



JOHN SNYDER grew up in North and South Carolina, attended the University of Chicago, and moved to New York in 1959. Recently retired as an Executive Director of Morgan Stanley, he previously worked as a buyer at Bloomingdales, and head of research for a carpet manufacturer. Along the way, he was awarded 7 patents, made an industrial film that won first place in the New York Film Festival, and wrote 2 off-Broadway plays. Throughout his working career he maintained a machine shop for making prototypes of inventions and turning found objects into sculpture. He continues to make sculpture ([www.johnsnyder.org](http://www.johnsnyder.org)), and has written this memoir. He and his wife divide their time between New York City and Cedar Mountain, North Carolina.

“Memoir done well is a wonderful and necessary contribution to culture, and *Hill of Beans* is among the best. These are beautifully written and skillfully layered stories that spring from a place beloved by many, the mountains of North Carolina. The stories have the delicate richness of chocolate, made even more delicious by John Snyder’s honesty. I very much enjoyed these real-life adventures of a place and time gone by, told with pathos and love.”

— JANISSE RAY, author of *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood*, *A House of Branches*, and others

\$24.00



SHARE CROPPER HOUSE ON THE SNYDER FARM  
Watercolor by the author

“John Snyder has recovered a lost universe with a particularity so fine and fresh as to create a kind of poetry.”

— DIANE McWHORTER, author of Pulitzer Prize winning *Carry Me Home*

“This is great stuff, extremely well remembered. There can’t be many memories left of this time and place, and these are richly told.”

— ROY BLOUNT, JR. humorist and author of 22 books including *Crackers*, *Be Sweet* and *Alphabet Juice*.

“John Snyder has conjured up a vanished world. The hardscrabble South he depicts in this beautifully evocative memoir calls to mind Faulkner and Flannery O’Connor. It’s a work of inspired anthropology, rich in folklore, and a work of literature.”

— JAMES ATLAS, author of *Bellow: A Biography* and a memoir *My Life in the Middle Ages*.

“An absorbing and moving exploration of the effect of environment on character.”

— JONATHAN GALASSI, poet and translator of Giacomo Leopardi and Eugenio Montale.

Smith/Kerr Associates LLC Publishing  
43 Seapoint Road  
Kittery Point, tME 03905 USA  
207 439-2921/bizbks@aol.com  
[www.smithkerr.com](http://www.smithkerr.com)

ISBN 978-0-9830622-0-2/0-9830622-0-X

HILL OF BEANS

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# HILL *of* BEANS



COMING OF AGE  
*in the Last Days of the Old South*

JOHN SNYDER’S memoir of growing up in the Depression era south evokes a time gone by. It is written with affection and understanding about people dealing with hard times, sometimes with cruelty, sometimes with violence... including a mysterious case of arson that forever changed the author’s life.

“John Snyder writes beautifully and evocatively of a time, a moment in history, and of the people in a way that makes you feel as if you are right alongside him. I loved this book.”

— KATHY PORIES, Senior editor, Algonquin Books

“If you had the sort of adventurous, bittersweet childhood that many children only dream about after reading Laura Ingalls Wilder books in school, John Snyder’s *Hill of Beans* will be irresistible. From the tremendous, larger-than-life father to the stiflingly cruel Aunt Bess, Snyder transmits the images and feelings of a unique childhood wonderfully.”

— LYDIA CROWE, University of Iowa

“As spellbinding, nuanced, intricate, evocative, and absorbing as his highly crafted metal-and-wood sculptures, John Snyder’s magical, magnificent *Hill of Beans* is a swirling, recursive American Journey through the rivers and woods and fields of a boy’s formative years, along highways of perception, memory, language, and expression, asking what it means to imagine, yearn, experience, and love.”

— DAVID M. DARST, investment analyst and author of six books, including *The Art of Asset Allocation* and *The Little Book that Saves Your Assets*

“John Snyder’s *Hill of Beans* evokes an era, a way of life, long passed into history. Recounted in vivid detail, with photographs, candor, affection, humor, this memoir brings to life the voices and struggles, the strengths, the industry, of families and communities long gone. It is a story that helps us understand and appreciate those who came before us, and also helps us understand our own times better. You will be pleased that you read it.”

— ROBERT MORGAN, author of *Gap Creek*

“I very much enjoyed this book. It’s a lovely evocation of a southern upbringing, with a fine sense of place and memorable, well-drawn characters, and the portrayals of family life are nicely rendered and often quite moving.”

— CHARLES GAINES, author of *Stay Hungry*, *Pumping Iron*, *A Family Place*, and *The Next Valley Over*

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