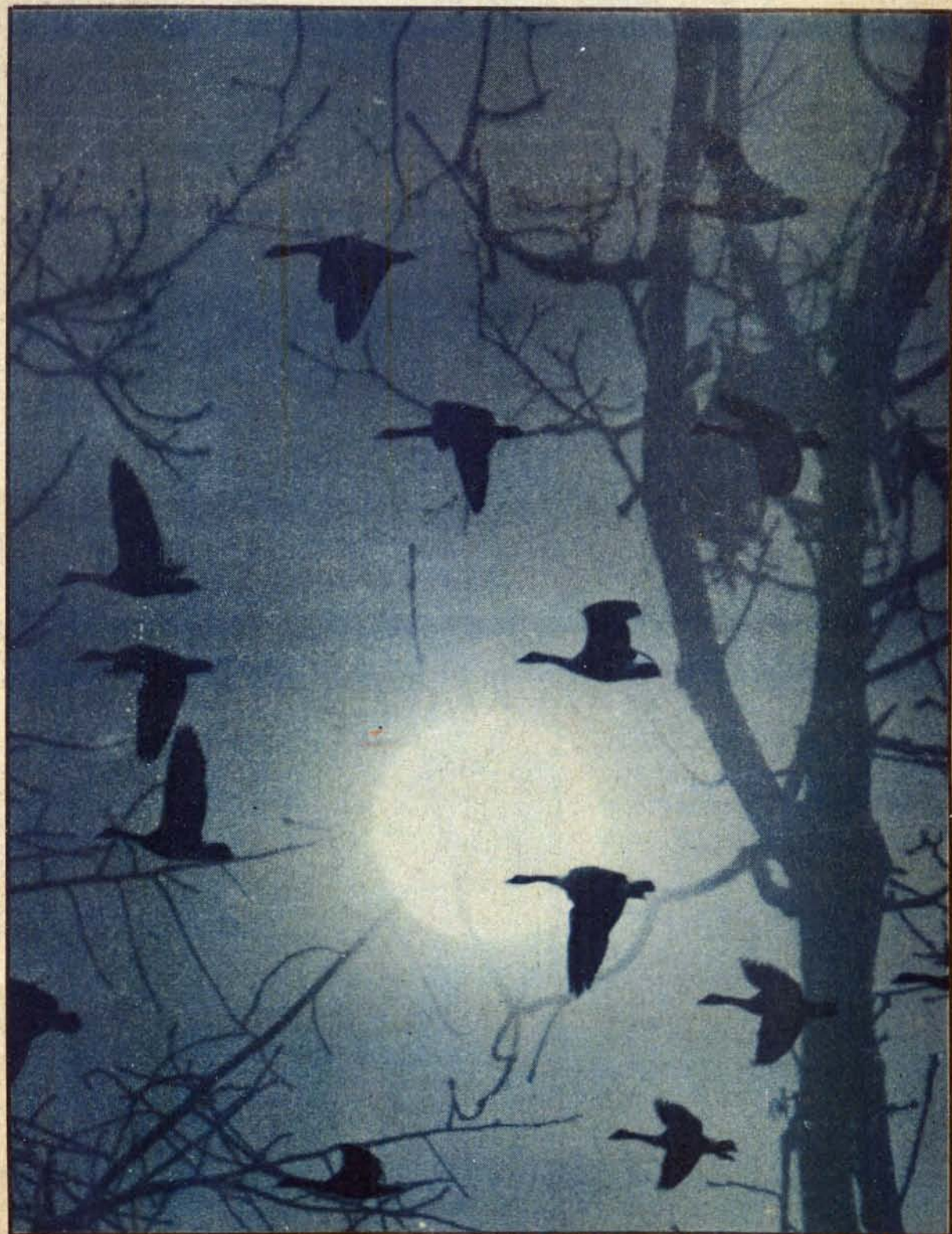


Hunter's Guide



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Three generations continue

by
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If you were to pick up a brochure of John F. Price III and Sons Commercial Goose Hunting, the caption would read "With us, Successful Hunting in Kent County is a tradition." Their success has become a tradition, but by no means overnight. To appreciate the growth and success of the Price Goose Hunting business, we first must drift back in time to the mid-1940's, when John's father, John F. Price Jr. and his wife Thelma first opened their home to day gunners that would come from surrounding states to take advantage of the growing goose population in the county.

Back then, the day's hunt would cost the goose hunter just \$10 per hunter and for an extra \$2 one could have lodging for the night in the friendly atmosphere of the Price family farm house. As an added attraction, Thelma would also offer a bit of personal catering that could be enjoyed for just \$2 per breakfast or \$3.50 per dinner, which was always served family style.

In contrast to the size of their operation today the Price family in the mid-'40's, had just three pits that were rented out to day gunners. John, III remembers helping his father out at the age of ten. It soon became second nature for him to take successful aim on a tolling Canadian, with his 12 gauge J.C. Higgins shotgun. John, III recalls too, with a bit of laughter the modest stool of silhouette decoys used in those early days which rarely exceeded forty or fifty in number. Both the father and

Prices offer prime hunting in the heart of Kent County with spacious pits in open cornfields.

the son can easily reminisce for hours on "those good old days" when shells were a dollar or two a box, or when they used the old style herder wooden calls, or even the short period when record players and tape recorders were used to lure in their prey.

In the 1960's, with John F. Price Jr. retiring from farming, the present day operation began to take shape. John, III following in his father's footsteps, first rented one farm for taking day hunters, which housed three pit blinds. From this modest start, John's business has grown to accommodate today, hundreds of hunters weekly on numerous farms throughout Kent County. But in order to keep up his tradition of "plenty of personal attention" John has had to employ "helper guides" to meet the demands of the new business growth.

He certainly did not have to look far for most of his help, having three able sons, John, IV, Jimmy, and Joey. It is through this close-knit family group of experienced day hunters that most of the second generations success of their business venture can be attributed.

As the years have passed there has been many an evening spent around the "Price family" kitchen table with the busy talk of the days shooting experiences. The oldest of the Price boys, "Buck," recalls with pride, the time when his yellow lab "Lucky" had more to retrieve than the days kill. It seemed that



Buck, John, III, Joey, and Jimmy Price

after a customer had lost his prized goose call, it was Lucky's good nose and patience that led him to the wanted call that had been dropped sometime during the day in the middle of an eighty acre field. Often kidded by his peers for his serious attitude towards going that extra mile to keep the customer happy, Buck's dog, Lucky, too has seemed to follow in his masters footsteps of "sending 'em home happy."

It comes by no surprise that the youngest Price, Joey, has perfected one of the most progressive portions of the present day Price operation. It is through his usage of special apparatus and movements that have lured the onlooking flocks of geese from out of the heavens to within an arms length of the anxious hunter. It has been termed an adventure in itself to see Joey use such a successful technique that certainly would have been laughed at just two or three years ago.

If these were not enough among the ranks of the Price family, there remains one very

goose hunting tradition

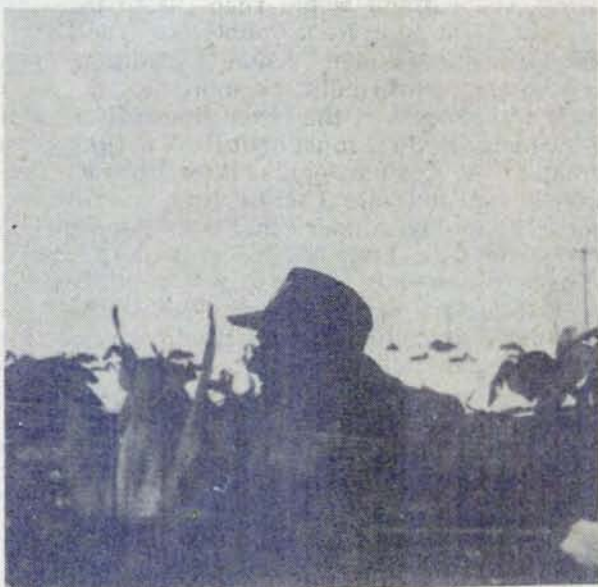
distinguished member of the clan that can not be overlooked. Jimmy, the middle son, has carried his gifts of goose calling expertise from the field on to open competition. Jimmy placed fifth in the 1983 Mason Dixon World Championship Goose Calling Contest. It is with the same tube call used in the finals that this champion class goose caller enhances his hunters chances in the field of coming into gunshot range of the Canadian honkers.

In addition to the family group, continued business growth has made it necessary for the Prices to hand pick even more experienced guides who have acquired that same special touch in making sure the customer will want to come back for more.

If one were to observe their operation from start to finish during a typical day in the hunting season, the entire clan of guides would be found at 4:30 in the morning at Buzz's Restaurant in Chestertown. If the hunter so wishes, it is here that a tremendous buffet breakfast can be enjoyed that promises to start the day out on the right track. It is from this meeting place that each guide is introduced to their hunting party, and then the hunters are taken to their perspective pit blinds. Upon

reaching the actual pit area the gear is unloaded and the stool of over 200 silhouettes, full bodies and life-like mounted decoys are

(Continued to Page 6)



John keeps watch at dawn.

Page 6

Price family

(Continued from Page 5)

put out, a task that, if wanted, the hunter can take part in.

It is at this time when one can find the county at her best as the sun rises on the land that has come to be known as "second home" of the much sought after Canadian wild goose. The actual length of time of the hunters stay depends upon the ability to "kill out" the limit. When the limit is taken the day is officially over for the goose hunter and his friends. If good fortune has found its way into the hunters bag the hunters are told they can spare themselves the unhandiness of picking and cleaning their foul, by sending them to a professional such as, Hickman's Goose Pickers, which is located in the easy to find community of Still Pond.

The Prices are quick to mention that much of their success in business too goes beyond their own talents and the surrounding natural resources, for the associated businesses do their part in making the hunters visit a pleasurable experience. For there are ample restaurants, motels, tourist homes, and bed and breakfast spots throughout the county

which make food and lodging no problem with advance reservations. The hunter who has to secure the proper licenses, stamps, and hunting supplies can do so at 5 a.m. by visiting the Bear's Den Sporting Goods Store, where they will do their part in making him ready for the day's hunt.

The memories that the hunter takes home are most assuredly filled with thoughts of the excitement of it all; the setting out of the decoys, the friendly conversation and ideas shared while waiting in the pit for that overhead flight, the breathtaking glance of a tolling canadian as he drops out of nowhere in

Successful hunting in Kent is a Maryland tradition with easy access to food and lodging.

answer to the labors of the days guide and his skills, and the challenge of that "shot of a lifetime" as his target comes closer, closer. What fun, what an experience, to enjoy a part of that "tradition" while hunting in Kent County, Maryland.