



Coming of Age in Kentucky: Politicians, Editors....and Mermaids

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“It is essentially drawn from my diary of September 1954 --May 1955 when I went on an exchange to the Louisville Courier-Journal, and drove round the state in the mid-term elections with two high-powered candidates for the Senate. I also sat through a McCarthyite trial of a journalist, [Carl Braden](#), whose crime of "sedition" was to buy a house in a new white suburb and hand it over to a Negro family-- it was fiery-cross racism with accusations of Communism.... I spent three months driving through the Southern states with an English friend, interviewing editors on their reaction to school desegregation the year after the US Supreme Court ruled its banning. Mermaids? I found that American girls didn't just play doubles tennis with boys...as in England....”

Clyde in an email to IDRC Alumnus Neill McKee.

In this irrepressible account of the springtime of his life, Clyde Sanger enters the pasture of Kentucky like a pony set free. His education in romance and politics is by turns jolly, harrowing, enlightening and, surprising, and very much of its time. Less a case of a young Englishman losing his innocence than of a born writer and keen observer striking out on his rambunctious own.

ELIZABETH HAY, author of ALL THINGS CONSOLED', Ottawa.

This book is distinctively unusual. In a way, it's the late harvest of an early vintage, and benefits from both. Based on a diary Clyde kept during a visit to Kentucky in 1954, it captures all the exuberance of a young reporter, missing out nothing. At the same time the book describes a 'coming of age' revelation, when he realized that the real world was not quite the jaunty, confident, tolerant milieu of his own upbringing.

CHRISTOPHER ROLLING, BBC Television Producer, London..

Clyde was the Associate Director of Communications at IDRC 1971-77. Two volumes of his poetry have made the Bulletin's Alumni in Print: [Defrosting No.15, November 2007](#) and [Second Wind, No.41, December 2014](#).