

[Letter from Alan Lomax to Woody Guthrie, November 1, 1940]

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Dear Woody:

I am indeed sorry that you're no longer on Back Where I Come From. I wish there was some way that you and Nick could get together again. The first program what you failed to appear on just about broke my heart and I don't know yet how I'm going to plan the scripts without imagining you taking lines. I'd like to hear your side of the story and I'd like to try to do something about the situation.

A friend of mine is helping to put on National Art Week. He heard about your ballad on Tom Joad and thought it would be a good idea for you to write a song or ballad about National Art Week. This project which you will find out more about in the pamphlet, gives opportunity to artists in the country to exhibit and sell their work and is aimed at making it easy for more artists to make a living in the United States. I thought this idea of finding the hidden talent in America might be right for you. The song doesn't have to be about artists, specifically, but just about the hidden, unknown, and undiscovered fine people that there are in this country. I wrote MacMillan Publishers the other day and suggested that they look at your autobiography. How is it coming along? How are you coming along?

If you'd like to get away from New York for a couple of weeks, why not drop down to see us. We'd be delighted to see you and to have you.

With my very best regards, Alan