

THE WRITING AND PRODUCING OF PECOS BILL AND THE INDIANS,
AN ORIGINAL MUSICAL COMEDY FOR EDUCATIONAL THEATRE

APPROVED:

E. Robert Blair
Major Professor

Arthur M. Sampson
Minor Professor

R. V. Holland
Director of the Department of Speech and Drama

Robert B. Toulson
Dean of the Graduate School

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THESIS

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By

William T. Overton, B. S.

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PREFACE

During May, 1967, the premiere production of a new musical comedy, Pecos Bill and the Indians, was presented by the students of Bussey Junior High School in Garland, Texas. Eleven performances were given in the high schools and junior high schools in Garland, and two additional performances were presented in the Studio Theatre on the North Texas State University campus in Denton, Texas. The writing and producing of this musical comedy was a creative production thesis.

The playwright first had the idea for the musical in 1963, when he was reading children's literature to find a story suitable for dramatization. Though no story about Pecos Bill suggested a play, the character seemed to have dramatic possibilities. The writer had worked as a drama director in the public schools and knew the need for new scripts and the lack of good musicals written for educational theatre.

Work began with a study of the art of playwriting. After research on some of the techniques used by dramatists, a script was begun using this research.

The playwright, who also served as director and designer, decided on a cartoon style for the production. The style was chosen for several reasons. First, the style was especially appropriate for comedy because of its deliberate

exaggeration. Second, the style seemed suitable for Pecos Bill, a super hero in the tradition of comic-book heroes. Third, the style was familiar to junior high school youngsters. Fourth, the style particularly appealed to the personal taste of the writer and gave him ideas to work from.

The completed script was then tested in a junior high school production. Although there were limitations of time and budget in the school and although the students lacked experience and training, the production was very successful.

The organization of the thesis is basically the organization of the project. Chapter One serves as a general introduction to the problem, showing the popularity of musical comedy production in educational theatre and the problem of finding suitable scripts.

The research in the art of playwriting is presented in Chapter Two. The chapter is not intended to be a textbook on playwriting, but rather a survey of the generally accepted techniques of dramatists, particularly those who write for young people.

Chapter Three is a record of the procedure used in writing the script and songs for Pecos Bill and the Indians. This part of the study presents the characterization of the protagonist and the antagonist, the construction of a scenario of the plot, and the development of the script and songs.

In Chapter Four, the direction and production of the musical at Bussey Junior High School are discussed. Organizing a backstage crew, designing costumes and scenery, planning publicity, and managing the house are presented in this chapter.

An evaluation of the production is made in Chapter Five, including a judgement of its financial, educational, and artistic success.

The Appendix contains a copy of the program; a copy of the script, including a description of the blocking, diagrams, and production photographs; a copy of the music lead sheets; a copy of the letter announcing tryouts, the rehearsal schedule, and the letters of instruction on costumes; and newspaper and magazine articles about the production.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
PREFACE	iii
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	vii
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. PLAYWRITING TECHNIQUES	12
III. WRITING <u>PECOS BILL AND THE INDIANS</u>	24
IV. PRODUCING <u>PECOS BILL AND THE INDIANS</u>	37
V. EVALUATION OF THE PRODUCTION	52
APPENDIX	58
BIBLIOGRAPHY	209

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Plate	Page
I. Set Unit with Hanging Panel	42
II. "I Thought We'd Never"	66
III. Armadillo Armstrong	69
IV. "Boy Howdy"	72
V. Bill: "Here's the rest of your money, Sir."	75
VI. "Tell Me, Is It True?"	80
VII. Bill: "Yep!"	85
VIII. "Tribal Council"	96
IX. Bill: "Scared folks don't make good neighbors."	99
X. Armstrong: "You men want to do something really nasty?"	106
XI. "Coyote Home"	113
XII. "Saturday Night"	120
XIII. "Invitation to a War Party".	125
XIV. Armstrong: "All right, men."	135
XV. "Rain Dance Rag"	142
XVI. Braves: "It's fun to do the Rain Dance Rag!".	144
XVII. "I Feel Sorry for You"	147
XVIII. "Boy Howdy (Reprise)"	156

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Musical comedy is a growing part of today's educational theatre. All over the United States, particularly in colleges and larger high schools, a musical comedy is the most important dramatic production of the school year. The prominent role musicals play in the theatre activity of the public schools parallels the emphasis on musicals in professional theatre. Besides the success musical comedies have had on Broadway, many summer stock companies, such as the Dallas Summer Musicals in Dallas and Casa Mañana in Fort Worth, specialize in the production of musicals. In professional, community, and educational theatre, musical comedy has grown in popularity.

Because of this growth in popularity, there may be pressure on the music department or the drama department of a school to produce a musical. However, such a production is an enormous task, even for professionals. Those who present a musical on Broadway try to hire only the best professional talent and usually spend more money than would ever be spent on a straight play. It is not unusual for a musical to cost \$500,000.¹

¹Lehman Engel, The American Musical Theatre (New York, 1967), p. 179.

For the ambitious high school or junior high school with limited facilities, time, and budget, production problems are multiplied. First among these problems is finding a suitable script. Practically none of the well-known musicals were intended for educational theatre, and a search through the publishers' catalogues shows that few suitable scripts are available.

The three most important publishers of musical comedy scripts are Tams-Witmark Music Library, Music Theatre International, and the Rodgers and Hammerstein Repertory. These three sources specialize in the Broadway and off-Broadway successes and provide scripts and scores to both professional and amateur groups. All three of them offer musical works for stage presentation by schools and look to educational theatre for much of their financial gain.

Tams-Witmark² is probably the largest and most important of these publishers. This company provides such successful shows as Bye Bye Birdie, Li'l Abner, Hello Dolly, Brigadoon, Carnival, My Fair Lady, and Camelot. In addition to recent Broadway musicals, the company also publishes the operettas of Victor Herbert, Jerome Kern, George Gershwin, Sigmund Romberg, Rudolf Friml, and George M. Cohan.

Many high school and junior high school theatre directors prefer Tams-Witmark because of the special services the

²Tams-Witmark Music Library, Inc., 757 Third Avenue, New York, New York, 10017.

company provides. They send perusal books and scores with no charge other than the mail charges both ways. They have a stage manager's guide to many works. For schools which do not want the standard Broadway pit orchestrations, this publisher has band and combo arrangements for many shows. Perhaps most important, Tams-Witmark prints a periodical, "Musical Show," which features articles about their musicals and photographs of amateur and professional productions. This publication and their colorful, illustrated catalogue are responsible for much of their success in the amateur market.

Music Theatre International,³ though not as large as Tams-Witmark, has much to offer the high school or junior high producer. In the Music Theatre International catalogue are such Broadway shows as The Music Man, The Unsinkable Molly Brown, Wish You Were Here, Guys and Dolls, and West Side Story. This company publishes a number of off-Broadway scripts, including Little Mary Sunshine, Riverwind, and The Fantasticks. Most important to schools, Music Theatre International, in response to many requests from groups in search of musical plays especially intended for junior and senior high school presentation, now publishes several musicals written for schools by James Leyden and Lee Benjamin. Most of these have stories based on folktales. The publisher

³Music Theatre International, 119 West 57th Street, New York 19, New York.

states in the catalogue that these productions have professional and artistic standards but few technical restrictions.

An important drawback to this publishing firm is their requirement of a rather large deposit in order to examine a script and score. Music Theatre International does an impressive business with schools, however, and are providing material for many educational theatre successes.

The Rodgers and Hammerstein Repertory⁴ provides not only Oklahoma!, The King and I, South Pacific, and the other musicals of Rodgers and Hammerstein, but also handles other popular musicals, including Annie Get Your Gun and Show Boat. The Rodgers and Hart musicals are a part of this company's catalogue, and educational theatre groups occasionally revive The Boys from Syracuse or Babes in Arms. Though many popular scripts are the property of the Rodgers and Hammerstein Repertory, the royalty and rental of the shows are very expensive.

Several new publishing companies have been organized to print nothing but musical comedies for secondary schools and youth groups. Most of these companies have no more than five shows available, and the scripts lack professional polish, but these publishers demonstrate the growing interest in school musicals across the country. Schools can purchase

⁴The Rodgers and Hammerstein Repertory, 120 East 56th Street, New York, New York, 10022.

a package from these companies for a reasonable price and receive scripts, stage charts, lead sheets, conductor score, production manual, advertising, and all the musical arrangement for a small band. Some of these publishers even furnish a tape recording of the accompaniment to rehearse by.

Hollywood Hits,⁵ Lancer Productions,⁶ and Prom Publishing Company⁷ are the three largest of these companies. All of them stress the fund-raising factor more than artistic excellence. According to the advertising of these publishers, no special costumes are required, very little scenery is needed, there are no royalties, and there is nothing to return. The complete package price varies, but it is usually about \$150.00.

Publishing companies that do not specialize in musicals usually include a few in their catalogue of plays. Samuel French,⁸ which is one of the largest theatrical publishers in the world, provides scripts of both Broadway musical successes, such as Peter Pan and Plain and Fancy, and Broadway

⁵Hollywood Hits and Dave Alexander, P. O. Box 428, Carlsbad, California, 92008.

⁶Lancer Productions, 310 Willis Avenue, Mineola, New York, 11501.

⁷Prom Publishing Company, 5404 Franklin Avenue, Hollywood, California, 90027.

⁸Samuel French, Inc., 25 West 45th Street, New York, New York, 10036.

failures, such as Drat the Cat!, which lasted eight performances in New York.

Samuel French also publishes several inexpensive shows, which the company advertises to be "screamingly funny" or "absolutely original" and which may be presented with little or no royalty. Most of these scripts are of the same quality as most of the nonroyalty plays published and advertised to be "screamingly funny" or "absolutely original."

Another large publisher, Baker's Plays,⁹ prints many of these same shows. Although Sing Out Sweet Land and Spoon River Anthology are listed in their catalogue, many other scripts of doubtful quality are included. Baker's Plays has now added three religious musicals: Exodus and Easter, Hannah, and Snakes and Eggs, and two children's musicals, The Clowns and Off with His Honorable Head.

Dramatists Play Service¹⁰ does not provide any Broadway musical successes, but does have several quality scripts to offer, including The Amorous Flea, Simply Heavenly, By Hex, and Jo. A deposit and reading fee are required to examine the piano-vocal score.

The Dramatic Publishing Company¹¹ has only recently become a publisher of musical comedies. They take pride in

⁹Baker's Plays, 100 Summer Street, Boston, Mass., 02110.

¹⁰Dramatists Play Service, Inc., 440 Park Avenue South, New York, New York, 10016.

¹¹The Dramatic Publishing Company, 86 East Randolph Street, Chicago, Illinois, 60601.

the quality of their scripts and include some that have been done on Broadway, such as Barefoot Boy with Cheek, Half a Sixpence, and Lute Song. Since this company is primarily aiming at the school market, it is of particular interest. At the present time, a score may be examined for ten days for a five-dollar deposit, and the price of royalty and music rental will be given on application and is comparatively reasonable.

About the only publisher still printing operettas is Denison and Company.¹² Like the Dramatic Publishing Company, this publisher does most of its business with the school market. For the most part, however, Denison's scripts are not of professional quality, though their catalogue promises "bright and snappy dialogue," "rollicking stories," and "catchy songs."

The shows in this catalogue include a somewhat modernized version of Victor Herbert's My Little Gypsy Sweetheart, called The Fortune Teller, an adaptation of Strauss's Die Fledermaus, called Golden Butterfly, and an up-to-date The Gypsy Baron. Several scripts are translations of European operetta successes and much of the music is excellent. Titles include The Prince and I and My Lady Fair; stories are set in the French Legion in Algiers, rustic inns, and gypsy camps; and characters often have names like Dr. Bohunkus, the Baron of

¹²T. S. Denison & Company, Inc., 321 Fifty Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 55415.

Tatsein, Princess Patani, and Phoebe Gushington. Most of the plots, whether set in modern times or not, are out-dated and probably would not satisfy a sophisticated audience unless produced in the manner of Little Mary Sunshine.

There are music teachers who want to do operettas, and Denison provides scripts for these productions. Denison is also one of the few publishers that print operettas for elementary schools.

All of these publishers have scripts available, but many of these scripts are not suitable for a high school or junior high production. The professional scripts, in spite of high quality, were not written for educational theatre and cause problems for a school producer.

First, the scripts were not intended for student performers. They require people who can dance, sing, and act well. Frequently the leads are supposed to be middle-aged people, and often the show was conceived as a vehicle for one or two stars, which may put too much of the burden on one or two student performers. The kind of talent available is often not the kind of talent required.

Secondly, the scripts were planned for elaborate production. The original show had a large production staff, which probably included a producer, a director, a musical director, a choreographer, a scene designer, a costume designer, and a lighting director. In the educational theatre,

this may have to be the job of one teacher with student help. A number of popular shows have difficult production devices. There is a swimming pool in Wish You Were Here; characters fly in balloons in Around the World in 80 Days, Ben Franklin in Paris, and The Golden Apple; characters fly by themselves in Peter Pan and High Spirits; and animals are an important part of Lill Abner and other shows. Costumes are a problem because casts are usually large and require several changes and because many good musicals are period shows. There are often many changes of scenery. The lengthy ballets and other dance requirements of many shows cause problems, because few students have extensive dance training and few educational theatre directors can choreograph.

The third area of difficulty comes from the fact that the musicals were written for Broadway audiences. The shows are generally two and a half to three hours long and need to be cut to suit local audiences. There is often swearing or rough language, which is especially difficult to cut when it occurs in song lyrics. Often drinking and sex and adult themes such as adultery in Camelot and Oh, Captain, race in No Strings and Finian's Rainbow, and prostitution in Destry Rides Again and New Girl in Town make these scripts unsuitable for high school or junior high.

The fourth factor making some shows unsuitable is that the material is frequently dated. Besides the overly

sentimental operettas of the early part of the century, many fairly recent musicals are now out of date. Happy Hunting, for example, deals with the marriage of Princess Grace of Monaco; Mr. President, Of Thee I Sing, and Lill Abner make much fun of the political situation of the time of their writing; and Damn Yankees was written when the American public thought that no other baseball team could beat the New York Yankees.

A final factor that has already been suggested is the expense of such a production. Besides the cost of costumes and scenery, the royalty and music rental alone can be prohibitive for many schools.

The director of a school musical has as his first problem the selection of a suitable script. He may find himself choosing between expensive scripts of high quality originally intended for professional production and often unsuitable, and scripts that, although inexpensive and easy to produce, are of doubtful quality. What he really needs is a satisfactory script intended for the high school or junior high school stage.

For the production that is the subject of this study, an original script and score were written especially for educational theatre. This musical was then produced in a school situation with the usual problems of a small budget and limited stage facilities and the additional problems of

the junior high: young students with little or no experience or training, boys with unchanged or changing voices, who are shorter than the girls, limited rehearsal time in the afternoon after school, and the need to tour the production to other stages. The work began with an analysis of playwriting techniques.

CHAPTER II

PLAYWRITING TECHNIQUES

The writer of a musical comedy script for amateur junior high production may begin with a general study of the art of playwriting, taking a special look at anything playwrights for children have said that would be applicable.

In her book Children's Theatres and Plays, Constance D'Arcy Mackay wrote the following:

There is an art about which no book has ever been written; about which the card catalogues of the vastest public libraries are silent; about which no brochure is passed from hand to hand. And yet it is a craft that is sedulously practised not only in Europe but in America. It thrives in playhouses and classrooms, in colleges, and Little Theatres and teachers' training schools. Great playwrights as well as the veriest beginners have experimented with it. It is the art of the children's play.¹

With the play for young people, as with adult drama, there is no formula for successful playwriting. If the writer is working on the book for a musical comedy, he can expect no dependable formula either. Lawrence Holofcener, who has written the lyrics for three Broadway musicals, two reviews, and one musical comedy, made the following statement about writing the book for a musical:

¹Constance D'Arcy Mackay, Children's Theatres and Plays (New York, 1927), p. 96.

There is just no set way, no formula, no right or tried and proven method for setting down the book to a musical. I wish I could be more specific, but all I can offer is the weak suggestion that you do what seems appropriate for the particular property. This may seem to be a silly answer to the problems I've raised, but it would make sense to anyone who has ever tried to go against it. Trying to fit or squeeze a plot or idea into a prescribed pattern, according to set rules, just doesn't work. It never fits snugly, so don't bother trying. Rules, in a creative craft like ours, are made by the periphery, after said rules have been proven by success (and of course they are changed as soon as the rule-breaker succeeds).²

Before the playwright starts his writing, he should consider his audience. Marc Connelly discussed this:

A play should be a successful blood transfusion between the actors and the audience. Without the proper union between the two, there can be no chance of success. The more easily the audience takes the new blood into their veins, the more skillful the writer.³

A writer of plays for young people needs a genuine respect for the young audience.⁴ Good theatre requires that the theatre-goer always be considered. It has sometimes been true that when the production is intended for students, the quality is lower than that of a production for adults. Some plays seem to announce, "If it's for kids, dramatic excellence doesn't matter; they will like anything."

²Lawrence Holofcener, A Practical Dictionary of Rhymes (New York, 1960), p. 18.

³Roger M. Busfield, Jr., The Playwright's Art (New York, 1958), p. 50.

⁴Geraldine Brain Siks and Hazel Brain Dunnington, editors, Children's Theatre and Creative Dramatics (Seattle, 1961), p. 99.

The young audience is more intelligent and more receptive than a writer might think. Hal Owen, a writer of plays for children, reminds other writers that "one doesn't have to 'talk down' to children."⁵

What values exist for educational theatre? Why should there be plays for young people at all?

What claim have they on drama? Why are children's plays now given in all our schoolhouses, settlements, camps, and recreation centers? Yet one does not have to look far for the answer. It is written in the eager, vivid faces of children waiting outside the "nickel arcades" in our great cities; it is sometimes stamped on the heavy, uninspired countenances of country children who have "never had a chance," for whom the imaginative life is a closed book. The former are avid in their quest for the stuff that is the substance of dreams; the latter do not know that the stuff exists. The needs of each are so vital and imperative that it is hard to determine which requires guidance most.⁶

Theatre offers to its audience a chance to experience vicariously moments of crisis, action, and conflict. When an audience sit in a darkened theatre, they are invited to become involved in the activity on stage sympathetically. In this way, the child may be expected to gain important values.

Through vicarious involvement in a dramatic event and through the process of identification with the characters who are living the event,

⁵Hal Owen, "Writing Plays for Children," California Journal of Elementary Education, XXV (February, 1957), 146-151.

⁶Constance D'Arcy Mackay, How to Produce Children's Plays (New York, 1915), p. 29.

children will gain insight into their own actions; and as they understand themselves better, they will begin to understand others. Such empathic involvement with a dramatic event, vividly and effectively portrayed upon the stage, may furnish a basis for future thought and action in the same way as an actual dramatic experience. The dramatic event may not be a substitute for an actual experience, but it may augment it or clarify it by focusing the child's attention on its essence, stripping it of the myriad complications which surround it in life.⁷

Keeping his audience in mind, a serious author of plays for students must train himself in all the techniques of entertainment.⁸ Books on playwriting consistently recommend that the playwright read and study play manuscripts, that he see performances of good plays, that he learn about theatre buildings and stages, that he study the history of the theatre, that he gain some knowledge of scene design and construction, and that if possible he act or direct in the theatre. To write well, a playwright must have a good working knowledge of his medium.

The child's mind is a mysterious and wonderful place; a child lives hand in hand with poetry. To speak to him, one needs not only new story material. One needs new styles, new patterns of decor, new breeds of character, new planes of meaning, for a good play must give a child something to grow on.⁹

⁷Jed H. Davis and Mary Jane Larson Watkins, Children's Theatre (New York, 1960), p. 16.

⁸Sara Spencer, "Writing Plays for Children," Children's Theatre and Creative Dramatics, edited by Siks and Dunnington, p. 100.

⁹Ibid., p. 100.

This study of entertainment techniques brings the playwright to consider the elements of dramatic writing, such as characterization, plot, theme, and dialogue as they relate to the young audience. It is at once apparent that these basic elements are inseparably related to each other and cannot be discussed as separate units, but as parts integral to the play as a whole.

All children's plays have a central figure or figures, a protagonist force through which the audience sees the play. Every children's play has a plot, a story arranged into a meaningful pattern which depicts the struggle of the protagonist to achieve or gain an objective. If either the objective or the protagonist force is unworthy of our interest, if we cannot care about them, then there is no play at all. The meaningful pattern of the play's plot will determine its theme--an important element of a children's play. But the most important quality of any children's drama is the story, and it must control the play. All other structural elements must be considered in reference to the story.¹⁰

The plot may be understood as the plan that determines what happens in the play and in what order events occur. Plot and story are of greatest importance to the children's drama. While adults may desire a play stressing character or idea, the young audience still prefers a play that emphasizes plot structure.

Most authorities on playwriting suggest that the construction of the plot be finished before a line of the play is written. This is done by making a scenario, or complete

¹⁰Davis and Watkins, Children's Theatre, p. 52.

outline of the play. The scenario is perhaps the only way a playwright can test whether his plot will build in dramatic interest, keep his audience involved, and end satisfactorily. Most important, the story must light a spark in the playwright.

Characterization may be defined as the playwright's representation of the people whose words and actions make up the play. Some may assume that characterization is a rather unimportant element in musical comedy, since the characters sometimes seem two-dimensional.

The theatre experience for the child audience is best assured by convincing and genuine characters working as an ensemble in a situation which arouses empathic involvement.¹¹

In his book A Primer of Playwriting, Kenneth Macgowan gives three principles of his own for characterization which apply to plays for educational theatre. First, he says that all characters must be believable, both believable in themselves and consistent in their actions.¹²

Macgowan's second principle is that the important figures in the play must be rich in characterization.

They must have many facets to their personalities, many interests, enthusiasms, and sympathies or prejudices, all reaching into the past. This will not only make them more interesting

¹¹Ibid., p. 21.

¹²Kenneth Macgowan, A Primer of Playwriting (New York, 1951), p. 63.

as people, but it will also provide more possibilities for emotional reactions that make for conflict and suspense.¹³

A third principle, according to Macgowan, is that the characters must include people who react against each other, who clash. The sharper the contrast between characters, the more clearly the audience may understand them. At this point it would be of value to examine the protagonist and the antagonist.

The play revolves around the protagonist, the person or persons with whom the audience identifies. The late Charlotte B. Chorpenning, who was for many years in charge of the Goodman Memorial Theatre, always asked playwrights, "Whose story is it?" recognizing that the character who provides a focus for the play is an indispensable element.¹⁴

No playwright can ask his audience to accept a central figure who is neither credible nor attractive. The audience must believe in the hero and care what happens to him. He must be believable in terms of human life and human values. Although he need not be a "realistic" figure, the qualities he displays will be interpreted as desirable human characteristics by the children identifying with him. He therefore must be worthy of the faith placed in him by members of the audience.¹⁵

Like adults, young people do not accept a character who

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Charlotte B. Chorpenning, Twenty-One Years with Children's Theatre (Anchorage, Kentucky, 1954), p. 56.

¹⁵Davis and Watkins, Children's Theatre, p. 66.

is too perfect to be true. Even in children's plays, a character with failings is more believable.

The antagonist usually causes more problems for the playwright than the protagonist.¹⁶ One common way of dealing with this problem is to give to the antagonist a humorous quality. The antagonists in animated cartoons are usually shown in this way. The vicious cat that chases the canary or mouse becomes a stupid clown to be outwitted. Psychologically, the young audience may benefit from the antagonist:

Through the process of identification children see in the villainous characters the "badness" that is in them. As they identify with these antagonists (and they unquestionably do) they experience the power of being antisocial, if only for a moment, and then the purging that comes through punishment. Their guilt is salved, and they can go on secure in the thought that they have paid the price for the escapade. The shrieks of delight in a child audience as the villain gets his just reward are perhaps not so much in pleasure in the thought that good has overcome evil as a deep sense of relief that the children's own "bad" actions have been punished.¹⁷

When the plot is carefully planned and the playwright fully understands his characters, he can begin to write dialogue. Dialogue reveals the character for the playwright and moves the plot forward.

For a young audience, the dialogue must be simple, clear, and to the point. Hal Owens has said, "No one character should say too much in any one speech. Speeches should

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 68-69.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 39.

be short, developing one idea at a time."¹⁸ The danger of verbosity is mentioned by almost every writer on children's theatre. Adults may enjoy clever or meaningful dialogue, but young people prefer action. Mrs. Chorpenning stressed this in her playwriting classes. Again and again she reminded her students to "show it; don't tell it."¹⁹ This she learned by observing children's audiences that became bored with long speeches, however well-written or well-acted.

Musical comedy provides an obvious way of handling long speeches. If a character sings a long speech rather than saying it, and if the song is a good one, the young audience will accept it. However, when the speech is spoken, it should be minimized, both for the sake of the young actor and the young audience.

Constance D'Arcy Mackay emphasizes brevity:

In writing the children's play cut the lines to a minimum. Adults can be interested in dialogue, but a child audience is interested in what is done. The tyro can watch this truth in action by closely observing the next children's play he sees.²⁰

Jed H. Davis also stresses the importance of action:

Children are oriented to action. Both in their own lives and in plays, children much prefer doing things to talking about them. Interesting action should seize attention right at the start and carry

¹⁸Owen, "Writing Plays for Children," p. 149.

¹⁹Chorpenning, Twenty-One Years with Children's Theatre, p. 56.

²⁰Mackay, Children's Theatres and Plays, p. 102.

the impact of the story. Movement will need to be more extensive in a children's play than in an adult drama. Imaginative business and patterns of blocking should be incorporated to present to a child audience an almost constantly changing stage picture.²¹

Hal Owen agrees:

The action should be kept up and the talk down. Broad action, including sprawls on the floor, awkward falls, kicks, fights, and stylized pantomime are the most fascinating of stage activities.²²

However, in a discussion of the need for action in plays for young people, it must be remembered that this action must be motivated.

After witnessing some existing children's plays, a writer may feel obliged to include a big fight, a chase scene, or a scene heavily dependent on broad physical movement. True, children like such action, but this alone is not sufficient reason for super-imposing exciting scenes. If they are used, it should be only because they contribute to the normal development of the play.²³

The need for motivated action and movement in a musical comedy is to some extent met in the choreography of musical numbers and ballets, but here there should never be dancing for dancing's sake. Even in the dance portions, there should be reason for the movement, and it should be consistent with character.

²¹Jed H. Davis, "Producing Theatre for Child Audiences," Children's Theatre and Creative Dramatics, edited by Siks and Dunnington, pp. 88-89.

²²Owen, "Writing Plays for Children," p. 149.

²³Davis and Watkins, Children's Theatre, p. 53.

Certain authorities on playwriting stress the premise, or serious theme of a play. The playwright should be especially careful with plays for young people, who always know when they are being admonished. The theme should be within the action of the play; the author should certainly avoid preaching or meralizing. Again he should remember Chorpenning's slogan, "Show it; don't tell it." Some children's plays take advantage of their opportunity to remind the audience to eat their spinach, say their prayers, and see their dentist twice a year.

Most experienced playwrights recognize that they do not start the creative process with a theme or message in mind. Rather, they find a story or set of characters that fascinates them. They arrange their incidents and build their play, and when it is done they discover that their work expresses a point of view and really has a theme. While this discovery may come as a complete surprise to the writer, the theme's presence is inevitable.²⁴

With some knowledge of his audience and his craft, the playwright begins his play. The merit of his work depends, of course, upon his talent, but also upon his understanding of the elements of drama. Each dramatist for educational theatre must find his own writing procedure and must work and work hard to create something of value.

Even so, he does not aim high enough. He is very fond of saying, "Only the best is good enough"

²⁴Davis and Watkins, Children's Theatre, p. 64.

for children,"²⁵ but hounded by producers, beguiled by their plaudits and by favorable press reviews, flattered by attention given his piece by little children, he settles too soon for success and leaves his work unperfected, characters underwritten, plot manipulated by expedience, meanings expounded instead of illustrated. The children do not complain. Like adults, they are easily delighted with theatrical entertainment that gives them no cause to think, to feel, to understand. A few years ago, a wise conference speaker warned: "Let me caution you, when a producer says, 'The children just loved it!', this is a bad word. You must seek more from your audience than a passing moment of pleasure."²⁶

The work of the playwright for the young audience is yet to be finished. The curtain is ready to rise before an excited and important audience.

The future of American theatre and certainly its standards may well be in the hands of today's children. We producers and playwrights of the children's theatre can therefore follow only one principle: CHILDREN'S THEATRE IS BASICALLY GOOD THEATRE. This principle cannot be compromised.²⁷

Challenged to provide theatre of quality for young people, the playwright can begin work on his script. For the purpose of this study, work can begin on Pecos Bill and the Indians.

²⁵Motto of the now-defunct Junior Programs, Inc., New York.

²⁶Spencer, "Writing Plays for Children," pp. 102-103.

²⁷Davis and Watkins, Children's Theatre, p. 18.

CHAPTER III

WRITING PECOS BILL AND THE INDIANS

Pecos Bill and the Indians did not develop into a cartoon-like musical comedy all at once. Many experiences and impressions influenced the imagination that produced it. Old radio shows and movie serials, Walt Disney animated movies, stylized musical comedies like Lil' Abner and Little Me, and memories of the people and atmosphere of the ranch country in West Texas are reflected in the script. The playwright wanted to show the Old West that exists in the imagination of a young person, the Old West in the minds of children playing cowboys and Indians. This is a technicolor daydream where good is good and bad is delightfully wicked, where there are real virtue and heroism, and where right always wins in the struggle against wrong.

The play was to be performed for audiences of all ages, but it was primarily aimed at junior-high school youngsters. The playwright had several years of experience working with junior-high students and had gained some understanding of this age group as an audience, and the production of the musical was scheduled in a junior high school.

The musical comedy was intended to be pure entertainment.

It had a moral attitude, but entertainment was the most important purpose of the script.

A contrived, melodramatic plot was developed for the musical. Although there is a wealth of folk literature available about Pecos Bill, much of it either could not be used on the stage or had already been used in E. P. Conkle's clever play, Bill and the Widower.¹ The well-known facts about this folk hero, such as his being brought up by coyotes, were used when they contributed to the purpose of the musical.

Pecos Bill was chosen because he is the classic Western hero and is familiar to the audience. With this kind of protagonist, a classic Western antagonist was needed. The villain of the piece was intended to be a comic character and was finally named Armadillo Armstrong.

These two characters were the beginning of the musical script, and early in the writing the author formulated a character sketch of each of them:

Pecos Bill is a 100% red-blooded, two-fisted, bow-legged, all-American hero. He is totally dedicated to doing good, helping people, and "making this tired old world a better place in which to live." Bill is strong, handsome, and thoroughly likable. Women find him irresistible, and men consider him the epitome of what they long to be. He is afraid of nothing, and like all heroes, he's always there when you need him.

It is true that he isn't the smartest man in Texas, but virtue and strength win over intelligence every time. He usually finds himself in situations where right and wrong are clearly defined. It's a

¹E. P. Conkle, Five Plays (New York, 1947).

good thing too, for he's most comfortable here and always does what is right. Ambiguous decisions give him trouble.

As any ten year old kid can tell you, he was brought up among the coyotes. When a cowboy found him, he believed himself a coyote. After becoming a cowboy, he revolutionized ranching and personally invented every single tool and skill important to ranchers.

Although he loves people and they love him, he doesn't take to civilization. His independent spirit, his love of nature, and his rustic background (the coyotes and all) are some of the reasons he never stays in one place for long. Outsiders like to talk about his digging Grand Canyon and bringing a Canadian winter to Texas, but except for such brief exploits, he always lives within the geographical confines of the Lone Star State.

Bill was a deliberate exaggeration of the Western hero. He was a cartoon of the characters played by Tom Mix, Roy Rogers, Gene Autry, Hopalong Cassidy, and others. To balance the conflict, he had to meet an antagonist as esaggerated as he was:

Armadillo Armstrong is the perfect fink. He has no redeeming characteristics except that he never succeeds for long. He's not a Texas at heart and is bound to be an outsider, probably from some place east of the Mississippi. He looks suspiciously like an indoor type.

Armstrong is also an older fellow and represents the very worst of the generation just about yours. He is a cheat, a thief, a sneak, a good-for-nothing, and worst of all, he's unfriendly.

However, his severest critics have to admit that he isn't the type to commit really diabolic crimes like burning orphanages or poisoning wells or, saints preserve us, killing somebody. Armstrong doesn't take part in any of these base crimes because he's too busy being nasty in everyday personal ways.

His favorite hobby is robbery, and because of it, his picture appears on wanted posters all over the West. You'll recognize him; he has a black mustache, evil eyes, and he dresses too well. Anybody who

dresses like that is bound to be vain and probably uses perfume.

Basically he's a coward, and whenever possible, he'll get someone else to do his dirty work and to risk capture. Although he is optimistic about getting away with his crimes, he knows that if he were to stand face to face with a real hero, he wouldn't stand a chance.

The plot was to be a struggle between these two characters. Many ideas seemed possibilities. Armstrong might steal Pecos Bill's horse, Widowmaker. The idea of the horse was rejected, as were the ideas of coyotes and other animals, since this did not fit the style the playwright had in mind and since animals had been used in the Conkle play. The idea of kidnapping an Indian princess seemed interesting for a while, but the character was too much like Tiger Lily in Peter Pan and Indian princesses in other stories. Pecos Bill's folk heroine, Bluefoot Sue, was considered, but was finally rejected because a romantic element took emphasis away from the conflict between Bill and Armstrong and because it wasn't the kind of idea that would interest a youngster playing cowboys and Indians. This idea, however, was used to some extent with the young girls of the town, which provided comedy and the opportunity for a song.

An Indian tribe as a chorus was a part of the planning from the first, and finally the general plot of the villain disrupting the peace between the settlers and the Indians was chosen. Basically, then, there were two primary characters, Bill and Armstrong, and two choruses, the townspeople

and the Indians. The other characters developed out of these choruses.

The next step in the writing was making a scenario with some notes about where musical numbers would effectively occur. Many changes were made in the scenario before any dialogue was written. In an early draft, for example, the townspeople had an encounter with the Indians before Pecos Bill came to town. Bill's bringing the news of the nearby tribe seemed to help streamline the plot. At another time, the Indians kidnapped the girls of the town with the money, but this seemed too sophisticated and adult an idea to fit the style of the show. Changes were made when an idea or situation stalled the pace, failed to fit the cartoon style, or did not suit the personal taste of the playwright or spark his imagination to further writing.

Finally a satisfactory scenario developed:

The Indians are happy until they see settlers coming. They hide and watch the settlers build a town, singing as they work. Once the new bank is built, Armadillo Armstrong and his gang of professional troublemakers try to rob it, but a handsome stranger in town stops them. The stranger turns out to be Pecos Bill. Although Armstrong escapes, Bill vows to catch up with him eventually. The townspeople have other troubles on their hands; they have found out about the Indians and beg Bill to get the tribe to sign a treaty. Bill agrees to go to the Indian camp, where Armstrong has failed to get the Indians to work for him. They are much too friendly. Armstrong watches from a hiding place while Bill gets the tribe to sign the treaty. Bill promises never to harm an Indian, and when he leaves, Armstrong puts magic war paint on the Indians to make them mean and leads them off to

attack the town. The citizens are celebrating the news of the treaty. As soon as Bill leaves, Armstrong and his new Indian gang attack. While the Indians frighten the townspeople, Armstrong robs the bank. After they have escaped with the money, Bill is told what has happened and goes to get the war paint taken off, knowing he has promised never to harm an Indian. Bill enters the Indian camp after Armstrong is asleep, allows himself to be captured, and tricks the Indians into doing a rain dance. The rain washes off the war paint, and the Indians are friendly again. Armstrong is captured, peace is re-established between the townspeople and the Indians, and Bill says goodbye and goes off in search of new adventures.

After the scenario was completed, the dialogue and the songs were begun. The speech of the townspeople was copied from the speech heard in West Texas. The playwright had kept a notebook for some time of things he heard in conversation or read in dialogue that struck him as interesting and appropriate. These included localisms such as "boy howdy!" and "rip-snortin'," some of which were used.

The speech of the Indians presented some problem. They had to speak and sing in English, but the mannered speech sometimes used in movies was discarded. Finally, a kind of simple, childish dialogue was used with an occasional dropping of article adjectives to indicate unfamiliarity with the English language. Certain familiar word choices, such as "big medicine" were used, while others, such as "heap big" and "me fight-um," were rejected. These choices were made partly on principle, but mainly as a matter of personal taste.

The chorus of townspeople was broken up for the dialogue, and characters emerged. The playwright was careful not to let these characters become so interesting that they detracted from the Pecos Bill-Armstrong conflict. They were intended to be of passing interest as they served their purpose in furthering the plot and then to step back into the chorus and become a part of it.

Since Armstrong's gang were bank robbers, and the bank was important to the plot, a banker was needed. Though such characters are often villainous in fiction, this character was a part of the townspeople chorus and was, therefore, good. He was, however, something of the stereotype. The Banker was the only well-dressed person in town and was treated as the unofficial mayor.

The sheriff was needed to lock up the gang and exert authority, and he had some individuality in the chorus.

A small boy who worshipped Bill as a hero was a part of the original writing. This boy, named Tad, was changed to "twins" when the casting call produced identical twins suitable for the role.

An older woman of the town tried to mother Bill and make him settle down. During the writing she was given several names, but was finally called "the widder." She reminded some of the audience of Aunt Eller in Oklahoma and Nettie Fowler in Carousel, and certainly she represents a familiar character part.

The Indians had less individuality and acted more as a chorus. There was no chief or medicine man, but, of course, the personalities of the actors gave the characters individual interest. This chorus was important to the plot only as a chorus, and no need existed to make any one Indian character more important than another.

As these characters' lines were written in the script, the lines they were to sing were composed. Though some writers prefer to take a dramatic script and make a musical of it, Pecos Bill and the Indians was understood from the beginning to be a musical, and the songs and libretto were written together.

Most songwriters find it difficult to answer the classic question of which comes first, the music or the lyrics. For this musical, the composer usually began with a title and often with the first line and worked from there. Though the words to a verse might be written before the melody, the other verses would then have to be written to fit the same tune.

The titles to the songs were very important, because they usually were the starting point for song writing. The idea was used for a title if it had a comic attitude toward its subject, if it were in the cartoon style of the musical, and if it seemed to present possibilities of becoming an interesting song.

Some of the songs did not prove to be satisfactory and were discarded. One march number for the beginning of Scene III, written in the style of songs praising political candidates, seemed unnecessary and was left out. Another number called "friendly Indian" was not sung, but the melody was used for the "Redskin Romp" ballet.

The townspeople entered singing "I Thought We'd Never Get to Texas," a light-hearted version of what settlers might have said when they finally reached their destination. After they put up storefronts, they sang "One Horse Town," a number intended to describe the setting.

The ballet, the first two songs, and the musical interlude between them became one important production number, using both choruses. This section of the show lets the audience know the style of the musical, introduces the comic conflict, and sets the stage for Bill's entrance.

Pecos Bill's first song, "Boy Howdy," gets its title from a popular expression in the Western United States, and merely establishes him as a happy cowboy who appreciates the beauty of nature. The last line of the song introduces him to the audience. The song is used again as the finale.

"Tell Me Is It True?" is a song that brings in the tall tales told about Bill. The song has one joke, that what seems exaggeration in these stories is true and that only the trivialities are in error.

Armadillo Armstrong's comedy solo, "If There's Anything I Can't Stand It Is a Hero" gets its humor from its use of clichés about heroes, its literary references, and the unusual rhyme scheme. It also shows Armadillo Armstrong's philosophy, villainy for its own sake.

The song the Indians sing is called "Tribal Council." It has a simple minor-key tune, and its two melodies were sung in counterpoint for the last chorus. To the sophisticated listener, the song uses the clichés of contemporary problems, the population explosion and racial intolerance.

"Coyote Home," a solo for Bill, is a song about homesickness in a slow tempo. It was necessary to relax the mood to build up to the Indians' attack. The song, though not actually a comedy song, has humor.

The girls of the town make their play for Bill by singing "Just My Type," which is a production number. Bill leaves them with the boys of the town, and they all sing "Something's Got to Happen on Saturday Night." This song becomes a dance number for the chorus and leads up to the attack of the Indians.

Armadillo Armstrong has another comedy patter song after he robs the bank called "I Have a 'Thing' for Money," which is a humorous expression of greed. This song contains jokes about the root of all evil.

"The Rain Dance Rag" is the biggest dance number of the

show and provides the solution to the problem of the play. It is both a comedy song and a production number.

The last song, "I Feel Sorry for You," is sung to Armstrong by the entire cast just before he is sent to jail and suggests that perhaps even this despicable villain is more to be pitied than censured. The song is written in the style of a hymn to give it a morally idealistic tone. The song is comic and sets up the surprise when Bill hits Armstrong at the end of the number.

Special care was taken to try to work the musical numbers into the play naturally so that there was no break between play and song. Much attention was given to the line that was spoken just before the first line of the song. A carefully planned line, usually spoken over introductory music, was the primary technique used to blend the musical numbers into the script effortlessly.

In both the song lyrics and the dialogue, the script was an attempt to maintain a point of view that would make the play humorous to the audience. Opportunities were provided for visual humor also. The play was to be a musical comedy, and the comedy was important to its success.

When the first draft of the play was finally finished, revision began. Some scenes remained unchanged, but most of the play was rewritten several times. The speeches of each character were read together to make sure he was consistent

in his speech and actions. This rewriting was considered as important as the initial writing.

One of the main reasons for revision was the element of comedy in the script. Often what was intended to be funny at first writing seemed forced when reread and was changed or omitted. These decisions concerning what was and was not comical were value judgements made by the playwright. Many variables affect comedy in the theatre. Funny lines may not get the laugh they deserve because the actor who delivers them lacks technique, while other lines that are not comic in themselves are very amusing because of the actor who says them. The playwright knew in advance that he could only provide the opportunity for comedy. The real comedy was to be in performance; and, because of the many variables involved, this comedy could never be completely controlled.

Lines were also changed to keep the dialogue simple. Some of the speeches were too long and wordy, and others repeated what had already been said or sung. These were rewritten.

In an early writing, Armstrong's last line was "Did you ever have one of those days?" This was changed when the playwright read the script of Sweet Charity, which uses the same line for a similar comic effect.

Some lines were cut because they could be shown instead of spoken. In an early version, a man of the town asked the

banker for a loan during the building of the town. This dialogue was cut because it was felt that the audience would know who the banker was, anyway.

The writing of Pecos Bill and the Indians was done in accordance with the plan developed in research and discussed in Chapter II of this thesis.

The construction of plot was completed in a scenario before spoken lines were written. A careful characterization was developed for the protagonist and the antagonist, and care was taken to see to it that these two characters would clash, that the contrast between them would be sharp. The dialogue was kept simple, clear, and to the point; and the individual speeches were kept short. Much of the story was to be told in action rather than in speech. Once written, the script was rewritten until the playwright was satisfied with it. When the script was ready to be tested in a performance, work began on the production of the musical.

CHAPTER IV

PRODUCING PECOS BILL AND THE INDIANS

Bussey Junior High School in Garland, Texas, is in some respects a very good place to produce a musical. The school has about a thousand students, so there is a large number from which to cast a play. The administration, the faculty, and the student body of this school are interested in the music, art, and drama programs and support them. The school has an outstanding band and choir program for boys and girls. The choir teachers and the band director encouraged their students to take part in the musical and were responsible for getting many of the most talented young people to try out.

A very successful musical comedy had been produced at Bussey in 1966, and quite a few of the students had this experience behind them. Since this show had also been artistically successful, the students wanted the new show to be of high quality also.

The principal of the school supported the show in every way and to a large extent served as producer. He handled most of the financial aspects of the production and made the arrangements for touring. His influence was important in obtaining the high school auditorium for an evening performance

and in getting the support of the Parent-Teacher Association. He took personal pride in the production and went on every tour with the cast.

The faculty's support was also very important. Not just the music and art teachers, but the faculty as a whole were interested in the show. The teachers congratulated and encouraged the performers and were particularly gracious about making up work the students missed while touring.

Backstage organization began by finding a capable student director. The young lady who served in this capacity had an important job to do, for while the director was occupied at the piano, she was in charge backstage. There were three crew members behind the scenes: one who was in charge of scenery, one who took care of props, and one who handled hats and wigs. These three young men doubled as the Armstrong gang. The student workers backstage were in full charge; there was no adult to help them.

Tryouts were announced early on the public address system to all of the students, and special announcements were made in the choir and speech classes. The boys and girls tried out separately to avoid embarrassment. Each group was taught "Something's Got to Happen on Saturday Night," which is a fairly simple song, and then the students tried out at the piano in groups of three. Many students came to tryouts, and the quality of the talent was good. When the cast was finally chosen, rehearsals began.

The cast rehearsed after school, and the rehearsals were usually over by 5:00 in the afternoon. The students were too young to rehearse in the evenings. Rehearsals were held in the auditorium whenever possible, but when there was a conflict, they were moved to the music room. The students had little or no theatrical experience, so rehearsals were also an introduction to stage discipline.

Since only two members of the cast had any dance training, the choreography had to be carefully planned in advance and patiently taught. The cast was willing to work hard and learned the dances rather quickly.

Projection was another problem. Most of the performances were to be given in cafeteriums of junior high schools, where the acoustics were not good. The cast worked to be loud enough to be heard and distinct enough to be understood.

The primary difference between the directing of a musical comedy and the direction of a straight play is the staging of musical numbers. Peccos Bill and the Indians was a stylized production, and the musical numbers were not intended to look realistic. The director worked for attractive visual patterns. These patterns included directing the chorus to form lines and duplicate gestures. The result was not to be photographic, but imaginative and stylized. Though the arrangement was not necessarily formal, the stage picture was balanced. This balance can easily be seen in the production photographs (Appendix).

Some technical problems had to be solved. The changing of the scenery had to be incorporated smoothly. The timing of "Redskin Romp," "Invitation to a War Party," "Rain Dance Rag," and other sections with a lot of pantomime took much rehearsing. Some of the cast learned the dances more quickly than others and were able to assist in teaching the steps.

The two biggest problems were keeping the ranges of the songs limited and blocking the movement of the large cast for small stages.

Voices in junior high are in the process of change. This is particularly noticeable in boys. Some of the boys in the cast still had unchanged soprano voices, and several had already developed into baritones and basses. Most of them, however, were somewhere in between. For soloists like Bill and Armstrong, the music could be transposed, more than once if necessary, to suit the limitations of the individual voice. For the choruses, the problem was greater.

The chorus numbers were deliberately written with a small range--an octave if possible. This did not completely solve the problem, and some of the lyrics were spoken, rather than sung, because the performer could not reach the notes.

Once the rehearsals were underway, work began on scenery and costumes. Because the musical was conceived from the first as a touring production and because personal cars were

to be used for transportation, it was necessary to build sets that could be packed into cars and assembled quickly. These sets had to be used on the large stages of the high schools and on the very small stages of the junior high schools in Garland and in the Studio Theatre of the Historical Building at North Texas State University in Denton.

To solve this problem, three garment racks were purchased, on which painted fabric was hung. The racks, which could be taken apart and packed in the back seat of a passenger car, were simple to use and worked well throughout the production.

Once assembled on stage, they could be placed close together on the small stages or far apart on the high school stages and always achieve a balance of scenery. Since they were on casters, scene panels were hung on both sides, and the racks were turned by members of the cast in full view of the audience to change the scene (Plate I). Each three-piece set was drawn with black marking pen on a different color of inexpensive drapery material, and the fabric panels were hung on the racks with drapery pins. The change of color gave variety while the similarity of style gave a unity to the production and contributed to the cartoon effect.

The initial landscape scene was drawn on a dull green material, the town storefronts were on a gold fabric, the teepees of the Indian village were drawn on a brick-red material, and the storm clouds and falling rain were printed

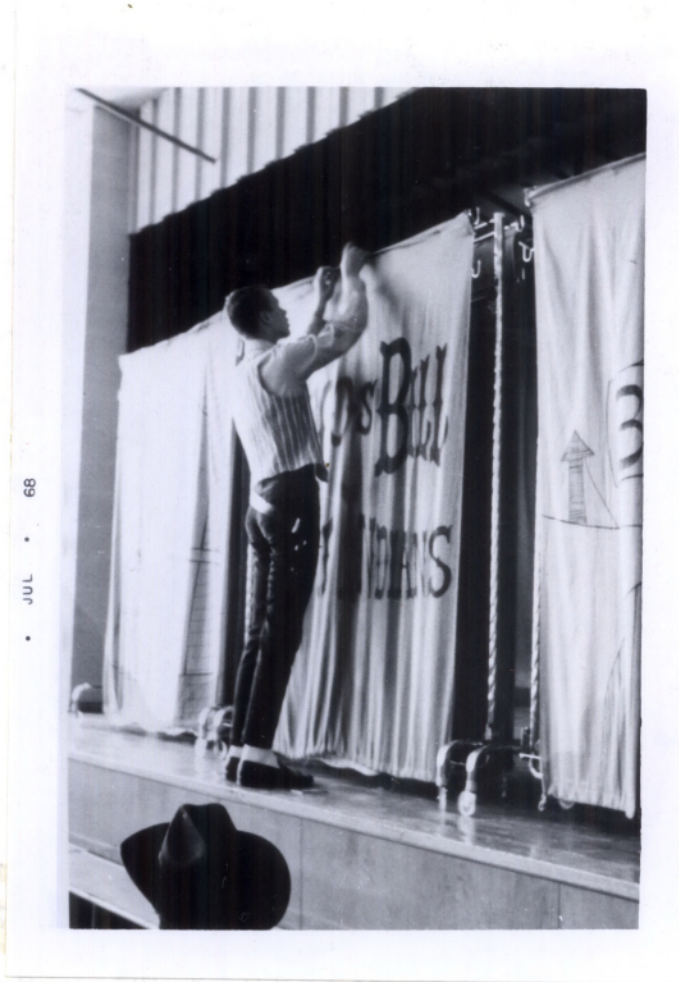


PLATE I

SET UNIT WITH HANGING PANEL

on a lavender fabric. Bright colors were avoided, and the designs were deliberately simple, both to make it easier for the students to do the art work and to keep the scenery from drawing too much attention to itself.

A teacher in the physical education department offered to sew the cloth panels, and one of the art teachers helped her students do the drawing from the director's designs. The excellent work of these two ladies was typical of the interest and cooperation of the school faculty.

The scenery not only set the locale, established the mood, and met the requirements set by limited budget and transportation facilities; it also enabled the performers to maintain pace by being simple and quick to change. The idea of changing scenery in full view is not a new one, but to most of the people in the audience, it seemed a novel and entertaining aspect of the production.

Once a basic-design concept had been found that was simple enough to be moved by car, the next problem to be solved was the transportation of the cast. Several mothers of cast members were willing to use their personal cars, and this method of transportation was used for one tour. For the rest of the trips, a school bus was obtained, and, except for the two shows on Saturday, there was no charge for the use of the bus. Two cars were used: a sedan for the scenery and props and a station wagon for the large drum set.

As long as the musical toured within the city, it was easier to have the cast put on their costumes and make-up before leaving school. This saved time when they reached the auditorium and made it easier to travel.

These costumes were made by the parents according to the director's designs, and the result was one of the most satisfactory aspects of the production.

Although the silhouette was basically that of the period of United States history when pioneers moved westward, there was no attempt to make the costumes historically authentic. The designs were deliberately exaggerated like a Western cartoon, and bright colors were used to give a contemporary feeling.

The material was purchased by the school and sold to the students, who then had the costumes made. This was done for two reasons. First, the school was able to obtain discount prices on much of the material, and the director bought from stores in all parts of the Dallas area and, consequently, could choose from a wide selection. A more important reason was that the colors could be coordinated in this way, and a more colorful and suitable stage picture could be achieved. Most of the costumes worn by the townspeople were made of broadcloth, but the Indians wore costumes of a variety of fibers to suggest natural materials.

The material was sent to the parents, with a letter carefully explaining in detail what kind of costume was needed, what pattern was to be used, and how the costume was to be made. An illustration of the finished costume was a part of the letter. Letters to the chorus members were duplicated, but individual letters were sent to the principals (Appendix).

Since every character danced, every costume had to allow freedom of movement. The garments were so well-made that they took the punishment of the stage activity and touring well. They were colorful and provided most of the spectacle of the musical. For the most part, the mothers understood what was wanted for a costume for their children. One mother thought her son's Indian costume should be flashier, but she eventually agreed to follow the design he had been given.

Generally the costumes were made of bright, flat areas of color. The only patterned fabrics were those used for the girls' print aprons, the Widder's dress, Bill's checked scarf, Armstrong's patterned nightgown, and a few striped vests and polka-dot scarves on the men of the town. When patterns were used, they were large designs in bright colors.

Costumes for the Indians presented a color problem. They needed to be bright and colorful, but they also needed to look as if their garments were made of deerskin. The fabrics chosen were in "earth" colors: brown, rust, gold, and olive green, with some touches of red, yellow, and orange.

Virtually the whole color wheel was used in the designs, but, with the exception of Pecos Bill's costume, white was not used. This decision was made because Bill needed to attract special attention, because a variety of bright colors was needed on stage, and because the designer considered white difficult to light, difficult to keep clean, and impossible to subdue in a stage picture.

Pecos Bill wore ivory-colored trousers, a yellow short-sleeved knit shirt, a white hat, and a yellow and orange plaid scarf.

Armstrong wore a burgundy-colored cutaway coat, a mustard-colored shirt, olive trousers, and a black vest, hat, and tie. His nightshirt and cap were made of lavender and green, patterned material.

The dress for the Widder was made of a lively floral print material with lower sleeves, collar, and bonnet of navy blue. Her apron was orange, trimmed in blue, and she wore wire-rimmed glasses.

The banker's costume was in colors associated with money. He wore a green formal coat, a yellow shirt, and a gold vest. His top hat was bright green, and a pair of spats completed his attire.

The sheriff's costume was in shades of gold, and, except for the metal star, was like the costumes of other men in the chorus.

The twins wore identical pink shirts without vests. The men of the town wore long-sleeved shirts, contrasting vests, scarves of bright colors, and cowboy hats. The women wore aprons, small bonnets, and floor-length dresses trimmed with bias tape.

Loose trousers of rough-textured fabrics with a slight bell at the bottom were worn by the Indian braves. Some of them wore vests, some wore sleeveless shirts, and some were shirtless. The three squaws were costumed in bell-bottom pants and sleeveless blouses. All of these costumes were trimmed with bias tape to contribute to the cartoon effect, and no two Indians had costumes with the same design.

The bank robbers were in black knit shirts, black trousers, and black hats. They had on poorly fitting, dull brown vests and navy-blue scarves. These black costumes suggested their villainous character and enabled them to change scenery without being noticed.

Make-up was kept simple, and the students were given instruction in make-up and applied it themselves. This was necessary because the students often went on stage less than half an hour after they arrived at school, and there was not time to apply elaborate make-up. The make-up also had to be removed quickly so the students could go back to class. The student director, who is a talented artist, proved very capable with make-up and supervised the cast in applying it.

No darker skin color was used for the Indians, which simplified the work involved.

The only make-up problems were the make-up for Armstrong, the aging of the Widder, and the war paint for the Indians. Armstrong wore a black mustache on gauze, which was purchased at a novelty shop. This type of mustache was used because it was quick to put on with spirit gum and always looked right. He also wore heavy eyebrow make-up to make him look evil. (Plate III).

The Widder had some lines to indicate wrinkles of age. These she applied herself. Since she wore a bonnet, there was no need to gray her hair.

The Indians' war paint was essential to the plot and had to be applied and removed quickly. Red make-up sticks were used and worked well. The war paint was removed with mineral oil.

The wigs worn by the Indians were bought from a theatrical supply house. They were listed in the catalogue as Raggedy Ann and Raggedy Andy wigs and were made of black wool yarn. The boys' wigs were too long and had to be trimmed, but no other changes were necessary. A feather was pinned in place in each wig, and these feathers had to be replaced several times during the tour of the musical.

It was important that the musical should not only look right, but that it should sound right also. Accompaniment

for the musical was provided by an ensemble consisting of piano, bass, and drums. The director served as pianist, the band director of the school played bass, and a student played drums. The drummer, who had had experience in musical comedy, handled certain sound effects and was a valuable asset to the production. The volume of the accompaniment was kept down so that the students' voices could be heard.

Two members of the chorus were taught to play banjos for the banjo duet in Scene I, and this brief instrumental interlude was an important part of the scene.

While the cast worked at rehearsals, other students began an elaborate publicity campaign. Publicity for the production was effective, not only in Garland, but in the whole Dallas area. Newspaper coverage (Appendix) was excellent. The local paper, The Garland Daily News, printed articles and pictures on May 9 and May 18, and even sent a reviewer to the dress rehearsal, who wrote a laudatory front-page review for the May 2 issue. The reviewer, Mrs. Wayde Cloud, a speech and drama major in college, uses her journalistic influence to encourage the dramatic arts. Although two other theatrical productions were given reviews that season, neither of them received the front-page praise that was given the Bussey musical.

The large Dallas papers, which seldom report on educational theatre, also gave space to the musical. The Dallas

Morning News carried short articles on April 29, May 9, and May 20. The Dallas Times Herald printed a long human-interest story by staff writer Jim Featherstone, which was illustrated with a photograph. A second announcement was printed on May 18. Before the Denton tour, The Denton Record Chronicle printed an article on May 18.

Articles were sent to the amusements editors of these papers stressing the unusual aspects of the production: the fact that the musical had an original script and score, the fact that the students did their own technical work, the fact that the musical was a premiere, the fact that the show toured, and the fact that the cast and crew of the musical were all junior high school students.

The best publicity the show received was a two-page, illustrated article that appeared in the August, 1967, issue of The North Texan,¹ a publication of North Texas State University. The article was actually a review of the Denton performances (Appendix). Many former students read the story, and it gave the production widespread publicity.

Colorful posters with the same design used on the programs were put up in schools, stores, and other public places in Garland and received some notice. Before the trip to Denton, posters were placed on the North Texas State University

¹ Jim Morris, "Pecos Bill and the Indians," The North Texan, XVIII (August, 1967), 4-5.

campus and in local stores. The play was announced to the students of the Garland schools and the Denton schools.

Radio stations in Dallas and Denton made public service announcements about the musical, and this seemed to be helpful publicity.

Letters were sent to influential people in Garland and Dallas, particularly those involved with educational and community theatre, inviting them to the performances.

The response to all of this advertising was excellent attendance at every performance.

When the audience arrived, they were met by the house manager and the ushers, dressed in red vests, red cowboy hats, and red bandannas. These students added to the decor of the play. They were carefully instructed and carried out their duties very effectively. The programs they gave the audience received many compliments (Appendix).

Peccos Bill and the Indians was a complicated show technically. There were a great many props, and the wigs and hats had to be carefully handled. The sets required careful hanging and changing. But the students were conscientious, and after careful rehearsal, the production aspects of the show worked rather well.

CHAPTER V

EVALUATION OF THE PRODUCTION

The Bussey Junior High School production of Pecos Bill and the Indians was a successful show in several ways. Thirteen public performances were given to all sorts of audiences, and the musical always received good response. Since one of the first duties of any playwright is to capture the attention of the audience, this favorable response to Pecos Bill and the Indians was gratifying. Never did any of the audiences indicate that they were bored or restless, and each audience was generous with laughter and applause. It is a mistake to place too much importance on standing ovations when the audiences are often largely made up of the families and friends of the cast, but the musical kept the audiences entertained and attentive at every performance.

The touring of the show made it even more beneficial to the school. The drama activity of Bussey Junior High was brought to the attention of the community, and many citizens were aware of what was being done for the first time. A large number of people from Garland who had never seen a school drama production heard about Pecos Bill and the Indians and came to see it. The show helped to gain public support for high quality in educational theatre.

Many people on the school administrative staff saw the production and expressed their congratulations to those who worked on it. The principal of the junior high said that he heard praise for the show from people all over the area, and congratulatory letters and phone calls were received by all the members of the production staff. The relationship between Bussey Junior High and the other schools for whom the show was given was improved. Touring the musical was a kind of cultural exchange from which all of the schools benefited. The separation and variance between the schools, increased by athletic competition, was unnoticed in the sharing of a theatrical event.

Not only did the production have favorable results in the community, but it also had value within Bussey Junior High. To give the musical successfully, the drama department cooperated with the music department, the art department, the Texas history department, and other subject-matter areas. The school as a whole shared the success of the show.

The seventh-grade music classes, for example, became so excited about the production that they asked to learn the songs and wanted to know how music was written. A copy of the music was sent to them, and a visit was arranged to answer their questions. The musical sparked their interest in music, and their music teacher felt that they benefited from the production.

Pecos Bill and the Indians was produced in part to prove that the script would work, but it was understood from the first to be an educational theatre project, and it was always of first importance that the large number of students involved learn from what they were doing. If the show were to be successful, the students who took part should gain the most from it. Although it is impossible to measure the development of talent, character, and responsibility, the students grew in doing the production. For the show to operate, the cast members had to be organized, they had to handle minor emergencies themselves, and they had to run their own show backstage. There are emotional and intellectual disciplines that are inherent in theatre work, and it was generally felt that the students in the musical were better because of the experience.

The cast were very proud of their work. They were enthusiastic in performance, and when they went in groups to see other schools' musicals, they showed a basic understanding and a critical appreciation of what the other cast was doing. They had learned a lot about theatre art, and this learning was a primary objective of the production.

Finally, though not as important as a measure of success, Pecos Bill and the Indians was successful financially for the school. The proceeds from the box office went into the school's general fund, and though the exact amount of profit

was never announced, it was probably about \$1,000.00. The investment made by the school in the show was \$332.40, with the following budget:

Scenery

three garment racks	\$34.50
scenery fabric	\$18.36
marking pens	\$ 4.21
masking tape	\$.70
drapery hooks	\$.20
chain for weight	<u>\$ 3.80</u>
	Total: \$61.77

Properties

two slingshots	\$.89
four umbrellas	\$ 5.11
peace pipe	\$ 1.53
smoke matches	\$.90
rabbit's foot	\$.50
prop box	<u>\$ 1.98</u>
	Total: \$10.91

Costumes

sheriff badge	\$ 1.02
feathers	\$ 6.00
ties and hats	\$ 5.43
wire-rimmed glasses	\$ 1.00
two top hats	<u>\$ 2.02</u>
	Total: \$15.47

Make-up

base, powder, liners	\$ 5.23
spirit gum and mustaches	\$ 5.16
facial tissue	\$ 1.04
"war paint"	<u>\$.45</u>
Total:	\$11.88

House

programs	\$18.00
tickets	\$14.00
usher hats and badges	\$ 5.75
flowers	\$15.00
janitorial	<u>\$ 6.00</u>
Total:	\$58.75

Transportation	\$29.92
Food for cast	\$115.00
Miscellaneous	<u>\$28.70</u>
Total Expenses	\$332.40

The show gave thirteen performances, and only the two in Denton had free admission. The production was not intended as a money-making project, but the large profit is indicative of its success and the fact that it was given in a business-like manner.

The musical was successful financially, educationally, and artistically, and the administration, the faculty, the

parents, the students, and the audiences were glad that the school gave Pecos Bill and the Indians.

APPENDIX

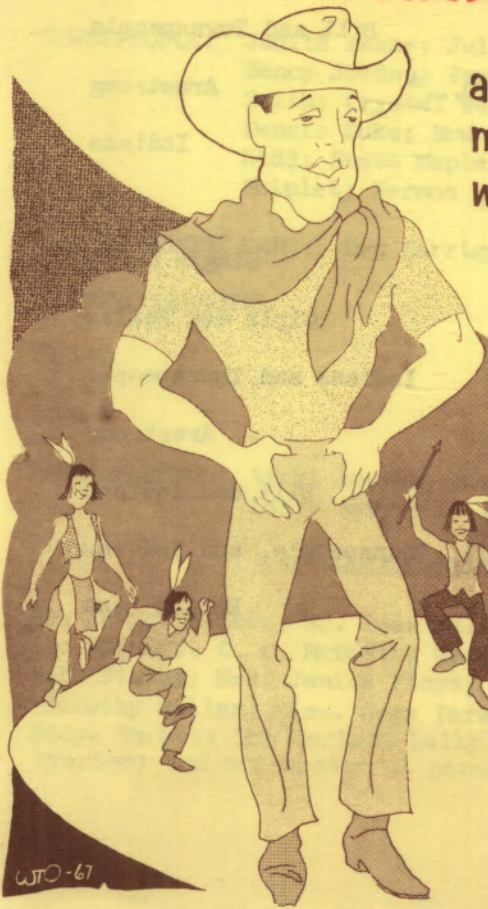
In this section of the thesis are found a copy of the program for the production of Pecos Bill and the Indians; a copy of the script, including a description of the blocking, diagrams, and production photographs; a copy of the music lead sheets; a copy of the letter announcing tryouts, the rehearsal schedule, and the letters of instruction on costumes; and newspaper and magazine articles about the production.

BUSSEY JUNIOR HIGH

presents

PECCOS BILL AND THE INDIANS

a brand new
musical comedy
wild west show



Written & Directed
by **BILL OVERTON**

WFO-67

E. D. BUSSEY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

presents

PECOS BILL AND THE INDIANS

Cast

PECOS BILL
 ARMADILLO ARMSTRONG
 BANKER
 SHERIFF
 WIDDER
 TWINS

Johnny Harris
 Michael Sawyer
 Mike Merritt
 Don Herron
 Deby Stegner
 Denny & David Watford

INDIANS: Betty Baker; Melodie Miller; Lynn Overall; Allen Boulware; Gerald Fast; Scott Killion; Kevin McLaughlin; Bill Morgan; Steve Oleson; Whitley Paul; Ricky Rodgers; James Sharp; Jack Teer

TOWNSPEOPLE: Judith Baker; Julie Foster; Sharon Johnson; Nancy Jordan; Pam McKeerregan; Pam Nelson; Kay Smith; Crystal Ward; Susan Young; David Border; Dennis Duke; Bruce Guess; Larry Harrison; Keith Kidd; Steve Maples; Mickey Roberts; Allen Shiplet; Vernon Swaim

THE ARMSTRONG GANG: Don Carrigan; Don Hines; Robert Marshall

STUDENT DIRECTOR
 Vicki Bourek

DRUMS
 Bob Baker

BASS
 Jane Parker

UNDERSTUDIES: Vicki Bourek; Everett Alexander; Daryl Davis; Larry Harrison; Eddie Timbrell; Jack Trimbrell

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mr. Jerry Sellers; Mr. Dean Nelson; Mrs. Beth Matthews; Mr. and Mrs. C. O. McBeath; Mrs. Barbara Hughes; Mrs. Mary Beth Finley; Mrs. Janice Floyd; Mrs. Shirley Bevers; Mrs. Dorothy Miller; Miss. Jane Parker; Mrs. Frankie Ross; Mrs. Eddy Tucker; The Garland Daily News; Mr. and Mrs. M. E. Overton; and our wonderful parents.

SYNOPSIS OF MUSICAL NUMBERS

"REDSKIN ROMP"	Indians
"I THOUGHT WE'D NEVER"	Townspeople
"ONE-HORSE TOWN"	Townspeople
"BOY HOWDY"	Bill
"TELL ME, IS IT TRUE?"	Bill and Townspeople
"IF THERE'S ANYTHING I CAN'T STAND..."	Armstrong
"TRIBAL COUNCIL"	Indians
"COYOTE HOME"	Bill
"JUST MY TYPE"	Single Girls
"SATURDAY NIGHT"	Girls and Fellas
"INVITATION TO A WAR PARTY"	Indians and Townspeople
"I HAVE A 'THING' FOR MONEY"	Armstrong
"RAIN DANCE RAG"	Bill and Indians
"I FEEL SORRY FOR YOU"	Bill, Townspeople, and Indians
"BOY HOWDY (REPRISE)"	Entire Cast

PECOS BILL AND THE INDIANS

by

William Overton

Copyright 1968

Blocking Symbols

- ↑ direction of movement
- ⓑ Bill
- ⓓ Banker
- ⓔ Sheriff
- ⓕⓖ Twins
- ⓓ Widder
- ⓓ Indian brave
- ⓓ squaw
- ⓓ Armstrong
- ⓓ man of town
- ⓓ girl of town
- ⓓ robber

PECOS BILL AND THE INDIANS

Scene I

Music No. 1

"REDSKIN ROMP"

As the music begins, the curtains open on three fabric panels. The one in the middle is a sign which reads, "Pecos Bill and the Indians." The overture ends, and Indian music begins. A pretty young Indian girl dances on, looks offstage, and hides behind the center scene. As she hides, she turns it around, revealing a Western landscape on the other side.

A smiling Indian brave enters, looking for her. She steals up behind him and puts her hands over his eyes. He lifts her into the air, and they dance off together.

A brave dances across the stage with a butterfly net, trying to catch an imaginary butterfly.

Three young Indian boys enter, playing leapfrog. One of them points offstage as two Indian girls dance on. They flirt innocently, and the boys dance off with them.

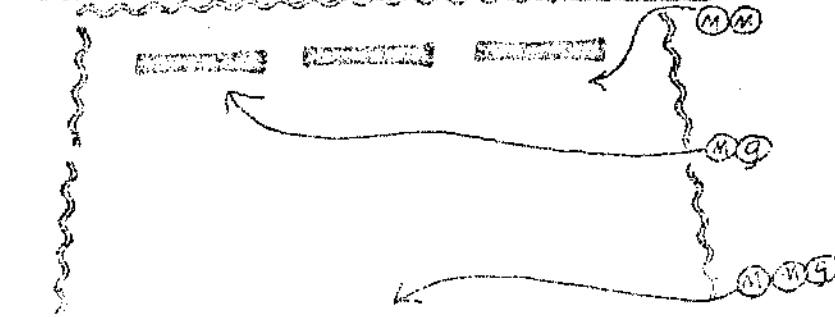
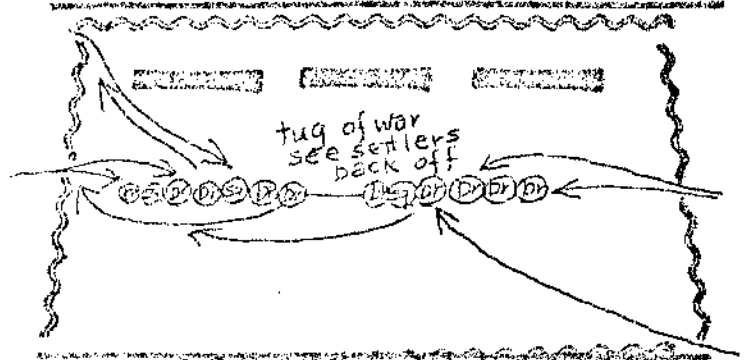
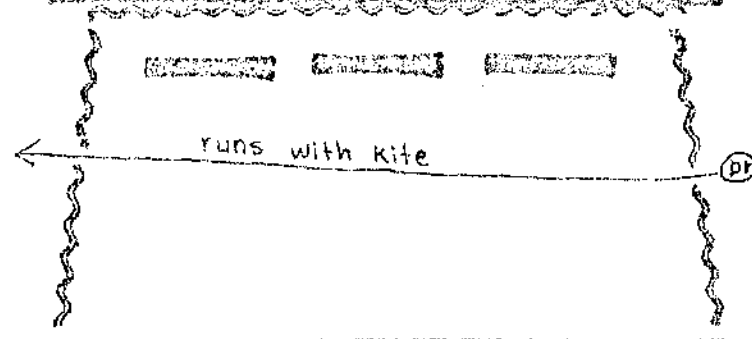
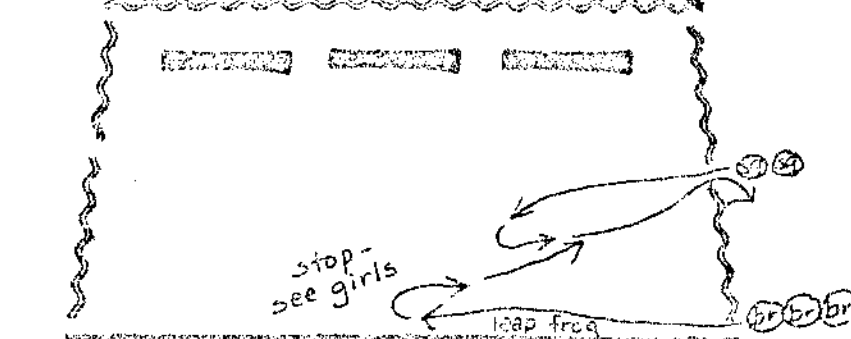
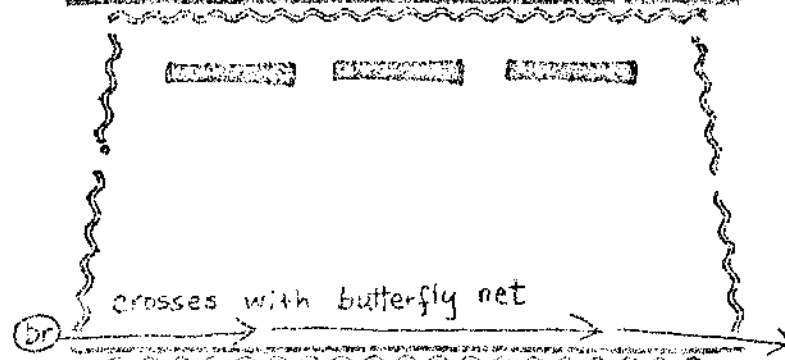
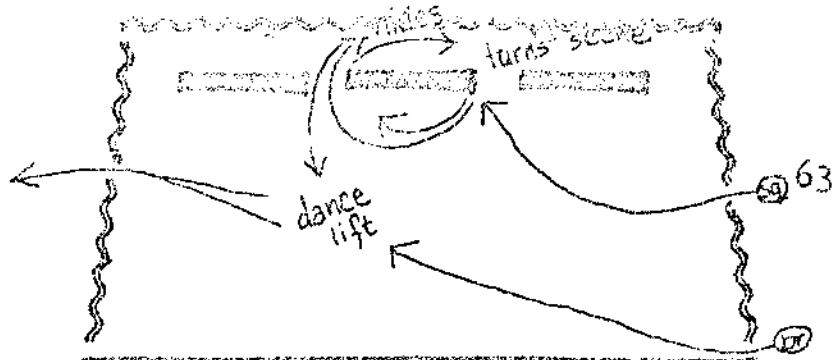
A small brave crosses the stage, flying a kite.

With an air of childish play, several Indian youngsters run on with a rope. The other Indians enter, and the game of tug-of-war begins. Then one team releases the rope and the other team falls. The team has seen something off left. They point to it, and the whole tribe becomes concerned. They hide off-right.

The townspeople begin to enter stage left. They are tired after a long journey. Many of them carry brooms, sacks, and other belongings. One of the men, who is wearing a coonskin cap, puts down his bundle and sings,

1st Man: I thought we'd never get to Texas;
 I had almost given up hope;
 It seemed the farther that we traveled,
 The farther we got from civilization and
 soap,
 An' I had just about decided
 To turn around an' go back,
 But we were bound and determined we'd make
 it to Texas;

change title set



Just let me catch my breath, an' I'll help
unpack.

Widder: (entering left with another pioneer woman)
I thought we'd never cross them mountains;
Ever' trail was stubborn an' steep.

2nd and 3rd Men: An' when we reached the roarin' river,
The current was swift; the water was muddy
an' deep;

All: You never seen so many troubles;
The trip was rougher than sin!

Widder: An' all I'm gonna say is this better be
Texas,
'Cause I don't figger ever to move again.

Men: I thought we'd never get to Texas,
But somehow or other we're here.

Women: We packed our kids an' our belongin's,
An' headed out West, a-pushin' away the
frontier;

Men: (taking off their hats)
Let's thank the Lord--

Women: (kneeling)
Thank the Lord!

All: Thank the Lord
For bein' with us!

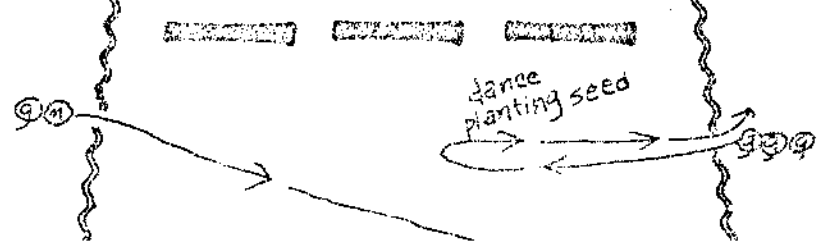
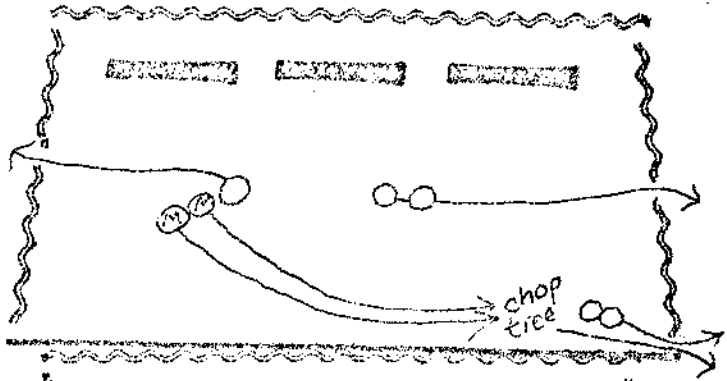
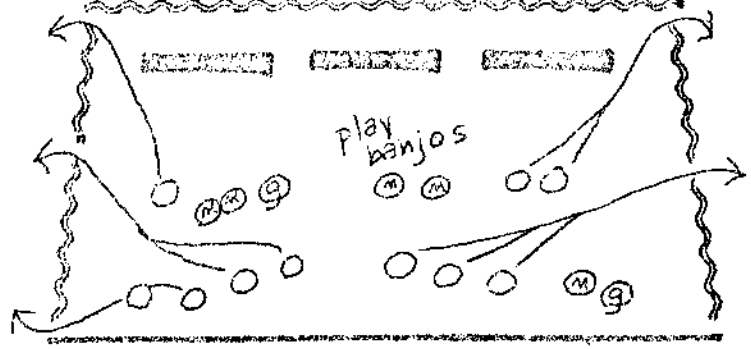
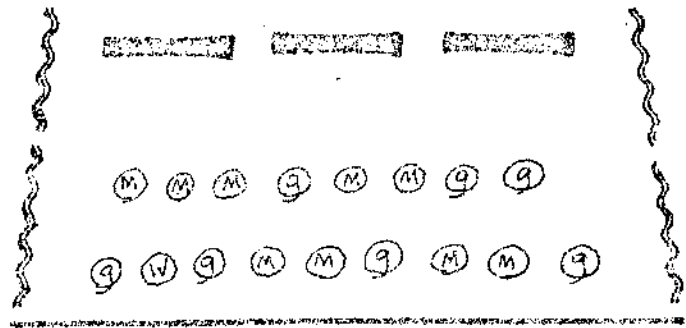
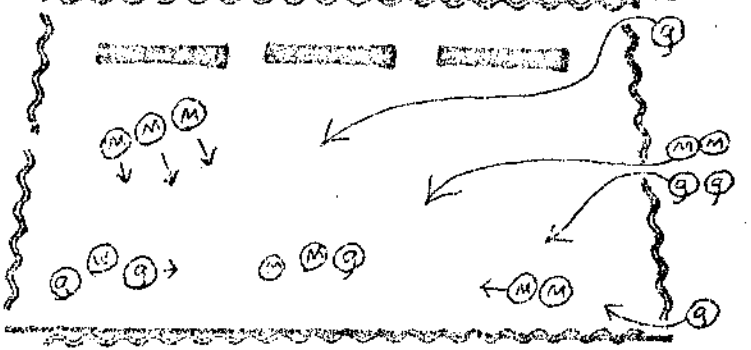
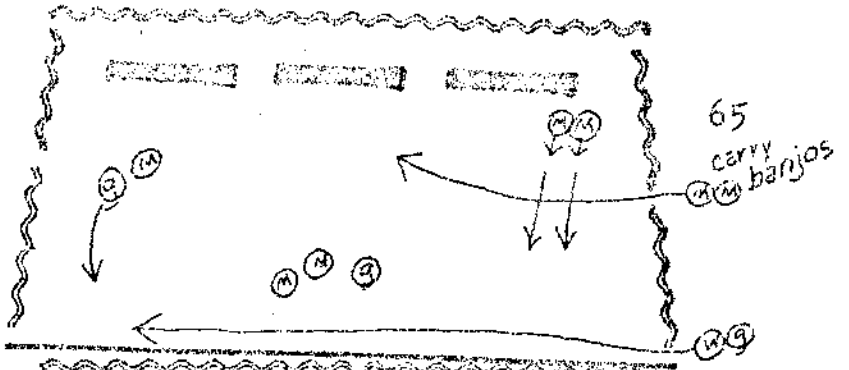
Men: His hand was pointin' the way!

Widder: An' we just kept on a-goin' the same way
the sun was,

All: An' now that we got to Texas, we aim to
stay!

The music becomes a hoedown, and the townspeople, with new energy, go off-stage to work. In the center of the stage are two boys playing the banjo. A few settlers stop to listen. At the end of the song, two of the men begin to chop an imaginary tree. When it falls, they carry it off.

Three pioneer girls enter, pantomiming the planting of seed. As they dance off, a pioneer woman crosses, lecturing to her son.



form
chair



PLATE II
"I THOUGHT WE'D NEVER"

The Widder and the twin boys cross and nod as they meet the Banker.

Two young couples dance on and stand with their backs to the audience.

Two pioneer men enter with small boys acting as wheelbarrows. They dig with imaginary shovels, then the men carry the boys off.

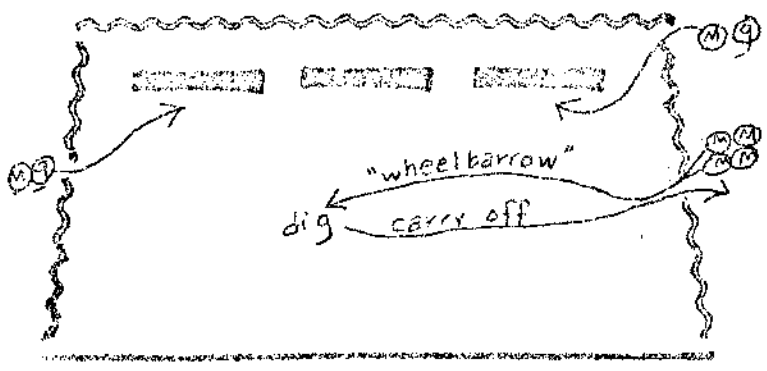
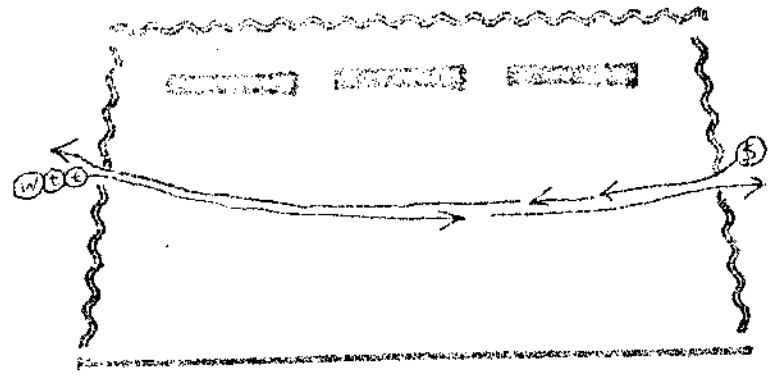
As the townspeople enter with their backs to the audience, the scene-panels are turned, revealing the town, a series of storefronts. The building on stage left is labeled "Bank," and the building on stage right has a wanted poster on it. The townspeople move downstage as the music builds, then turn to the audience and sing,

Music No. 3

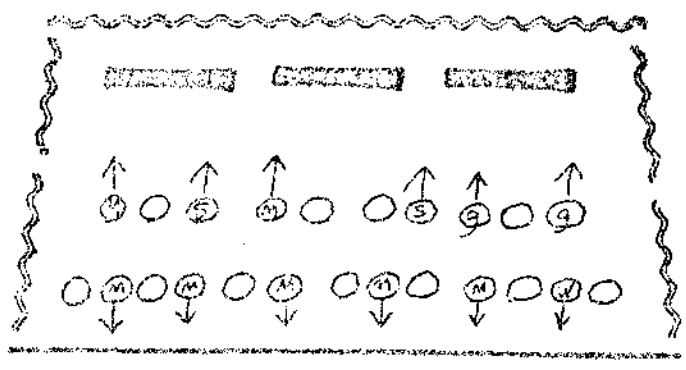
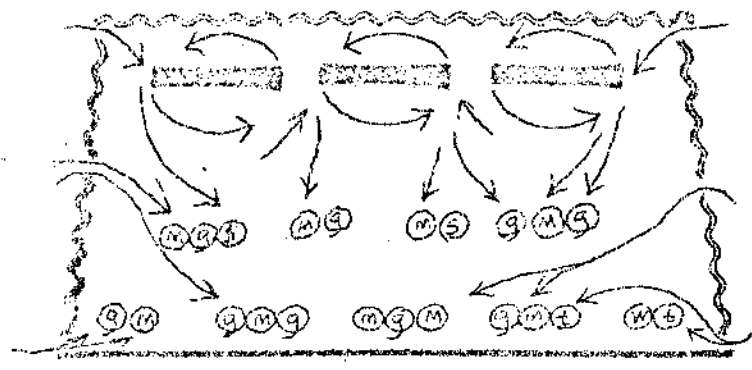
"ONE-HORSE TOWN"

All: Well, we made a town that we can be proud of,
 Nicest town in the West,
 An' I've seen me a lot of places;
 Still I think that our place is the best;
 It suits us to a T;
 Our little town is young, an' so are we;
 And you'll hear us ask every total stranger,
 "Don't you like it? Won't you stick around?
 In no time at all, you'll learn to love our
 One-church, one-bank, one-street, one-horse
 town!"

I don't want to live in a great big city;
 Things ain't ever the same
 As they are when you're livin' where the
 Entire population knows your name.
 We'll never be high-hat,
 But we'll be happy stayin' where we're at;
 So we won't be wearin' the latest fashion;
 Neither will we ever wear a frown
 In our tiny, two-bit, next-to-nothin'
 One hotel, one livery stable,
 Blacksmith shop an' general store,
 Music-hall and sheriff office,
 And as we have said before,
 One-church, one-bank, one-street, one-horse
 town!



change
set to
town



JUL 68



PLATE III
ARMADILLO ARMSTRONG

(At the end of the song, the townspeople exit. When all of them have gone, Armadillo Armstrong, every inch a villain, enters with three members of his gang. They tiptoe to stage center, shush the audience, tiptoe farther, stop, and look around. Armstrong moves to the back of the row and forces the men to enter the bank. As they go in, he hides behind one of the scene-panels. When all four are out of sight, Pecos Bill enters right. He is a handsome, likable cowboy. He pushes back his hat and sings,

Music No. 4

"BOY HOWDY"

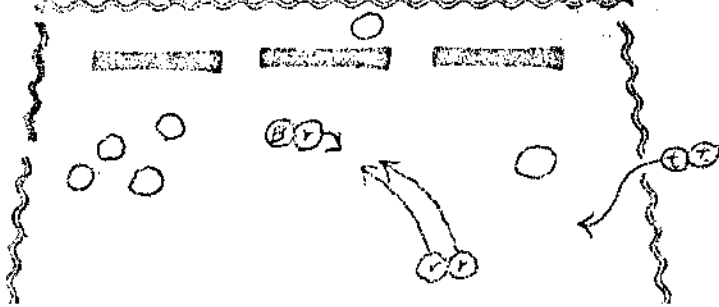
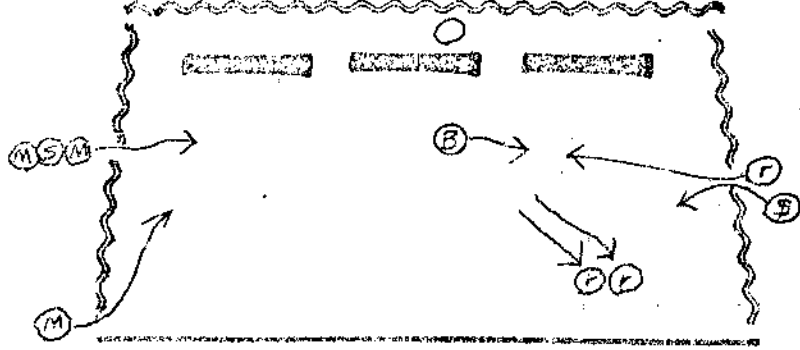
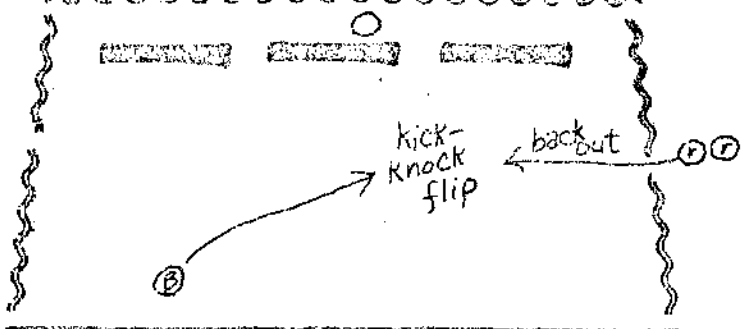
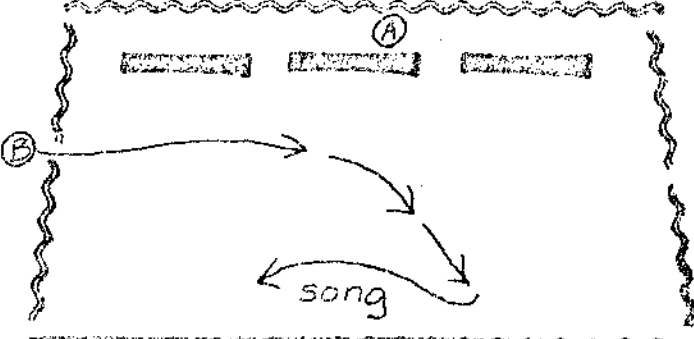
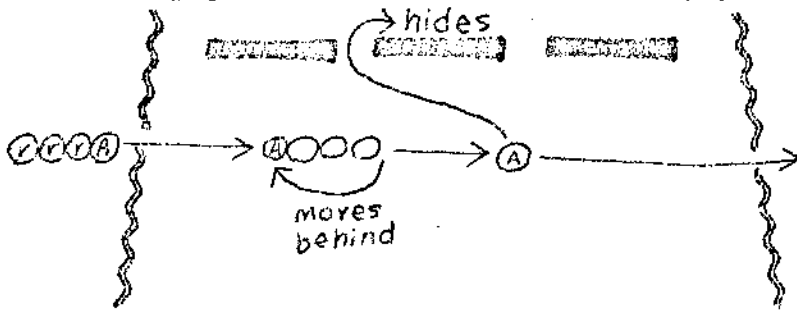
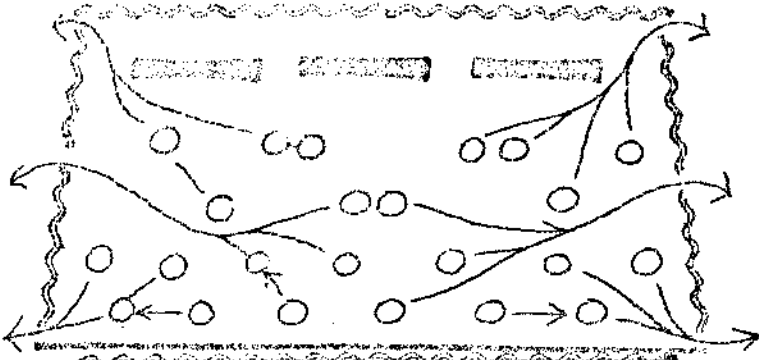
Bill: Boy howdy, take a look at that sun;
 Boy howdy, get a load of that sky;
 Boy howdy, did you ever see such a day in
 your life?
 Boy howdy, every cactus plant's a flower,
 Bloomin' cross the sparklin' yellow sand.
 Boy howdy, cast an eye at that sky of blue-
 bonnet blue;
 Too good to be true--
 Too fine for words from just a poor cowboy;
 Every bird's a-singin' it now,
 Boy howdy, take a breath of that air;
 Boy howdy, exhale an' declare,
 Boy howdy, did you ever feel such a thrill?
 Boy howdy, how do you do; I'm Pecos Bill!

Boy howdy, take a breath of that air;
 Boy howdy, exhale an' declare,
 Boy howdy, did you ever feel such a thrill . . .

(There are two shots, and the robbers back out of the bank with sacks of money. Bill kicks the first robber in the rear. The Sheriff, the twins, and other men of the town enter and watch. The first robber wheels around, and Bill knocks him in a flip over the second robber. The first robber, stunned by the blow, socks the second by mistake. As they struggle to help each other, the third robber backs out of the bank. He runs at Pecos Bill, who holds him off as he swings. The first and second robbers flip a coin, and the second loses. He winds up to hit Bill but accidentally hits the third robber, who falls. The second robber tries to escape, but Bill turns him around just in time to bump heads with the first robber. They fall.)

2nd Man: Did you see that?

3rd Man: Unarmed and single-handed!



JUL 68



PLATE IV
"BOY HOWDY"

Sheriff: (Stepping toward Bill) That was quite an exhibition of fightin', stranger!

Banker: (entering stage left) They'd cleaned out the bank to the last red cent.

Bill: That'll be the Armstrong gang. Armadillo Armstrong and his outlaws been terrifyin' the country. I been followin' 'em for a couple of weeks. Wonder why Armadillo ain't with 'em.

Sheriff: We better put 'em in the hoosgow.

Bill: Or, better yet, in jail.

(The sheriff takes the three bank robbers off right. Bill starts picking up the money sacks and piling them in the banker's arms.)

Bill: Here's the rest of your money, Sir.

Banker: Much obliged. But just sayin' thanks ain't enough. Could I ask your name?

Bill: Aw, don't thank me; I was glad to do it. An' the name's Bill. Pecos Bill.

Banker: (dropping the money bags) Pecos Bill!

Bill: (picking up the money) What's the matter?

2nd Man: Did you hear that?

Twins: (yelling off left) Hey, ma, this fella's Pecos Bill!

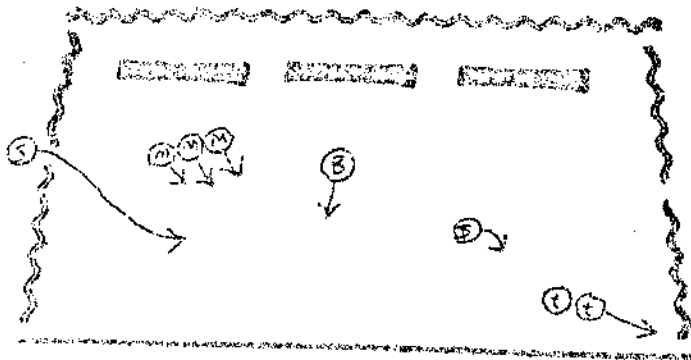
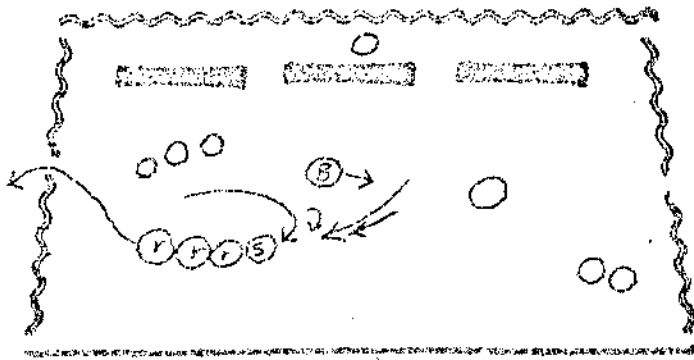
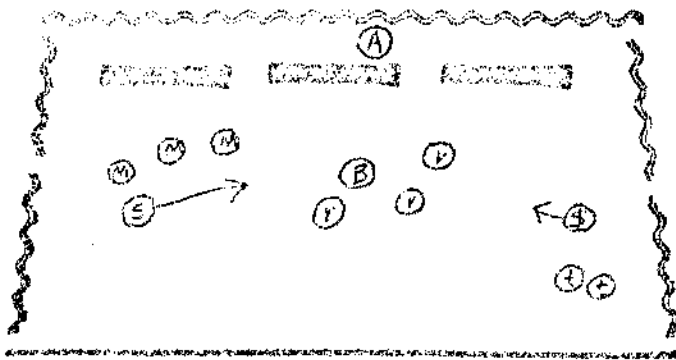
3rd Man: We heard a lot about you--stories it took some doin' to believe.

Bill: Well, you might not ought to believe all of 'em.

3rd Man: If they hadn't a-took some doin' to believe, nobody would have told them.

1st Man: Where'd you come from?

Bill: (throwing a bag of money in the air) From everplace. From all over. (He gives the money to Banker.) Here you go.



JUL

68



PLATE V

BILL: "HERE'S THE REST OF YOUR MONEY, SIR."

(The Banker exits left with the money.)

Twins: (moving near Bill) Gosh, Pecos Bill, we never thought we'd be lucky enough to meet you.

Bill: (putting a hand on their shoulders) I'm right glad to meet you. You folks got a nice place here--for a town.

Widder: (entering stage left) Did you say Pecos Bill?

Bill: (respectfully taking off his hat) Howdy, ma'am.

Widder: (suddenly shy) I do declare. (taking his hand) Well, welcome to the prettiest little town west of Dallas.

Bill: Thank you, ma'am.

3rd Man: Bill here hust caught a whole mess of desperados that was robbin' the bank an' whipped 'em single-handed.

Widder: Did you now?

Bill: Yessum.

Widder: (slyly) You married?

Bill: No, ma'am.

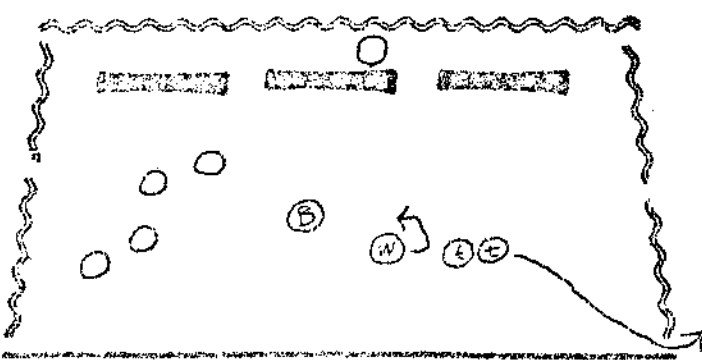
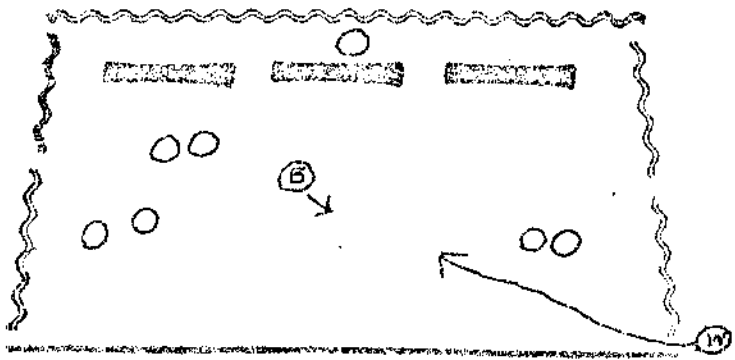
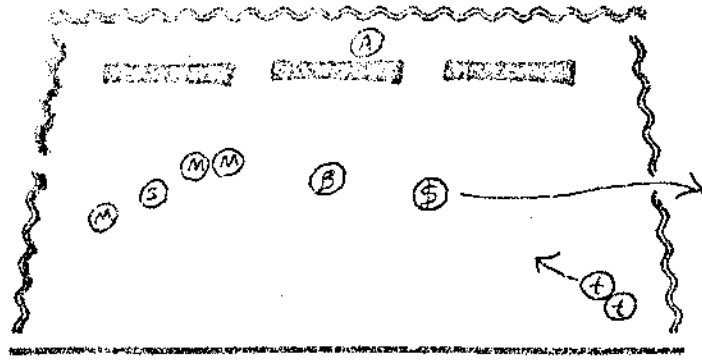
Widder: Batchin'?

Bill: Yessum.

Widder: (quickly) Twins, run get your sisters. Now scoot! (The twins exit left) Say, if you're a-lookin' for a nice clean town to settle down in, you won't find one better than this 'un.

Bill: Yessum. Well, I ain't much for town ways. (The sheriff enters right) I was just passin' through, lookin' for Armadillo Armstrong.

Widder: Armadillo Armstrong?



Sheriff: (pointing to poster) "Wanted dead or alive-- preferably dead."

3rd Man: He looks like a baddun, all right.

1st Man: Sure does.

Bill: Born troublemaker, that's what he is. Now that we got his gang in jail, he shouldn't be too hard to find.

2nd Man: (stepping forward) I hope you catch the ornery thievin' coyote.

Bill: (grabbing 2nd Man by the collar threateningly) You mind what you say about coyotes; my step-momma was a coyote.

(Several young girls enter stage left.)

Widder: Uh, girls, I want you to meet somebody. This here's Pecos Bill.

Girls: Pecos Bill!

1st Girl: Are you really Pecos Bill?

Bill: That's the name I answer to, ma'am.

(The Banker enters left.)

3rd Man: Hey, Bill, did you really cut your teeth on a Bowie knife?

1st Man: And invent the rodeo?

(The townspeople begin to enter.)

Sheriff: How 'bout it, Bill?

Bill: Hold your horses. One question at a time.

Music No. 5

"TELL ME, IS IT TRUE?"

Banker: Tell me, is it true?
Tell me, is it true?
Is it true what I've been told?
When you were just a baby, or so they say,
A coyote kidnapped you and took you away,

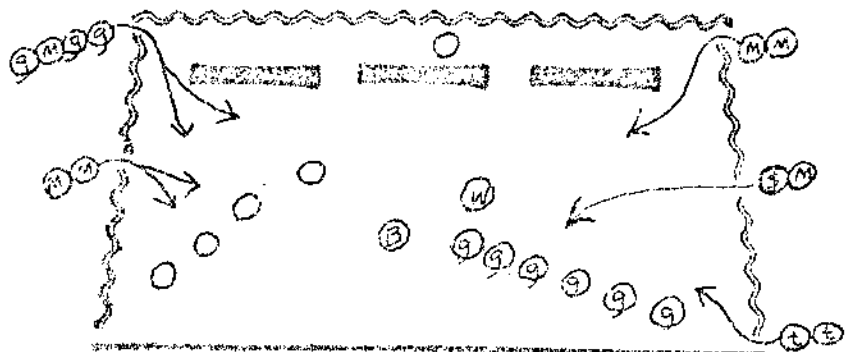
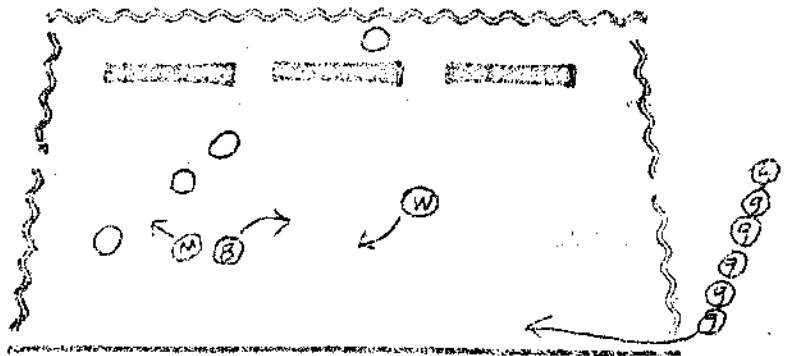
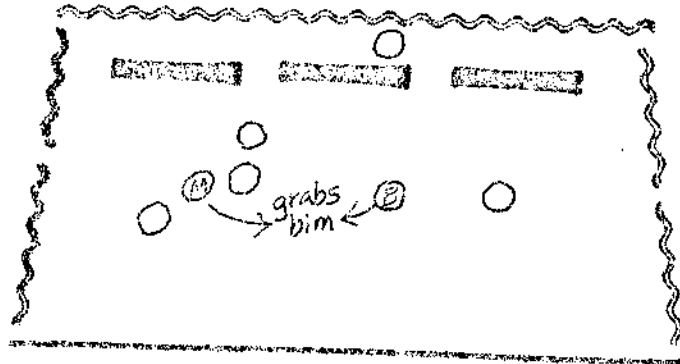
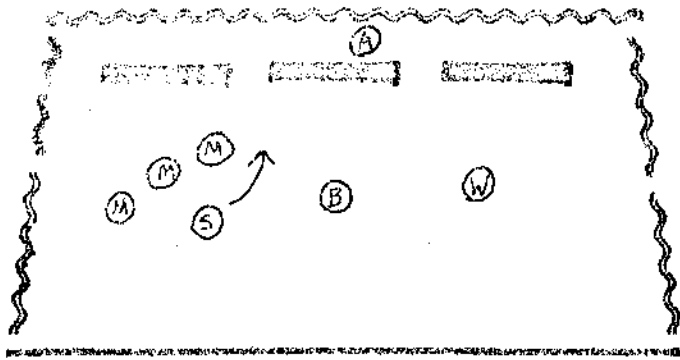




PLATE VI
"TELL ME, IS IT TRUE?"

Banker and
1st Man: An' she taught you good
Till you understood
Everything that coyotes do.

Bill: (spoken) Well, that's not exactly right.
I was brought up by a coyote, but she
couldn't teach me everything they do.

(sings) I tried and tried, but to no avail;
I never learned how to wag my tail.
Otherwise it's true;

Townspople: Otherwise it's true.

Bill: Exceptin' for that, it's true.

Girls: (crossing to Bill) Tell me, is it true?
Tell me, is it true?
Is it true or just a yarn?

Widder: I guess the story that we've all heard the
most
Is that you dug a gulley right to the coast,
And that even now
They say that is how
That the Brazos River grew.

Bill: (spoken) I don't believe that's the honest
truth, now.

3rd Girl: It ain't?

Bill: No, if memory serves me right . . .
(sings) The river I dug across the sand,
I think they called it the Rio Grande.

Girls: Otherwise it's true?

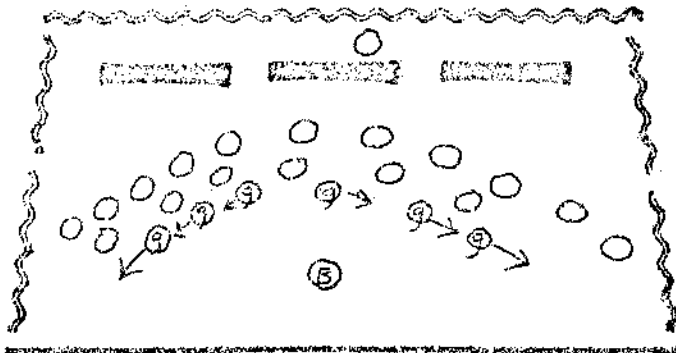
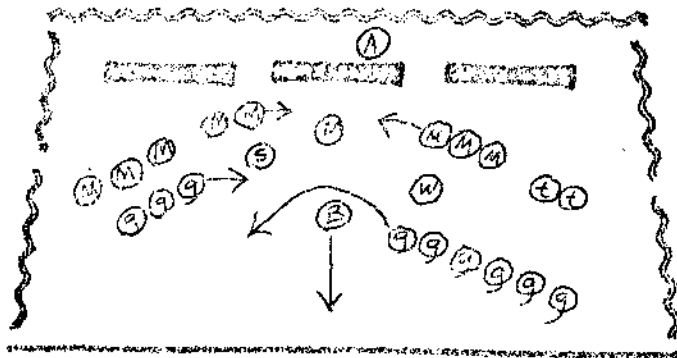
Bill: Otherwise it's true.

All: Exceptin' for that, it's true.

Men: Tell me, is it true?

Girls: Tell me, is it true?

Townspople: Is it true what people say?
I've heard it said that on the Fourth of
July,



You went an' roped a cyclone out of the sky;
Then you tamed it so
That the storm was o-
nly a breeze when you got through.

Bill: (spoken while crossing to Sheriff) Now,
I'm positive you got that wrong.

Sheriff: You are?

Bill: Yes, sir.
(sings) In spite of what you-all may have
heard,
I tamed that storm on July the Third;

Men: Otherwise it's true?

Girls: Otherwise it's true?

Townpeople: Exceptin' for that . . .

Bill: (spoken) Yep!

All: (sing) It's true!

3rd Girl: (spoken) How long you gonna be in town?

Bill: Just long enough to bring Armadillo Armstrong
to justice.

4th Girl: How long's that?

Bill: All depends, ma'am. Day or so, I reckon--
if he's still here.

Sheriff: Well, I better fix you a place to stay over
at the livery stable.

Widder: No such of a thing. Bill's more than wel-
come to use my spare bedroom.

Bill: Much obliged to you, but I already made plans
to stay with some friends up in the
shinnery outside of town.

Banker: Friends outside of town?

Widder: Who?

Bill: Oh, some Indians I know.

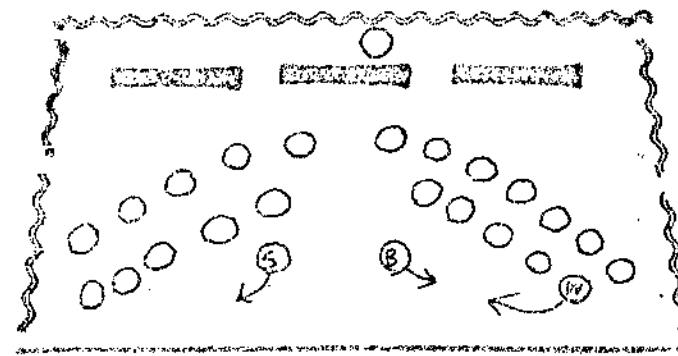
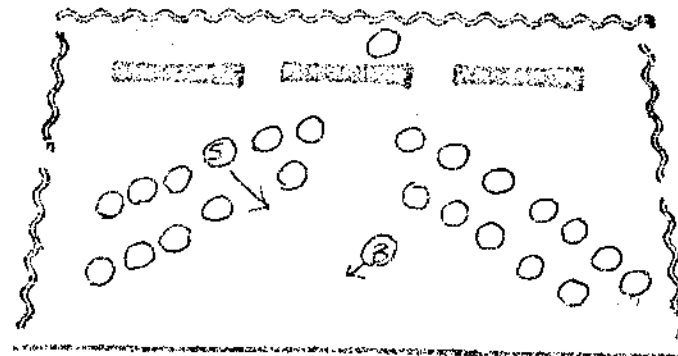
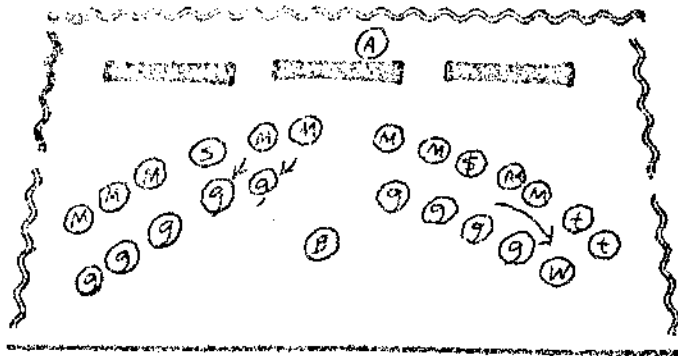




PLATE VII
BILL: "YEP!"

Townspeople: (terrified) Indians!

3rd Man: You mean (He gestures to show feathers.)
Indians?

Bill: Yep.

3rd Man: Lordy!

4th Girl: Indians!

2nd Man: We ain't seen a single redskin since we come
out here.

Widder: I'd 'bout decided all them stories 'as just
rumors.

Banker: How far away are they?

Bill: (pointing) Oh, a couple of miles as the
arrow flies.

Widder: As the arrow flies?!

Bill: It's just a sayin'. They're nice folks.

Sheriff: Nice folks? Scalpin', raidin', murderin'
hostiles! Lordy, Bill, don't you read the
papers?

Bill: Now, I admit they're a little . . . un-
civilized, you might say, but I never met
an Indian that wasn't a real American once
you got to know him.

Widder: Fiddle faddle. I'm not gonna have you
spendin' the night with heathens when I
got a spare bedroom.

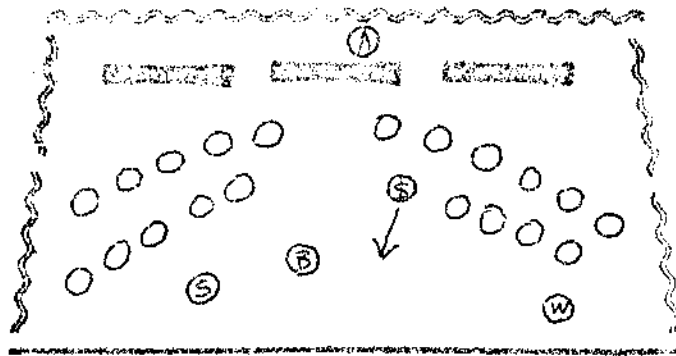
3rd Girl: You gotta stay here an' protect us.

Banker: Just 'cause they haven't done anything up
to now don't mean they won't attack the
town tonight.

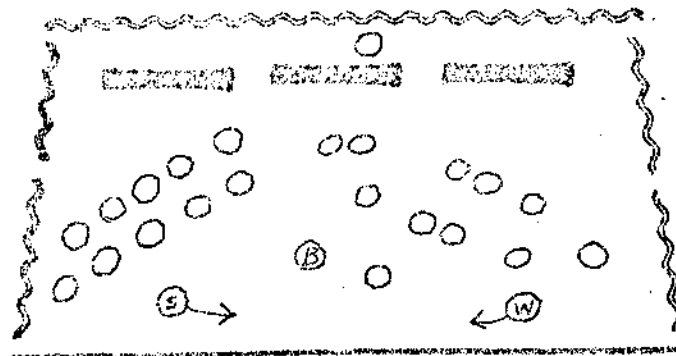
Bill: They wouldn't do that.

Banker: How do we know?

Sheriff: They haven't signed a treaty, have they?



87



Bill: Well, no. But they probably would.

2nd Man: You think so?

Banker: Would they promise to be peaceful?

Sheriff: No scalpin', raidin', murderin'?

Bill: Why, I reckon so. They're nice folks.

Banker: I'd be glad to draw up a treaty if you could get 'em to sign it.

1st Girl: Oh, Pecos Bill, please make 'em.

3rd Girl: Make 'em promise.

2nd Girl: Please.

Bill: Well, all right. I could do it. I'll take 'em the treaty, an' they'll sign it, or I'll know the reason why.

(The townspeople cheer. Some of them exit.)

Sheriff: Don't you want to carry my gun . . . for extra protection?

Bill: Nope. Guns ain't friendly somehow.

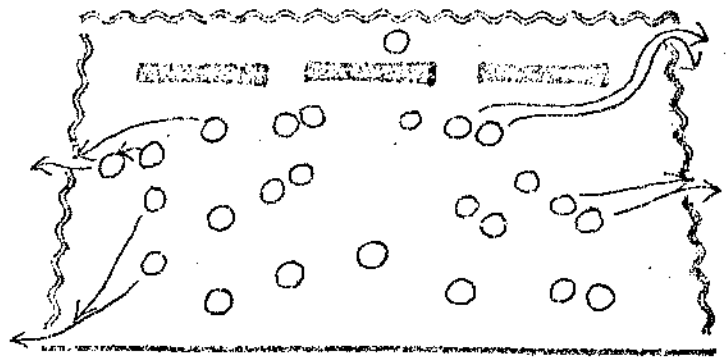
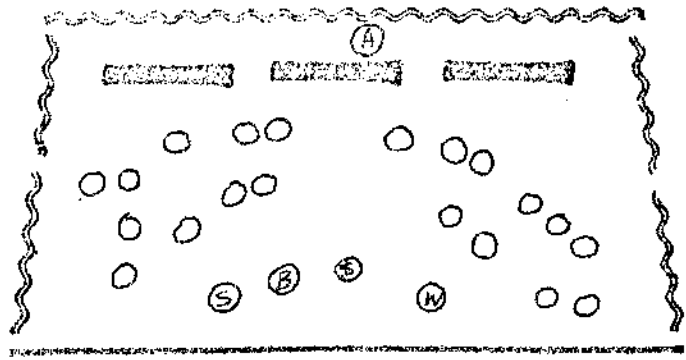
Sheriff: Suit yourself.

Twins: Would you like to take our rabbit's foot, sir?

Bill: Why, yes, son. That might be just what I need. (to the others) I'll be back this e'nin' with the treaty signed, so you folks can rest easy. But watch out while I'm gone. Armadillo Armstrong is meaner than any Indian you'll ever see. If a stranger comes around with a black mustache and an evil glint in his eye, don't trust him. It could be Armstrong.

Widder: Don't worry 'bout us; you look out an' don't get scalped.

Bill: Don't fret. I'll be okay.



Banker: Come on, Bill. I'll draw up that treaty.

Sheriff: I reckon we all ought to sign it.

3rd Man: Wait for me!

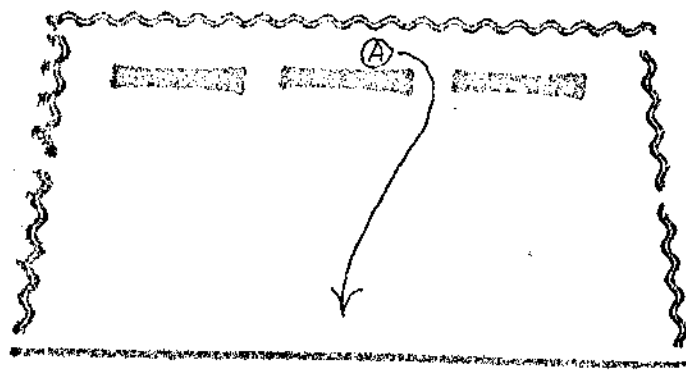
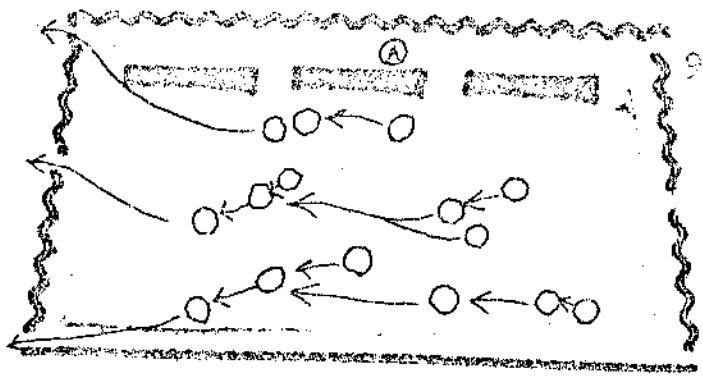
(Bill and the townspeople exit stage right. Armstrong comes out from his hiding place. He looks offstage after them and sticks out his tongue, moves down center and sings.)

Music no. 6

"IF THERE'S ANYTHING I CAN'T STAND"

Armstrong: If there's anything I can't stand, it is
 a hero;
 If there's anything I can't tolerate,
 It's a clout that without any doubt is just
 great;
 If there's anything gives me hives,
 It's the guys with the virtuous lives;
 One of 'em always arrives in the nick of
 time.
 Yes, I always detest a knight in shining
 armor;
 Oh, how I'd love to push him in the moat!
 And I make it my business to help to get rid
 Of each smart-aleck kid who behaves like El
 Cid;
 A hero never fails to get my goat!

 If there's anything I can't stand, it is a
 hero;
 If there's anything puts me in a stew,
 It's some son-of-a-gun who has done derring-
 do;
 And the guy who gives me a pain
 Is the one who'll go out in the rain
 And flag down the passenger train that's
 doomed to crash.
 It turns my stomach when he starts that
 stupid smiling
 And positively gushing with good will;
 And if there is one person I really dislike,
 It's that little Dutch tyke with his thumb
 in the dike;
 A hero never fails to make me ill!



If there's anything I can't stand, it is a
 hero;
 If there's anything that gets in my way,
 It's some brave kind of knave always saving
 the day,
 And I nearly get nauseous when
 I'm confronted by one of those men
 Whose strength is the strength of ten 'cause
 he's pure of heart.

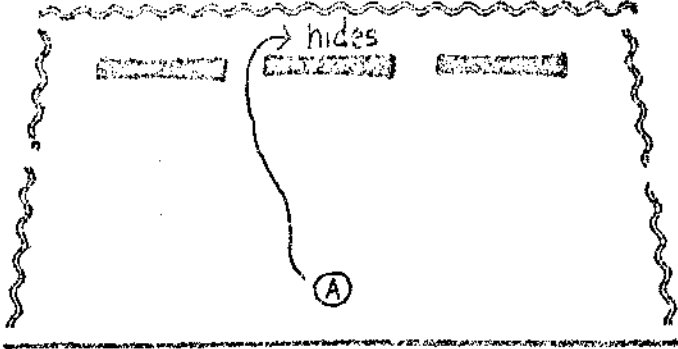
His blood's a hundred percent the milk of
 human kindness,
 And he'll rush to your aid in spite of thin
 and think.
 So if I get in trouble, don't bother to send
 For some stout-hearted friend who is true
 to the end;
 A hero never fails to make me sick (I nearly
 vomit!)
 A hero never fails to make me sick!

(At the end of the song, Armstrong hides. Indian music begins,
 and three squaws dance on. They turn the set-panels around
 to reveal the Indian village. They dance off without seeing
 Armstrong.)

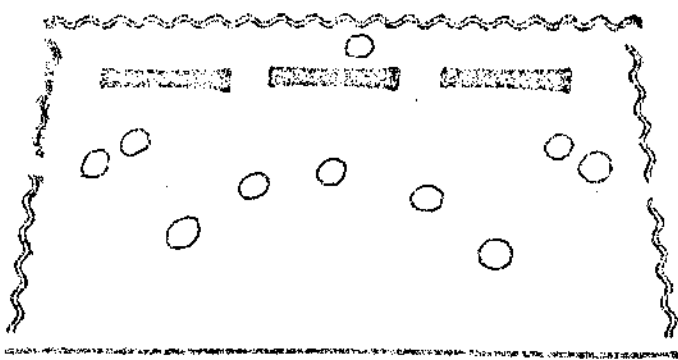
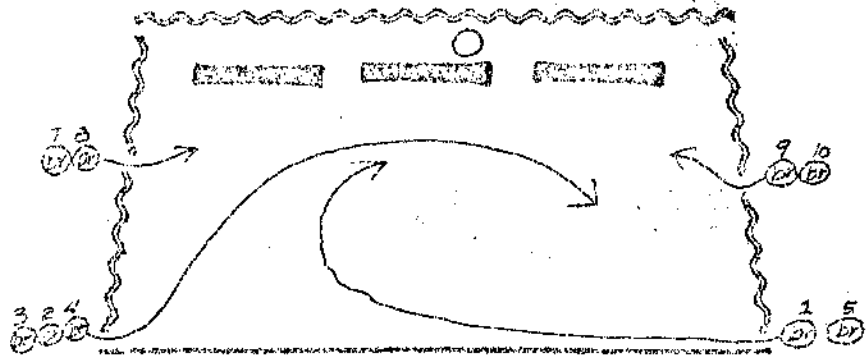
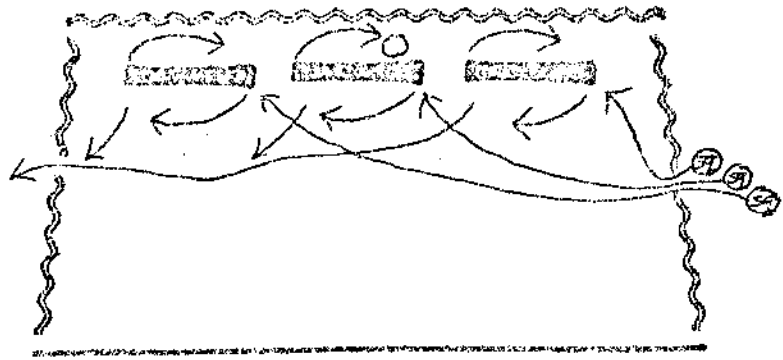
Scene II

(The Indian braves enter solemnly. Some carry lances.
 Another has a peace pipe. One has war paint in his hand.
 On a minor chord, they seat themselves.)

1st Brave: The tribal council will please come to order.
 2nd Brave: I move we dispense with routine matters and
 get down to the serious business at hand.
 3rd Brave: What are we going to do about the white
 intruders?
 4th Brave: That's what I want to know!
 2nd Brave: Something's got to happen.
 5th Brave: And soon.



change
to village



Music No. 7

"TRIBAL COUNCIL"

1st Brave: (sings) Here we live
The kind of life that's simple and primitive;
Though it may sound old-fashioned, we never
give
A thought to modernizing our civilization;

Trio: Just you wait;
If we allow the white man to immigrate,
They're going to really ruin the real estate,
And make this land unfit for the Indian
Nation.

Duet: The settlers come and then
Before we count to ten,
We'll have a surplus population;
I think the braves and squaws
Had better pass some laws
And put an end to immigration.

4th Brave: I think it would be smart
To learn this rule by heart:
It never pays to trust a stranger;

5th Brave: One thing is very clear;
When they find out we're here,
Our very lives may be in danger.

(The braves sing the two melodies in counterpoint.)

All: (spoken) What're we gonna do?

(After the applause, the 6th Brave runs on stage left.)

1st Brave: What is it, Green Frog?

6th Brave: From the lookout tree I saw a white man
approaching.

4th Brave: Did he have a gun?

6th Brave: (confused) If he did, it was a small one.

1st Brave: (full front) Small guns can cause big pains.

3rd Brave: (pointing off left) Here he comes!

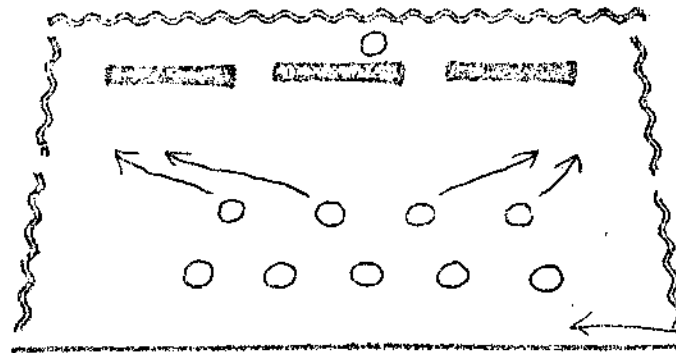
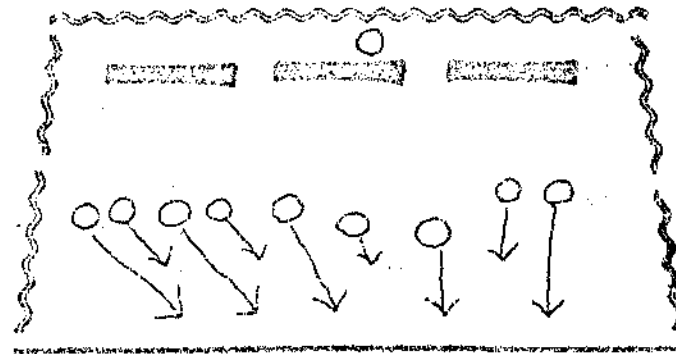
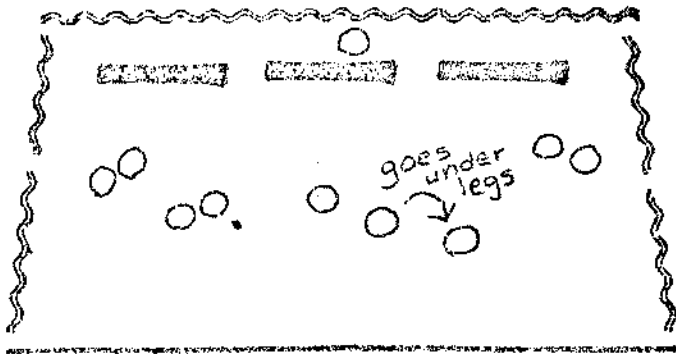
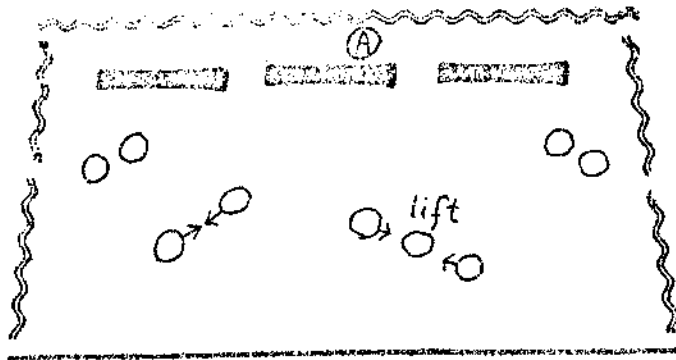




PLATE VIII
"TRIBAL COUNCIL"

2nd Brave: (from behind 5th Brave) He looks friendly.

5th Brave: And familiar.

1st Brave: It is the one the white men call Pecos Bill.

(Bill enters stage left, seriously. There is a moment of solemn silence; then he grabs a brave by the hand.)

Bill: Buffalo Foot! An' Silver Fish, you old side-winder! Howdy, Little Black Bug.

3rd Brave: It is good to see you again, Pecos Bill, and we welcome you in peace and friendship.

Bill: Thanks a lot. Nice to be here. I haven't seen you folks in some time.

1st Brave: Not for many moons.

Bill: No sir. Many moons.

(A musical chord, and the braves all seat themselves.)

1st Brave: What cause brings you to our campfire?

Bill: Boy, you get right down to business, don't you?

3rd Brave: Do you bring us news of the new white man?

Bill: (sitting down) As a matter of fact, I do.

4th Brave: (stands) They plan to attack our village.

Bill: Why, no. Come to think of it, they're afraid that you'll attack their village.

5th Brave: Maybe it is best that they stay afraid.

Bill: Uh-uh. Scared folks don't make good neighbors.

1st Brave: (standing) Pecos Bill, the white men are not like us. We do not understand them.

Bill: But they don't understand you neither.

2nd Brave: (kneeling) Let them understand this: we will defend ourselves if they try to civilize us.

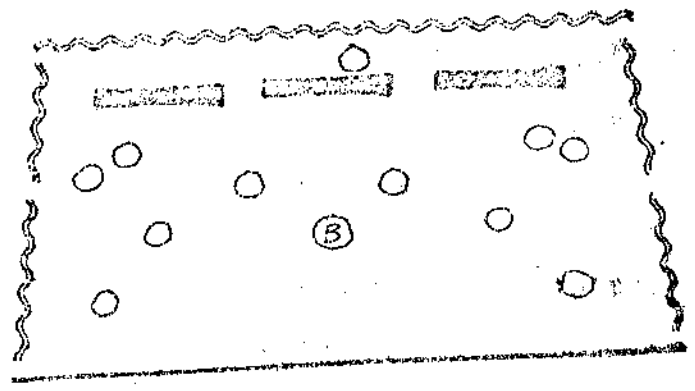
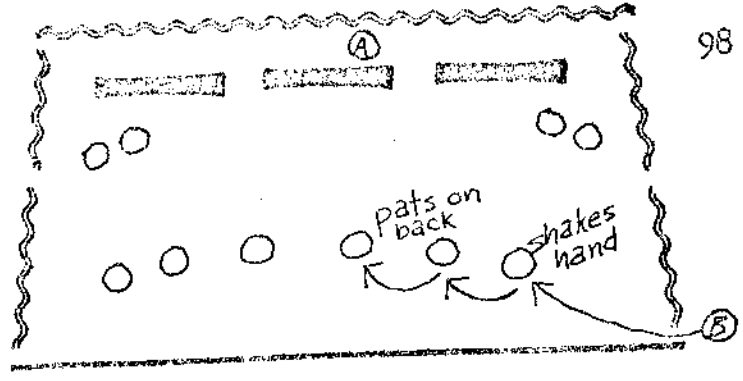




PLATE IX

BILL: "SCARED FOLKS DON'T MAKE GOOD NEIGHBORS."

Others: (standing) Yes!

1st Brave: But, until they attack us, we will not fight them.

Bill: (taking out the treaty) Would you be willing to put that in writing?

4th Brave: (looking at the paper) You want us to sign a treaty?

Bill: Look, I've met the folks in town. You'd like 'em. They're good and kind.

2nd Brave: They are good and strange.

1st Brave: Still it would be bad to make war on them.

Bill: That's the honest truth.

5th Brave: But they may forget the treaty tomorrow.

Bill: I'll sign, too. I solemn promise that them settlers'll never cause you trouble.

1st Brave: What about you, Pecos Bill? Will you stay our friend?

4th Brave: You have strong medicine.

Bill: I give my word as a former coyote I'll never bother an Indian as long as I live.

5th Brave: No matter what?

Bill: No matter what.

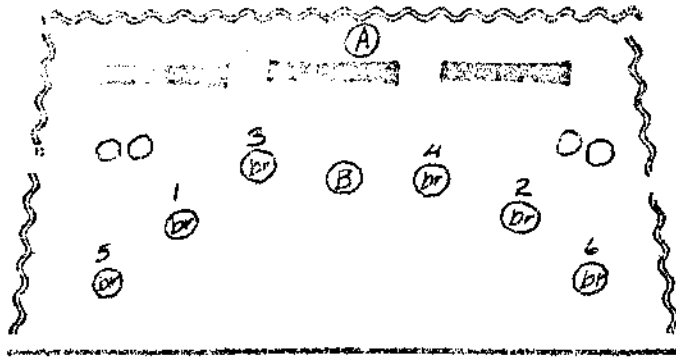
1st Brave: If you and your white friends will leave us in peace, we will sign.

Bill: It's a deal.

1st Brave: We will have a peace ceremony.

(The braves sit down. Bill looks around and then sits also.)

3rd Brave: (standing) First we break the lance. (He tries to break it and can't do it.) On second thought, you break the lance.



(Bill breaks it.)

5th Brave: Now we smoke peace pipe.
(He lights the pipe and passes it to Bill.)

Bill: (coughing) Whew, what is that you're smoking?

5th Brave: Old peace treaties.

(Armstrong sticks his head out of hiding.)

2nd Brave: Next we bury war paint.

Bill: War paint?

1st Brave: Yes. War paint has great powers. Before battle we put it on our faces. Its magic will make a man very brave and very mean.

(The second brave buries the paint at the curtain stage left, and Armstrong hides.)

Bill: Bury it deep.

2nd Brave: (returning) It is done. Now where do you want us to sign?

Bill: (turning 6th Brave around and using a feather from a headdress as a quill to sign the paper on his back) Right here. And I know you'll never regret this.

(The braves in order sign the treaty. When Bill signs, he dots the "i", stabbing the 6th Brave.)

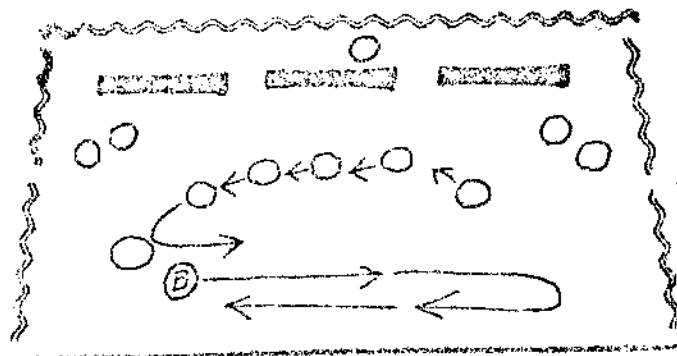
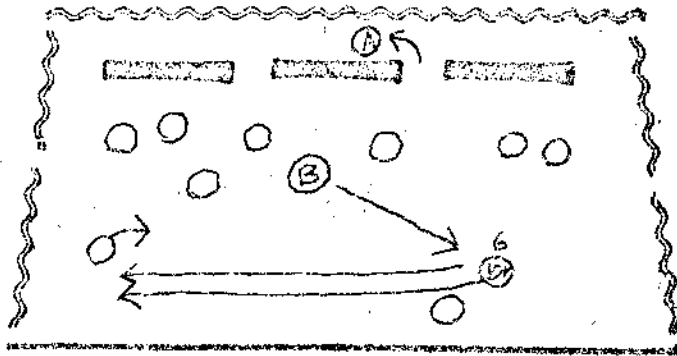
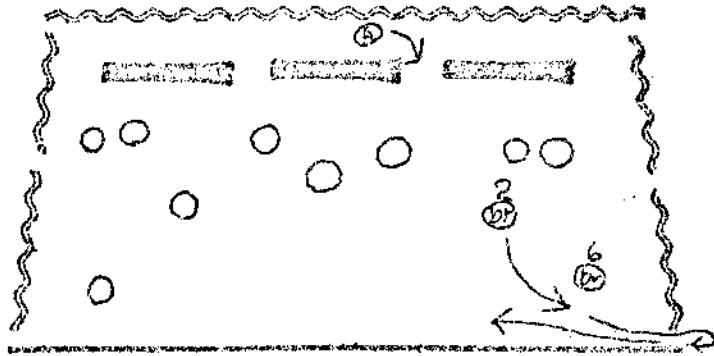
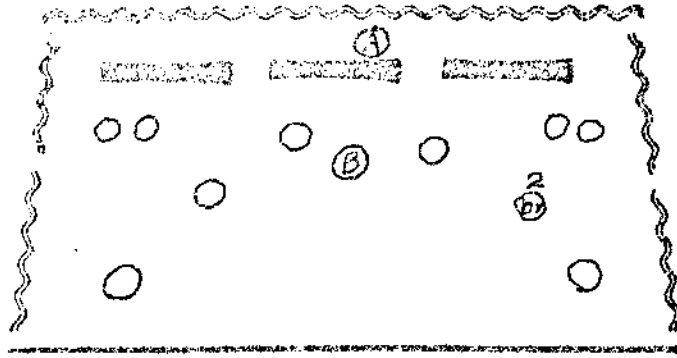
1st Brave: You are a good man, Pecos Bill. May there always be a fish on your line.

4th Brave: May the mosquitos lose the way to your tee-pee.

3rd Brave: May you eat strawberries every day of your life.

5th Brave: And may what you say always make sense.

Bill: Well, thanks. Same to you, boys. (He takes the treaty which they all have signed.) Them folks in town'll be proud to get this.



I'm much obliged. If you'll'll excuse me, I'll take this to 'em and stop their worryin'. I'll be back out later. Bye!
(He exits stage left.)

(Three braves follow him out while four others exit stage right.)

3rd Brave: Nice fella.

2nd Brave: (agreeing) Hmmm.

(The three braves left on stage yawn and go to sleep. Armstrong comes from hiding.)

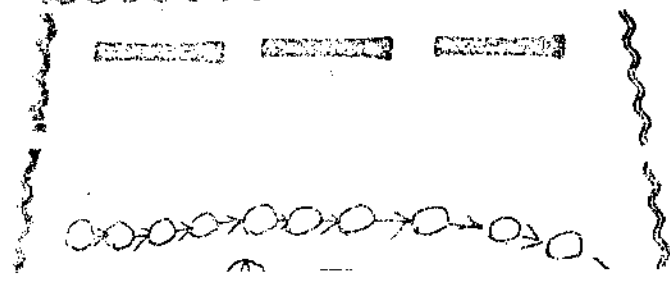
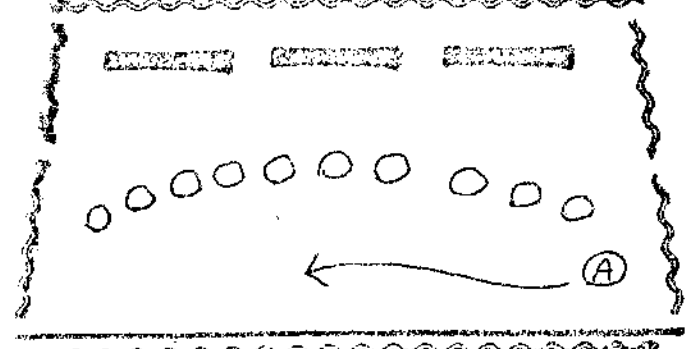
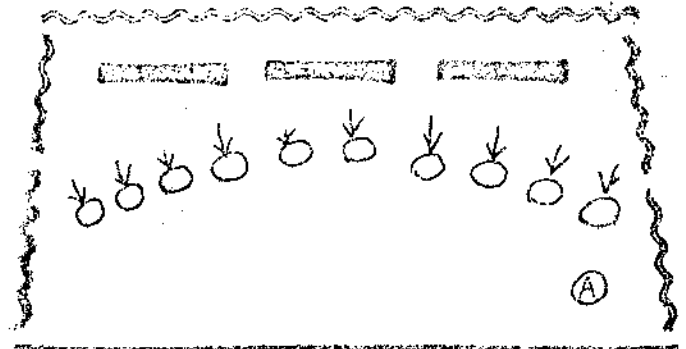
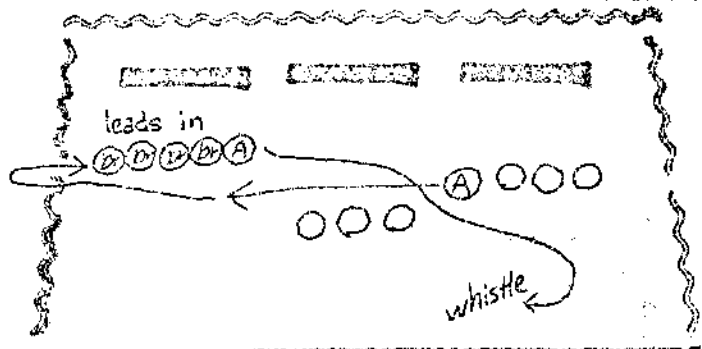
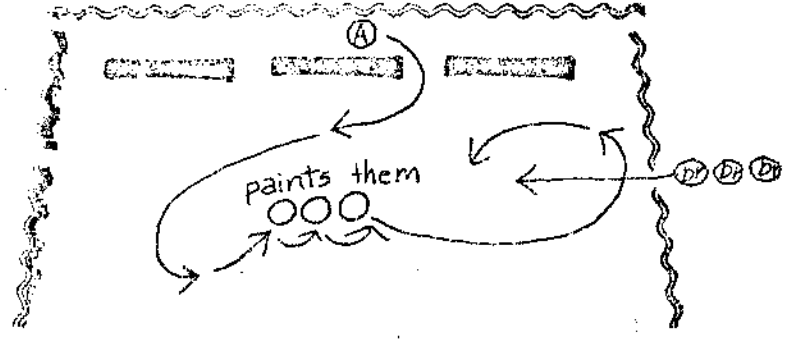
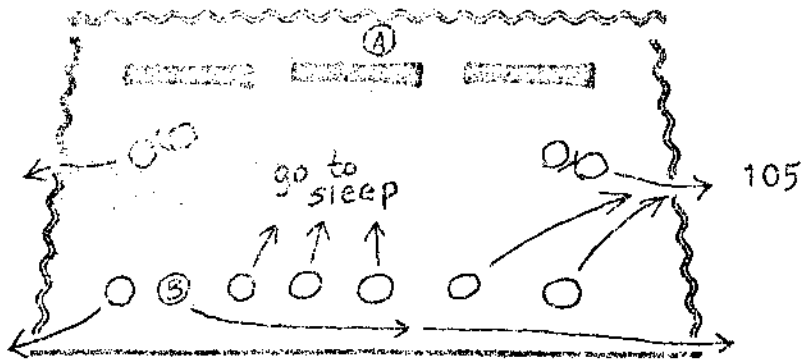
Armstrong: Oooh, the devil is in me today! (He gets the war paint.) Magic paint. Makes you brave an' mean, huh?

(With elaborate carefulness, he paints the faces of the sleeping braves. As others enter stage left, he runs a circle around them, and they face the audience, asleep and painted. Armstrong exits stage right and quickly enters, leading four Indians with paint on their faces. He leaves them and moves down left.)

Armstrong: This stuff better work. (He takes a whistle from his pocket and blows it. The braves line up snarling like animals.) Mean as a matched set of diamond backs. You men want to do something really nasty? (They growl and nod their heads.) All right. Pay attention. We're goin' into town and finish the job I started this mornin'. We're gonna rob the bank . . . and you can't get much nastier than that. We'll take them stupid town folks by surprise. And Pecos Bill won't lift a finger because he signed the treaty. Get it? (He laughs. The braves try to laugh, but Armstrong sobers immediately.) All right. Let's go. (He blows the whistle, and the Indians give out blood-curdling yells.) Shut up! Honestly, you are the most incompetent savages! Sneak! Sneak!

Braves: (tiptoeing off left) Sneak. Sneak.

Armstrong: It just makes me sick. (He exits left.)



JUL 68



PLATE X

ARMSTRONG: "YOU MEN WANT TO DO SOMETHING REALLY NASTY?"

Scene III

(The townspeople enter in a festive mood and change the set to the town. Bill enters with the banker and the sheriff. The banker steps to stage center and silences the crowd.)

Banker: Fellow townspeople, citizens, and homesteaders. You know I'm not one for fancy speeches.

(The townspeople laugh at this.)

We organized this meetin' to pay tribute to just about the greatest man in Texas-- Pecos Bill.

(The townspeople applaud.)

Whoever thought that when our little town got in trouble, anybody as big and important as Bill here would come to the rescue?

3rd Man: Twice in one day!

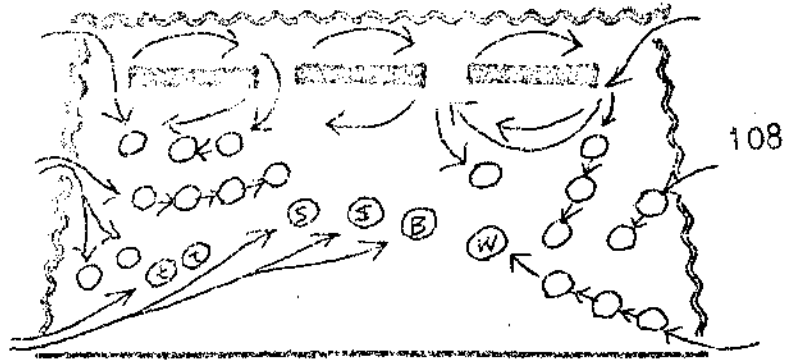
Banker: That's the honest truth. Not only has he taken care of the Indian problem, but he also stopped them bank robbers who--in tryin' to rob my bank--threatened the entire town with economic disaster. He come along just when we needed him, and he's been an example for everybody. It's people like him that make the West safe for people like us. It's too bad there ain't more like him. Friends, I give you a man you all love an' respect--Pecos Bill!

(The townspeople cheer.)

Bill: (moving to center) If you folks don't stop braggin' on me, I'm gonna need a bigger hat. I want to thank you for the celebration.

2nd Man: We would have had a parade, but when you just got one street, there's no place much to go.

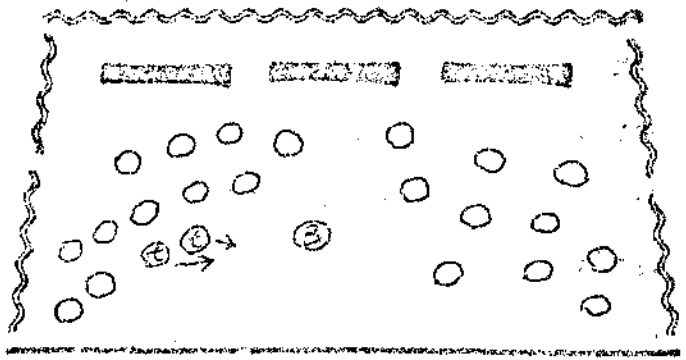
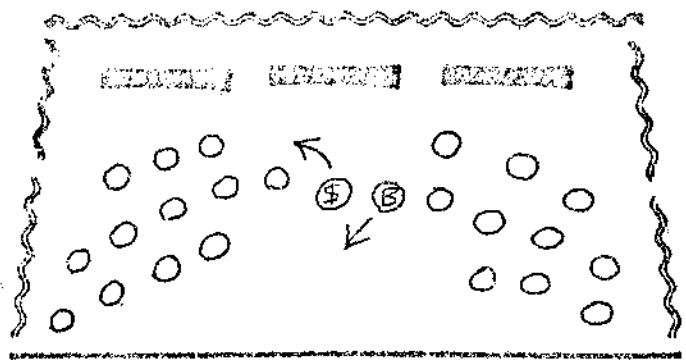
change
set to
town



- Bill: If I helped out, I was glad to do it. But them Indians signed the treaty 'cause I told 'em what a nice friendly bunch of folks you are. I knew you'd be good neighbors to 'em.
- 4th Man: An' we will, won't we?
- All: Yes. Sure. You bet.
- Twins: Did our rabbit's foot work?
- Bill: Yes-siree-bob, it worked, an' I'm much obliged--for the rabbit's foot an' for everything else you've done. You've treated me fine, an' I hope I can come back some day to see you.
- 2nd Man: Come back some day?
- 4th Girl: You ain't leavin'!?
- 3rd Girl: Bill, please don't go.
- 5th Girl: We want you to stay.
- Bill: It ain't that I don't appreciate the invite, but I guess I spent too many years livin' with the coyotes to take to town livin'.
- 3rd Girl: It must have been terrible to live with ccyotes.
- Bill: Why, no. I reckon I was happier then than I am now everbody knows my name. Shoot, if you're a coyote, you can scratch when you itch, but you can't spit when you're famous.
- 2nd Girl: You sound like you miss it.
- Bill: I guess I do. Sometimes I miss it a lot.

Music No. 8

"COYOTE HOME"



Bill: I wanna go back, wanna go back, go back to
 my coyote home,
 Out underneath a prairie sky;
 I'm gettin' homesick, gettin' homesick,
 homesick for my coyote home;
 I'm just so homesick I could die.
 I got a yearnin' to be returnin'
 Back to the place I loved when I was a kid;
 No one fixes raw jackrabbit
 Like my coyote mother did;
 When I was a pup there, just a pup there, up
 there in my coyote home,
 My biggest en'my was the flea;
 A coyote home's the only home for me.

Life would be rosy, if I could mosey
 Back to the kind of life that suited me
 right:
 Sleepin' in the sun all day, an'
 Howlin' at the moon all night.
 If I could go back, I could go back, go back
 to my coyote home,
 I guarantee I'd never roam;
 That is why I wanna go back,
 Back to bein' one of the pack,
 Back to my coyote home!

(At the end of the song, all of the townspeople except the
 Widder, the Sheriff, and the young girls exit.)

4th Man: (walking away) You make livin' out on the
 plains sound grand.

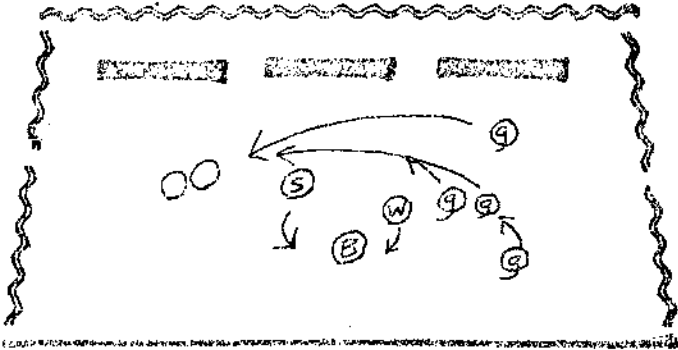
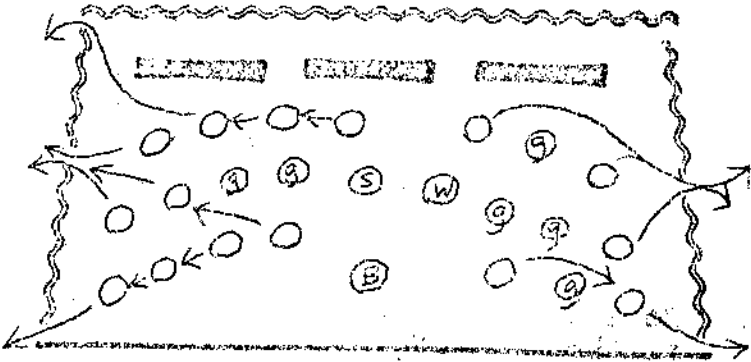
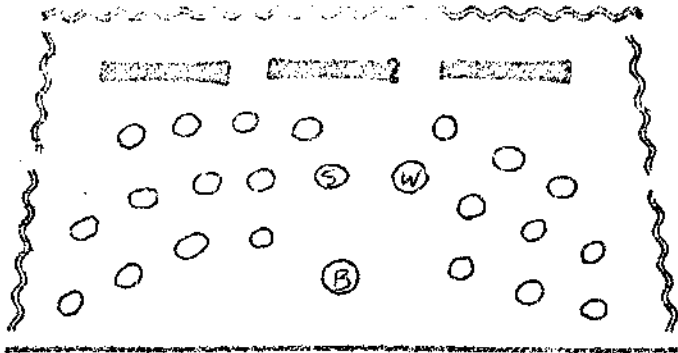
Bill: I reckon it has its points.

Widder: Sure it has its points! On ever' cactus
 plant in Texas. Bill, that's no way for
 you to live. You can't just blow around
 like a tumbleweed. You need to settle
 down.

Bill: I'm proud you want to help me, but I got
 places to go an' things to do.

Widder: Things to do! Name one.

Bill: Well, Armadillo Armstrong's still on the
 loose, an' I made a promise to catch him
 before he does any more damage. He's been
 a cocklebur in the side of Texas long
 enough.



JUL 68



PLATE XI
"COYOTE HOME"

Widder: Can't you think about anything but catchin' criminals an' doin' good deeds? There's other things in life. Softer things.

(Two girls move downstage.) Sweet things.

(Two more girls move downstage.) Do-mestic things.

(The last two girls come downstage and pose as the Widder exits. A soft waltz begins.)

Bill: Good e'nin', Ladies.

(They drop their handkerchiefs.)

Uh, you dropped your bandannas, Ladies.
(He picks them up and gives them to the girls.)

2nd Girl: (taking her handkerchief) Thank you, Billy.

Bill: Not Billy, ma'am; just Bill.

3rd Girl: Bill, you've been wonderful.

1st Girl: I hate to think of what would have happened if you hadn't come along.

Bill: Aw, I was glad to do it, an' I've been thanked aplenty.

(a pause)

2nd Girl: Ain't it a beautiful evenin'?

Bill: Yes, ma'am.

4th Girl: Just look at that yeller moon.

1st Girl: It takes up so much of the sky the stars are crowded.

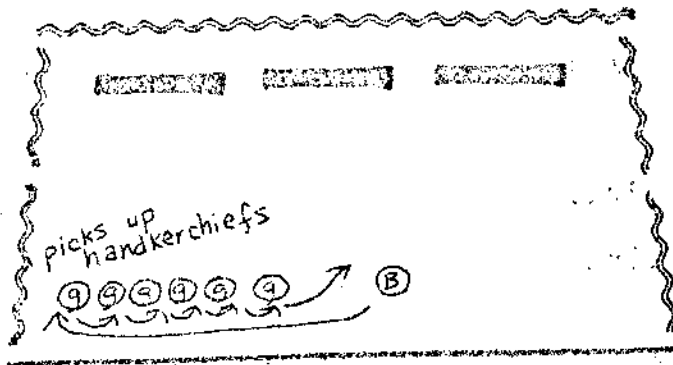
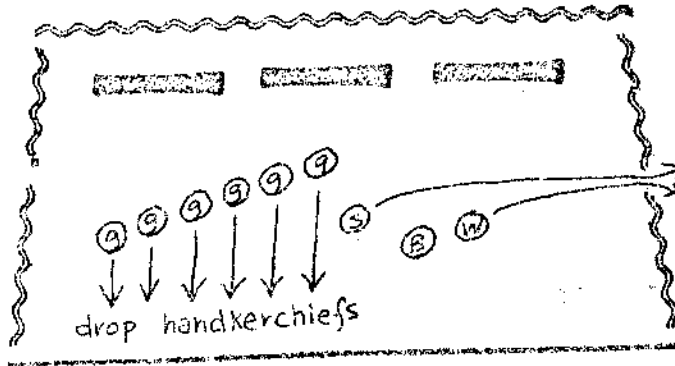
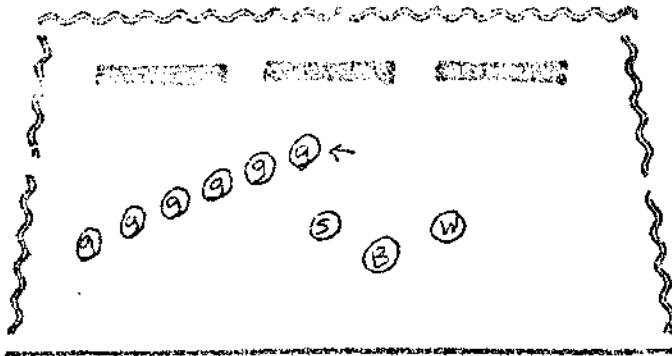
Bill: Yessum, it's pretty, all right.

3rd Girl: Moon like that starts a girl to thinkin'.

Bill: Thinkin'? 'Bout what?

1st Girl: Soft things.

2nd Girl: Sweet things.



4th Girl: Do-mestic things.

Music No. 9

"JUST MY TYPE"

Girls: Well, I keep tryin' not to stare
At your dark eyes an' wavy black hair.

(They whistle.)

I would be an easy mark,
'Cause a man who's tall and dark
An' handsome is just my type.

An' I admit that I got weak
When I first saw your manly physique. (Ooh,
wow!)

Though I can't imagine why,
I have noticed that a guy
With muscles is just my type.

Some women find out that strength is their
weakness;
Some women think of a man with a mind;
Some women look for good looks--
Me, I like the handsome, strong, intelligent
kind.

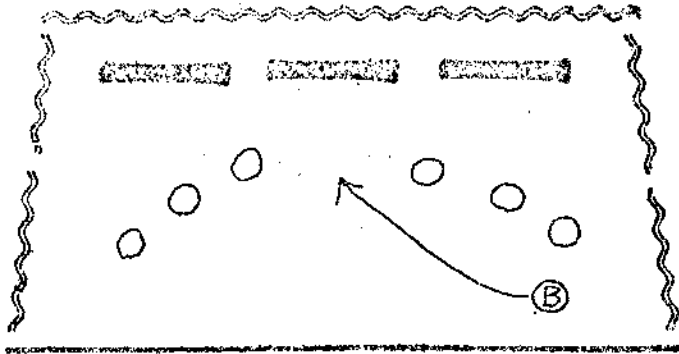
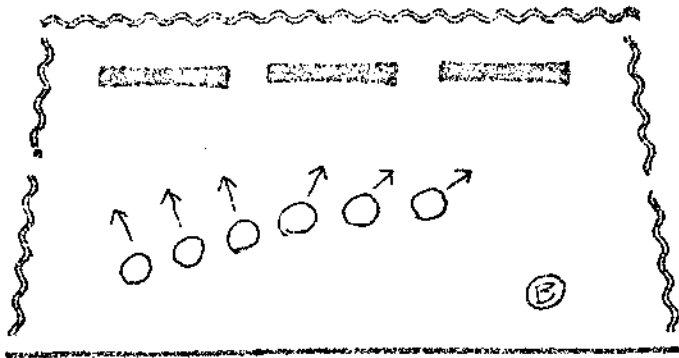
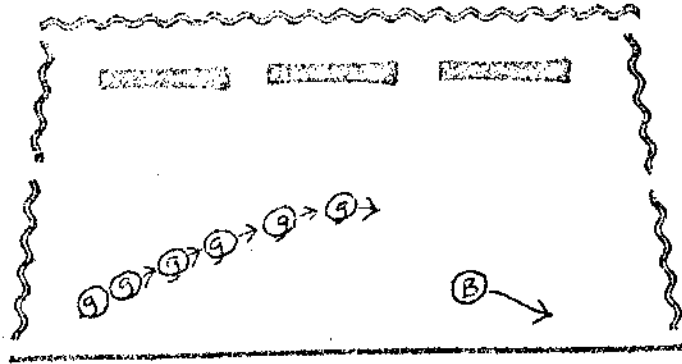
Of course I noticed from the start
You were very quick-witted and smart.
You are wide-awake and wise,
And I'm sure you realize
A girl like me could be--
A girl like me could be--
A girl like me could be just your type!

(They finish the song in various flirtatious
poses. Bill, feeling uncomfortable, crosses to center.)

Bill: If you ladies will excuse me, I got to go
over to the jail and check on them bank
robbers.

4th Girl: Bill, don't go.

1st Girl: Please don't leave us all alone.



Bill: All alone. Well, I guess I couldn't do that.
(He whistles.) Hey, fellas!

(The men begin to enter.)

1st Man: Yes, sir?

4th Man: What is it, Bill?

Bill: These here ladies were just complainin'
about bein' lonesome.

4th Man: Well now, we can't have that.

3rd Man: No gal ought to be lonesome on a Saturday
night when the moon's out.

(Bill exits.)

4th Girl: Bill!

3rd Man: He's gone.

1st Man: Looks like you're stuck with us.

2nd Girl: You ain't like him.

4th Man: Maybe not, but we're young, ain't we?

1st Man: An' middlin' good lookin'?

3rd Man: An' anyway, you'll get a lot farther with us
than you will pesterin' Pecos Bill.

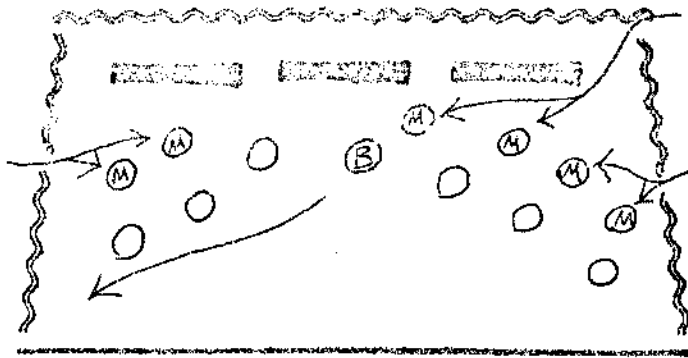
3rd Girl: 'At's probably true.

2nd Man: An' there's no sense lettin' a perfectly
good moon go to waste.

Music No. 10

"SATURDAY NIGHT"

Men: If you are free, gal,
Come on an' spend the evenin' with me, gal;
You just as well let me be polite,
Or you'll be by yourself on a Saturday night.



119

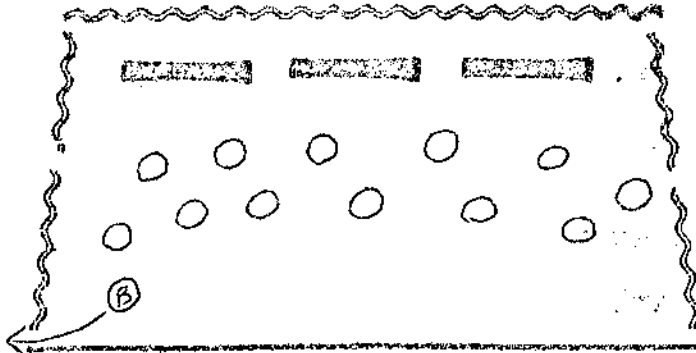




PLATE XII
"SATURDAY NIGHT"

Girls: Though you ain't grown boys,
 Who wants to spend the evenin' alone, boys?
 You're sorta puny an' not too bright,
 But still you'll keep me company on Saturday
 night.

Men: Monday, stupid;

Quarter: Tuesday, sad;

Girls: Wednesday's always wearisome;

2nd and 3rd
 Men: Thursday, boring;

2nd and 3rd
 Girls: Friday, bad;

All: But once Saturday has come,
 I feel like I got it made;

Men: I've had my bath an' I been paid!

3rd Man: (spoken) An' I'm gonna have a good time if
 it costs a dollar an' six bits!

All: (sing) Let's all forget time;
 I aim to stay up way past my bedtime;
 The week's been dull, an' it won't be right
 Unless I kick my heels up on Saturday night!

(There is a short dance, and the townspeople exit in couples.
 When they are gone, Armstrong and three Braves sneak on
 stage right.)

Armstrong: Luck is with us.

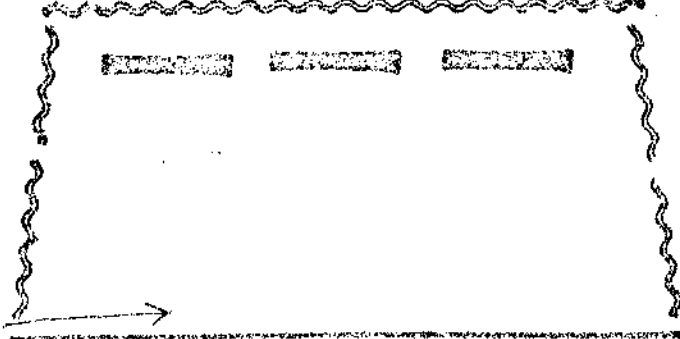
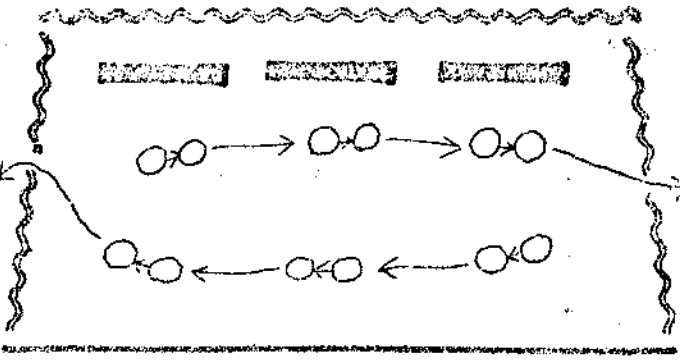
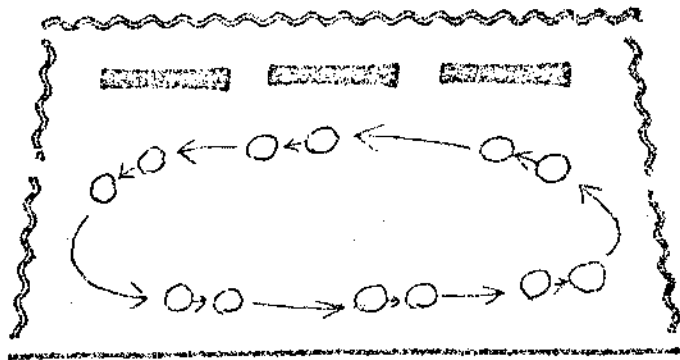
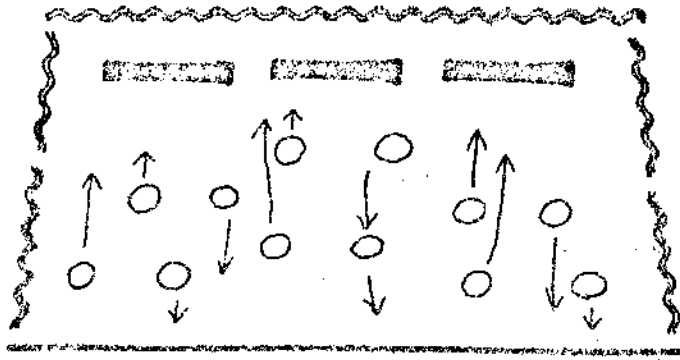
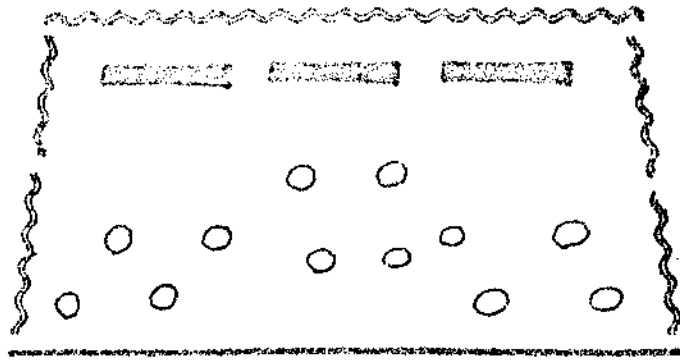
4th Brave: Luck is with us.

5th Brave: Luck is with us.

Armstrong: QUIET! Shhh! Now you men keep them settlers
 busy while I figure a way to get into that
 bank.

Music No. 11

"INVITATION TO A WAR PARTY"



(a) (b) (c) (d)

(Armstrong goes off stage right, and the Indians hide. In a pantomime ballet, a girl and boy dance on stage right. The Indians jump out from hiding, and the girl jumps into the boy's arms, and he carries her out right, followed by the Indians.)

(Three Indians enter right. The smallest one turns a cart-wheel into the arms of the largest, and they exit left.)

(The Widder crosses left to right. She is smiling and obviously doesn't know anything about the attack.)

(A couple dance on stage left. When two Indians run on stage right, the girl jumps into the boy's arms, and they are chased off stage left.)

(The Sheriff enters left cautiously. Four Indians sneak up behind him. One kicks him in the rear. He wheels around and is carried off right.)

(A girl and a small boy dance on right. Two Indians jump from stage left. The boy jumps into the girl's arms and they are chased off right.)

(The Widder enters right and crosses the stage again, still smiling.)

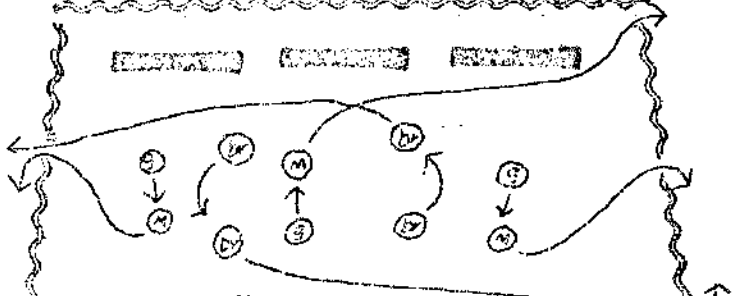
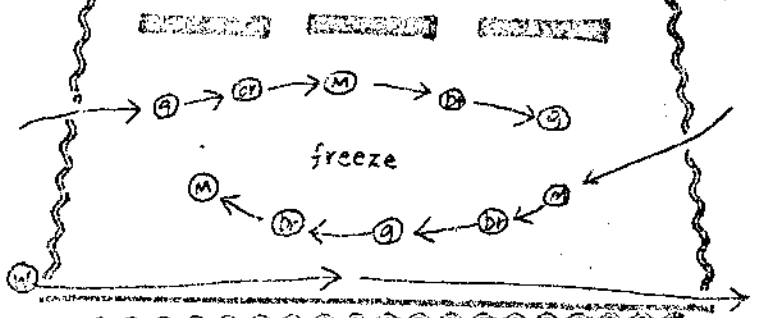
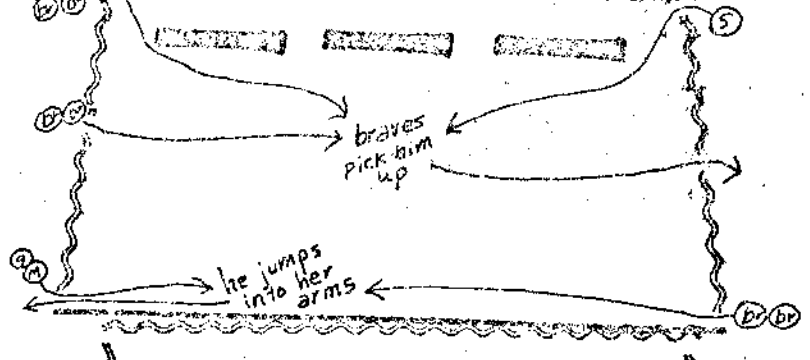
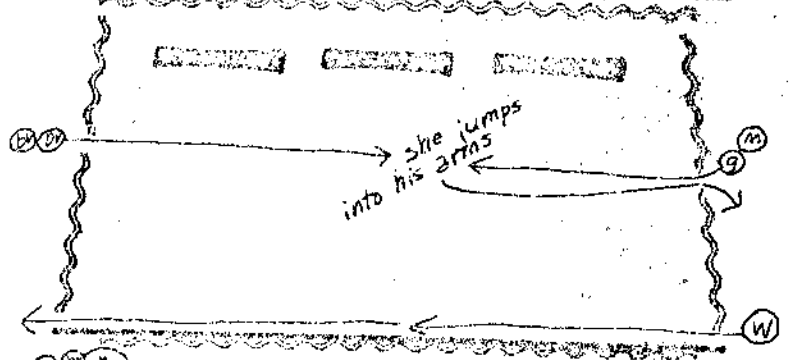
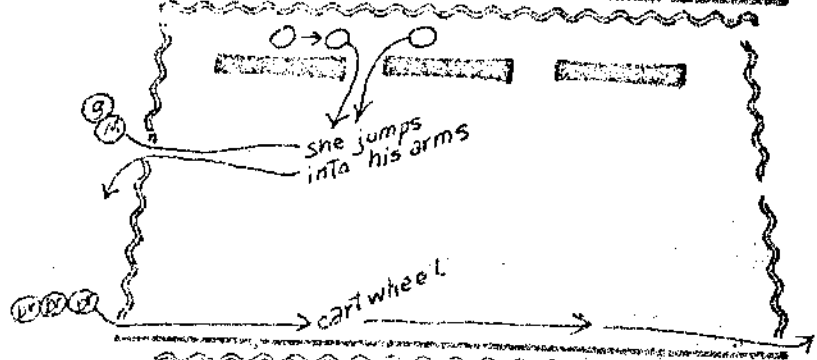
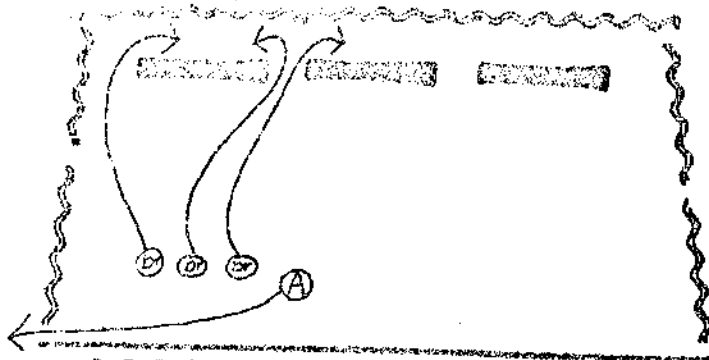
(Townspople and Indians tiptoe on from both sides of the stage. The frightened townspeople don't see the Indians, and the gleeful Indians know it. Suddenly, the townspeople realize what is happening, and everybody freezes in tableau as Armstrong enters stage right with a huge stick of dynamite.)

Armstrong: That's it, men. Keep 'em occupied.

(He exits stage left. The girls of the town faint in the arms of their dance partners and are dragged off. The Indians dance in a wide circle and then chase them off.)

(The Widder crosses left to right. She still doesn't know about the attack.)

(Two boys of the town enter stage right, riding on Indian braves' shoulders. They search for Indians, shrug to each



JUL

68



PLATE XIII

"INVITATION TO A WAR PARTY"

other, and ride off stage left.)

(Three pioneer women enter left as three braves enter right. They pass each other, nodding politely. Suddenly the women realize what they have seen. They do a take and run off right.)

(Three Indians enter and hide behind the scenery. Three girls run on stage right. The Indians jump from hiding and there is a frozen tableau as Armstrong enters stage left without the dynamite. He holds his ears, there is a boom from the bass drum, and he runs back off stage left.)

(The twins enter left with slingshots and chase the Indians off right. The girls escape left.)

(The Widder, still smiling, crosses right to left.)

(Three boys back on stage left as three Indians back on stage right. They counter and turn past each other. The boys turn around and see the Indians. They swing at the Indians, who duck. When the boys are turned, the Indians get on their backs and ride them off right.)

(Two girls enter right and two Indians enter left. The Indians prowl at the girls and chase them off right.)

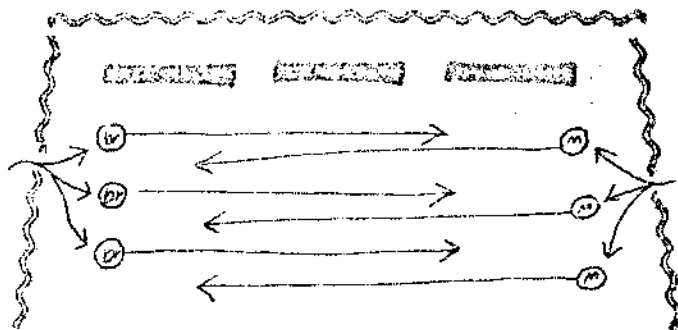
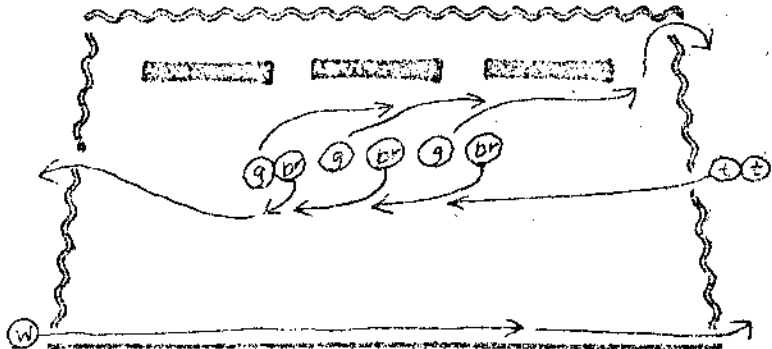
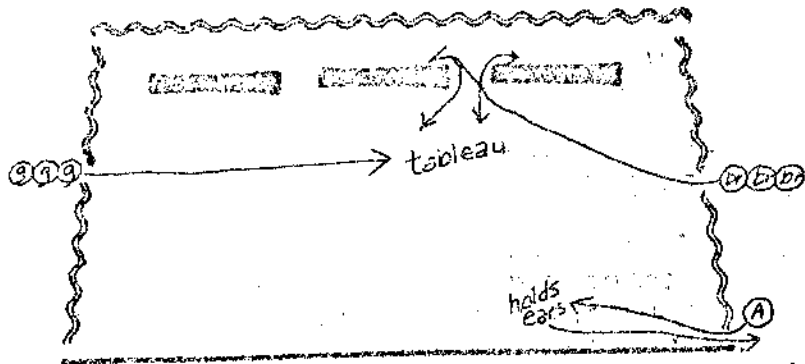
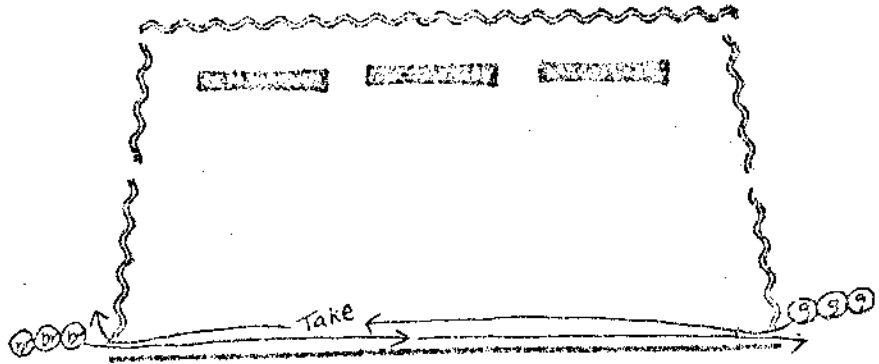
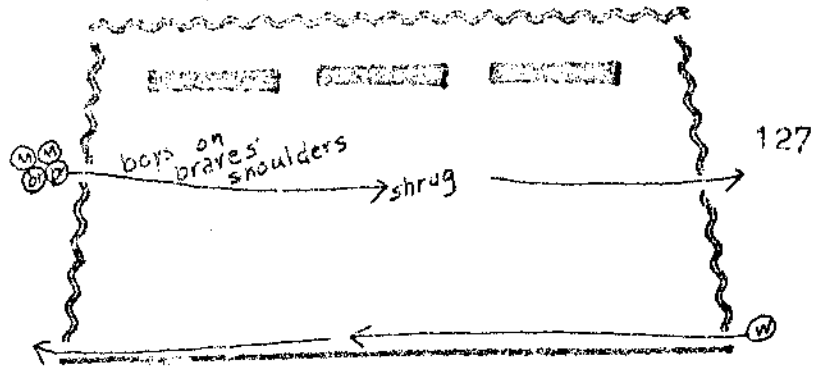
(The Widder enters left followed by two Indians. The pioneer women enter right. They see the Indians and faint. The Widder turns, sees the braves, faces the audience and pantomimes a scream. She runs off right, followed by the Indians.)

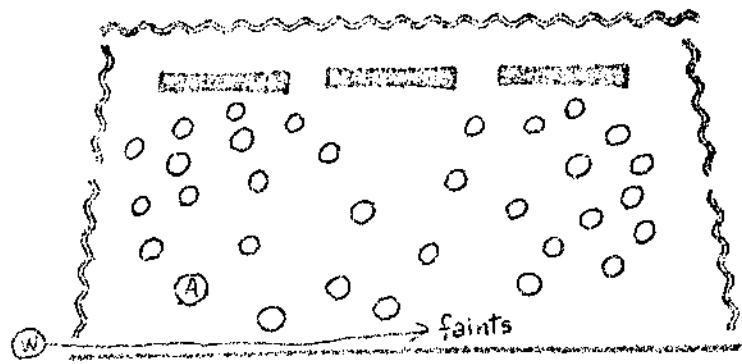
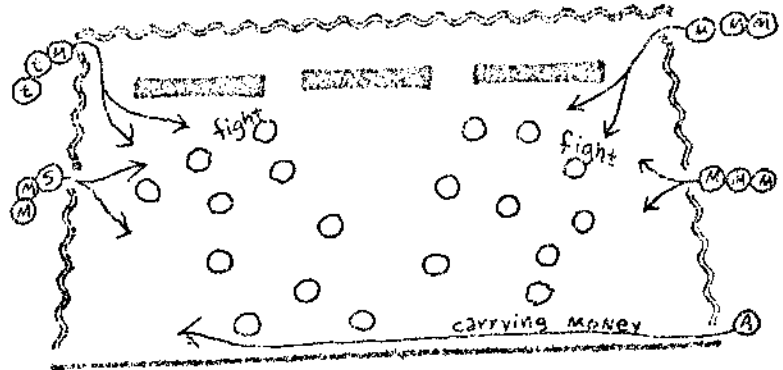
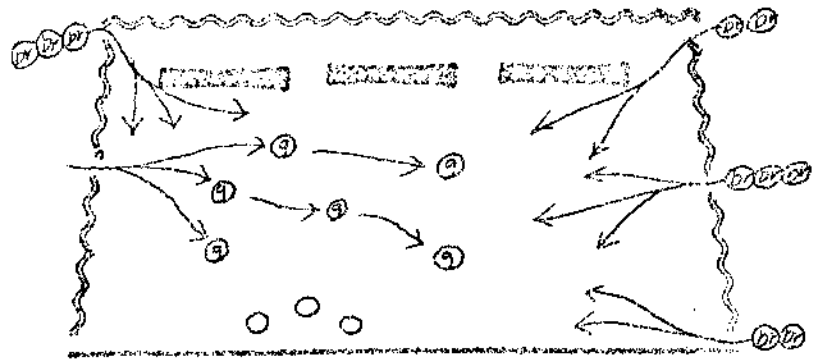
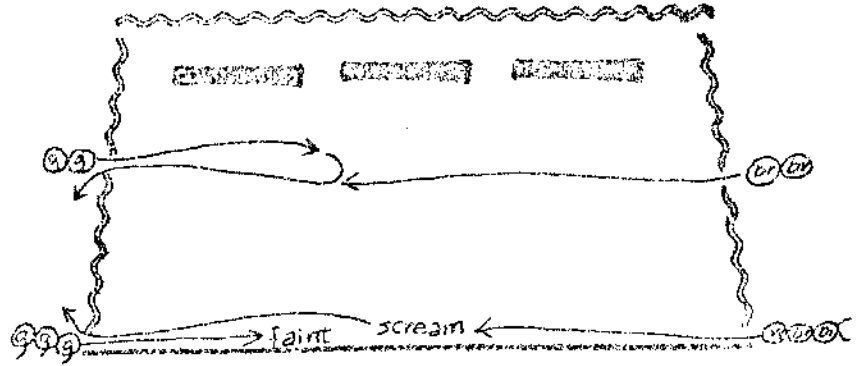
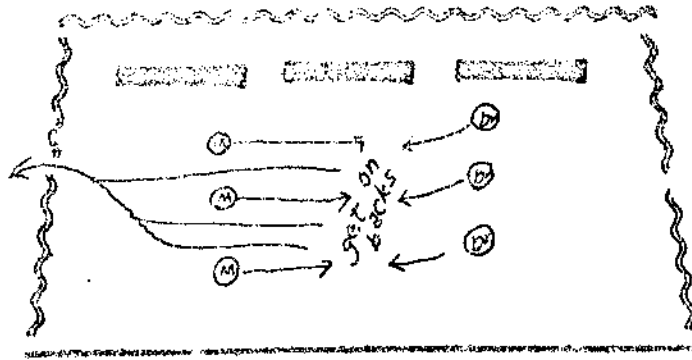
(Girls of the town run on right. When Indians enter left, the girls faint up center.)

(All the men of the town except the banker and all the Indians come on stage. There is a brief fight, and the townspeople are knocked out. During the fight, Armstrong crosses from left to right, his arms full of money bags.)

Armstrong: Look at it. Money beyond the calculations
 of mathematics.

(The Widder walks on stage right. In a daze, she stares at the stage, full of vicious Indians and unconscious settlers. She faints.)





Banker: (entering stage left) Stop that man! He's robbed the bank!

(Two braves pick up the banker and carry him off right. They are followed by Armstrong and the rest of the Indians. Bill enters stage left and looks around, bewildered.)

Widder: (coming to her senses) Where have you been?

Bill: What in the name of common sense is goin' on?

Sheriff: What does it look like is goin' on? We just been attacked by a war party of them Indian friends of yours.

4th Man: It's a wonder they didn't scalp us all.

2nd Girl: Scared me purt near to death.

Bill: But them Indians couldn't have caused trouble. They signed a treaty.

Sheriff: And they broke the same treaty.

Widder: Come a-buzzin' in here like hornets.

3rd Girl: Ruined the party.

Banker: (entering stage right) Robbed the bank.

Bill: Robbed the bank?

Banker: Dynamited it an' stole ever' penny.

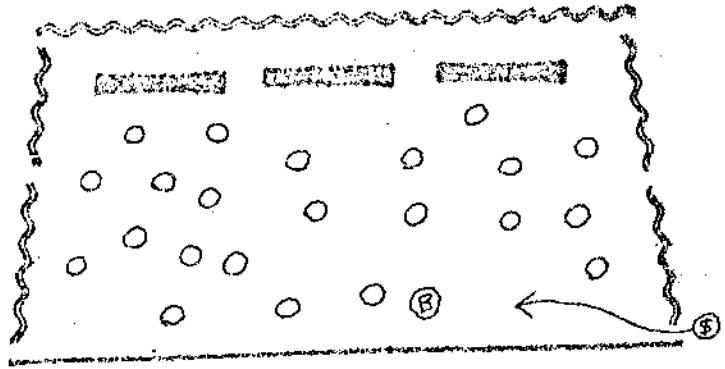
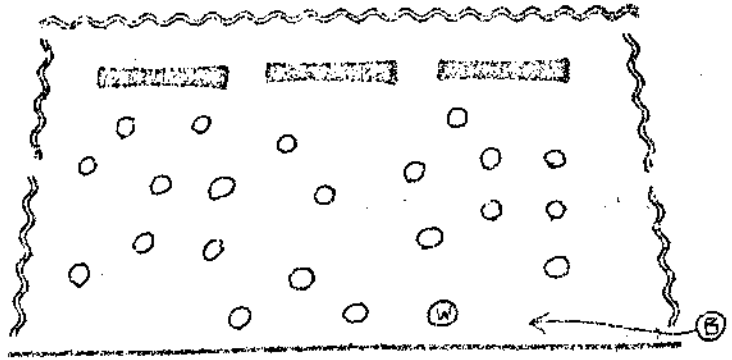
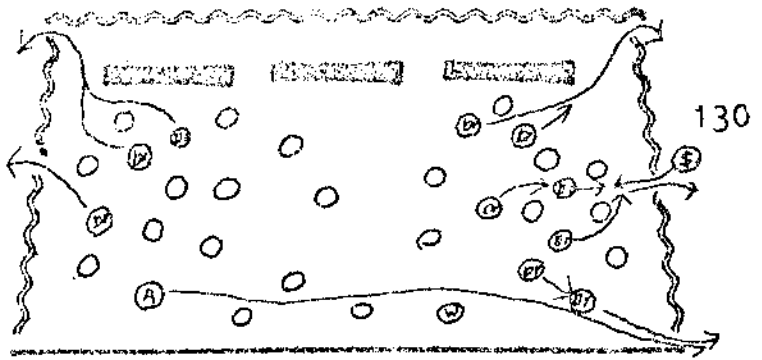
Bill: Why would Indians do that? What would they want with money?

Banker: How should I know? All I know is this place was swarmin' with red Indians.

Widder: Bill, you gotta stop them painted savages.

Banker: An' get my money back.

Bill: If they were the Indians I know, they didn't wear paint. I seen 'em throw that stuff away.



3rd Man: Well, they wasn't all wearin' paint. That one with the black mustache didn't have none on.

Widder: He could have used a little. Ugliest face I ever saw on a mortal.

Bill: A black mustache! That wasn't an Indian; that was Armadillo Armstrong. He must have found the paint an' used it to rile the whole tribe.

Sheriff: Well, if that's what he done, it sure 'nough worked.

Bill: Curse his black heart. I bet he found out I'd signed the treaty to leave the Indians alone.

1st Girl: But what'll we do?

Bill: There's only one thing to do; I'm goin' to go to the Indian camp and get that warpaint taken off.

Sheriff: We'll organize a posse to go with you.

Bill: Nope. I'd better handle it alone.

5th Girl: But they may be waitin' to ambush you.

Bill: I'll have a better chance by myself. You folks just stay here, cross your fingers, say a prayer or two, and wait for my signal.

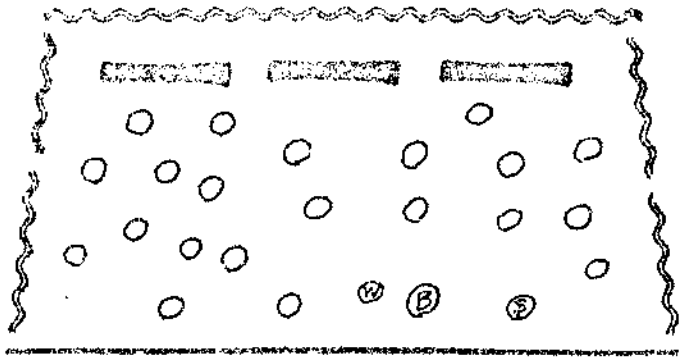
Banker: What kind of signal?

Bill: I'll think of something. Well, there's no time for jawin'. I better get on out to the Indian camp. Bye! (He exits stage left.)

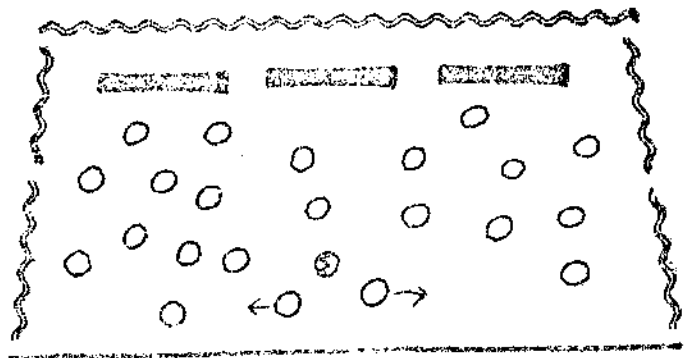
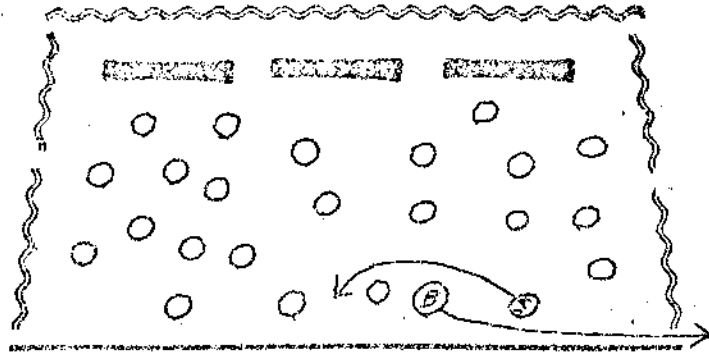
2nd Girl: Oh, Bill.

4th Girl: Be careful!

Banker: (moving to center) All right, friends, until Bill either comes back or signals for us to come, there's only one thing to do ...
HIDE!



132



(The townspeople run off. When they are gone, the squaws enter upstage left and change the scenery back to the Indian camp. As they leave, Pecos Bill enters and hides.)

Scene IV

(Armstrong and six braves enter with sacks of money.)

Armstrong: (taking up the money bags) All right, men. You did pretty good tonight--for beginners. But there's lots more banks to be robbed, and lots more meanness to be done, an' we can't afford to rest on our laurels, can we?

(They look blank.) Well, can we?

Braves: No, sir!

Armstrong: That's better. Just look at that!

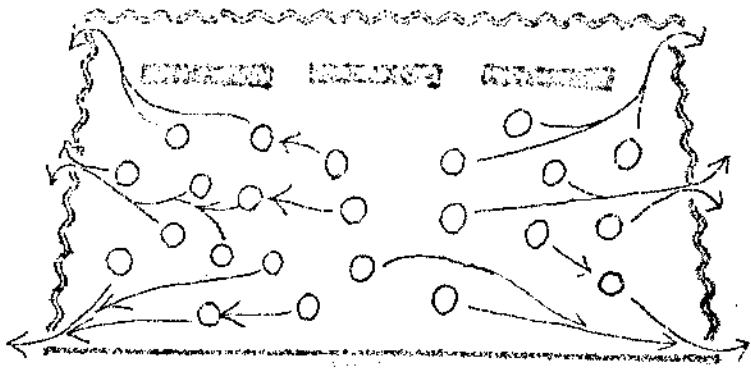
Music No. 12

"MONEY"

Armstrong: I know that it is wicked to covet; yet I swear
I'd give a thousand dollars to be a million-
aire,
'Cause when you're broke, it's not a joke;
Misfortune isn't funny;
But gettin' loot gives me a boot;
I have a "thing" for money!

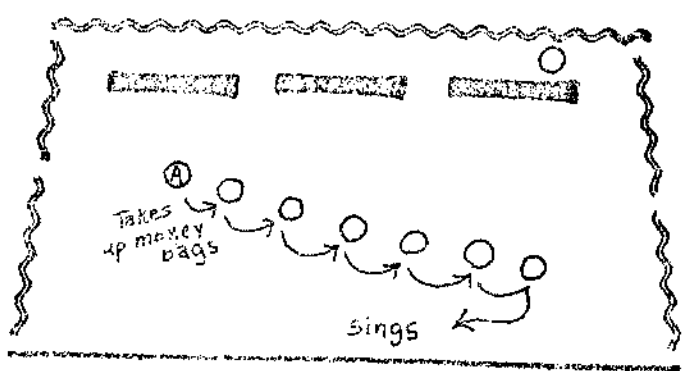
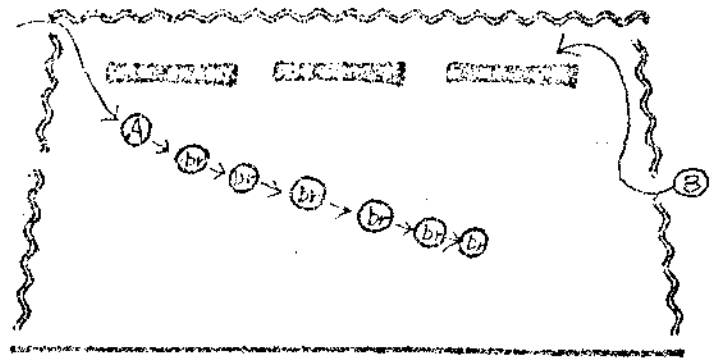
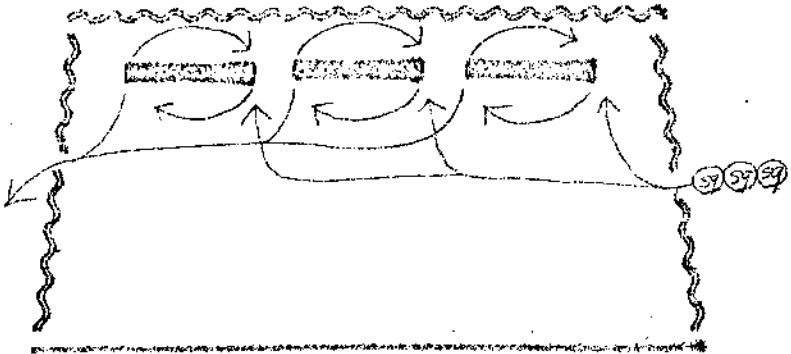
When I sit in the gutter and watch rich men
go by,
It often makes me think: there but for
poverty go I;
Give me cold cash, and in a flash,
My cloudy day is sunny;
Though being poor has no allure,
I have a "thing" for money!

Some say they want but little while they are
here below;
If I can't take it with me, I don't intend
to go;



134

change set to village



JUL 68



PLATE XIV

ARMSTRONG: "ALL RIGHT, MEN."

The well-to-do won't make it to
 The land of milk and honey;
 The wealthy class will fry en masse;
 We have a "thing" for money!

(spoken) Now, I have to get this money
 counted and (he yawns) rest up for the
 next job. You men stand guard.

Braves: Yes, sir. (They startle Armstrong.)

Armstrong: Course, Pecos Bill won't show up 'cause he
 signed the treaty, but that sheriff and
 his deputies might be stupid enough to try
 something. Be ready. Stand alert. And
 remember . . . Think dirty. (He exits
 with the money.)

(The Indians snarl. Pecos Bill peeks out, then marches to
 center stage.)

1st Brave: Pecos Bill!

(The braves start toward him. There is a moment of tension;
 then Bill starts casually doing a jazzy dance step. The
 Indians are shocked.)

3rd Brave: What are you doing?

Bill: Dancin'.

4th Brave: Dancing?

2nd Brave: Do you not know what trouble you are in?

6th Brave: We were just waiting for some victim to come.

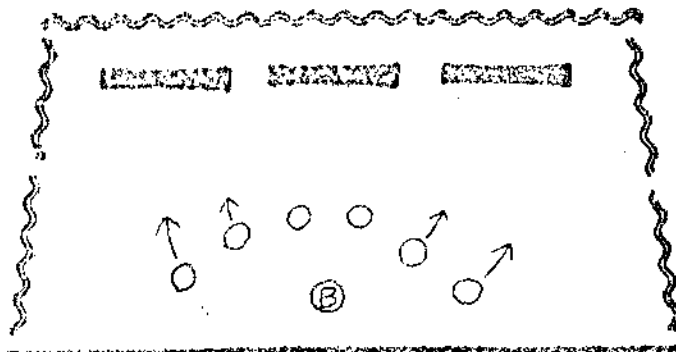
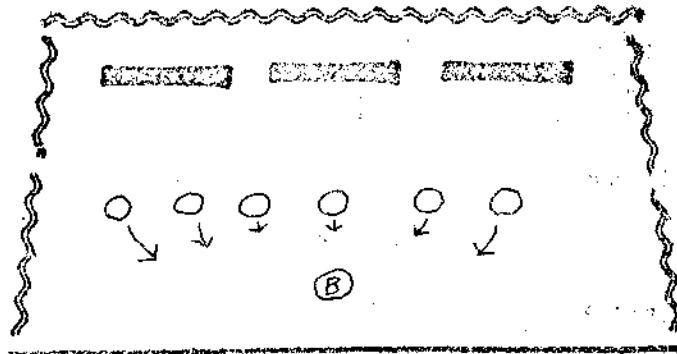
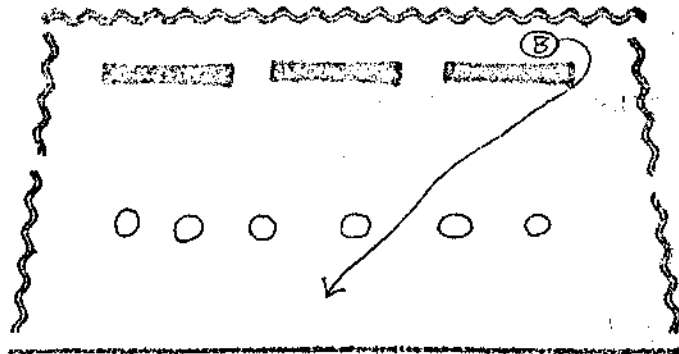
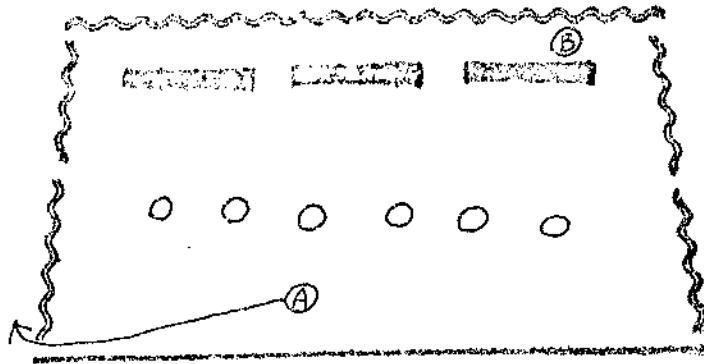
1st Brave: We shall torture you slowly in terrible ways
 that only an Indian in warpaint could
 think of.

5th Brave: And it will hurt.

3rd Brave: Are you not afraid?

Bill: (stopping his dance) I'm not afraid of any-
 thing that walks, swims, or flies.

(He continues dancing.)



1st Brave: The dance must be big medicine.

Bill: It's very big medicine.

Music No. 13

"RAIN DANCE RAG"

Bill: Fellas, if this dancin' has got you curious,
Start movin' your feet.
Just pay no attention to inhibition; start
Snappin' your fingers an' pick up the beat;

(The braves begin to snap their fingers.)

There's no use in fightin'; it's irresistible;
Aw, now, don't be a drag!

Braves: Doodle-dee, doodle-dee, doodle-dee.

Bill: Come on an' do the Rain Dance Rag!

1st Brave: Though I hate to sound impressed,
Clouds are gatherin' in the west.

4th Brave: Maybe there is somethin' to it.

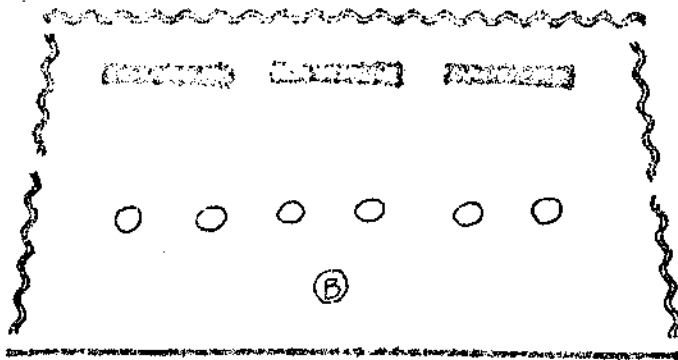
Braves: (to Bill) Could you teach us how to do it?

Bill: It's as easy as can be;
Everybody follow me,
An' you'll learn to do the rag, do the rag,
do the rag!

(Bill and the Braves begin to dance.)

First you get the thymh into your moccasins;
It's easy to do,
An' before you know it, you've started
dancin', an'
Rain'll be fallin' before you are through.
Anyone can tell you that the humidity
Count gets way above norm
When folks start dancin' up a storm!

Better go an' check your roof;
Make your teepee water-proof;
When you hear that distant thunder,
Find a shelter to get under;



Maybe 'fore the rain comes down,
 We should move to higher ground;
 Everybody do the rag, do the rag, do the rag!

(The braves dance to the scenery and turn it, revealing a drawing of rain clouds and lightning and falling rain.)

Rain!
 Until even frogs complain!

(Bill exits right, and three squaws dance on with yellow umbrellas. As they dance off right, four braves enter pantomiming rain. When the squaws reenter, couples form to do a ragtime dance. When they dance off, the men of the town enter stage left, and Bill enters stage right.)

Banker: We come as soon as we seen your signal.

1st Man: What a signal that was! Thunder and lightning.

3rd Man: Worst storm since we come West.

Bill: Good to see you. Everbody hide. Armadillo Armstrong will be here any minute, and there's no time to explain.

(The townspeople hide, and the dance continues. The Indians dance on stage left. They have removed their warpaint.)

Braves: All that moisture in the air
 Takes the curl out of your hair;
 When the showers start to wet you,
 Rheumatism's bound to get you;
 Anyhow I guess we should
 Stop before we cause a flood.
 It's fun to do the rain dance--
 That water-on-the-brain dance--
 It's fun to do the Rain Dance Rag!

(Armstrong enters stage right dressed in a print nightshirt and nightcap.)

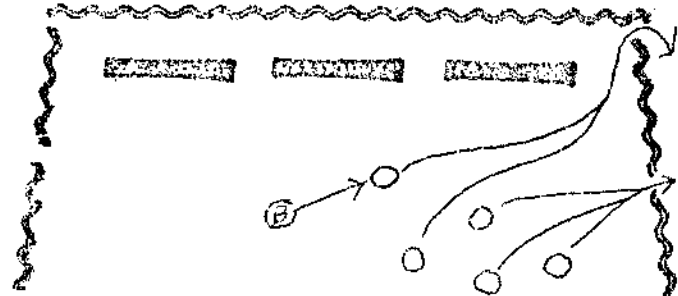
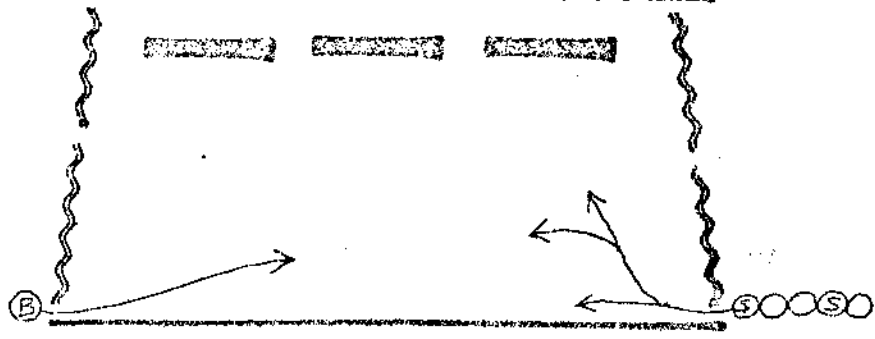
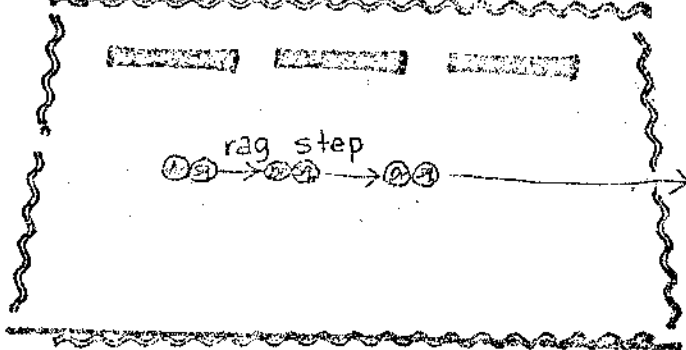
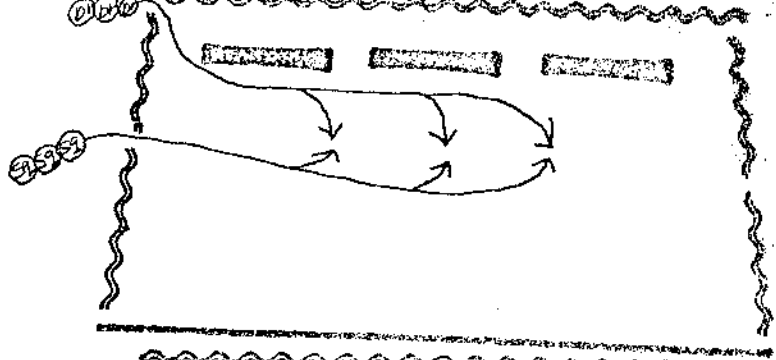
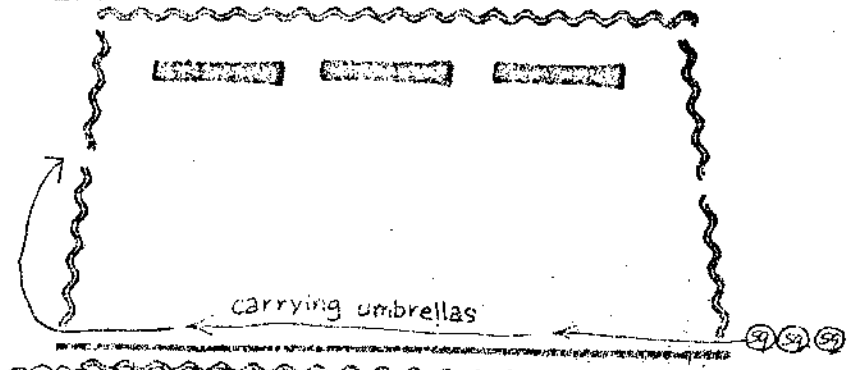
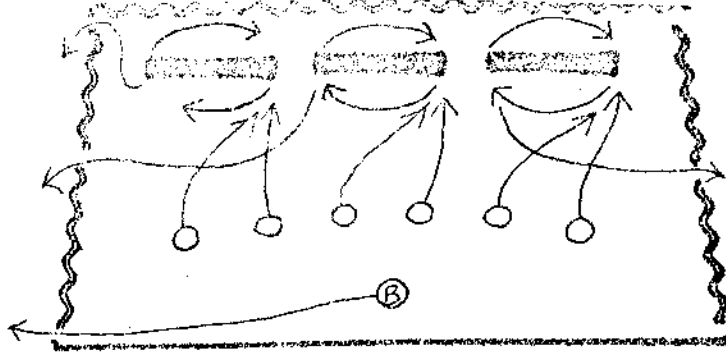
Armstrong: What in the Sam Hill's goin' on out here?
 Dancin' and thunderin' an . . .

(Bill steps out from behind the scenery.)

Bill: Howdy, Armstrong.

change
set to
storm

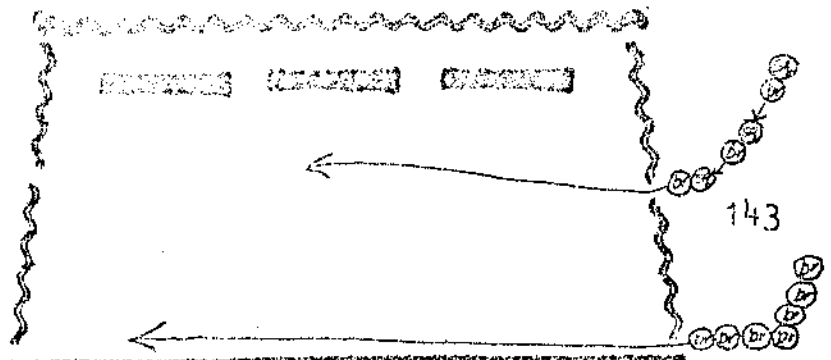
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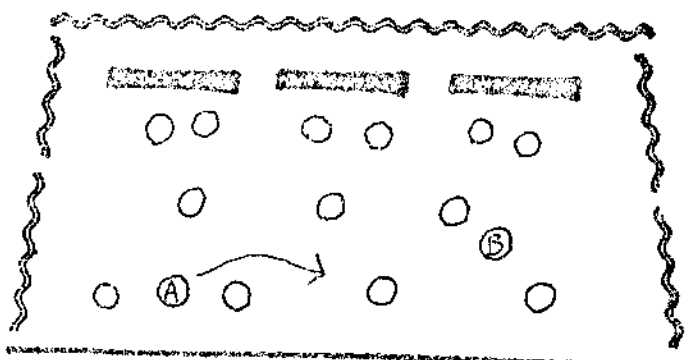
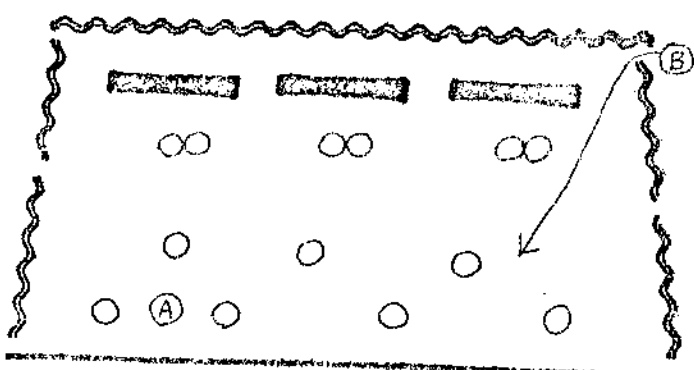
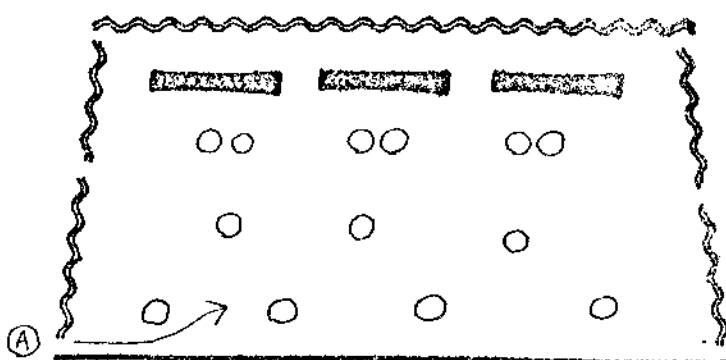
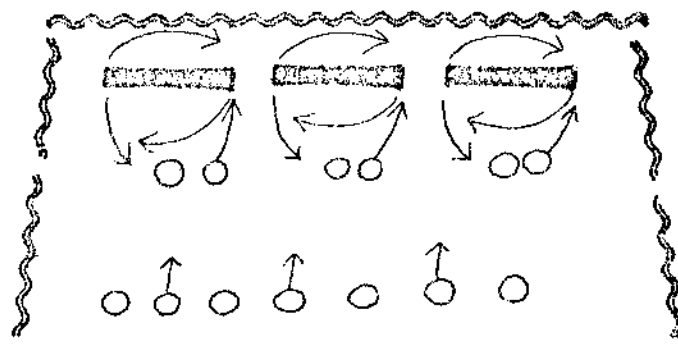
JUL 68



PLATE XV
"RAIN DANCE RAG"



change
set to
village



JUL 68



PLATE XVI

BRAVES: "IT'S FUN TO DO THE RAIN DANCE RAG!"

Armstrong: Pecos Bill! Hey, men, here he is! (He whistles.) Hey! Pecos Bill! Get him! Sic him! Well, do something. This is no time to be nonviolent. (He puses the 1st Brave.) He won't fight back; he signed the treaty. (a pause) Where's your paint?

1st Brave: It washed off in the rain.

Armstrong: (to the audience) I think I'm going to be sick!

(The townspeople, including the girls and the Widder, come from hiding, angrily. Armstrong tries to hide from them.)

3rd Man: Kill him!

2nd Man: Shoot him!

1st Girl: Hang him!

Sheriff: Tryin' to rob our hard-earned money. Stirrin' up them Indians against us.

Widder: You vinegaroon!

1st Man: It won't take me five minutes to get some tar and feathers.

Bill: Wait! I know Armadillo Armstrong's kind. You oughta have sympathy for him. How do you s'pose it feels to be despised by everbody? What do you think it's like-- skulkin' across the prairie like a mangy desert rat?

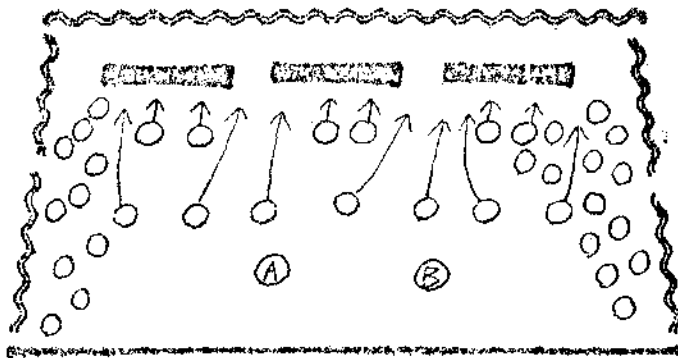
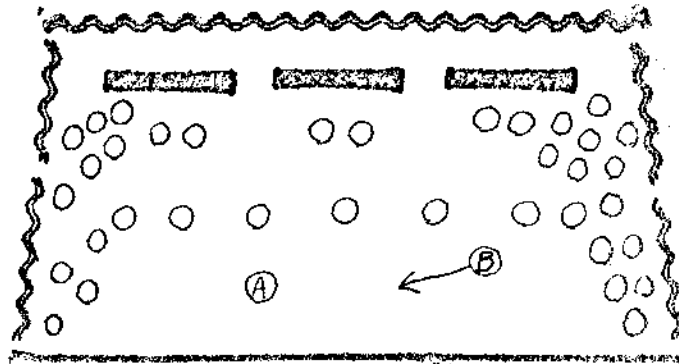
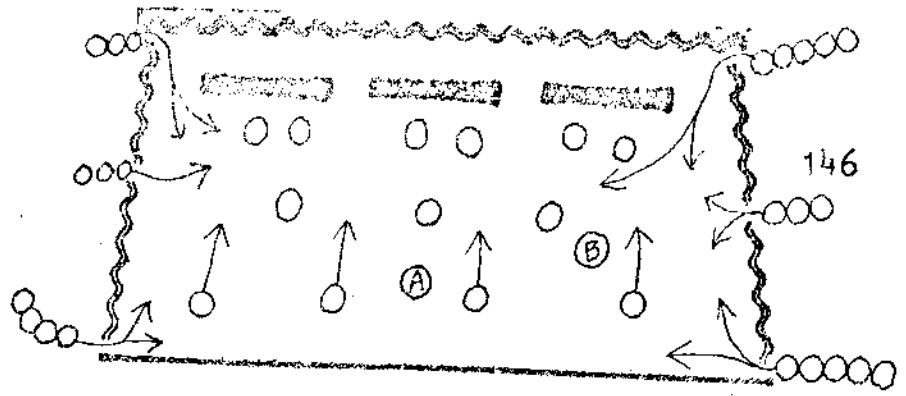
Armstrong: Hold on there.

Bill: A miserable, flea-bitten, worthless, two-legged rattlesnake.

Armstrong: Now just a minute.

Bill: A low-down, ornery, sidewindin' polecat.

Townspeople
and Indians: (sympathetically as they pose) Aw.



JUL

68



PLATE XVII

"I FEEL SORRY FOR YOU"

Music No. 14

"I FEEL SORY FOR YOU"

Bill: I feel sorry for you;

Armstrong: You feel sorry for me?

Bill: I feel sorry for you, for you;
You never have acted nice;
You always shot with loaded dice;
I feel sorry for you;

2nd Girl: He feels sorry for you;

Bill: I feel sorry for you,

Girls: For you;

Bill: I feel sorry for, real, real sorry for, I
feel sorry for you.

Armstrong: (spoken) I don't want your pity.

Widder: You got it anyway.
(She sings) I have mercy for you;

Girls: I have mercy for you;

Widder: I have mercy for you,

Girls: For you;

3rd Man: He's just a pain in the neck;

Sheriff: Deals from the bottom of the deck.

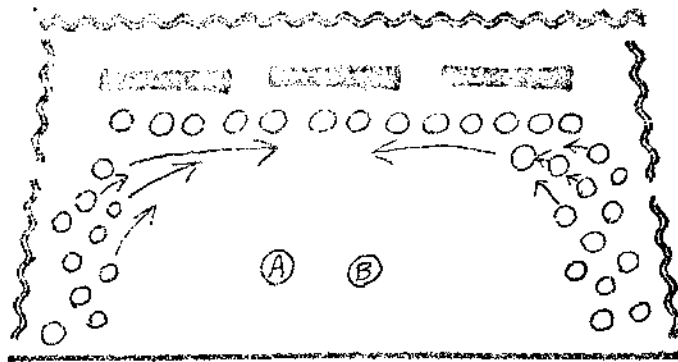
1st Man: I have mercy for you;

4th Girl: I have mercy for you;

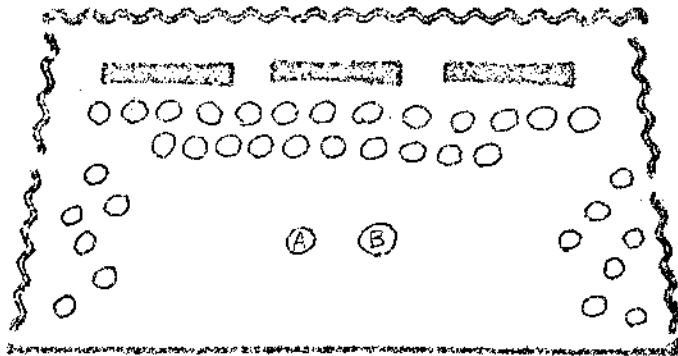
1st Man and
4th Girl: I have mercy for you, for you;
I have mercy for,

Bill: Much more mercy for,

Bill, 1st Man,
4th Girl: I have mercy for you.



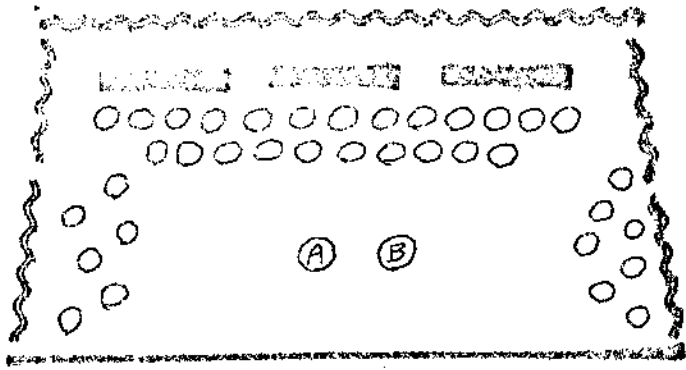
149



2nd Man: He's chock full of venom an vanity;
 Banker: This bum's a disgrace to humanity.
 Twins: There's compassion for you;
 5th Girl: There's compassion for you;
 Girls: There's compassion for you,
 All: For you;
 Sheriff: He often tells dirty jokes.
 Widder: I'll bet he even drinks and smokes;
 1st and
 2nd Girls: There's compassion for you;
 3rd and
 4th Girls: There's compassion for you;
 5th and
 6th Girls: There's compassion for you,
 Twins: For you;
 All: There's compassion for,
 Twins: Real compassion for,
 All: There's compassion for you.

(Bill conducts the townspeople and Indians as a choir. Armstrong becomes remorseful.)

Girls: Aren't you ashamed?
 Men: Aren't you ashamed?
 Girls: Aren't you ashamed?
 Men: Shame!
 Girls: Shame!
 Bill: Shame!
 Braves: I have sympathy for you!



Girls: I have sympathy for you;
 Men: I have sympathy for you,
 All: For you.
 3rd Man: This rat's led a life of crime;
 Banker: His soul isn't worth a dime.
 Braves: I have sympathy for you;
 Men: I have sympathy for you;
 All: I have sympathy for you, for you.
 I have sympathy, lots of sympathy, I have
 sympathy for you.

(At the end of the song, Bill knocks Armstrong cold, and he falls into the arms of two of the men.)

Sheriff: (speaking) What'll I do with him, Bill?

Bill: I guess put him in jail with the rest of his gang. Nothin' much else you can do with a good-for-nothin' scalawag like that.

(The men carry Armstrong's body off right as the Banker enters right with the money bags.)

Banker: Hey, here's the bank's money.

4th Girl: Wonderful!

Banker: Bill, how can we ever thank you?

Bill: Oh, by forginin' my Indian friends here.

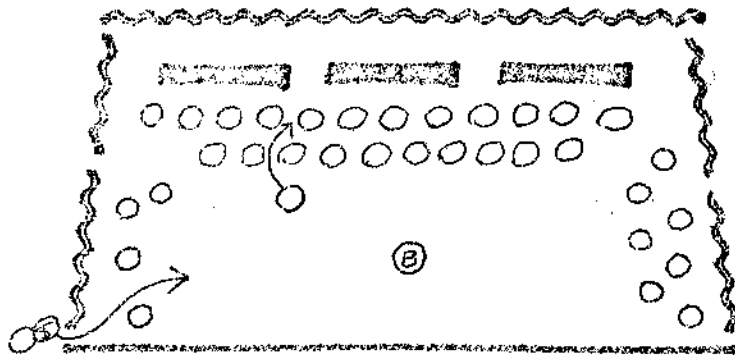
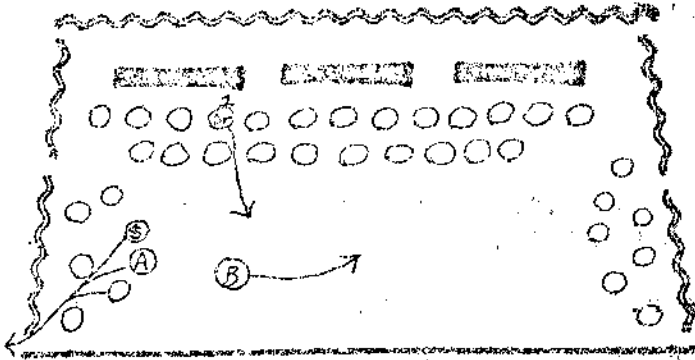
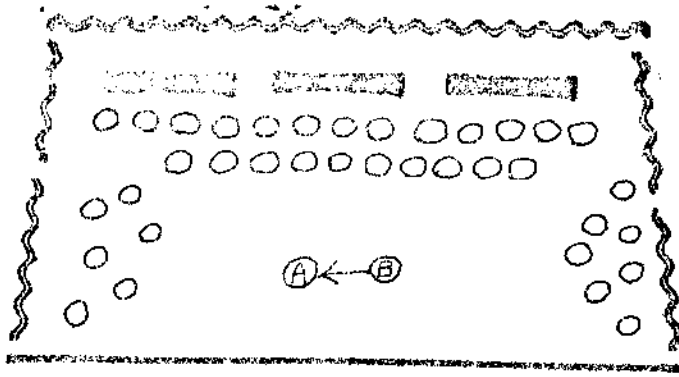
1st Brave: Our tribe is sorry we caused you so much trouble.

Bill: See?

Sheriff: Why, that's all right, ain't it?

Townspeople: Sure. Yeah. Of course.

Bill: If Armstrong's in jail, an' the Indians are friendly again, I guess my job's about finished.



2nd Girl: Bill, don't leave.
 Bill: Oh, it's high time I got a move on.
 Widder: But ever gal in town has her cap set for you.
 Bill: That's what I mean.
 Banker: You're quite an hombre, Pecos Bill.
 1st Girl: We'll always remember you.
 Bill: An' I'll remember you folks. An' if things
 ever get so's you can't handle 'em, me or
 somebody like me'll always show up to lend
 a hand. Well, I'll be goin'. Looks like
 it's goin' to be a fine day for travelin'!

Music No. 15

"BOY HOWDY"--Reprise

Bill: (sings) Boy howdy, take a look at that sun;
 Boy howdy, get a load of that sky;
 Boy howdy, did you ever see such a day in
 your life?
 All: Boy howdy, ever' cactus plant's a flower,
 Bloomin' cross the sparklin' yellow sand.
 Bill: Boy howdy, cast an eye at that sky of blue-
 bonnet blue;
 All: Too good to be true--
 Bill: Too fine for words from just a poor cowboy;
 Every bird's a-singin' it now,
 Townspeople
 and
 Indians: Boy howdy, we certainly do,
 Boy howdy, think the world of you,
 Boy howdy, an' I reckon we always will;
 Boy howdy, you are our hero, Pecos Bill!

The curtain closes
 and
 the play ends.

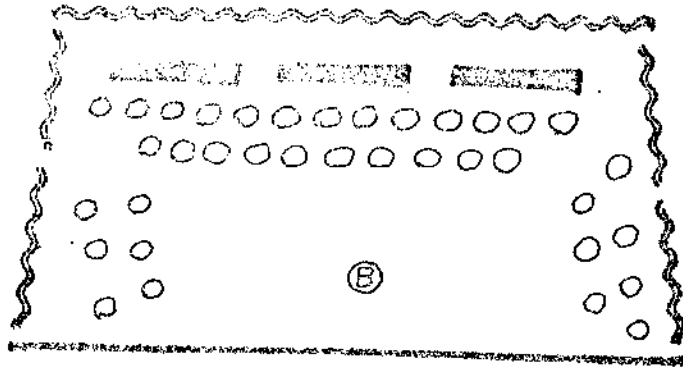




PLATE XVIII

"BOY HOWDY (REPRISE)"

Redskin Romp

C7 DM7 GM C7

DM7 GM C7

F F7 Bb Bbm

DM7 GM C7

DM7 GM C7

DM7 GM C7

F F7 Bb Bbm C7

DM7 C7 F F7

Bb F

Chord: D^b7

Chords: D^M7, G^M, C⁷

Chords: D^M7, G^M, C⁷

Chords: F, F⁷, B^b, B^bM

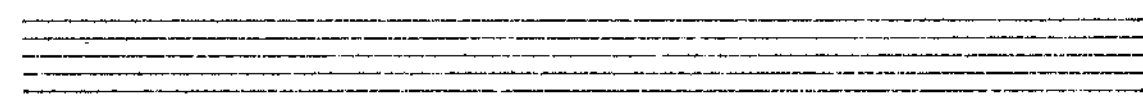
Chords: D^M7, B^b, C⁷, D^M7, B^b, C⁷

Chords: D^M7, G⁷

Chords: C⁷, F⁷, F^{dim}, B^bM, F

Chords: F⁷, F^{dim}, B^bM, F, F⁷, F^{dim}, B^bM, F

Chords: C⁷, F



I Thought We'd Never

F7 Gdim F7 Bb6

I thought we'd ne-ver get to Texas; I had

Fdim Cdim Gdim Fdim

almost given up hope; It seemed the

Cm7

farther that we tra-veled, the

F7 Gdim F7

farther we got from civilization and soap, and I had

Bb6

just a-bout de-ci-ded to

C7

turn a-round an' go back. But we were

EP EPM EP C7

bound an' determined we'd make it to Texas,

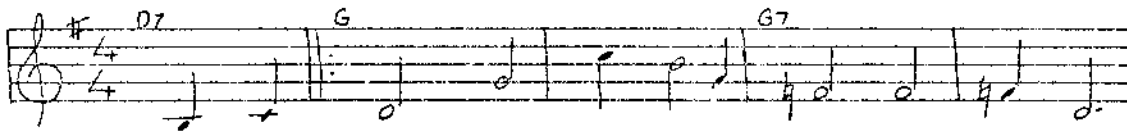
EP cm F7

Just let me catch my breath an' I'll help un-

Bb6

pack.

One-Horse Town



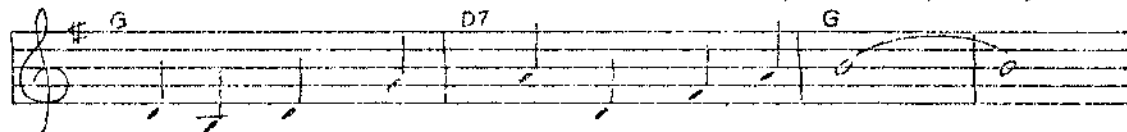
Well, we made a town that we can be proud of



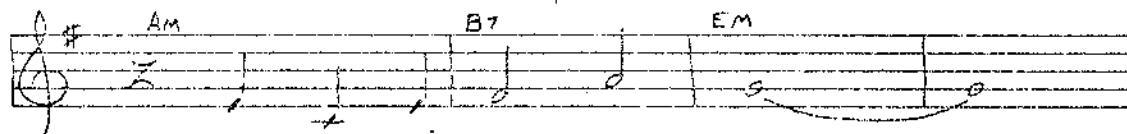
Nicest town in the West;



An' I've seen me a lot of places;



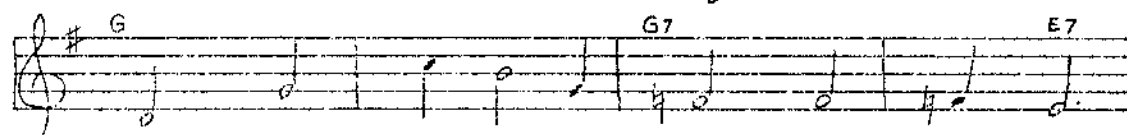
Still I think that our place is the best.



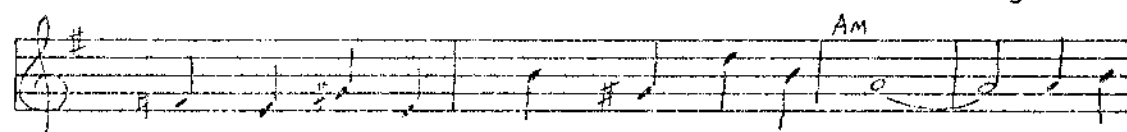
It suits us to a T



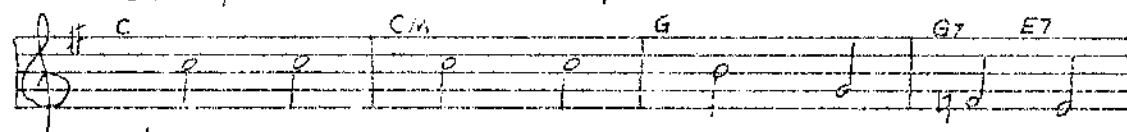
Our little town is young and so are we; And you'll



hear us ask e-very to-tal stranger,



Don't you like it? Won't you stick a-roun'? In no



time at all you'll learn to love our No. 1

1. G EM Am D7 161

one church, one bank, one street, one horse

G CM G D7

town, I don't

2. G EM Am D7

One ho-tel, one liv-ery sta-ble,

G EM Am D7

black-smith shop an' gen'-ral store,

G EM Am D7

mu-sic hall an' she-riff of-fice,

G EM Am D7

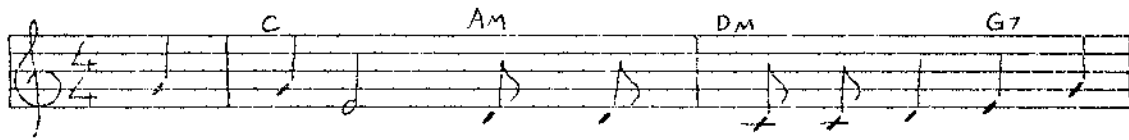
And as we have said be-fore:

G CM G

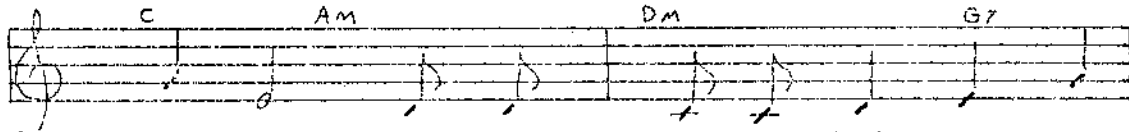
One church, one bank, one street, one horse

town.

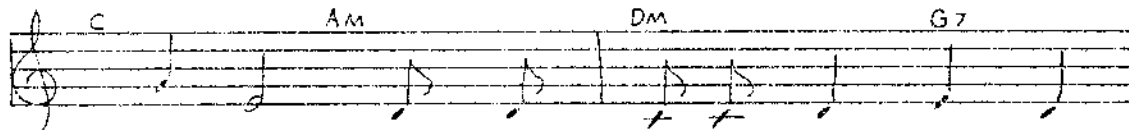
Boy Howdy



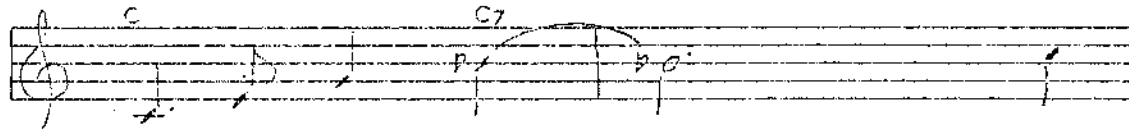
Boy Howdy, take a look at that sun; Boy



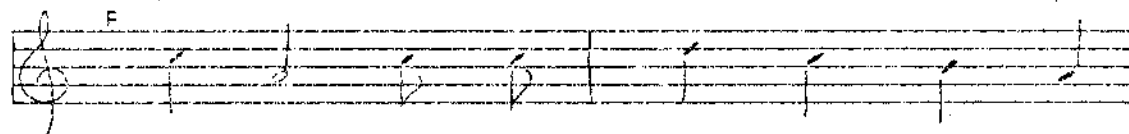
how - dy, get a load of that sky, boy



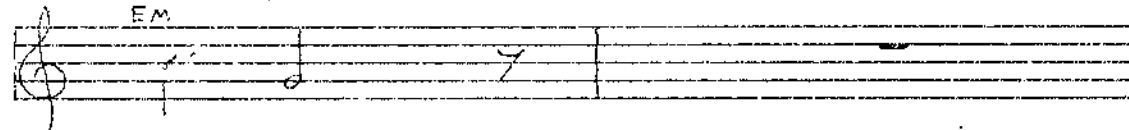
how - dy, did you e - ver see such a



day in your life? Boy -



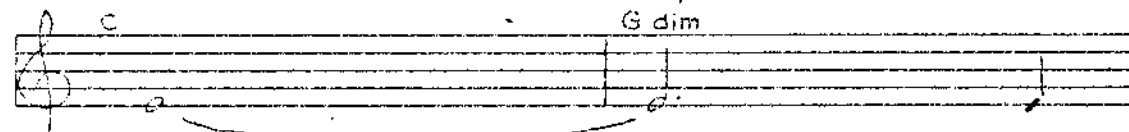
how - dy, e - ver cac - tus plant's a



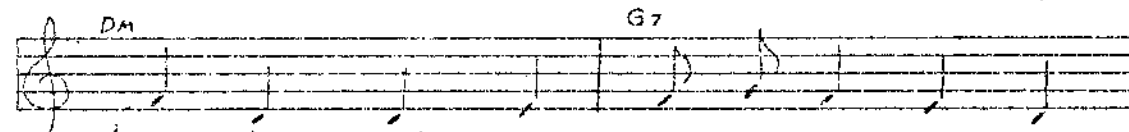
fla - wer



bloom - in' cross the spark - lin' yel - low



sand - Boy



how - dy, cast an eye at that sky of

Musical staff with notes and chords C and Gdim.

blue - bon - net blue - Too

Musical staff with notes and chords DM and DM7.

good to be true; Too

Musical staff with notes and chord AM.

fine for words from just a poor cow - boy;

Musical staff with notes and chord G7.

Ev - ery bird's a - sing - in' it now; Boy

Musical staff with notes and chords C, AM, DM, G7.

how - dy, take a breath of that air; Boy

Musical staff with notes and chords C, AM, DM, G7.

how - dy, ex - hale an' de - clare; Boy

Musical staff with notes and chords C, AM, DM, G7.

how - dy, did you e - ver feel such a

Musical staff with notes and chord A7.

thrill? Boy

Musical staff with notes and chords D7, DM7, G7.

how - dy, how do you do? I'm Pe - cos

Musical staff with notes and chord C.

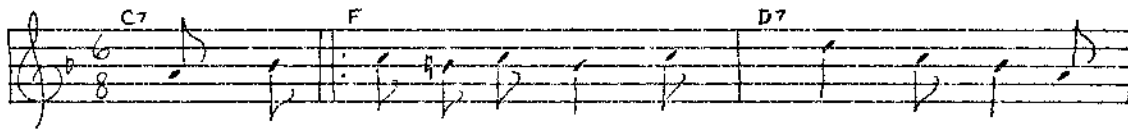
Bill!

Tell Me, Is It True?

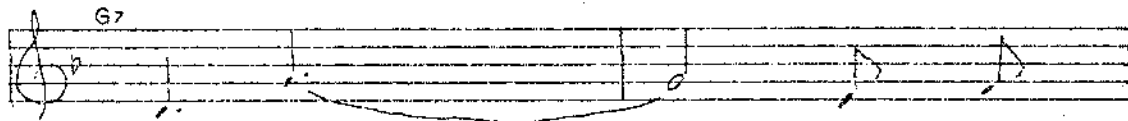
The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 7/8 time signature. The melody is written on a single staff. Chord symbols are placed above the staff at various points: G7, C, E7, F, C, G7, C, A7, D7, G7, C, E7, F, E7, F, Fm, G7, C, D7, G7, C. The lyrics are written below the staff, with some words underlined. The piece ends with a double bar line.

Tell me is it true, tell me is it true? Is it
 true what I've been told? When you were just a baby,
 or so they say, A coyote kid-napped you an'
 took you a-way, and she taught you good till you
 un-der-stood E-ver' thing that coyotes do
 I tried and tried but to no a-vail;
 I ne-ver learned how to wag my tail; O-ther
 wise it's true: O-ther wise it's true — Ex-
 cep-tin for that, it's true!

If There's Anything



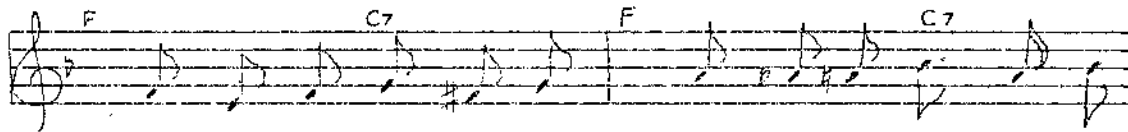
If there's any-thing I can't stand it is a



he - ro — If there's



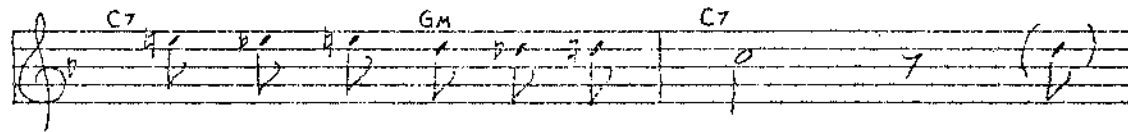
a ny - thing I can't to - le - rate, it's a



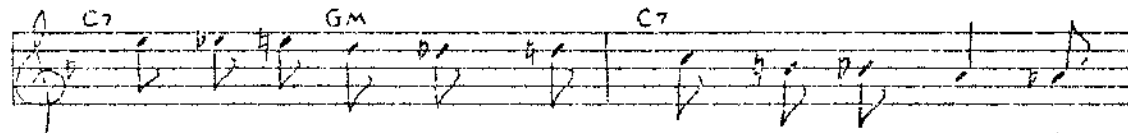
clout that without a-ny doubt is just great. If there's



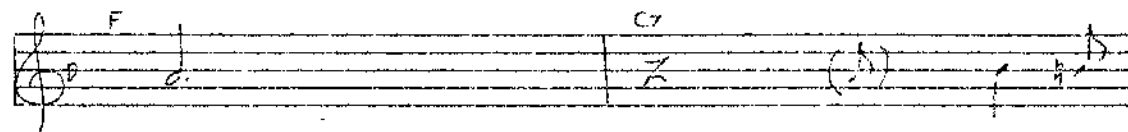
a-ny-thing gives me hives, it's the



guys with the vir-tu-ous lives,

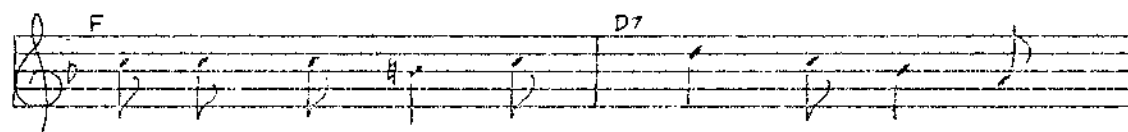


One of 'em al-ways ar - rives in the nick of



time.

Yes, I



al-ways de - test a knight in shi - ning

G7

ar - mor;

Oh,

C7

how I'd love to push him in the

F C7

moat!

And I

F E7 Ebdim D7

make it my busi- ness to help to get rid of each

Gm Cdim Gm

smart - al - eck kid who be - haves like El Cid; A

C7

he - ro ne - ver fails to get my

1. F C7

goat.

If there's

2. F D7

ill; (I near - ly vo - mit); A

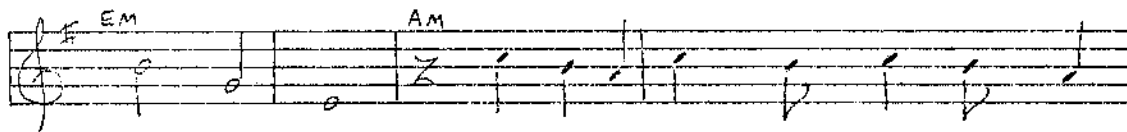
C7

he - ro ne - ver fails to make me

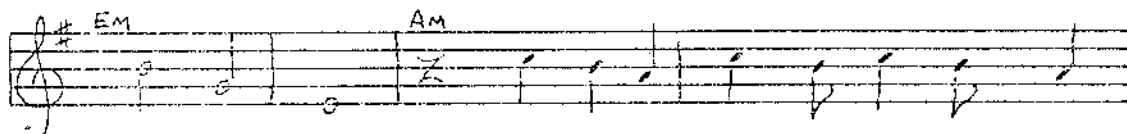
F

ill

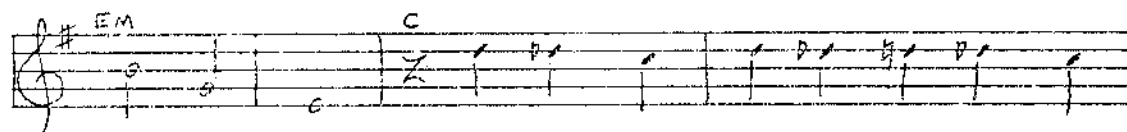
Tribal Council



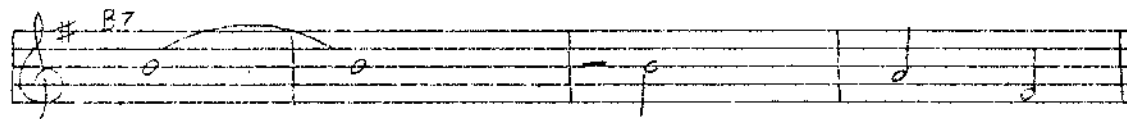
Here we live the kind of life that's simple and



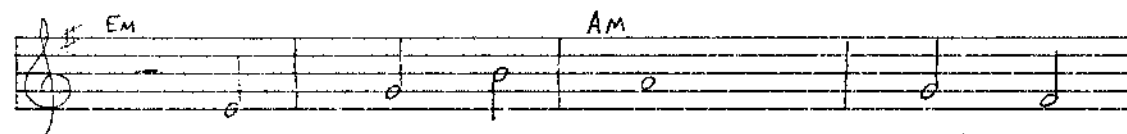
prim - a - tive; Though it may sound old-fashioned, we



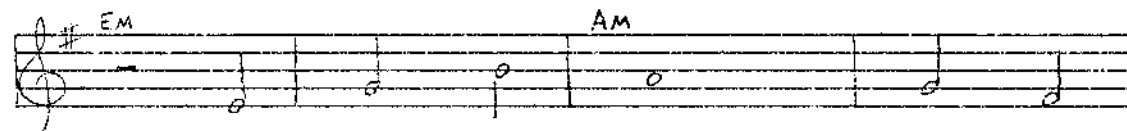
ne-ver give A thought to mo - der - ni - zing our



civ — li — za - tion.



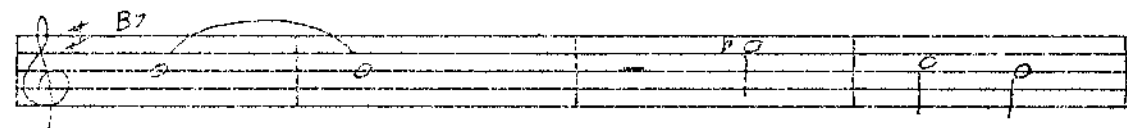
The sett - lers come, and then



Be - fore we count to ten,



We'll have a sur — plus



Handwritten musical notation for the first system. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains two measures of music. The first measure has a chord labeled "Em" above it. The second measure has a chord labeled "Am" above it. The bottom staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and contains two measures of music.

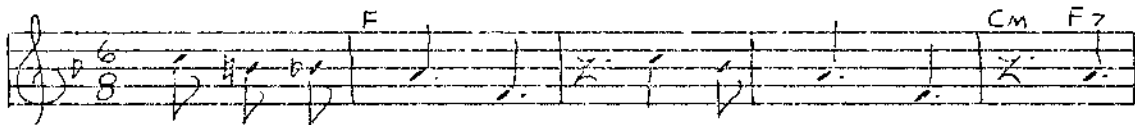
Handwritten musical notation for the second system. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains two measures of music. The first measure has a chord labeled "Em" above it. The second measure has a chord labeled "Am" above it. The bottom staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and contains two measures of music.

Handwritten musical notation for the third system. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains two measures of music. The first measure has a chord labeled "Em" above it. The second measure has a chord labeled "C" above it. The bottom staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and contains two measures of music.

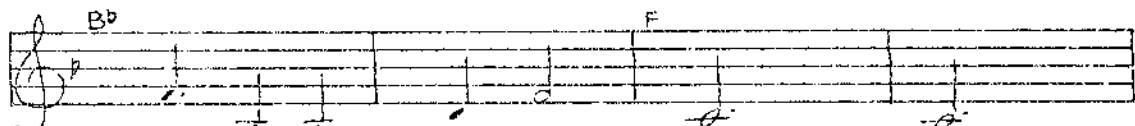
Handwritten musical notation for the fourth system. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains two measures of music. The first measure has a chord labeled "B7" above it. The bottom staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and contains two measures of music.

Handwritten musical notation for the fifth system. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains two measures of music. The first measure has a chord labeled "Em" above it. Below the staff, the lyrics "what're we gon-na do?" are written. The bottom staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and contains two measures of music.

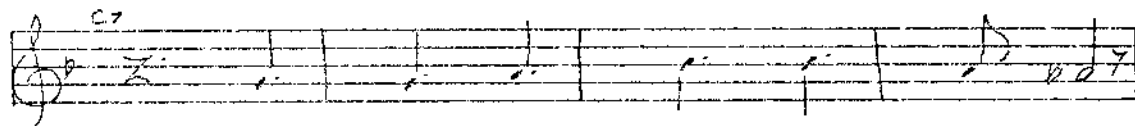
Coyote Home



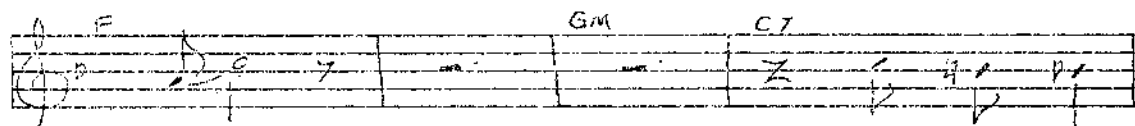
I wanna go back, wanna go back, go



back to my coyote home -

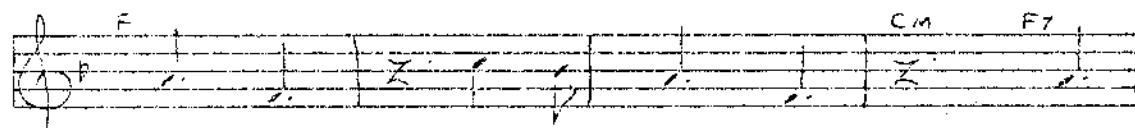


Out un - der neath a prai - rie



sky!

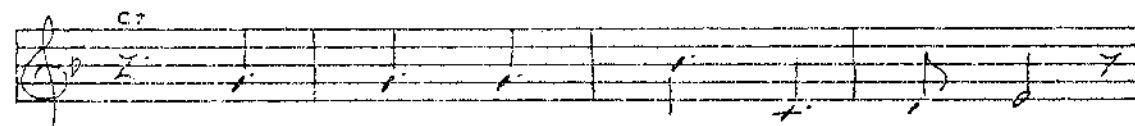
I'm get-tin'



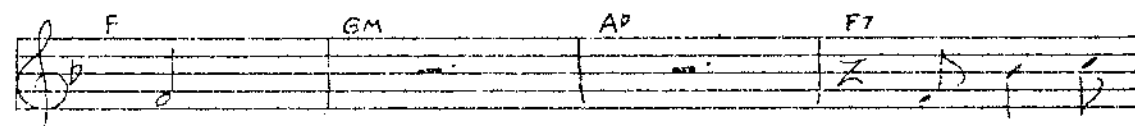
home - sick, get-tin' home - sick, home -



sick for my coy - ote home -

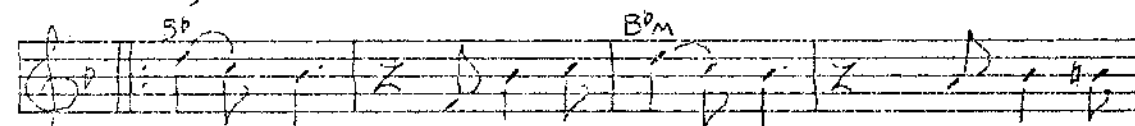


I'm just so home - sick I could



die;

I got a



year - nin'

to be re - tur - nin'

back to the

F

place I loved when I was a kid;

G7

No - one fix - es raw jack - rab-bit

C7 GM AM, Ab C7

like my coy - ote mo - ther did; When I was a

F Cm F7

pup there, just a pup there, Up

Bb F

there in my coy - ote home

C7

my big - gest en' - my was the

1. A7 D7

flea! A

GM C7

coy - ote home's the on - ly home for

F GM Ab F7

me. Life would be

2. A7 D7

roam;

Gm C7

A musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The staff contains a sequence of notes: Bb4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. Above the staff, the chord Gm is written above the first measure and C7 above the last measure.

That is why I wan-na go back,

F D7

A musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The staff contains a sequence of notes: Bb4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. Above the staff, the chord F is written above the first measure and D7 above the last measure.

back to be - in' one of the pack;

Gm C7

A musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The staff contains a sequence of notes: Bb4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. Above the staff, the chord Gm is written above the first measure and C7 above the last measure.

back to my coy - ote

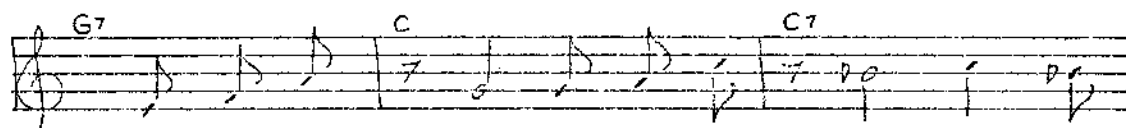
F C7 F

A musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The staff contains a sequence of notes: Bb4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. Above the staff, the chord F is written above the first measure, C7 above the last measure, and F above the final measure.

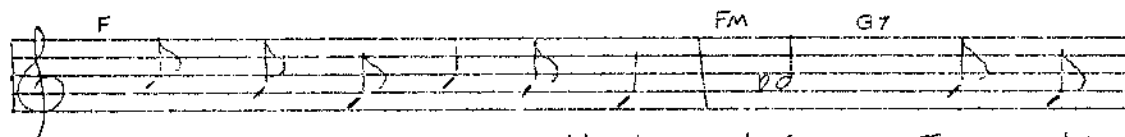
home.

Five sets of empty musical staves, each consisting of five lines, provided for additional notation.

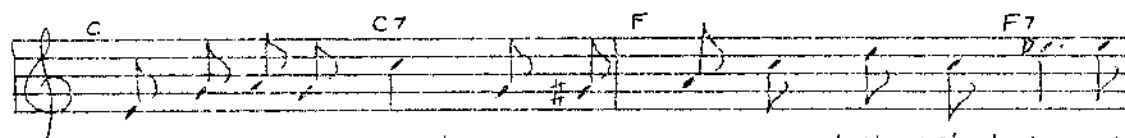
Just My Type



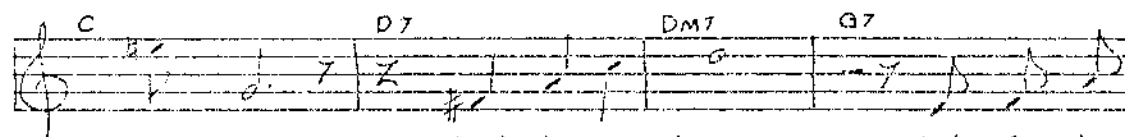
well, I keep try-in' not to stare at your



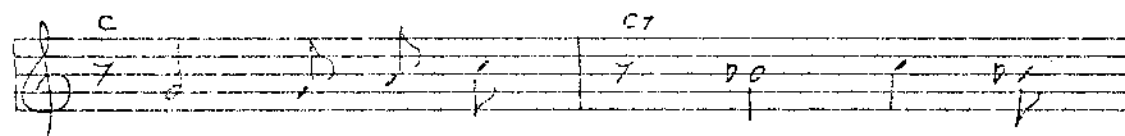
dark eyes an' wa-vy black hair. I would



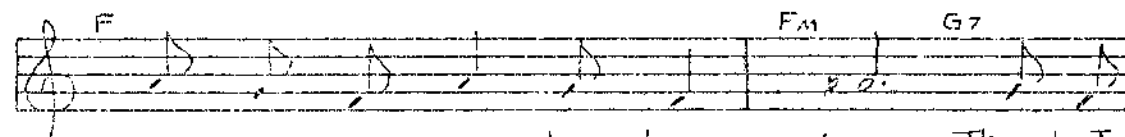
be an easy mark, 'cause a man who's tall an' dark an'



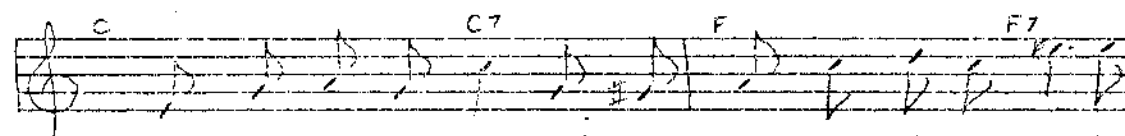
hand-some is just my type — An' I ad-



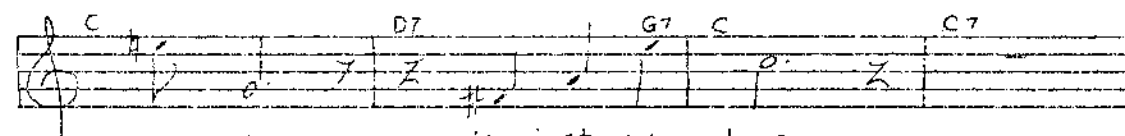
mit that I got weak when I



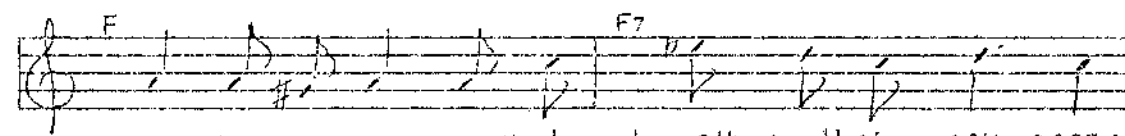
first saw your man-ly phy-sique. Though I



can't i-magine why, I have noticed that a guy with



mus-cles — is just my type.



some wo-men find out that strength is their weak-ness;
 Printed in the U. S. A. No. 1

Some wo-men think of a man with a mind;

Some wo-men look for good looks - Me, I like the

hand - some, strong, in - tell-i-gent Kind; Of course I

no - ticed from the start, You were

ve-ry quick - wit - ted and smart. You are

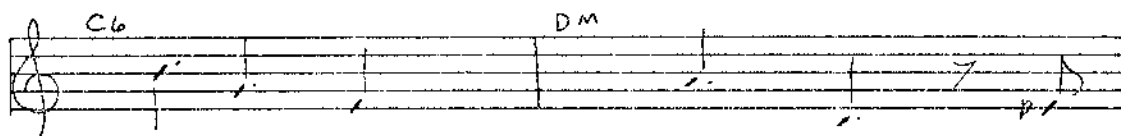
wide - awake and wise, and I'm sure you re-a-lize a

girl like me could be — A

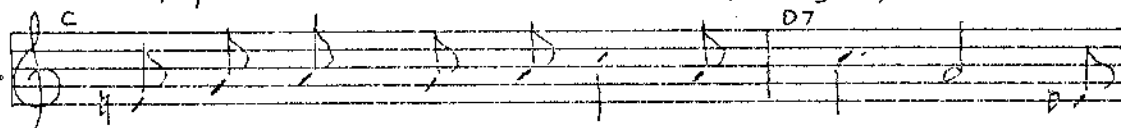
girl like me could be — A

girl like me could be — just your

Saturday Night



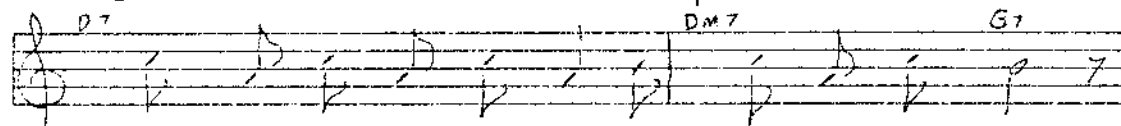
If you are free, gal, come



on an' spend the ev'nin' with me, gal; you



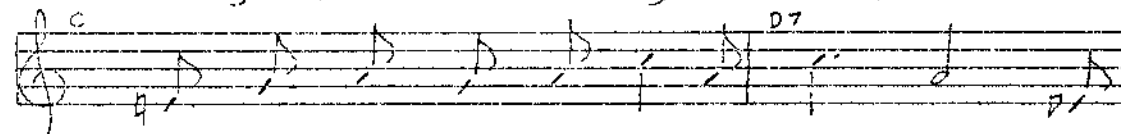
just as well let me be po-lite, or



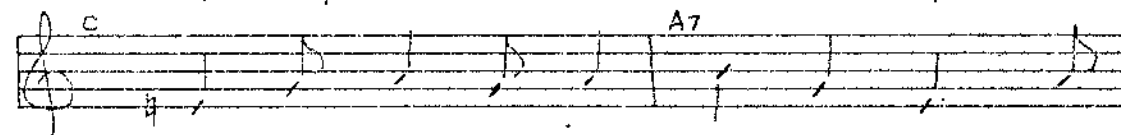
you'll be by yourself on a Sa-tur-day night;



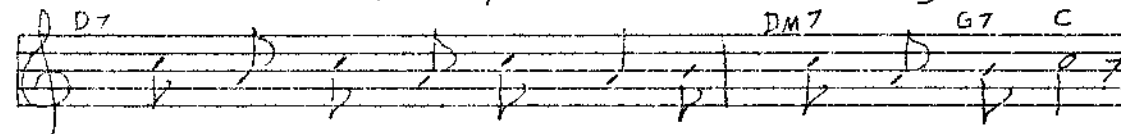
Though you ain't grown, boys, who



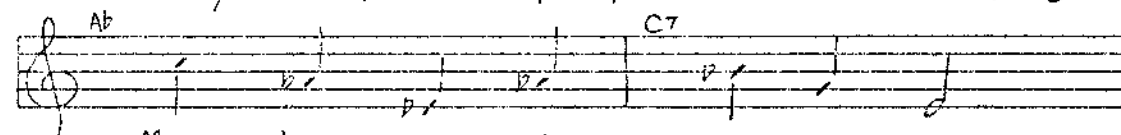
wants to spend the ev'nin' a-lone, boys? You're



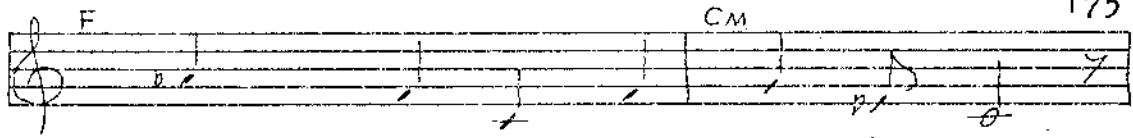
sor-ta pu-ny an' not too bright, But



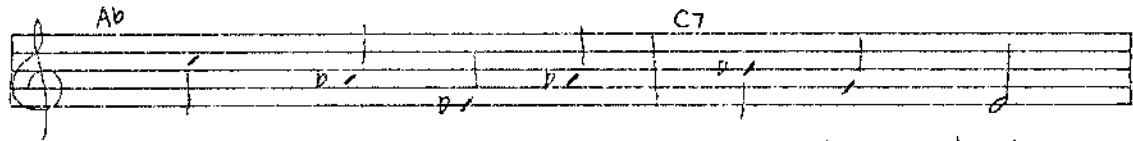
still you'll keep me comp'-ny on Sa-tur-day night;



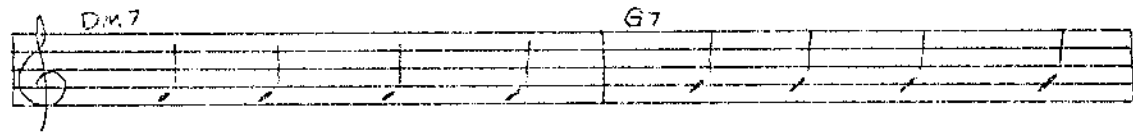
Mon - day stu - pid; Tuesday sad; No. 1



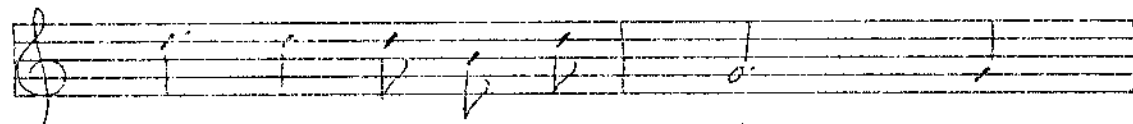
Wednes - day's al - ways wear - i - some;



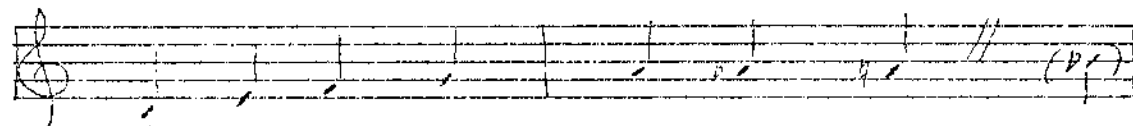
Thurs - day bor - ing; Fri - day bad,



But once Sa - tur - day has come, I



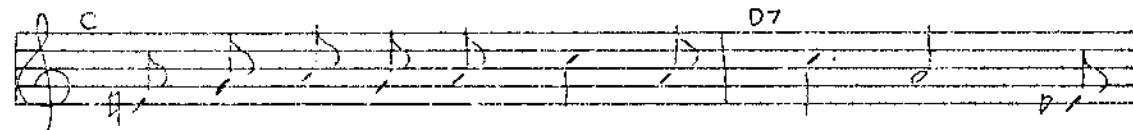
feel like I got it made; I've



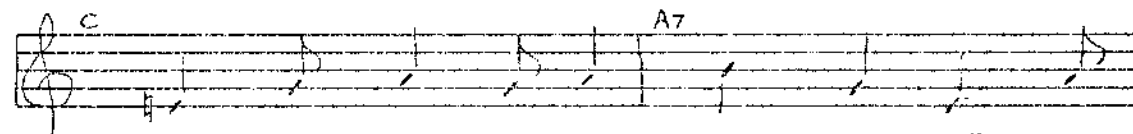
had my bath an' I been paid...



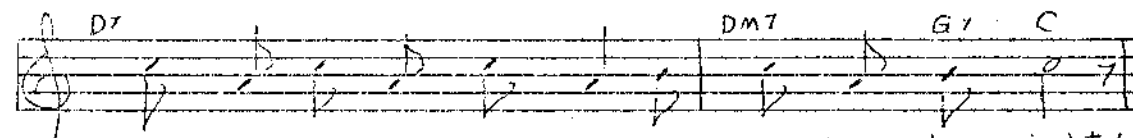
Let's all for - get time; I



aim to stay up way past my bed - time; The



week's been dull, an' it won't be right Un -

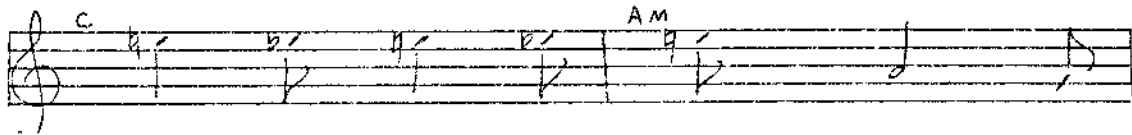


less I kick my heels up on Sa - tur - day night!

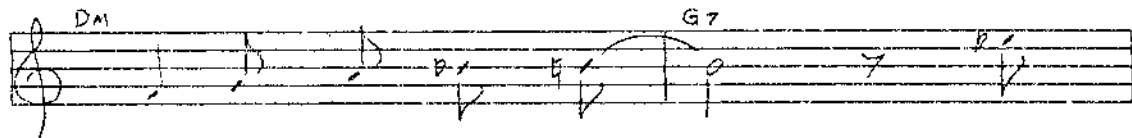
I Have a "Thing" for Money



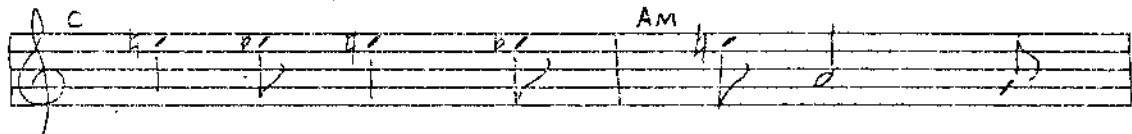
I



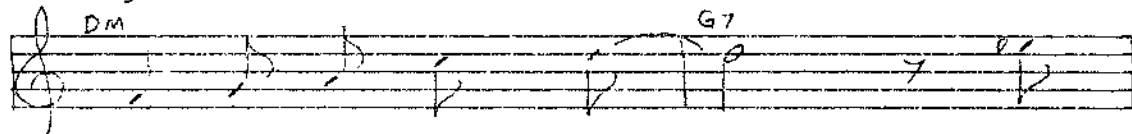
know that it is wic - ked to



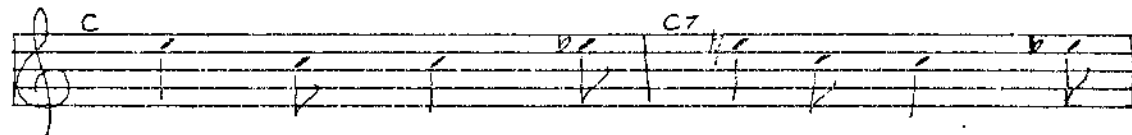
co - vet, yet I swear I'd



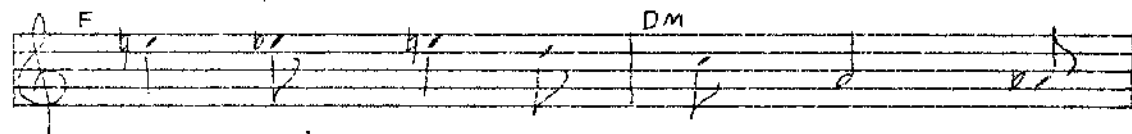
give a thou - sand dol - lars to



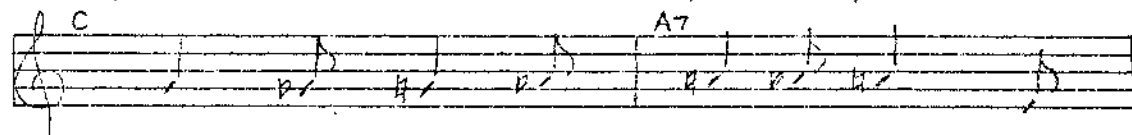
be a mil - li - o - naire 'cause



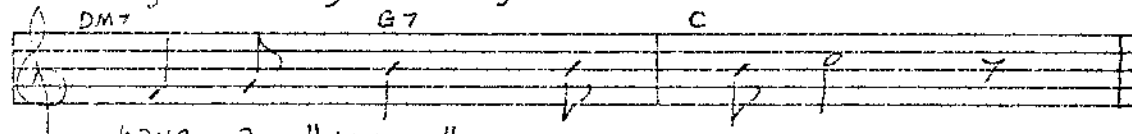
when youre broke, it's not a joke; mis -



for - tune is - n't fun - ny; But



get - ting loot gives me a boot; I



have a "thing" for money.

Rain Dance Rag

G7

Fel - las, if this dan-cin' has got you cur-i-ous,

C

start mo - vin' your feet! Just

G7

pay no at-ten-tion to in-hi-bi-tion; start

C

snap-pin' your fingers an' pick up the beat! There's

G7

no use in fight-in'; it's ir-re-sis-ta-ble;

C A7

Aw, now, don't be a drag;

D7 G7

Come on an' do The Rain Dance

C

A7 Rag!

D7

Clouds are gath'-rin' in the west;

G7

May - be there is some - thin' to it

C C7

Would you teach us how to do it?

DM7

It's as ea - sy as can be;

F#M

Ev' - ry - bo - dy fol - low me,

1. and 2. Cdim

An' you'll learn to

G7

do the rag, do the rag, do the rag! First

3. Cdim

Ev' - ry - bo - dy

G7

do the rag, do the rag, do the rag!

Rain un - til

C

e - ven frogs com -

A7

plain!

D7 G7

4. G7

It's fun to do the rain dance -

That wa - ter - on - the - brain dance -

It's fun to do the Rain Dance

Cdim

Rag -

G7 C

The Rain Dance Rag!

I Feel Sorry for You

C AM DM G7

I feel saw - aw - ry for

C C7

(you;) I feel saw - aw - ry for

F DM G7

(you;) I feel saw - aw - ry for

C G7 C

you, for you - oo - oo - oo;

F G7

You ne - ver have

C

act - ed nice -

D7

You al - ways shot with

G7

load - ed dice -

C Am DM G7

I feel saw - aw - ry for

C C7
 (you;) feel saw - aw - ry for

F DM G7
 (you;) feel saw - aw - ry for

C G7 C
 you, for you - oo - oo - oo;

F G7
 I feel sor - ry for,

C D7
 real, real sor - ry for

C Am DM
 I feel saw - aw - ry for

1. F C
 you - oo - oo - oo!

2. F C
 you - oo - oo - oo!

E7
 He's chock - full of

Am E7 Am E7 Am
 ve - nom and va - ni - ty;

This bum's a dis -

grace to hu - man - i - ty;

You - oo - oo - oo!

Aren't you a - shamed?

Aren't you a - shamed?

Aren't you a - shamed?

Shame! Shame! shame!

You - oo - oo -

oo!

Dear Parent,

On May 2 and 4, Bussey Junior High will present a musical comedy, Pecos Bill and the Indians. We felt that our production last year was a success and a wonderful experience for the students who took part, and we have looked forward to this year's production.

Soon we will have tryouts to find the singing, acting, and dancing talent we will need for a good show. Before we audition, however, we want to inform you of our plans and obtain permission for your child to take part.

Rehearsals will be after school and will usually last until about 5:00. We shall try to schedule rehearsals so that a child will only have to come to rehearsals of scenes for which he is needed.

There will probably be about thirty in the cast, depending on the size of the chorus. The tryouts will be competitive, and anyone may try out, whether he has had singing and dancing experience or not.

We hope many students will try out; however, not every student who tries out will get a part.

Each member of the cast is expected to have one costume made. You will be given the name of the department store where you may purchase the fabric at a discount, and we shall give pattern numbers and instructions so that each costume will be suitable to the style of the play and will coordinate with the colors and lines of the other costumes.

Please fill out the enclosed form and sign it. Your child should bring it to try-outs. If you have any questions, we will be glad to answer them.

Very truly yours,

Bill Overton

Director

REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

This is the rehearsal schedule for Pecos Bill and the Indians. Cast members are required to come to all rehearsals for which they are needed. Plan to come ready to work and arrange transportation home. Remember: the rehearsals are closed to everyone but the cast.

Monday, March 27	Read-through	Entire Cast
Tuesday, March 28	Scene I to Bill's entrance	Pioneers, Single Girls and Fellas, Armstrong, and Gang
Wednesday, March 29	Finish Scene I	Everyone Except Indians
Thursday, March 30	Scene II and Opening	All Braves, War Party, Squaws
Friday, March 31	Scenes I and II	Entire Cast
Monday, April 3	Scene III to Bill's exit	Pioneers, Single Girls and Fellas, Bill, Townspeople
Tuesday, April 4	Finish Scene III	Entire Cast
Wednesday, April 5	Scene III	Entire Cast
Thursday, April 6	Scene IV to entrance of townspeople	All Indians, Armstrong, Bill
Friday, April 7	Scene IV to entrance of townspeople,	All Indians, Armstrong, Bill
Monday, April 10	Finish Scene IV	Entire Cast
Tuesday, April 11	Begin run-through	Entire Cast
Wednesday, April 12	Finish run-through	Entire Cast
Thursday, April 13	Run-through	Entire Cast
Friday, April 14	<u>No Rehearsal</u>	
April 17 through 25	run-through	Entire Cast

Wednesday, April 26	<u>Dress Rehearsal</u>	Entire Cast
Thursday, April 27	run-through	Entire Cast
Friday, April 28	<u>Dress Rehearsal</u>	Entire Cast
Monday, May 1	performance at school	
Tuesday, May 2	performance at night	
Wednesday, May 3	performance at school	
Thursday, May 4	performance at night	
Friday, May 5	performance at school	

Dear _____,

We certainly appreciate your willingness to make the costume for your child in our musical-comedy, Pecos Bill and the Indians. We think that by this manner, we can have costumes that are color-coordinated and appropriate.

With this letter, we are sending the material for the costumes. If the colors seem too bright or too dull or if the combinations seem strange, this is because colors for the stage must be exaggerated and fabrics are not what is worn everyday.

Again, thank you very much for making the costume. Below are the instructions and pattern numbers for each group. If you have any questions or problems, please contact me, either at school before 10:00, or at home. My home phone number is BR 6-6245. We need to have the costumes made by Monday, April 24.

GIRLS: This costume is a bright-colored pioneer dress, bonnet, and apron. The apron material, which is a print, is not being sent since we hope to have them all made together so they will be the same length, etc. This costume is to be made from Simplicity pattern 3294-S.O. Since the pattern should be special-ordered, it will be necessary to order it right away.

The costume is to be made like view 1, except that the collar will be of the same material, and the sleeve will not have the lace lower sleeve. All the lace will be omitted, and there will be no lace or bias on the lower skirt, since the apron will be worn.

Your child's dress will be of the _____ material, and her bonnet will be of the _____ material.

If you can alter the pattern, make the brim of the bonnet more narrow so that it won't cover the actress's face. Please do not use the buttons down the front that are shown in the pattern picture. Please use _____ bias tape.

PIONEER WOMEN: This costume is a pioneer dress, bonnet and apron. The apron material is not being sent since we hope to have them all made together so they will be the same length, etc. This costume is made from Simplicity pattern 3294-SO. Since this pattern must be special-ordered, it should be ordered right away.

The costume is to be made like view 2, except that the bias and trim on the skirt should be left off, and no lace should be used. The buttons down the front shown in view 1 should be used, either black or the same color as the bias.

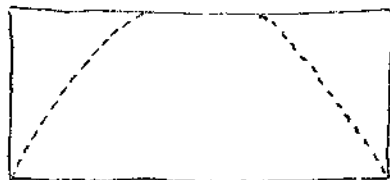
Your child's dress will be of the _____ material, and her bonnet will be of the _____ material.

If you can alter the pattern, make the brim of the bonnet more narrow so that it won't cover the actress's face. Please use _____ bias tape.

BOYS AND PIONEER MEN: This costume consists of a shirt, a vest, and a scarf. For the shirt, use McCall pattern 7785, view B, long sleeves, without a pocket. We chose this pattern because it has no buttons, and has a nice, theatrical open collar. The shirt will probably work better if you make it a little longer than the pattern says so that it will stay tucked in. The shirt is to be made of the _____ material.

The vest is to be made from the _____ material, according to Simplicity 4160, Simplicity 5697, McCall 5051, or another such vest pattern. If the fabric is striped, the stripes should be vertical. Please leave off any small pockets, small belts, etc. Buttons are not necessary; the vest may be worn open. However, it should be made a little longer than the pattern. Most vests turn out short-waisted.

The scarf is to be made of the $\frac{1}{2}$ yard of _____ material. It will probably be easiest to cut it like this:



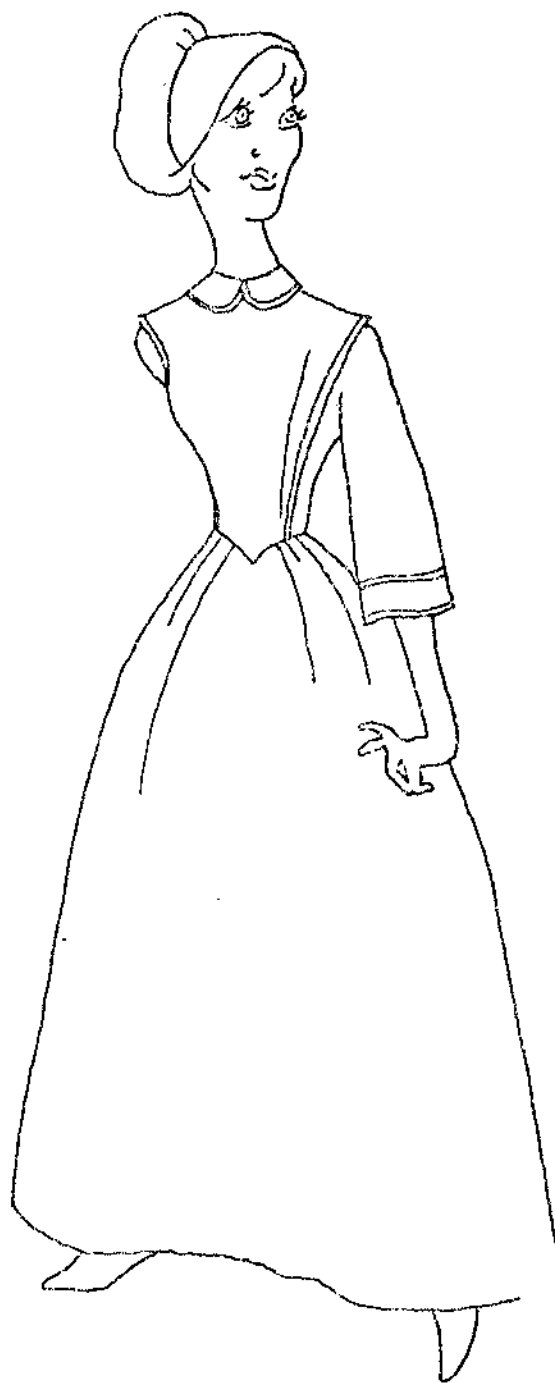
INDIAN BRAVES AND WAR PARTY: Each costume is different, but basically we are working for a sloppy, rough, cartoon effect. Fabrics were chosen of "natural" colors and rough textures where they could be found. Use Simplicity 5039, McCall 4815, or some similar pajama pattern, and the pattern top may be changed to be like the drawing. Leave off any pockets, etc.

The pants should be made of the _____ material. If the material is too thin, we will use tights under them.

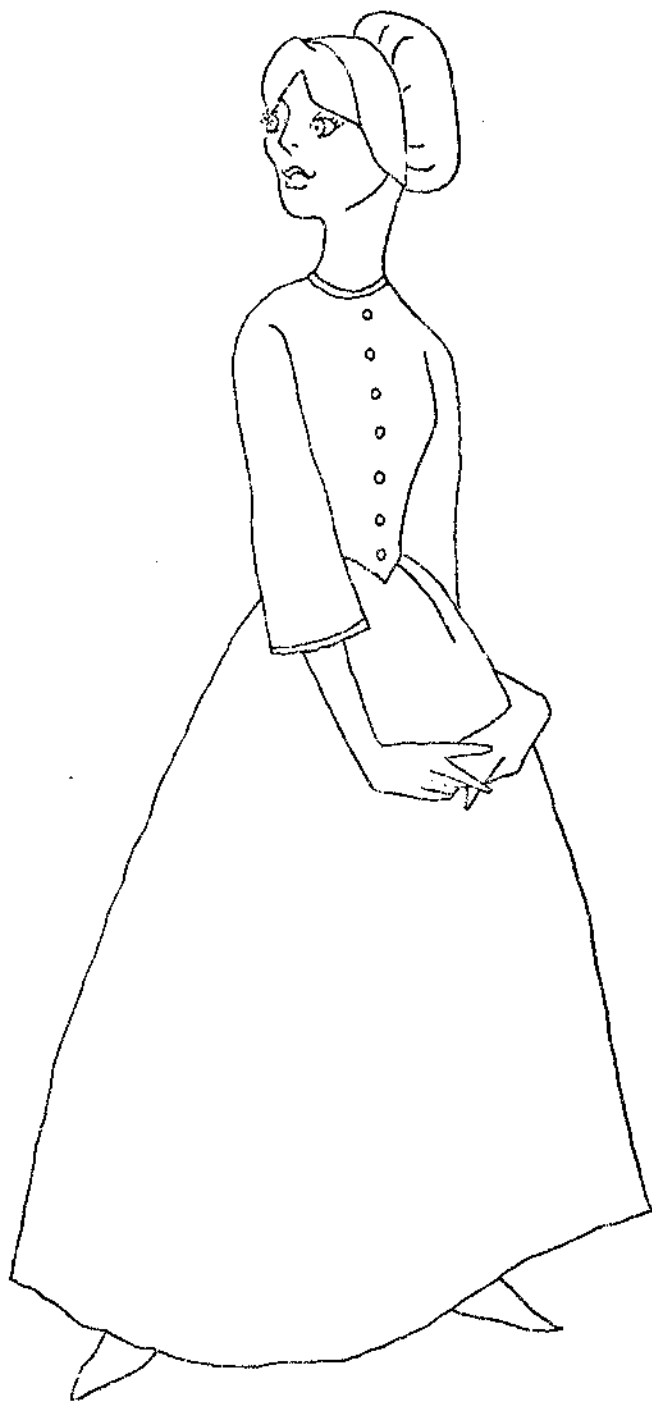
The top is to be made of the _____ fabric. It would be good to bind the top in black or dark brown bias tape rather than to hem it. This would outline the top in a cartoon way. Any trim design shown on the drawing may also be made of bias tape.

SQUAWS: Each squaw costume is different, but basically we are working for a sloppy, rough, cartoon effect. Fabrics were chosen of "natural" colors and rough textures where they could be found. The pants may be made from Simplicity 7021, Simplicity 6450, Simplicity 6502, Simplicity 6640, McCall 8150, or McCall 8138. Most of these patterns include a top pattern that can be altered to be like the drawing.

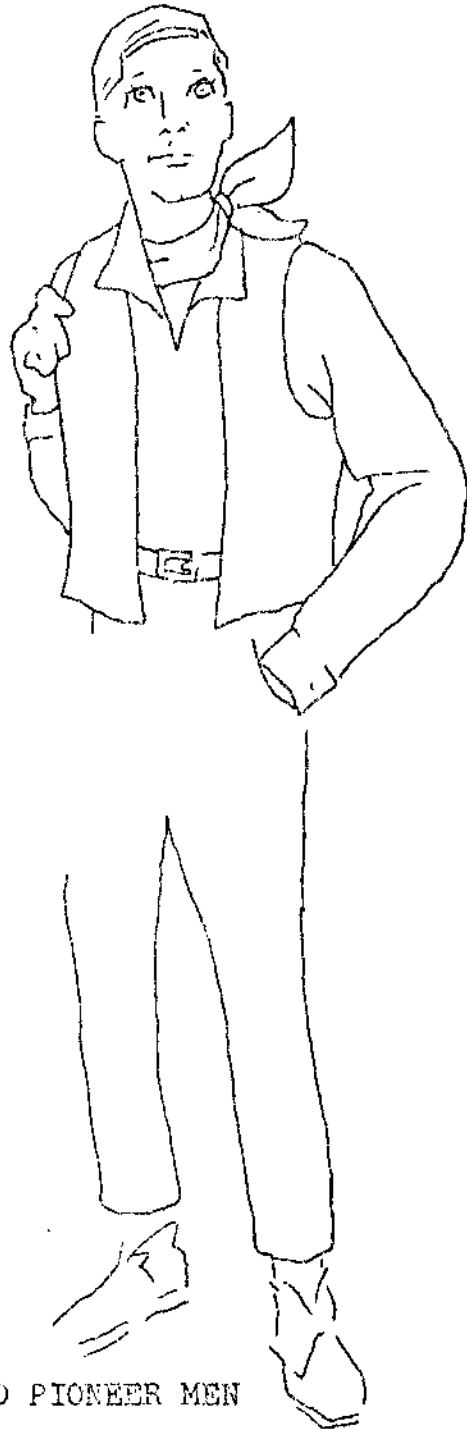
The pants are to be made of the _____ material, and the top is to be made of the _____ fabric. It would be good to outline the top in black or dark brown bias tape. This would give a cartoon effect. Some trim is included with the material. Any other trim designs shown on the drawing may be made with bias tape.



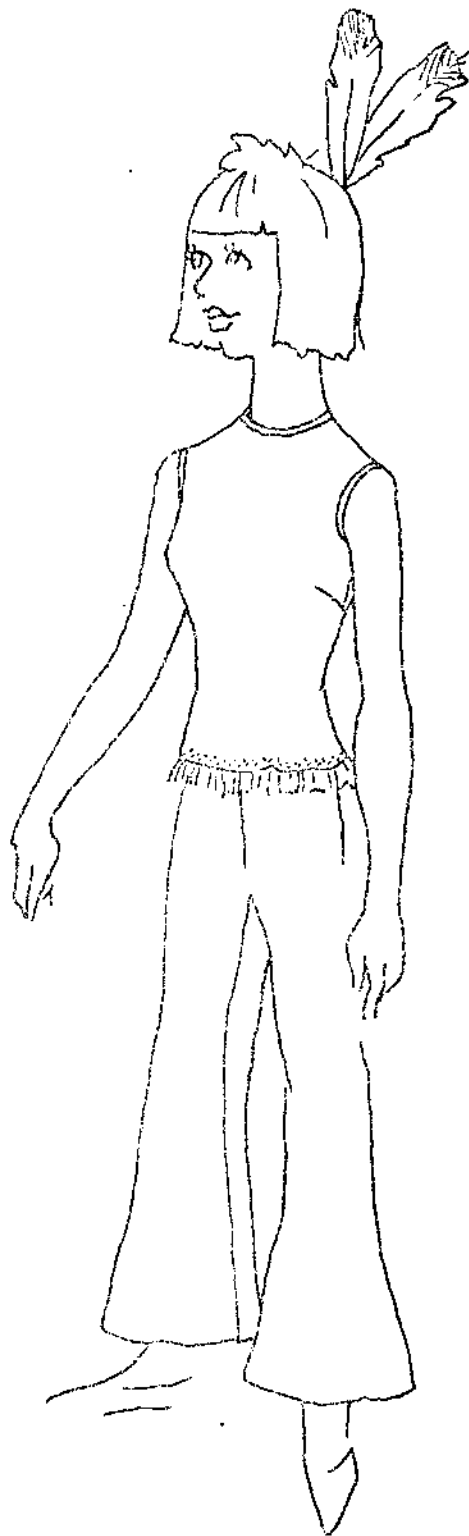
GIRLS



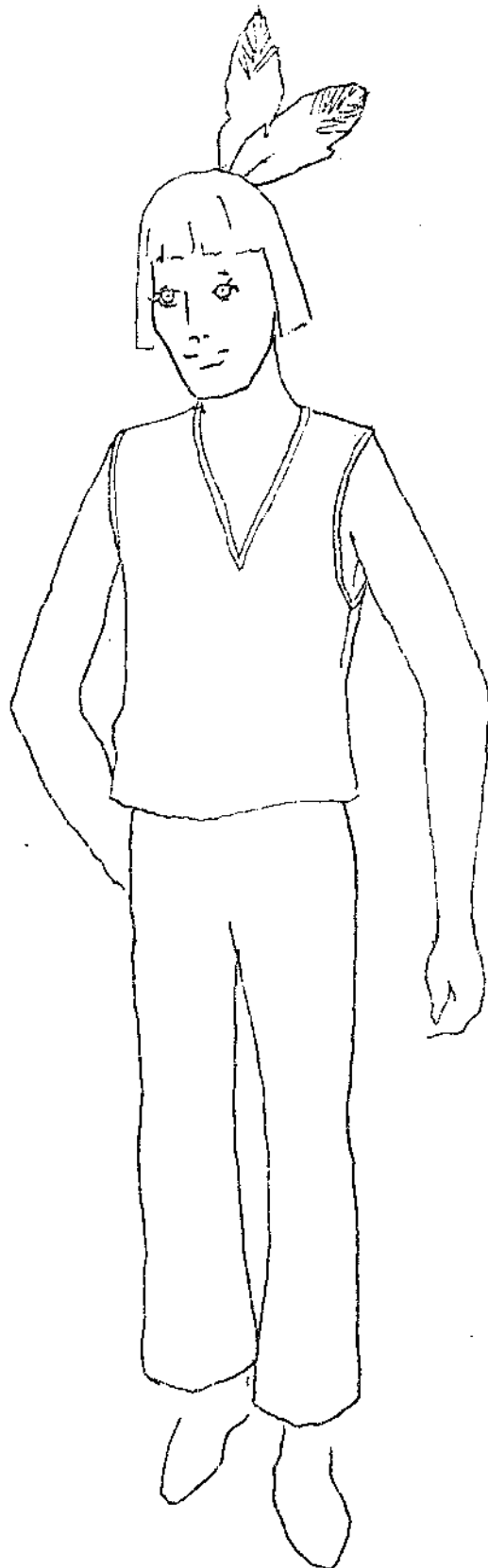
PIONEER WOMEN



BOYS AND PIONEER MEN



SQUAWS



INDIAN BRAVES AND WAR PARTY

The Dallas Morning News

Tuesday, May 9, 1967

*Garland Opening
Set for Musical*

GARLAND, Texas (Sp.)—"Pecos Bill and the Indians," a new musical comedy by Bill Overton, will be presented at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday in the Bussey Auditorium in Garland.

Overton has written 14 original musical numbers for the production, including "Boy Howdy," "If There's Anything I Can't Stand, It's a Hero," and "The Rain Dance Rag."

Following Tuesday's performance, the cast will begin a tour of area schools, including a performance at North Texas State University in Denton on May 20.

The Dallas Morning News

Saturday, April 29, 1967

Musical Premiere

GARLAND, Texas (Sp.)—Bussey Junior High School in Garland is presenting the premiere of a new musical comedy, "Pecos Bill and the Indians," written and directed by Bill Overton, at 7:30 p.m. next Thursday in Garland High School Auditorium, and Tuesday, May 2, at Bussey Auditorium.

The Dallas Morning News

Saturday, May 20, 1967

'Bill and Indians' to Visit NTSU

GARLAND, Texas (Sp.)—The Garland production of "Pecos Bill and the Indians," a new musical comedy by Bill Overton, will tour to North Texas State University in Denton for two performances Saturday.

The musical will be presented at 10 and 11 a.m. in the Studio Theater on the NTSU campus.

Overton, who also directed and choreographed the produc-

tion, is the author of several other musicals. "Pecos Bill and the Indians" is the cartoon-like saga of an epic hero who solves every problem that turns up in and around the old West. During the show he captures a band of outlaws single-handed, makes a war party of savage Indians friendly and outwits a bumbling villain named Armadillo Armstrong. The musical has 14 original musical numbers.

The Dallas Times Herald

Monday, May 15, 1967



ACTING UP AT GARLAND

Bill Overton, left, teacher at Bussey Junior High School in Garland, watches three of his student actors in action. They are, left to right, Michael Sawyer, Lynn Stegner and Johnny Harris cast members of a musical comedy which Overton wrote and directed.—Staff Photo.

The Dallas Times Herald

Monday, May 15, 1967

ONE-MAN SHOW
School Musical
Good to Degree

By JIM FEATHERSTON
 Staff Writer

Armadillo Armstrong is doing his bit to help Teacher get a master's degree.

So are Peccos Bill and the Indians.

They are actually students at Bussey Junior High School in Garland and they're staging a musical comedy which Teacher will use as his thesis for a master's degree from North Texas State University at Denton.

Teacher is Bill Overton, a 28-year-old member of the Bussey Jr. High faculty for the past six years.

"It's unusual for the musical comedy to be an original," says Overton.

Overton wrote the show, choreographed it, designed the sets and costumes and is directing it. The comedy, entitled

"Peccos Bill and the Indians," has 4 songs written by Overton. Armadillo Armstrong, by the way is the villain.

The musical comedy, moreover, is no one-shot deal. It is being performed at least 11 times at various schools.

And it will be performed May 20 at North Texas State University in Denton before a special graduate committee that will decide if it is good enough to serve as a thesis for a master's degree in speech and drama for Overton.

The cast of the junior high production numbers 41 and it was no small task for Overton not only to get them to remember their lines but to sing and dance as well. Most of them never had a lesson in their lives.

So Overton, who originally is

See SCHOOL on Page 19

★ SCHOOL

Continued From Page 17

from Paint Crack near Haskell, is obviously a versatile fellow. He even plays the piano in a combo that provides music during the show.

He also is no stranger to theatrical problems. He has worked in productions at the Dallas Theater Center and Theatre 3.

Overton is confident his youngsters will perform well before the university committee.

"By the time these kids get to Denton, they'll be real troupers," Overton says.

But there are some problems Overton just can't solve.

"With kids this age, you just have to face the fact that some of the girls will be taller than the boys and that some of the boys' voices are in the process of changing," he says.

The Dallas Times Herald

Thursday, May 18, 1967

NTSU to Hear New Show

"Texas Bill and the Indians," a new musical comedy written and directed by Edl Overton, will tour to North Texas State University in Denton on Saturday for two performances.

The musical, presented by Garland students, has just completed a tour of local schools, giving as many as six shows a week.

The show, billed as "a musical-comedy Wild West Show," is the cartoon-like saga of an epic hero who spends his time "catchin' criminals and doin' good deeds." During the show, he captures a band of outlaws

who are robbing the bank, and takes on a whole tribe of savage Indians single-handed.

Overton has written 14 original musical numbers for the production.

The performances in Denton will be at 10 and 11 a.m. in the Student Theater on the North Texas campus. It will be sponsored by the department of speech and drama.

The Denton Record Chronicle

Thursday, May 18, 1967

Children Are 'Real Pros'

"Pecos Bill and the Indians," a musical comedy written for the children's theatre, will be presented for two performances Saturday in the Studio Theatre at North Texas State University.

Show times for the 55-minute production are at 10 and 11 a.m. There will be no admission charge.

Written by Bill Overton, NTSU student from Pajot Creek, the play has been produced in several junior high schools in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

Overton also wrote the words and music for the 14 musical numbers in the production. He was designer, director and cinematographer for the production, written as his thesis production.

Forty-one students from Bussey Junior High School in Garland will produce the show at NTSU.

According to Overton, the Bussey students received a laudatory front-page review of their efforts in the Garland daily newspaper.

"They are veterans," Overton said. "They run their own show. They make up, prepare sets and costumes and keep the play going."

Overton is a member of the ensemble that accompanies the production. He is out front throughout the production.

Overton said the Bussey students are becoming "real pros." "They have performed to audiences of all ages and have become accustomed to touring, to adjusting to new theatre and auditorium situations and adapting to new audiences."

Overton explained that junior high schools seldom give musicals. "Good scripts aren't available and the expense of royalty and music rental is a problem. I wanted to show that musical comedy, perhaps the most exciting and successful theatrical form in America, could be presented by junior high students in an educational theatre situation."

The Garland Daily News

Tuesday, May 2, 1967



LEADING CHARACTERS — Portraying leading roles in the original musical, "Pecos Bill And The Indians", written by Bill Overton, Sussey Junior High speech and English teacher, from left, are David and Dan-

ny Watford; Lynn Stegner, widow, and Michael Sawyer, villian. The musical will give its premiere performance Thursday at Garland High School, 7:30 p.m. The public is invited.

The Garland Daily News

Tuesday, May 2, 1967

Bill Overton Production

Original Musical Set To Premiere Thursday

An original and colorful musical, "Pecos Bill and the Indians" depicting a saga of the old west, written by Bill Overton, speech and English teacher at Bussey Junior High School for his master's thesis, will be premiered Thursday night at 7:30 in Garland High School Auditorium.

Presented by Bussey students the musical is also scheduled for performances at Bussey Junior High on May 9, and at North Texas State University, May 26.

Overton, a talented young man has written both the words and the music for the production and is choreographer as well. He will get his master's degree in speech and drama at NTSC in August.

Adding interest too is the fact that Overton, an accomplished pianist, plays the accompaniments for the musical, capably aided by Bob Baker, drummer, who handles the sound effects.

Dressed in typical costumes worn by the early settlers the show opens with the pioneers arriving in Texas to build a new settlement in country occupied by a friendly tribe of Indians. Friendly that is until a villain portrayed by Michael Sawyer appears on the scene to rob the village bank.

Foiled in his first attempt, the villain goes to the Indians with tales that the settlers are planning to take their lands — enlists their aid in helping rob the bank for the second time.

Pecos Bill, a young man

will not harm the settlers. The Indians bury their war paint as a truce — but the villain finds it and after doping the young Indians — paint their faces so that when they awake they are more than eager to accompany him to the village

for the attack and bank robbery.

Adding romance to the musical is the widow, Lynn Stegner and her five young daughters. Susan Young, Crystal Ward, Kay Smith, Nancy Jor-

Continued on Page 7.

Original—

Continued from Page 1

dan and Judith Baker whom she is trying to marry off.

The widow offers lodging to Pecos Bill, played by Johnny Harris, in a sincere effort to secure a son-in-law.

David and Danny Watford, portraying roles of the widow's twin sons add humor to the musical with their enthusiasm and wit as does the role of diminutive Dennis Duke, another member of the cast.

Playing the roles of Indians are Ricky Rodgers, Bill Morgan, Kevin McLaughlin, Steve Olson and Gerald Fast.

Among the original songs written by Overton and sung by the cast are "I Thought We'd Never Get To Texas", "Roy Howdy Take A Look At That Sun", "Tell Me Yes It's True", "If There's Anything I Can't Stand It's a Hero", "Here We Live", "I Want to Go Back", and "Here We Stand".

Open to the public the musical is not only entertaining but deserves a good turnout for two reasons — first because it was written and directed by a local teacher and second be-

The Garland Daily News

Tuesday, May 9, 1967



PECOS BILL — Johnny Harris, portraying the role of the hero in the musical comedy written by Bill Overton, a member of Bussey Junior High facul-

ty, is the idol of the pioneer women, from left, Susan Young, Crystal Ward, Kay Smith, Nancy Jordan and Judith Baker.

Photo by Dick Nalley

The Garland Daily News

Tuesday, May 9, 1967

Musical Comedy Slated At Bussey Junior High

Tonight, at 7:30, Bussey Junior High students will give the second performance of a new musical comedy, "Pecos Bill and the Indians" at Bussey Junior High Cafeterium.

The show featuring twelve original musical numbers was written and directed by Bill Overton, Bussey faculty member.

The show features Johnny Harris as Pecos Bill; Michael Sawyer as Armadillo Armstrong; Mike Merritt as the banker; Don Herron as the sheriff; Deby Steger as the widow; and Denny and David Walford as the twins.

The Indian tribe is composed of Betty Baker; Melodie Miller; Lynn Overall; Allen Boulware; Gerald Fast; Scott Killen; Kevin McLaughlin; Bill Morgan; Steve Oleson; Whitley Paul; Ricky Rodgers; James Sharp; and Jack Teer.

The townspeople are Judith Baker; Julie Foster; Sharon Johnson; Nancy Jordan; Pam McKerregan; Pam Nelson; Kay Smith; Crystal Ward; Susan Young; David Border; Dennis Duke; Bruce Guess; Larry Harrison; Keith Kidd; State Naples; Mickey Roberts; Allen Shipton; and Vernon Same.

Members of the Armstrong gang are Don Carrigan; Don Hines; and Robert Marshall.

Student director for the production is Vicki Bourek, and Bob Baker is playing drums

for the show. This is the second annual musical for Bussey and follows last year's successful "A Portrait of Nelson Holiday, Jr."

The Garland Daily News

Thursday, May 18, 1967



RAIN DANCERS --- Five Bussey Junior High students portraying roles of Indians in the original musical, "Pecos Bill and the Indians" written and produced

by Bill Overton, a teacher at Bussey, from left, are Ricky Rodgers, Bill Morgan, Kevin McLaughlin, Steve Oleson and Gerald Fast.

Photo by Dick Nalley

The Garland Daily News

Thursday, May 18, 1967

Bill Overton's Musical Due Denton Presentations

Bill Overton's "Foces Bill and the Indians," a musical comedy written for the children's theatre, will be presented for two performances Saturday at the Studio Theatre at North Texas State University.

Showtimes for the 55-minute production are at 10 and 11 a.m. There will be no admission charge.

Overton, who is an English and speech teacher in Bussey Junior High School in Garland, wrote, choreographed and scored the play, which has been produced in several junior high schools in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

Besides writing words and music for the 14 musical numbers in the production, Overton was designer and director for the master's thesis project.

Forty-one students from Bussey Junior High School will produce the show at NTSU.

The Bussey students and Overton received a laudatory front-page review of their efforts in the Garland Daily News.

"They are veterans," Overton said. "They run their own

show. They make up, prepare sets and costumes and keep the play going."

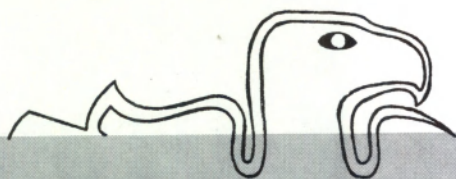
Overton is a member of the ensemble that accompanies the production. He is out front through the show.

Overton said the Bussey students are becoming "real pros." "They have performed to audiences of all ages and have become accustomed to touring, to adjusting to new theatre and auditorium situations and adapting to new audiences."

Overton explained that junior high schools seldom give musicals.

"Good scripts aren't available, and the expense of royalty and musical rental is a problem. I wanted to show that musical comedy perhaps the most exciting and successful theatrical form in America, could be presented by junior high students in an educational theatre situation."

Overton, a graduate student at North Texas State University, is from Paint Creek, near Haskell.



Contents

Editors

JUNETTA DAVIS

J. ROY MOSES JR.

Photography

SMITH KIKER

JIM BARLOW

Cover Design

JEFF MILLET

- 4 Pecos Bill and the Indians
- 6 The Rules Rebellion of 1901
- 8 Three Join Distinguished Ranks
- 10 NT Notes
- 12 News of X X X X X's
- 14 About NT Sports
- 15 Biology to New Quarters
Aloha

Vol. 18, No. 4

August, 1967

About the cover: Since the magazine is still experimental, we decided to use another design this month. Jeff Millet, an art student last spring when he designed this cover, is now an ex-student himself. The cover picture shows a crane operator as he begins the demolition of the old science building to make room for the new language building (See NT Notes, p. 10).

The "North Texan" is published four times yearly by North Texas State University and distributed to former students and other friends of the university who are interested in its activities. Second class postage paid at Denton, Texas.

Information for publication should be addressed to the editor. Requests for change of address should be sent to Box 13557, NT Station, Denton, Texas, 76203.



Freckled-faced friend of Pecos Bill and the Indians.

Pecos Bill was a friend of the Indians. And he admonished settlers moving westward to try to get along with the Redskins.

"Why, ah never met a Indian that wasn't a real American—once you got to know him."

Pecos Bill—pure, true and brave—is the main character in a musical comedy written, produced and directed by Bill Overton for his master's thesis production at North Texas State University.

"Pecos Bill and the Indians" was staged at NTSU by 42 students of Bussey Junior High School in Garland, where Overton teaches English and speech.

The show was quietly transported—not by design—onto the NTSU campus one lazy Saturday morning in late May. Not many saw the production, but everyone who did become an instant Bill Overton fan.

They join a veritable army of Overton fol-



Bill Overton, NT graduate student, with mini-students.

By JIM MORRIS

Pecos

lowers from the Garland area where "Pecos Bill" has been produced 11 times.

A Bussey "cowgirl" passing out programs before the NTSU premiere was queried about Overton. "How do the students at your school like Overton," she was asked.

"Oh, we all think he's great," she swooned, then added dreamily, "I've got him for English."

Overton wrote and scored 14 musical numbers for the show. They are satirically clever enough to be appreciated by any adult, yet have sufficient melodrama to offer wide appeal to the younger audiences.

Overton accompanies the show's numbers on a rinky-tink piano. A fast-paced, varied drum beat and bass fiddle help create the mood for the show.

It is obvious from the beginning that the students enjoy doing the show. The audience identifies immediately with the light-hearted mood set



Cast of his students from Garland junior high helped Mr. Overton with his homework for NT master's degree.

BILL AND THE INDIANS

by Overton's music and a few hilarious continuous skits enacted without dialogue.

There are no intermissions. The one-hour production is a straight run-through with a minimum of background scene changes which are woven smoothly into the theme of the show.

Pecos Bill is the hero of the show. He admittedly is proud of having a coyote for a step-mother, and learned to do everything a coyote could "cept, ah never could wag mah tail."

He comes to the settlement ("right nice place y'all got here—for a town") to rid the west of Armadillo Armstrong, a "sidewinder" who put some Indians under a hypnotic spell and had them create a disturbance while he robbed the town bank.

Overton's musical numbers flow so smoothly into the dialogue it all seems a logical transition. In fact, some of the wittiest lines were sung:

In all modesty, Bill admitted he didn't dig the

Pecos; "The river I dug in the sand/I think they call the Rio Grande." After Bill taught the Indians the "Rain Dance Rag," the Redskins chorused, "moisture in the air/ takes the curl out of your hair." And when the Indians hold a tribal council to discuss being "integrated" with the white man, they wonder "about the value of real estate/ if we let those settlers emigrate."

Perhaps the best-liked numbers in the show (judging by audience reaction) were "I Thought We'd Never" (. . . get to Texas, sung by the Townspeople), "Boy Howdy," by Pecos Bill, in praise of the West; "Tell Me, Is It True," by Bill and the Townspeople, an exchange about his exploits; "Tribal Council," by the Indians; "Coyote Home," by Pecos Bill; "Saturday Night," by Girls and Fellas; "Rain Dance Rag," by Bill and the Indians; and "I Feel Sorry for You," by Bill, the Townspeople and the Indians, directed at Armadillo Armstrong after he is captured. □



Mrs. Moore, an effervescent 87, discusses pictures of 1901 graduating class with Dr. Wayne Adams, Coordinator of Alumni Affairs, during recent Corsicana visit.

The Rules Rebellion of 1901

By JUNETTA DAVIS

Times and customs change, but people don't. At least, not much.

Even back in 1900-01, coeds at North Texas Normal complained about strict rules for girls. And now and then, they broke a rule or two—if the occasion demanded.

Take Miss Nora L. Denton (B.E. '01), for instance. She was studying in the NTN chapel when she chanced to meet W. H. Moore.

"He walked up to the stage to look up a word in the dictionary," she recalled 67 years later. "When he came back down the stairs, we met face to face."

Remembering, she said: "He told me later that it was love at first sight for him. I know it was for me."

But the young people had difficulty getting together, rules being what they were. In those days, boys didn't call on girls living in boarding houses. And to meet elsewhere was also forbidden.

However, Nora Denton would walk downtown

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