



A Chattahoochee Album: Images of Traditional People and Folsky Places Around the Lower Chattahoochee River Valley (Images of Traditional People and Folksy Places Around the Lo)

Fred Fussell

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This handsome photojournal offers a window into the traditional folkways and rich cultural heritage of one of the South's most distinctive regions.

Immortalized in Sidney Lanier's poetry, the Chattahoochee River forms in the hill country of northwest Georgia, near Brasstown Bald, and flows southward to become a mighty southern river before it empties into the Gulf of Mexico at Apalachicola, Florida. For 173 miles of its mid-length it forms the border between Alabama and Georgia, draining a watershed of 877,000 square miles and 18 counties between the two states. As such, the lower Chattahoochee River Valley has been termed the geographical center of the Deep South.

Fred Fussell has traveled and explored this area for more than 25 years in his capacities as a museum curator, a folklorist, and a historic preservationist. Camera in hand, mindfully ready to capture the essence of the region, he has made a visual record of the places and the people who perpetuate the music, the stories, and the crafts indigenous to the lower Chattahoochee River Valley. Scenes of family reunions, sacred harp singings, clog dancing, white oak basket weaving, fiddle playing, gourd trees, folk pottery, yard whirligigs, bee keeping, county fairs, canning and preserving, quilting, "syrup soppin's", Indian powwows, grave decorations, roadside vendors, and blues balladeers-all portray the Chattahoochee as a rich cultural corridor where folk expression plays a vital role.

From the blending of diverse peoples, a singular culture has developed in the lower Chattahoochee River Valley that persists to the present day-diverse, robust, and tradition proud. Published by the Historic Chattahoochee Commission, *A Chattahoochee Album* is Fred Fussell's personal tribute to the region, lovingly compiled to honor the folklife and traditions of an enduring place and its people.

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