Uncle Ab From Abington — October 29, 1975

(By Jim Jones)

This has been one of those October weekends the artists crave. It has been warm, the sky most delightful blue and the foliage is completely beyond description. This Ol' Hoosier Farmer has been at work repairing roofs, raking leaves and other chores, but time was left for several hours in the woods cutting firewood.

Here is the perfect job for a fine October day. We had some tree tops left from a logging operation and spent the afternoon cutting them up for the fireplace and stove. The path led from the farmhouse down a gravel road, then a turn off into the woodland, past an old apple tree which had yielded its crop a few weeks ago, thru a group of hedge apple trees with the ground covered with Osage Oranges, then down a long slope into the woods. We crossed a shallow creek fed by springs, then up another long slope on the other side and finally found our tree tops. The chain saw makes short work of wood cutting, not the backbreaking work of a few years ago when all wood was cut with a crosscut and a bucksaw. We hauled four loads out of the woods with the old Ferguson tractor and were gratified to see the woodpile grow.

The colored leaves fell around us and the late fall birds were singing on this beautiful day. It was warm enough to work in shirtsleeves and we often paused to look over this woodland, left to nature's devices for almost 40 years. One could see many kinds of trees, oak, walnut, poplar, maple, in all sizes and shapes. Some were nearly ready for timber, some were mere saplings and there were all sizes in between Few people made their way into this woodland, and there was a noticeable absence of trash and litter. It was like a step into the past.

As the afternoon waned, the sun sank lower in the southwest and the wind took on a chill. The hour grew late and the final load of wood was loaded. The trip home was all too short and the load was soon unloaded—the smaller sticks set aside for kindling, the large blocks piled for splitting, and the rest corded up for burning in the big stone fireplace.

This farmer is grateful for a fireplace to burn wood in, and thankful for the wood to burn. Each kind of wood has its own rate of burning, its own color of flame, its own heat abilities. But the Ol' Hoosier Farmer cuts it all and takes satisfaction in a day's work well done. He knows soon winter will be upon the land and the wood that was cut and gathered In Sunny October will lend its own warmth to a cold December day.