12 years ago I ran across my first Kentucky sour mash bourbon, presto, my quest and my hangovers were over. Ever since then I have divided my booze bibing between the choice sour mash bourbons of Kentucky and Tennessee.

Now I hope no one thinks I'm being sordidly commercial and trying to make recruits. Far from it in fact. For the sad truth is that the supply of good sour mash is limited, and if all of us started guzzling it there wouldn't be enough to go around. Instead I am simply trying to throw a friendly lifeline to those groping souls who continue to play the field as I once did. Toward those uncouth drinkers who have found a different path to plasterhood I feel only charity and tolerance; I'll let any man stick to his booze if he'll let me stick to mine. In fact my wife has long been amazed at my tolerance for boozes of all kinds.

One of the reasons I like sour mash is that it is the only booze I know of that I can sip straight with delight; all others I must first disguise and dilute and then doggedly toss off like a man taking physic. But there are other if marginal reasons why I remain loyal to my sour mash. For one thing the people who make it are so friendly and grateful. Besides cards at Christmas they keep sending me little dispatches and gifts all year round—highball glasses, drinking and



## ROTO—Editorial Martin—Return to Saunders

ROTO—Sunday, January 26, 1969

TRAVTR—Galley 2

9 on 10 Imperial—13 NO indent

quaint folk song records, exotic new recipes, trick shot pourers, thoughtful little things like that. None has yet sent me a bottle of sour mash, alas, but I have magnanimously concluded there must be a law against that.

Even more miraculous, the lucky salesmen who shill for the stuff invariably spring for a drink when one inadvertently lurches against them in public bars. In fact it is not excessive to say that the swigglers of sour mash are members of a big happy family. One friendly distiller recently sent me an anonymous poem that is so purty I must pass it along.

*"In the Bluegrass region  
a paradox was born;  
The corn was full of kernels,  
The Colonels full of corn."*

But my Dixie cup ranneth over when, just a few years ago, one of these warm-hearted distillers up and gave me a plot of ground near the site of his distillery in what I shall call Cinchburg, Tenn. I was and remain deeply touched by his generous gesture; since then I glow not only from his products but from a fine sense of camaraderie and proprietorship; at last I really belong. Even my sneaky trips to the pantry for a quick one are now accompanied by a warm feeling that someone down there is watching and cares . . .

With my lot in Cinchburg not only did loneliness vanish but overnight my correspondence swelled to marvelous proportions; all at once it seemed that all Cinchburg started writing me. Scarcely a month goes by, for instance, that I don't get a cheery letter from the county agent down there. Am I figuring on planting a tobacco crop this season? Or if I leave the place fallow do I aim to remove those unsightly weeds? Can Jud Hawkins pasture his mule there? Is it all right for the neighbors to harvest some sort of bug, the name of which eludes me—could it be cinchbug?—that the natives crave for fish bait?

Then I maintain a spirited running correspondence with the local tax assessor, a courteous but persistent soul whom I keep slyly pushing off on Papa Distillery, thus giving me all the pangs of ownership without any of its pangs. In short my lot in Cinchburg has given me a new purpose in life; indeed it is by way of becoming a whole new career.

All the more strange it is, then, that I have never yet seen my exclusive country place down Cinchburg way. But lately some real estate people there have been rather ardently wooing me and I may just have to go take a look. Who knows, possibly there is oil on the place. Better yet—a man can dream, can't he?—maybe there's a bubbling spring of pure sour mash bourbon. This last heady speculation has afforded me many a happy hour. Maybe I could build me a rustic tavern there to rival even the Long Branch, and furnish dippers. I've even dreamed up a name for the place — the Bourbon Bonanza, of course . . .

Of all the nice letters I have received because of my country place in Cinchburg none has intrigued me more than the engaging one I recently got from a doctor in Nashville. (At this point I think it high time to swear on my solemn New Year's honor that I'm not making any of this up.)

"Dear Mr. Traver," he wrote, "For many years, I and a number of my colleagues in the fird of geriatrics



## ROTO — Editorial Martin — Return to Saunders

ROTO—Sunday, January 20, 1969

TRAVER—Galley 3

9 on 10 Imperial—13 NO indent

have been interested in the high incidence of octogenarians in the area surrounding Cinchburg, Tenn.

"Some months ago, Mr. Traver, we initiated a small informal study to ascertain what, if any, were contributing factors to this apparent phenomena. While certainly not conclusive, preliminary results indicate a high consumption of buttermilk coupled with mineral content of the water are apparently the most positive factors.

"While we have interviewed a number of people, there are many who have moved from the area in recent years. We understand that you have an interest in a small piece of property near Cinchburg and, consequently, might have some pertinent knowledge to support or challenge our preliminary findings. If you do, please feel free to write me at your convenience."

At first his letter shook me, and I brooded over it for days. Gnawing doubts and bleak questions began assailing me. How long, for example, had people been taking me for an octogenarian? Since when had my luxurious southern retreat dwindled, in Doc's words, to a mere "interest in a small piece of property near Cinchburg?" Worse yet, if Doc's findings were true might not my distiller down there—out of sheer love for his customers, of course, and an unselfish desire to prolong their lives — be tempted to sneak a little buttermilk into his bourbon? Or perhaps a wee smidgin of that magic mineral water?

Then I thought back on all the nice things he had done for me over the years, all the warm letters he had stimulated, all the solace and joy he continued to bestow on the inner man. So I banished my craven doubts and quit looking at my tongue in the mirror, courageously fortified myself with a slug of sour mash, and wrote Doc a chin's-up letter as follows:

"Dear Doctor," I wrote. "I have never laid eyes on my lot in Cinchburg. The reason I happen to own it is because it was given me by a grateful distiller down there. This, as nearly as I can gather, was my reward for a prolonged and sturdy devotion to the consumption of his product. At times I feel a little guilty over my good fortune. Some drinkers get only cirrhosis and cemetery lots for their pains; my drinking has earned me a whole tobacco plantation in Cinchburg. It doesn't seem fair.

"Inasmuch as the only people I am even faintly acquainted with in Cinchburg are pen pals—such as the county agent and the local tax assessor—and moreover I am mercifully not yet an octogenarian, manifestly I can scarcely either support or refute your interesting theory that the longevity of its inhabitants might spring, in part at least, from their high consumption of buttermilk. At the same time I cannot resist expressing the wistful hope that you may ultimately discover that their reputed high consumption of sour mash bourbon is a significant contributing factor — although how they can mix the two staggers the imagination. I say this because I happen to hate the former and love the latter. In fact I'd rather die than switch. Good luck on your research. Should it confirm my growing suspicions please wire me collect and I'll move down there to be nearer the source."

Happy New Year you all! ■