

THE MAN WHO KNEW WILLIAM FAULKNER

w.e. and mrs. e and the toad and ray
sat at the table and tried to talk,
but the piano player of the saloon
at the hotel stater played every request
with a lot of pedal, so that "the yellow
rose of texas," and "jambalaya," and
"a rainy night in georgia," and a lot of
other songs that the cowboys there
asked to hear, ended up sounding about
the same — loud.

w.e. kept looking over at the piano
player, as if he'd have shot him had he
been a gunfighter, a hundred years before.

then the piano player took a break
and it was nice and quiet, so. w.e. said,
"when I went down to oxford, to see
faulkner, I asked him if there was a good
restaurant in town. he said, 'sure.
there's a good one down at the end of this
street, on the right.'
and I said, 'is the food any good?'
'no,' he said, 'but they'll turn the music
down, if you ask them.'"

THE MAN WITH A BAD HABIT

We were out at Mr. Pete's place
in the middle of Navajo Land and
Mr. Pete and Sam and I stood beside
the pickup truck and talked about
what the Hopis would do next about
the land dispute.

It was about a hundred miles or so
to the next cigarette machine,
but we'd brought a supply along.
Sam took out a cigarette and I
took one out and we lit up.

Then I looked over at Mr. Pete
and he was patting his shirt pockets,
as if he'd left his cigarettes behind.
So I said, "I'm sorry, Mr. Pete, I
didn't know you smoked." And
I gave him a cigarette and lit it
for him.