



The Alumni Gazette
The College of

William and Mary

Winter 1981



On The Cover

The selection on the cover is a photo of a plant specimen from the Conservatory of the United States Botanic Garden located at the base of Capitol Hill in the Mall in Washington, D.C. The idea of a botanic garden for the nation originated with George Washington during his presidency, but the present conservatory which welcomes more than one million visitors every year was not completed until 1933. The Botanic Garden contains sub-tropical and tropical plants from around the world. Its purpose is to protect, cultivate, and display the plants for the benefit of the public, scientists, and garden clubs. The conservatory, display and growing areas of the Garden contain thousands of rare plants in their 47,674 square feet. Lyle Rosbotham '71, a free-lance photographer, captures in an unusual photographic approach some of the specimens of the Garden elsewhere in this magazine.

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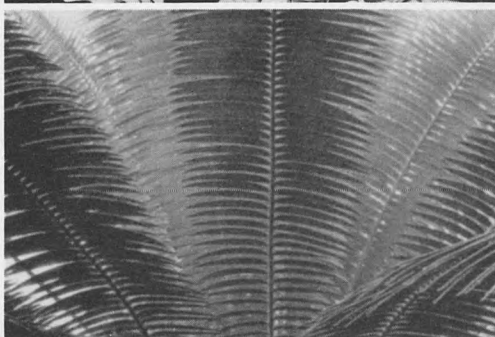
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What Would Mencken Say?

The Twentieth Century's Most Fascinating Critic Would
Have Some Keen Observations
About America's Ongoing Greatest Show on Earth

By Carl Dolmetsch

At least once a year some newspaper columnist wistfully wonders: "What would Mencken say?" What might Mencken have said, for instance, had he lived to see a Southern Baptist peanut farmer elected to the highest office in the land? Or, to see him turned out of the White House by a former Hollywood movie star? What would he say, were he living now, about what he called our "daily panorama of

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private and communal folly" that makes this great "star-spangled Republic and its simian citizenry . . . incomparably the greatest show on earth"?

There is, to be sure, no dearth of social and political commentary in newspapers nowadays, and not a few present-day "Op-Ed" commentators who were born twenty years too late to have teathed journalistically on H. L. Mencken affect Menckenisms in their style. Nevertheless, surveying the field, one seeks vainly for a successor to the mantle Mencken wore so gaudily in the Twenties and Thirties. By 1948, when he was silenced by a thrombosis that left him, though mentally alert, unable to read or write for the last eight years of his life, he had already lost most of his old clout. Yet, he was not forgotten during those shadowed years and his memory is still green.

Samples of Mencken's prose--called by Joseph Wood Krutch in 1956 "the best prose written in America during the twentieth century"--still turn up regularly in

college anthologies, and heterodox students in American lit or history courses still occasionally re-discover him with enthusiasm. He has indeed become almost a cult figure. His books, most of them long out of print, are avidly sought by collectors of Americana. There exists a full-fledged Mencken Society with several hundred members scattered across the land and a quarterly journal, *Menckenia*, devoted to learned articles about and reminiscences of him. His home in Baltimore's Union Square, willed by his surviving brother to the University of Maryland, is a mecca for die-hard Menckenites, and each September, on the Saturday nearest his birthday, the Enoch Pratt Free Library, where his papers and books are housed in a special Mencken Room, honors their city's favorite son with an endowed lecture and a day-long program.

As September 12, 1980 marked the centenary of Henry Louis Mencken's arrival on earth, the Pratt's observance of the "Sage of Baltimore's" hundredth birthday was especially

elaborate, spreading over two days instead of the customary one, and drawing thousands of local fans as well as scores of admirers from around the world. So sought-after were the four hundred tickets to the birthday banquet in the Belvedere Hotel's grand ballroom on the 12th that the entire affair had to be replayed next evening, when it was again sold out. Mencken's long-time friend, the British journalist and PBS-TV celebrity, Alistair Cooke, was the banquet speaker, repeating his witty, imaginary "Letter from Henry in Heaven" both nights.

Among the honored banquet guests was Mencken's publisher and close friend throughout five decades, Alfred A. Knopf, whose own eighty-eighth birthday it also was. Knopf published on that day under his famed Borzoi imprint a new volume of essays (*On Mencken*) in which eight writers, the publisher included, surveyed "HIM's" diverse career. The *Baltimore Sun*, with which Mencken was associated for nearly a half-century, also announced on this occasion the establishment of an annual Mencken Prize for outstanding political journalism.

Nor were these the only Mencken centennial observances in 1980. In May, Chicago's Newberry Library hosted a two-day conference of scholars to "reappraise" Mencken's manifold contributions to American culture, though the atmosphere at that gathering was more one of celebration and eulogy than of critical re-examination. Throughout the year there were also special exhibits and commemorative programs at Dartmouth College, at The New York Public Library (where the bulk of Mencken's correspondence--nearly 500,000 letters--now reposes)

and at several hinterland universities and libraries with large Mencken collections.

When Mencken died, on January 29, 1956, his erstwhile colleagues at the Baltimore Sunpapers, Inc. opened a locked tin box he had left with them supposedly containing instructions for his obituary and last rites. What they found inside was a simple note saying "Don't overplay it." It is not difficult to imagine, therefore, what Mencken would have said about all the fuss and feathers of these centennial celebrations. He would doubtless have been amused, perhaps secretly flattered but outwardly disdainful, and he would certainly have found some colorful word to epitomize what the octogenarian authority on American humor, Walter Blair, the opening speaker at the Newberry Conference, called "this Menckenonization." Neither Dr. Blair nor anyone else in the Chicago or Baltimore commemorations, however, went so far as to suggest they were "overplaying" the centennial. Mencken was simply getting his just desserts.

Those too young to remember Mencken in his heyday may well wonder how this somewhat raffish, cigar-chewing pundit can still inspire such devotion after a quarter-century in the grave. Who was H. L. Mencken, anyway? Certainly he is not easy to explain as a phenomenon, to categorize as a writer or to characterize as a person. He was *sui generis*, one of a kind, whose peculiar combination of talents, proclivities and opinions is unlikely to occur again. To call him a journalist, a critic (in several fields), a magazine editor, a philologist, and an exuberant verbal pugilist scarcely gives an indication of his interests,

activities, and accomplishments. The subject of his lifelong study was simply the creature he dubbed *boobus americanus* in all its aspects. Politics and economics, religion and theology, medicine and quackery, philosophy and psychology, manners and morals, the arts and their practitioners, language and literature--all came under his purview and became grist for his mill. He was as he remains--different things to different people.

For example, to an Englishman like Alistair Cooke as to the University of Chicago's eminent dialectologist, Raven McDavid, editor of *The Linguistic Atlas of the United States & Canada*, Mencken's supremely enduring contribution was his monumental, pioneering study of our native tongue, *The American Language*. First produced in 1919, it spawned three supplementary volumes by 1948 and it stimulated hundreds of scholarly inquiries into what its author called "the American Vulgate"--the peculiar ways we Americans express ourselves as distinct from the British and other members of the worldwide English language community. There are shelves upon shelves of books and articles today on this subject that might not exist but for the stimulus Mencken gave American linguistics. Still, Mencken's original study--the work of a devoted amateur, innocent of all higher academic training--remains the most readable book on its subject, especially in the excellent one-volume redaction by Professor McDavid, now available in paperback.

To a literary historian and critic like William H. Nolte, among many others, Mencken's great importance in the development of our national culture was as a literary critic. Mencken came to criticism in 1908 when he was hired to review books for *The Smart Set*, a monthly magazine in New York of which he later became co-editor with George Jean Nathan, the drama critic. He continued reviewing books there until December 1923 and, thereafter for a decade in the pages of *The American Mercury*, another monthly he, Nathan and Knopf founded in 1924. But it was in the old *Smart Set* that Mencken gained a national following with his sharply pointed reviews and acquired a power over American literary endeavor such as no one has ever wielded before or since. By the early Twenties Mencken's word could literally make or break a new book or a budding reputation. Just how and why this

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was so and what its results were Professor Nolte has demonstrated in his excellent *H. L. Mencken: Literary Critic* and in his collection, *H. L. Mencken's "Smart Set" Criticism*.

As a critic, Mencken may have been pontifical but, paradoxically, he was also a liberator. The thrust of his criticism was ever on the side of freedom of expression, of enlarging the subjects American authors could write about with impunity, and against what he called in one of his best essays "Puritanism as a Literary Force" in this country. He fought passionately against the official and unofficial censorship directed at writers like Theodore Dreiser and James Branch Cabell '98 by people he pilloried as "ignorant smut-hounds." The most dramatic moment in his fight came in April 1926 when an issue of his *American Mercury* containing a story about a small-town prostitute was banned in Boston. Mencken went to Boston himself to sell a copy of his banned monthly on Boston Common and have himself arrested by the chief of Boston's Vice Squad. In Municipal Court next morning the judge found "no offense has been committed" and, amid a glare of publicity, dismissed the complaint--a landmark victory for American literary freedom. It is not too difficult to imagine, therefore, what Mencken would say (and do) today in the face

of the new rising tide of censorship by such groups as The Moral Majority and the mounting evidence that the victories he won long ago were perhaps only temporary ones.

His liberating influence was most forcefully felt in the South. As I indicated on the NBC Television series, "The New South," which William and Mary produced in November 1977, it is possible to date the onset of what literary historians call The Southern Renaissance--that explosion of excellent writing in the South from Faulkner to Eudora Welty and William Styron--from the appearance of Mencken's newspaper article of 1917, "The Sahara of the Bozart," and especially from the reaction it evoked in its 1920 reprinting in his *Prejudices, Second Series*. Mencken excoriated the South as "almost as sterile, artistically, intellectually, culturally, as the Sahara Desert" and documented his indictment at length. The outcry against this criticism by leaders of the Southern Establishment was more than matched by the chorus of approval by numerous emerging young writers. To dozens of the younger novelists, poets and journalists from Richmond to New Orleans and way points Mencken became a cultural hero in ways Fred Hobson has detailed in his *Serpent in Eden: H. L. Mencken and The South*.

It is not claiming too much to say

that Mencken, in his literary criticism, was also a prime mover in the re-discovery of such neglected American masters of the last century as Walt Whitman and Herman Melville--a movement that led to the rehabilitation of a number of other American writers of the past and dethroned the New England "Schoolroom Poets" Longfellow, Whittier, Holmes and Lowell. Mencken recognized the genius of "Mark Twain" at a time when "Twain" was being put down as a genial humorist and writer of boys' books no one would take seriously as an adult. By his constant reiterations of his judgment that "*Huckleberry Finn* is the greatest novel ever written by an American," Mencken almost single-handedly elevated that work to the status of undisputed masterpiece it enjoys today.

Soon after World War I, as many American writers and artists began taking ship to Paris and other European centers in what became known as the Expatriate Movement, Mencken frequently ran this colloquy as a filler in *The Smart Set*:

Query: If you find so little that is worthy of reverence in this country, why do you stay here?

Answer: Why do men go to zoos?

It is true that Mencken, as he jested, "stayed on the dock, wrapped in the flag, when the Young Intellectuals set sail." Except for his semi-monthly trips to Manhattan ("Gomorrah-on-the-Hudson" he contemptuously called it), he remained in his native Baltimore--a true provincial to the core--while he counselled the young *literati* to "flee the shambles." He was thus an important influence on American literary expatriatism and its consequent internationalizing of our culture, as Wilbur L. ("Pete") Davidson, Jr. '64 explained in his perceptive article, "H. L. Mencken, *The Smart Set*, and The Expatriate Movement," in *The William and Mary Review*, II (Spring 1964), pp. 71-84--an article, incidentally, that has been quoted or referred to in later works by Mencken scholars. In this connection one recalls the snide remarks about Mencken by those fictional expatriates, Jake and Bill, while fishing in the Pyrenees in *The Sun Also Rises* as a young "Papa" Hemingway sought to exorcise the Mencken influences he was loath to acknowledge in himself.

In his recent book, *Mencken: A Study of His Thought* (Knopf, 1978), Charles A. Fecher has given us the



Almost 40 years after their first meeting, H.L. Mencken and George Jean Nathan, erstwhile co-editors of *The Smart Set* and *American Mercury* magazines, held a much publicized reunion in Sherman Billingsley's Stork Club in New York (1947). (courtesy The Stork Club and Enoch Pratt Library)



Music was Mencken's great avocation. Here he is practicing the piano in dishabille at his Baltimore house before a session of *The Saturday Night Club* in 1928. (courtesy Enoch Pratt Library)

most thorough survey of Mencken's social criticism and ideas to date. Mencken was not a systematic thinker nor a "Sage" in the true philosophical sense, even if his admirers called him that. His philosophy or philosophical outlook was, rather, a matrix of sometimes inconsistent, even contradictory prejudices, as he acknowledged by using that word in the title of six volumes of his *Smart Set* and *Mercury* causeries. As he laid about him awesomely at the "absurdities," "puerilities," "imbecilities," "grotesqueries," and "aesthetic ribaldries" he daily witnessed, Mencken's social philosophy expressed itself in a series of glittering aphorisms, making him--in common with Franklin, Emerson and "Mark Twain"--one of our most quotable writers. Who can ever forget such pithy definitions as:

An Idealist is one who, on discovering that a rose smells better than a cabbage, concludes it will make better soup.

Conscience: the inner voice that warns us that someone may be looking.

Democracy: a system of government based on the assumption that the common people know what they want and deserve to get it--good and hard.

Mencken was perhaps lucky in many of his targets--Prohibition, boosterism, rampant religious fundamenta-

lism, and the like--but he made the most of his opportunities for social and political criticism and, as Fecher points out, his "influence was all to the good . . . the things he attacked deserved to be attacked and . . . America is a cleaner, saner, more healthy place today because he attacked and disposed of them." One cannot disagree with the first part of this statement, but are we really "saner, more healthy," intellectually, today than in Mencken's time? What would Mencken say?

My own research on H. L. Mencken has been directed primarily at his career as a magazine editor. This was the subject, in part, of my book, *The Smart Set: A History and Anthology*, and more recently I re-examined the Mencken-Nathan editorial partnership in the Centennial (Fall 1980, No. 75) issue of *Menckiana*. I maintain that it was one of the greatest editorial partnerships in American literary history and that its dissolution in 1925, though perhaps inevitable, was a misfortune for our national letters. It does not diminish Mencken's achievements and importance in other fields to say that what gave him his great power and influence in American culture was, in addition to his style, his career as a magazine editor extending over the better part of two decades. While Mencken could titillate the young writers with his *obiter dicta* and bon mots and inspire fear and trembling in his judgment of their latest books, he could also accept or reject their

works for publication in his magazine. It is fair to say that a good many writers like F. Scott Fitzgerald, Sinclair Lewis, Eugene O'Neill and, to a lesser extent, Dreiser and Sherwood Anderson, wrote to please the editors of *The Smart Set* first, Mencken the critic second.

Altogether nearly 1,500 young Americans had their first published works in *The Smart Set* or *The American Mercury*. Not all of them became famous authors. Many of them--like Howard Mumford Jones, Kenneth Burke and Luis Munoz Marin--distinguished themselves in other fields after flexing their wings as writers. Mencken and Nathan took an almost paternal interest in the fledgling writers who flocked to their banner and, although Mencken expressly denied ever having "discovered" anyone who would not have made it on his own merits (in his Library of Congress interview with Donald Kirkley, now on a commercial LP recording) it is clear that he fostered the careers of hundreds who might otherwise have found it difficult to get published in the "genteel" magazines of that day. Although it was an ancestor of the present-day *New Yorker* magazine, *The Smart Set* was not "respectable" in established literary circles ca. 1920 and the hospitality its editors afforded apprentice authors allowed those writers the freedom to develop themselves in ways that would not have been tolerated elsewhere. Similarly, by giving first American publication to such British and

European writers as Joyce, Lawrence and Anatole France, Mencken and Nathan opened new vistas of cosmopolitanism to their young readers and contributors. They also brought a number of their contributors as well as other foreign authors to the attention of Knopf, who added many of them to his publishing list.

In recent years, having taken up the cudgels of a music critic myself, I have become fascinated with Mencken's numerous writings on music--a side of his critical acuity that is not so well-known. He actually wrote a considerable number of reviews and essays on music for the Baltimore Evening *Sun* and other newspapers and for his two above-mentioned magazines. Some of the best of these pieces were collected by Louis Cheslock in *H. L. Mencken on Music* (Knopf, 1960; Schirmer paperback, 1975), a book that makes vastly entertaining reading. His style as a music critic bears comparison with that of George Bernard Shaw who, as "Corno di Bassetto," was undoubtedly the liveliest stylist the English tongue has yet produced in the field of music. Indeed, Mencken was an early admirer of Shaw (he wrote the first American book about GBS) and, although distrusting Shaw's brand of socialism, was greatly influenced by him.

Like many other good critics of the tone art, Mencken was a *musicien manqué*. He played the piano indifferently, tried his hand occasionally at composition, and was a guiding spirit of a club of musicians, mostly amateur but including also a few professionals, who met at each other's homes in Baltimore each Saturday night for nearly a half-century for music-making and Pilsner-quauffing. For several years Mencken and Knopf made annual pilgrimages together to the Bach Festivals at Bathlehem, Pennsylvania and, although he actually had an extensive knowledge of and keen sensitivity to music, Mencken lamented in the first volume of his memoirs, *Happy Days*:

My lack of sound musical instruction was really the great deprivation of my life. When I think of anything properly describable as a beautiful idea, it is always in the form of music. I have written and printed nearly 10,000,000 words in English, and continue to this day to pour out more and more. But all the same I shall die an inarticulate man, for my best ideas beset me in a language I know only vaguely and speak only like a child.

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No one could ever criticize Mencken for being "inarticulate" on any subject and in expressing his views on music his articulation compares to that of the ordinary critic like Demosthenes to a deaf-mute!

Consider, for example, this description of Franz Schubert in a letter from Mencken to his first biographer, Isaac Goldberg: "The fellow was scarcely human. His merest belch was as lovely as the song of sirens. He sweated beauty as naturally as a Christian sweats hate." Or this, concerning a certain deplorable type of opera-goer: "A soprano who can gargle her way up to F-sharp in *Alt* is more to such simple souls than a whole drove of Johann Sebastian Bachs."

In literary criticism, too, Mencken often used musical metaphors richly, as in this definition: "Poetry is a comforting piece of fiction set to more or less lascivious music--a slap on the back in waltz time--a grand release of longings and repressions to the tune of flutes, harps, sackbuts, psalteries and the usual strings." Of one of his favorite works by Joseph Conrad, he said:

There is in "Heart of Darkness" a perfection of design which one encounters only rarely and miraculously in prose fiction: it belongs to music. I can't imagine taking a single sentence out of that stupendous tale without leaving a visible gap; it is as thoroughly *durch komponiert* as a fugue. . . . As it stands it is austere and beautifully perfect, just as the slow movement of the Unfinished Symphony is perfect.

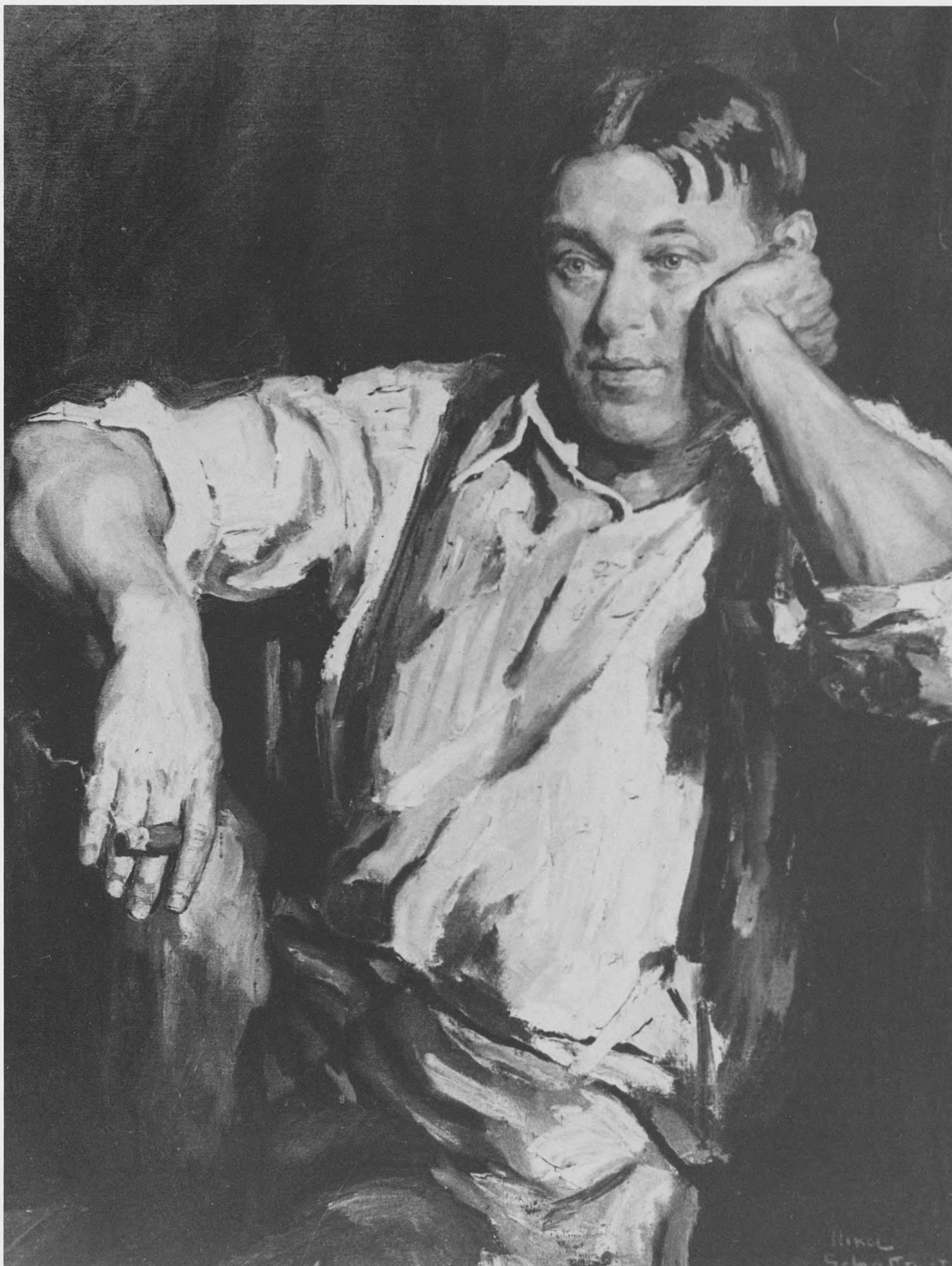
In music, as in other areas of criticism, Mencken was unabashedly solipsistic. His tastes were old-fashioned, conservative, and--to my own mind--often wrong. But questions of right and wrong agitated him not one whit, for he knew that in aesthetics, as in morality, there are no absolutes. Yet, he was as perplexed as any critic must be in find-

ing ways to refute the common fallacy about music--*de gustibus non est disputandum* (it's all a matter of taste).

Thus, he could blithely toss off outrageous lines like "there are only two kinds of music: German music and bad music," thereby consigning to the flames whose aeons, continents, and races. Or he might smugly opine that "opera, to a person genuinely fond of aural beauty, must inevitably appear tawdry and obnoxious," then flip-flop to proclaim Richard Wagner's *Die Meistersinger* "the greatest single work of art produced by man." Obviously, no hobgoblins of consistency haunted Mencken in his thoughts on music.

He epitomized Giacomo Puccini back-handedly as "the best of the wops" whose operas were "silver macaroni, exquisitely tangled." Of Chopin, he said: "His music is excellent on rainy afternoons with the fire burning, the shaker full, and the girl somewhat silly." He delighted in the Savoy operas of Gilbert and Sullivan, especially "The Mikado." For Stravinsky and most other Russian composers as, indeed, for most moderns, post-Richard Strauss, he had little use. Yet he responded perceptively to jazz and what he called "the niggerish swing of American folk music."

A critic today must envy the freedom Mencken enjoyed to call the shots as he saw them, right or wrong. One simply cannot do that in this bland age of institutionalized hypocrisy without risking condemnation as a racist, a sexist or worse. Moreover, one must resist the temptation to imitate Mencken's beguiling style. The critic who could so acutely observe that "no one ever went broke underestimating the taste and intelligence of the American people" is truly inimitable. It is for that reason especially that, although most--but not all--of the battles he fought were interred with him, H. L. Mencken is in no danger of being forgotten. One can imagine that in A.D. 2080 the bicentennial of this great American iconoclast will be celebrated with almost as much gusto as his centennial has been in this past year. In the end, of course, he was much more than merely an iconoclast and one can only agree with Alfred Kazin's judgment (in *On Native Grounds*) that "if Mencken had never lived, it would have taken a whole army of assorted philosophers, monologists, editors, and patrons of new writing to make up for him." No wonder he is still honored and will remain so.



This informal portrait of Henry Louis Mencken by Nikol Schattenstein, painted in 1927, hangs in the Mencken Room at the Pratt Library, Baltimore. (courtesy Enoch Pratt Library)

MAGIC AND LITERATURE



Literature and Magic Seem To Have a Lot in Common as Both Depend Upon Age-Old Symbols and Creative Interpretations

By Howard Fraser

Literature and magic seem to be two widely divergent enterprises but there is a firm point of contact between them: both operate on the interplay of symbols.

Literature is a kind of now-you-see-it-now-you-don't institution in

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which words are slices of sound, blots on a page, maps of a territory and, for a magical moment, the territory itself.

Similarly, magic, principally alchemy, is like literature in several ways. In many examples of contemporary literature, the writer has taken on the role of alchemist in order to show the modern world the magical truth about life.

We live each day with symbols, and they are often misunderstood. We are manipulated by the symbols we use in irrational ways, ways we would deny if confronted by our own reactions. For example, beards and long hair used to be symbolic of radical politics, rightly or wrongly. Families were torn apart over the issue. Billboards advertised our national hostility like this: BEAUTIFY AMERICA; GET A HAIRCUT. I had a beard then, and my uncle looked at me and asked, "Why do you want to look like your grandfather?" But in those days a decade ago beards evoked fear and suspicion.

Another misunderstood symbol accounted for our national hysteria over evolution. Although the Scopes trial occurred a half century ago, the issue of evolution, or "evil-lution" as it was often called, is still with us, perhaps because of the ambiguous symbol of the ape as a relation to man. It wasn't so long ago that apes appeared in works of art to symbolize the Devil. Surely, for didactic purposes, the fallen angel had to resemble man, and so the outcast assumed distorted features, in fact, those of apes, to denote its deviant status. So when Benjamin Disraeli made his claim, "I would rather be on the side of the angels," it was understandable. After all, he was talking about a symbolic world, not necessarily the real world. Disraeli echoed the beliefs of many who, from the symbols of our culture, saw Darwin tearing down the very concept of Heaven to explain the origin of the species.

Deceptive Symbols

Some symbols are easy to read, but some symbols can be deceptive. For example: An American with a broken watch in a small village in Rumania needs his watch repaired. When he sees several dozen watches strung in a window of a small house and hanging in full view, he assumes that this is the home of a watchmaker. He goes inside and asks the old man sitting there if he will repair his watch. The old man looks at him and says, "I am not a

watchmaker. I am the mohel in this village. I am the man who performs the delicate operation of circumcision on male children just after they are born. I don't know about watches." So the man asks angrily, "Well, then. Why did you hang *watches* in the window? To which the old man shouts back, "What would *you* hang in the window!" Symbols are often in the eyes of their beholder.

Symbols are the essence of literature. Literature is writing with excitement, imagination, metaphor, writing whose elements — words — are like symbols: their hidden meaning goes beyond their dictionary definitions. The excitement of literature is an outgrowth of the symbolic interplay of words. Their raw sounds and the spectrum of evocations the sounds evoke somehow resembles our own world, but is something else. The world of literature is necessarily vague, partially invisible. The response to this world in the reader is very much like that of an audience in the presence of a magician: we sense that there is another reality beyond the tangible or visible materials. Although we can't touch the reality which is illusory, that doesn't mean we don't stop trying.

Many writers have tried to define literature, but the one I like best is that of the Italian Nobel Laureate Luigi Pirandello. He says that there are two kinds of stories, as there are two kinds of eggs — the ordinary egg, and the fertile egg. This fertile egg is symbolic of the invisible, magical qualities of Literature. The offspring of the fertile egg lives, has a life of its own, flies across boundaries of time and space, has meaning in spite of the losses in translation, and inspires others to imitate and emulate it. Ray Bradbury has written a similar definition of literature in *Fahrenheit 451*. Books are described as "only one type of receptacle where we stored a lot of things we were afraid we might forget. There is nothing magical in them (i.e. the books themselves). The magic is only in what books say, how they stitched the patches of the universe together into the garment for us."

Magic is Ritual

If literature has the magical or supernatural power to stitch pieces of the universe together, what is magic and what is its relationship to literature? We should remember that magic is the invisible substratum of modern culture. Magic underlies the foundations of art, literature, and

science. It has been with civilized man and woman from the most ancient times. Magic is tied to ritual and myth. Ritual: behavior that removes the individual from chronological time back to magical time, before time, before the rivers flowed and the sun traced its path across the sky. We have a feeling for ritual. Ritual is our expression of the need for magic in our daily lives.

In the wild New York subway, the very image of modern times and the mad rush of chronological time, I saw the workings of ritual. Next to me each day, punctually, there sat an old woman with a prayer book. For the duration of the ride, she was somewhere else: physically in the car, but spiritually in the Beyond. Each day, after the ride, she closed her book, took out a small calendar, and placed a red check in the space reserved for that day's reading. She probably had good reasons to use the magic of prayer to flee from the New York subways, but in that neat, red check she reasserted how her life was once again in equilibrium, thanks to her daily ritual.

Prayer shows the power of ritual to take us away from the present and to abolish time. We could say that the power of ritual is the subject and goal of literature as well. Ritual is the theme of Shirley Jackson's short story "The Lottery." The lottery in the story is the symbol of ritual in daily life. The materials of the ritual are an innocuous black box and a three-legged stool. These objects are the symbols of a blind tradition which cannot be changed. A strange legend surrounds the box. It was made from pieces of wood of the box that preceded it. It was made ages ago during the first days of the town. But no one wants to replace it with another, even though it grows shabbier each year, even though it is splintered and no longer truly black. Into this box are placed the names of members of the community. And each year, on the same symbolic day, a name is drawn and the person is stoned to death. No one knows why the ritual is allowed to continue — the people who take part act like automatons for the duration of the event. Nonetheless, like that lady in the subway, the participants in the lottery express their need for equilibrium through ritual.

The alchemist's search for gold is endowed with a rich, ritual quality. It is a personal search, conducted in private through precise stages of development which are directed at the "great work," i.e. the perfection of gold. But gold is the end of the road of symbolic perfection. The

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search begins with the fundamental belief of alchemy, Animism. Animism is a kind of primitive mysticism which finds its way into the roots of scientific and artistic expression. All things are alive for the primitive mind: all things grow and mature, and decay; all things are derived from the same spiritual essence. Visible reality is a host of distinct objects and living creatures and, for the magician or alchemist, or writer, they are merely surface manifestations of an unseen Absolute: eternal, indefinable, and all powerful.

Perpetual Flux

Because the tangible universe is composed of the same underlying stuff, all things are related, and are descended from a primitive unity. Nature is in a state of perpetual flux: the living and the dead, the human and animal all intermingle in a universal harmony. The romantics understood this relationship between humans and nature. Mary Shelley's original Dr. Frankenstein was an alchemist, and he felt that he was in touch with the secret forces of the Beyond.

Romantic poets live in an animistic universe. They draw strength from association with the majesty of mountains, the freedom of the sea, the sun's power, and the wind. These are the four magical elements, earth, air, fire, water, which form the alchemist's equation of life.

Foreshadowing, one of the great tools of the writer, has at its base an animistic or magical conception of the universe. Nature and literary characters are united by invisible bonds. And so, what happens in the setting of the work is a reflection of what will happen in the main action. Foreshadowing is a kind of voodoo or sympathetic magic. Things which are or have been in contact with one another, such as characters and landscape, are forever in touch, even though at a distance.

All societies have elected or selected the most sensitive among them to be the adepts, witchdoctors, shamans, or magicians. They are in touch with the secret spirit of animism which unites all things. In many ways, the writer of literature is our modern counterpart of the shaman and the witchdoctor or magician. The writer's role is to enthrall, possess, make the reader cross the boundaries of time and space in the manner of sympathetic magic. Through this analogy we can see clearly why the writer is valued, why the writer should be valued even more than at present, and why we will always need writers for their magical craft.

Literature is like the other crafts such as painting, pottery, and the performing arts. They all have a history which begins in a magical moment in ancient times. They are representational and mimetic in origin. The origin of writing systems is a representational art form. Objects important to the culture are represented on cave walls or in mimetic dances. Working with words thus becomes a manual craft, like took making or pottery, and has religious as well as utilitarian purposes. The writer makes symbolic marks in order to represent, and perhaps control, the larger reality beyond his medium of expression. The writer is a creator, in the image of his own creator: both fashion realities which are mirror images of one another. Both attempt to intervene in the other's world through a secret art.

Like the alchemist, writers work in secret in order to perfect their imitation of life. Like the alchemists, writers and artists refine the materials of art such as words, colors, and gold-bearing ore. Artisans separate meaningful and valuable units of their materials, that is sound, pigment, and metal, from the dross. Artisans and alchemists separate the basic units of value into opposing categories like light and dark, wet and dry. By separating their materials, they seem to destroy



Both magic and literature operate on the interplay of symbols, and it wasn't long ago, for instance, that apes appeared in the works of art as symbols of the devil.

them. But this initial stage of destruction is a basic step in the creative process. The division and separation into components precedes a reworking of the elements into new and untried forms. Language, as the other raw materials of art, mirrors the infinite possibilities of life itself. A finite set of basic elements such as phonemes and words, has numberless combinatory potential. These elements are also like the building blocks of the genetic code. Words can be recycled and reiterated into innumerable sentences just like unique life forms.

Words are Alive

Words for the writer contain an animistic essence, much as gold does for the alchemist. Words, like gold, are alive. They change and grow at every moment as they become more perfect. The alchemist sees the metals as embryos in the womb of the earth. The alchemist intervenes in the metals' growth to hasten the natural process of maturation. With light and heat, the alchemist moves the process to fruition. The alchemist requires patience, and the word patience is related to the word

"passion" or suffering. He makes his material suffer by bringing it into contact with fire. In like manner, the writer learns patience while he hastens the process of perfection in his medium. The writer provides the light of an inner vision and the heat of his own passion in the achievement of his great work, literature.

All this indicates that for the writer, words have a life of their own, just as for the alchemist, things have a life of their own. Literature is more than a static, photographic imitation of life. Literature, in its finest moments, evokes life itself. For this reason, the following observation of Sinclair Lewis on his acceptance of the Nobel Prize for literature, is so shocking. Lewis was apparently criticizing the attitude of professors of literature who do not recognize the life of art. He said, "To the true-blue professor of literature in an American university, literature is not something that a plain human being, living today, painfully sits down to produce. No; it is something dead." Unlike those "true-blue" professors Lewis disparages, we should recognize the life of literature in an animistic sense. Works of literature have identity and personality which often go beyond the authors' intent.

As Nietzsche said, "The author must keep his mouth shut when his work starts to speak." John Ciardi describes a similar attitude regarding the life of literature in his book *How Does a Poem Mean?* The great poet W. H. Auden was asked what advice he would give to a young man who wished to become a poet. Auden replied that he would ask the young man why he wanted to write poetry. If the answer was "Because I have something important to say," Auden would conclude that there was no hope for that young man as a poet. If, on the other hand, the answer was something like, "Because I like to hang around words and overhear them talking to one another," then that young man was at least interested in a fundamental part of the poetic process and there was hope for him. Ciardi emphasizes that literature is not a statement of fact, but rather an experience, unique and unpredictable, just like relationships between people.

Dictionary as Poetry

For a poet like the Nobel Laureate Pablo Neruda, words come alive in his *Elementary Odes*. In his "Ode to the Dictionary," the dictionary seems like so much dross to the uninitiated.

It is a heavy object, a door stop, a stool. One day, the book rebels against mistreatment. The volume presents itself to the young poet. Its leaves become live foliage. The words hang like fruit from the branches and leaves which the dictionary sprouts. Finally, each letter of the alphabet gives the sensitive poet nourishment and seeds of inspiration for his work. This is an animistic, poetic world, as we can tell from the titles of some of Neruda's other elementary odes to the lemon, artichoke, and onion. For Neruda, all things are elements of the natural world, endowed with humanity and dignity, even something as common as the subject of his "Ode to a Pair of Socks."

The world of literature, as we are observing, is an animistic world where all things are united by an essence. The alchemist's playing with the gestation of metals has its corresponding technique in the writer's experimentation with the elements of literature, particularly with the element of time. Contemporary writers play with time. Time is not linear, not a genealogical tree with ancestors at the trunk and new generations among the lofty branches above. Rather, time takes on new forms to reflect the writer's magical conception of his work as alchemy. Consider the shape of the Moebius strip as symbolic of the modern writer's concept of time. Modern writers display their belief in infinite forms generated by finite materials, as in this twisted loop in which the inside becomes outside on an infinite course or cycle.

A case in point involves a story by Ambrose Bierce, "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge" and a similar story by the Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges, "The Secret Miracle." Bierce places a Southern sympathizer during the Civil War on Owl Creek Bridge. The Northern forces have prepared him for execution by hanging, and as the noose tightens around his neck, the victim to be has an extraordinary vision and experience. He drops to the river, escapes to safety on the other shore, and runs home to the arms of his loving wife. Just as she embraces him, the prisoner instantly finds himself on Owl Creek Bridge where the noose closes around his neck and he dies, as planned in his execution. Bierce attempted to close the circle on time in this story, but he failed to do so completely. The escape from chronological time in "Occurrence . . ." is an illusion, a fantasy of wish-fulfillment for the psychological realist Ambrose Bierce.

Twisting the Loop

Half a century later, Jorge Luis Borges, one of the pre-eminent writers of Spanish American fantastic fiction, twists the loop on the Moebius strip of magical time. Borges picks up where Bierce left off. Borges' version of the Owl Creek Bridge execution is set during the Holocaust. A Nazi firing squad shoots the fatal bullets. But before the bullets reach their target, the victim, a writer, is released from the execution to complete his life's work. He prays for a "secret miracle" and receives it. The writer makes a magical leap from the finite, linear world of realistic time to the infinite world of the Moebius strip in an instant. He writes a drama in which time is recursive, rather than sequential. The clock strikes the same hour throughout the play, and the sun never sets. The writer achieves in a metaphysical sense what he failed to do in a physical or biological sense. He has escaped mortality in the magic of literature before the bullets strike.

**Literature
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Many contemporary writers are intrigued with the circularity of time. Borges' short story, "The Circular Ruins" is another example. A priest of an arcane religion begins to dream his own offspring into existence. He succeeds in creating a son, but at the end of the story, he realizes that he also has been dreamt in this way. The reader feels an eerie sensation as the story closes that the chain of being which includes the mystical priest and his dreamed son also includes the reader as well. Julio Cortazar, an Argentine Surrealist writing in the tradition of Borges, writes a magical story, "The Continuity of Parks." The protagonist settles down to read a murder mystery. He feels most comfortable in a velvet upholstered chair. The

plot of his book advances until the point that a target of a murder plot is introduced. The fictional victim is reading a murder mystery as he sits in a velvet upholstered chair.

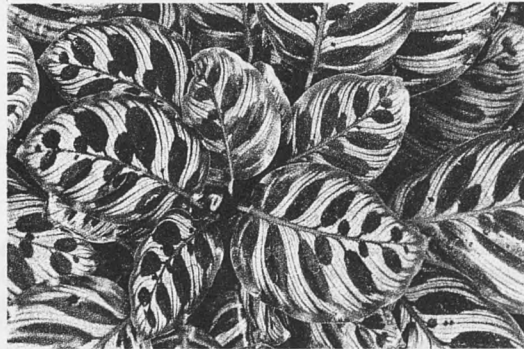
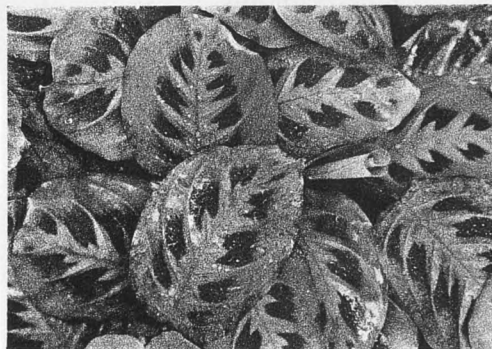
Literature is Revolutionary

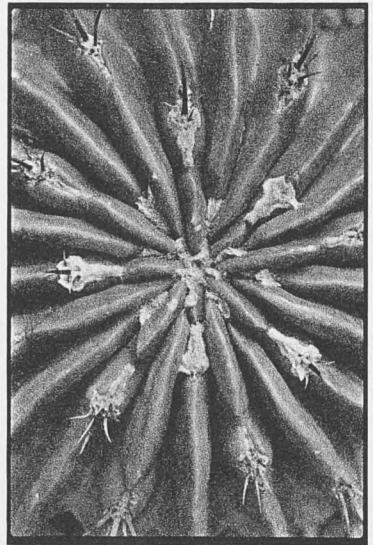
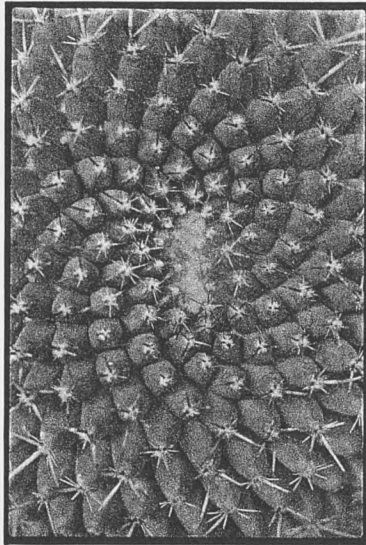
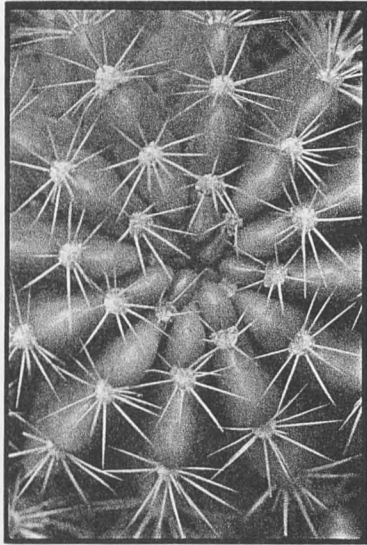
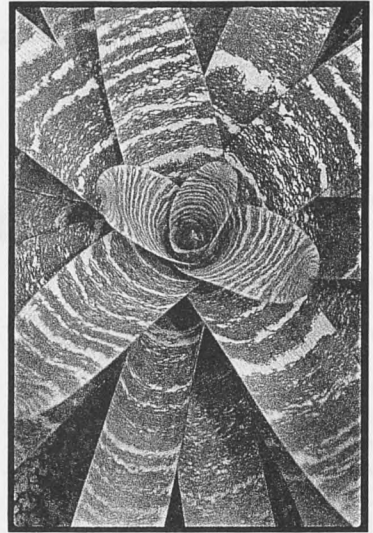
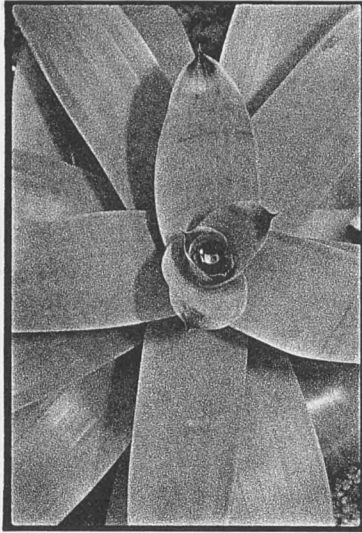
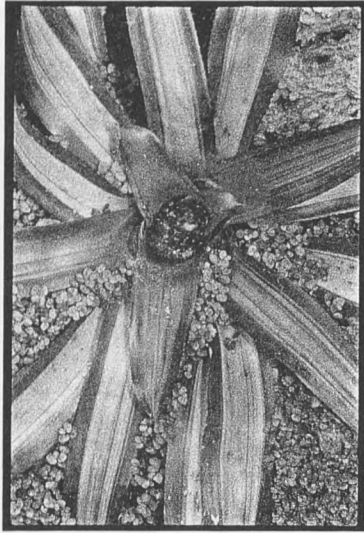
What we have been seeing in the literature of magic and the magic of literature is the transformation of our concept of literature. It is alive. It grows and is never static. Literature is revolutionary. Flexible or circular time in literature and the theme that all things are magically related must shock the reader. Our cherished distinctions are blurred, thanks to this new revolutionary art. Modern literature is disquieting, like the drawings and etchings of the Dutch draftsman Escher. He plays with our concept of three dimensions. We have seen reproductions of his stairways or moonscapes, or figure eights with ants crawling about eternally. One of his works is a picture of a hand drawing another hand which is drawing the first hand. Escher tests the limits of the two dimensions and stretches them to encroach on three dimensions. What Escher does, and what all modern artists do, is acquaint their audience with the infinite possibilities of the universe in which it lives. This reiteration and circularity they cultivate is dizzying, and maybe upsetting, but it underscores the essential subservience of literature, its most important magical aspect.

Literature is shocking because it makes us question our most cherished institutions. Literature shakes our mental constructs to their foundations. For example, the insistence on circularity in modern art makes us question the nature of progress. Can there be progress in a universe in which time is circular? All motion on the Moebius strip is at the same time motion backwards. By moving ahead, we always move toward the source. There are no absolutes to trust. Progress, when measured by the circular motion of the Moebius strip, is merely a mental construct. Progress is a metaphor of the realist's concept of linear time. We are moving forward, say the politicians, and this motion forward is supposed to symbolize a qualitative betterment of the human condition. But we need writers and alchemists to tell us over and over that this construct is illusory. We are constantly returning to our cultural and biological beginnings. We must repeat the past. We must seek the beginning of all things through the ritual and myth of literature.

A SELECTION OF
PHOTOGRAPHS
OF SPECIMENS IN THE
CONSERVATORY
OF THE
UNITED STATES
**BOTANIC
GARDEN**

BY LYLE ROSBOTHAM





*Neoregelia carolina
tricolor perfecta*
Bromeliaceae

Vriesea platynema
Bromeliaceae

Red Chestnut
Vriesea fosteriana
Bromeliaceae

Sea-urchin Cactus
Echinopsis sp.
Cactaceae

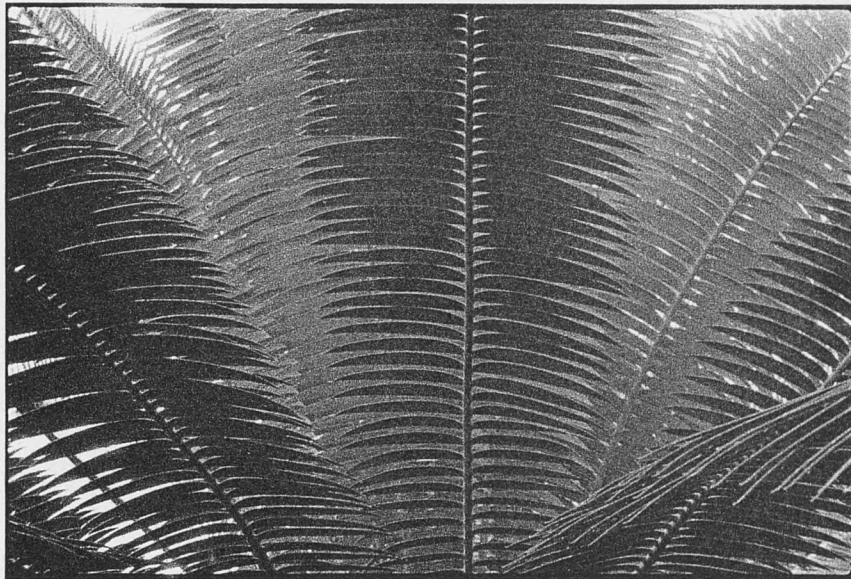
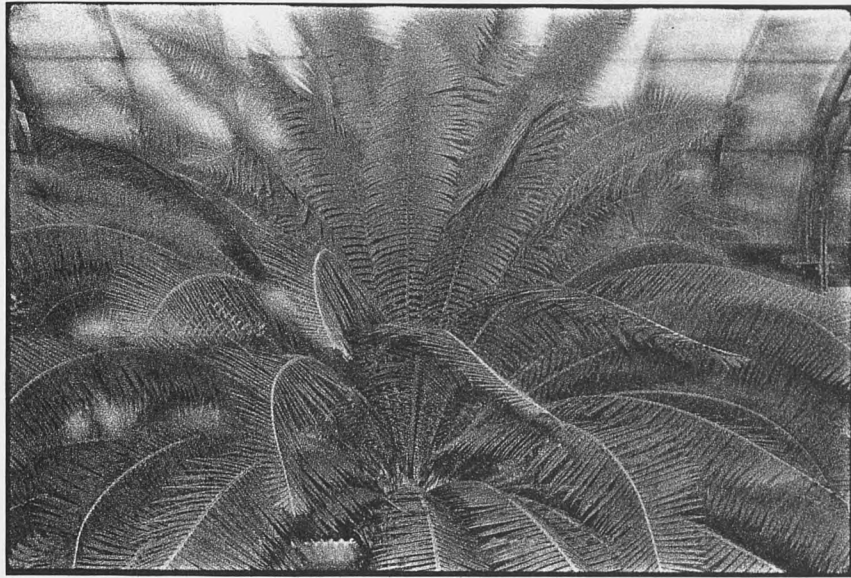
Pincushion Cactus
Mammillaria gigantea
Cactaceae

*Echinocactus
platyacanthus*
Cactaceae

Lyle Rosbotham '71 was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland, in 1941 and grew up in Baltimore, Maryland. After graduating from William and Mary he stayed in Williamsburg as a freelance photographer and later as an archaeological photographer for Southside Historical Sites. In 1976 he published a book of color photographs,

Jamestown Island. In 1977 he moved to the D.C. area.

He presently supervises a photo-lab for a large corporation. He has just published his second book. These images are a selection from that book.



Cycad

Dioon spinulosum

Zamiaceae

Mexico, Central America

I started photographing at the Botanic Garden on the Mall near the Capitol in Washington, D.C., in 1978. I had no preconceived plans and began by shooting very conventional images. After repeated visits I came to see the plants less as static botanical specimens and more as living, changing

forms. Eventually the project took shape as a potential book and I began organizing the images.

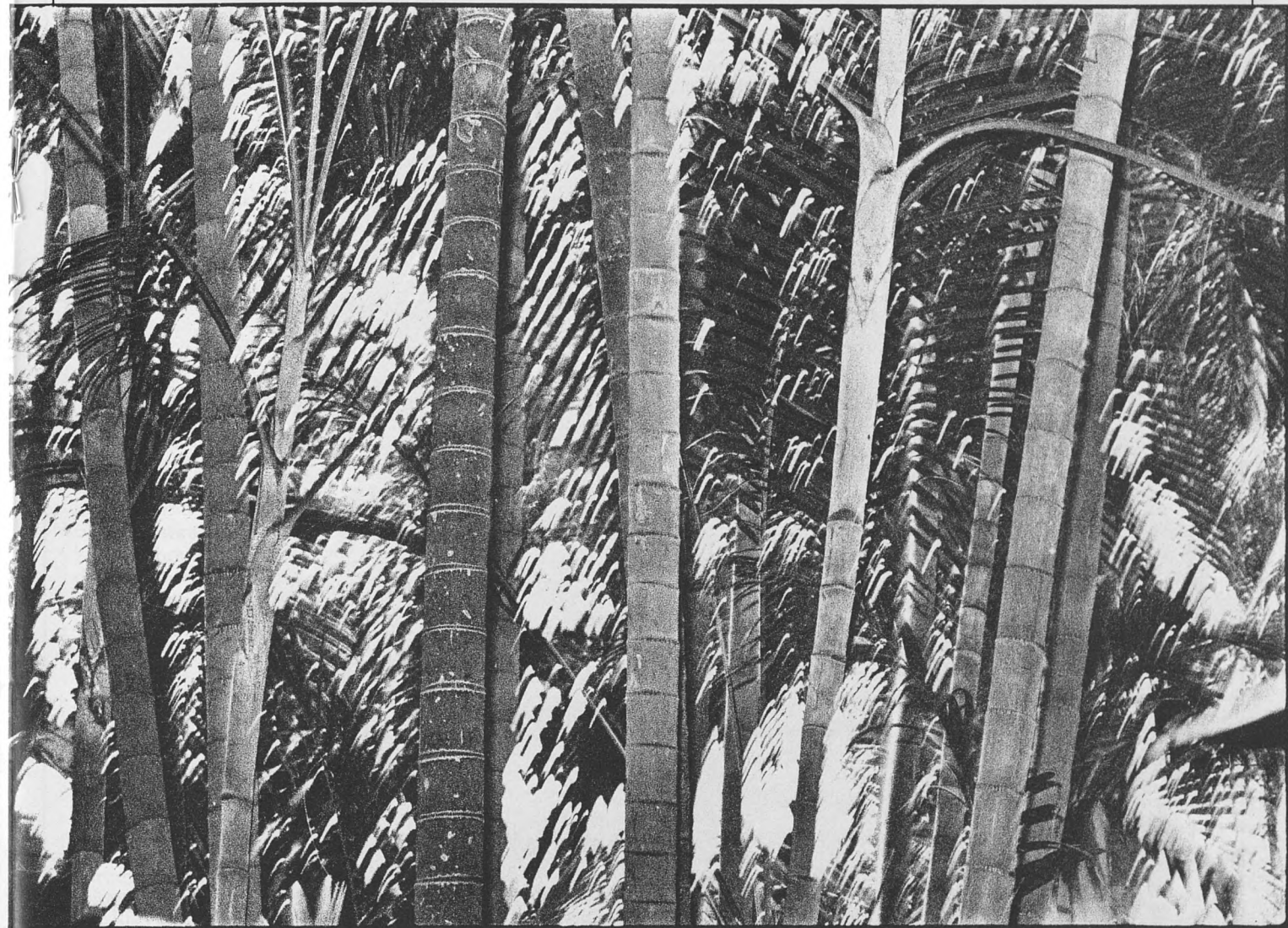
I had real problems with the design for almost a year until in June of this year I began printing sample/test pages. I was fortunate to be able to do this at The Writer's Center at Glen



Variegated Caribbean Agave
Agave angustifolia marginata
Agavaceae
West Indies

Echo Park, Maryland, a place which encourages artists to experiment with uncommon and innovative offset printing techniques. The stimulation and cooperation of the people at the Writer's Center enabled me to finalize my design, and then made it possible to print the book in an unusual way.

Briefly, an explanation: the normal course of offset photographic reproduction runs from original negative, to photographic print, to half-tone negative, to plate, to printed sheet. The half-tone negative is exposed through a half-tone screen, which breaks the image up into rows of dots.



Yellow Butterfly Palm
Chrysalidocarpus lutescens
Palmae

Malagasy Republic

The process used in the book went from original negative, to film positive, to plate, to printed sheet. Note first that this process does not require a photographic print. Thus, the reproductions are not attempts at duplication and cannot be judged by their faithfulness to any original. Note further that

no conventional half-tone screen was used. Instead, the film positives were made by exposing the original negatives through a sheet of non-glare glass and then processing the film in fine-line developer. The glass reduced the image to a non-linear dot pattern and the developer provided effective



contrast control in processing. The film-positive image was then exposed onto a direct-positive plate which in turn transferred it to paper on the press.

Finally, five days on the press in November brought forth an edition of 165 books with 44 pages, duotone reproductions, and hand-sewn binding.

Copies of the book can be purchased for \$10.00 directly from Lyle Rosbotham, 905 S. Walter Reed Drive, Arlington, Virginia 22204.

The Missing Throne

When Prince Charles Succeeds his Mother on the English Throne,
He Will Sit on a Throne That Should Have Been Temporary

By A. Z. Freeman

When Prince Charles succeeds his mother on the English throne--if he does--his coronation ceremony will be somewhat tainted. He will sit on the wrong throne. So did his mother, and her father, and their predecessors for some 640 years back. I should have said "British throne," anyway, for Charles will also be king of Scotland at his accession, and thereby hangs a tale. He will become king of Scotland, as any William and Mary history concentrator knows, because Queen Elizabeth I had no issue and a king of Scotland succeeded her peacefully in 1603. When her successor, James I, sat in the wooden coronation throne to receive his new crown he achieved what the warlike Edward I had failed to do some 307 years earlier. He now ruled the two realms without conflict, without conquest. On his brow rested the crown of England, and beneath him lay the Stone of Scone, resting on a shelf on his throne.

This is the throne that will receive Prince Charles when he accepts his crown, one day. But if that occurs, an original plan will have been altered, one that involved uniting two potent symbols, the coronation throne of England and Scotland's most venerable relic. King Edward I of England formed the plan in 1296, to exemplify his dominion over Scotland. To work out the plan he

A. Z. Freeman, who joined the faculty of the College of William and Mary in 1969, received his B.S. degree from Virginia Military Institute, his M.A. from Brown University, and his Ph.D. from the University of Toronto. Dr. Freeman is a professor of history.



Mr. James Wishart, the custodian of Arbroath Abbey, points out a crack in the Stone of Scone, which was taken from Westminster Abbey on Christmas Day 1950. The accompanying story in The Illustrated London News reports that three men carried the historic stone to the high altar and placed it, draped in a St. Andrew's Flag, close to the tomb of King William the Lion.

captured the Stone of Scone, about which more later, and he caused to be built a grand coronation throne made of bronze, for he had none special enough for his purpose. The splendid throne disappeared, however, and only its wooden model remains.

The plan required, first, that Edward I establish his overlordship of Scotland. The English king had no wish to become king of Scotland, but he did intend to show his dominance over his neighbor, as he already had over Wales. He tried to do so by deciding a disputed succession to the Scottish throne and, next, by war. Once the Scots themselves accepted his paramountcy, as they did, he proceeded to signify his dominion over them by placing their sacred Stone of Scone in his new coronation throne. Thenceforward, at the three solemn crown-wearings of the year, Edward would appear to all as Lord Paramount of Scotland. The plan did not work out as Edward had expected, however. The Scots refused to stay defeated and docile, even when beaten in battle, and, for our purposes here, the great bronze throne that was to symbolize Edward's dominance disappeared.

Edward's Ascent

What gave Edward his first opportunity to establish his dominance over the Scots came about through a chance happening. Alexander III of Scotland fell over a cliff to his death one stormy night. Eager to join Queen Yolande, his young French second wife, Alexander crossed the River Forth--against the strong advice of the ferryman--and rode off to his death.

Succession to a crown in the Middle Ages was always a dan-

gerous matter. Usually when a royal line died out a sort of election settled the problem or, failing that, a war amongst cousins took place. That might have happened in the case of Scotland but for a couple of romantic incidents. When Alexander died in 1286, he had outlived his children, so a frail child living in Norway, his granddaughter, was to succeed him. She remained in Norway for almost three years, and in the course of her voyage south to claim her throne, the Maid of Norway, as she was called, died in the Orkneys. Now came the time for Edward I of England to move in to forestall the expected war of succession on his northern border and to establish his paramourty.

Edward had already given thought to uniting the two realms by affiancing his only son, Edward to the maid of Norway. That ambition ended with her death, of course. Now the nearest heirs were gathering

their claims and their forces and war amongst cousins threatened. While Edward could not have his own heir on the Scottish throne, he could at least choose Scotland's new king from amongst the claimants, for he had implied rights of overlordship over his neighbor to the north. Insisting on these rights, he presided over the competition for the crown; this incident was "The Great Cause." He moved up just north of the border, settling himself at Upsettlington amidst his full court, an impressive military force, and a collection of historical documents gathered for the occasion. Edward chose John Balliol to be king.

The events leading to the tainted coronation of Prince Charles start here. Balliol turned out to be a weak king, as Edward had known he would be. The English king continually provoked him with unreasonable demands, and the Scottish king finally retaliated, goaded by his

bellicose barons. King John backed into war and fell into defeat. The English marched up to the border in force, took Scotland's greatest port, Berwick-upon-Tweed, walloped the Scots at Dunbar north of Berwick, and found themselves unopposed masters of the land. Edward made a leisurely tour around eastern Scotland, riding as far north as Elgin, then returned to hold a parliament at Berwick. There he received the submission of almost all Scots of any standing at all. They pledged loyalty to the English king and received back the lands they had lost by being on the losing side. Those Scots lords taken in battle went off to English castles as prisoners, to be redeemed later. By now the ineffective John Balliol, given the derisory sobriquet "Toom Tabard" (Empty Jacket) for his lack of fighting heart, had surrendered his kingdom to Edward and had sailed off in an English ship to live in an English castle, eventually returning to the family home in Normandy. Balliol never saw Scotland again.

Taking the Stone

During his victorious progress around the country after defeating the Scotch armies, Edward collected the Scottish regalia, "some documents. . . the Black Rod, and a portion of the True Cross, once St. Margaret's." He also took back with him the most holy relic of all when he stopped at Scone Abbey and took the sacred stone. There is a minor mystery here, for the itinerary of Edward I in 1296 shows no stop at Scone. In fact, Scone itself was not an active abbey at the time. It is still unaccounted for on current road maps, but there it had been for centuries, a center of Scottish nationality and the locus for the Moot Hill, an elevation built of soil brought from all over the land. Now, with the Scottish regalia in his possession, the choice of the next Scottish king in his power, and the Stone of Destiny in his hands, Edward appointed a guardian for the realm of Scotland and departed for England.

Edward, you will remember, intended to use the Stone of Scone henceforth as one of the English sacred relics, as indeed he did. How complete a symbol of his lordship over his neighbor to the north! The Stone still lies there, "that stone on which the kings of Albany [Scotland] are used to be crowned," on a shelf under the seat of the coronation throne of England. Every sovereign since Edward I--except our own Mary and her sister Anne--has sat



This photograph from the January 6, 1951 issue of The Illustrated London News shows the space beneath the seat of the throne from which the Stone of Scone was stolen.

upon that stone in that throne while receiving the crown. Even Oliver Cromwell used it at his installation, although he had the throne moved from the Abbey to Westminster Hall for the occasion.

What was so important about the Stone? First, what it is: it is a piece of reddish-grey sandstone 26½" x 16½" x 11" and it weighs about 450 pounds. Traditionally it is Jacob's Pillow. That it came to Scotland at all is purely legend, for there are deposits of the same rock in several parts of the land, so it is almost certainly native rock. Even so, the legend says that it was the seat of Scota, daughter of an Egyptian pharaoh, and that she carried it from Egypt to Portugal to Spain to Ireland. From there Fergus, king of Scots (who were, remember, Irish), carried it to Argyll in western Scotland. Forty kings later, in 843, Kenneth MacAlpin set the Stone of Destiny in place at Scone to mark his great victory over the Picts. Scone had been an ancient gathering place for the Scots--the Pictish Chronicle mentions it as such in 906. A sacred stone at a venerable meeting place marking some of the most solemn moments of Scottish history, that was the importance of the Stone and that was the tradition Edward took over when he removed the Stone to his own kingdom.

The Bronze Throne

When I was last in London, looking at documents in the British Museum, I found an odd one that led to this article. It referred to the Stone of Scone and to a coronation throne to be built to hold it. Here is a transcription of the document and a translation of it. You will see that King Edward ordered to be made a throne of *bronze* to hold the Stone, and that the throne with the Stone should be placed next to the altar and before the tomb of Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey. The throne is where Edward directed it be placed, and the Stone is in it, but the throne is of wood. Where is the bronze throne? By the time the document listed items and expenses, those expenses had already been incurred--the copper with tin had been purchased, the bronze mixed and cast, and parts of the throne fabricated. Master Walter the Painter had already made a wooden temporary throne by the date of the document, which noted payment to him for it and "for two small leopards made of wood, painted and gilded," the two still to be seen, but on the *wooden* throne. The whole enterprise cost the king £39 6s. 3d., a

large sum at the time--enough to feed 650 common people for a week. We cannot know how far along the work was, but we do know that on 1 August 1297 Edward ordered all work stopped--"by reason of his crossing over to Flanders." While the throne was yet unfinished, Edward needed every penny he could get for his continental campaign, so he stopped the work. Why he did not start it once he had returned, we shall almost certainly never know. Whatever his reason for halting the operation, no one, to my knowledge, has known of the existence of a bronze throne. The document you see here is the only evidence for a

grandier throne than that serving so long as a substitute.

Some 683 years later one may wonder what happened to three-quarters of a ton of bronze, already cast in a form hard to conceal or mistake for what it is. Perhaps one of the cannon that repelled the Armada in 1588 had been a throne, or perhaps some statue presiding over a leafy London square once formed part of the repository for the Scottish Stone of Destiny. When the next sovereign of Great Britain sits for his solemn crowning and acclamation, he will occupy a temporary throne, but one made to last.

Eidem pro diversis custibus per ipsum factum circa quandam cathedram de cupro quam Rex fieri praeceperat anno xxv^o post reditum suum de Scocia pro petra super quam Reges Scocie solebant coronari inventa apud Scono anno xxii^{to} superponenda iuxta altare ante feretrum Sancti Edwardi in Ecclesia Abbatiae Westmonasterii. Et nunc eadem petra in quadam cathedra de ligno facta per Magistrum Walterum pictorem Regis loco dicto Cathedra quo prius ordinata fuit de cupro ut assessa: Videlicet pro una cathedra de ligno facta ad exemplar alterius cathedra fundende de cupro--C sol.--Et pro MD lib. cupri emptis una cum stagno empto ad idem cuprum allaicundum xii lib. v sol.--Et pro vadiis et stipendiis unius operarii fundentis eandem cathedram et preparantis pecior quandum una cum formiset hoc invenendum et faciendum; pro custam conventionem factam cum eodem x lib.--- Et pro stipendie diversorum operancium in metallo predicto post formationem ejusdem cathedra mensibus Junii et Julii ante primum diem Augusti anno xxv^o quo die dicto operationes cesserunt ex toto pro precipionem Regis ratione passagii sui versus Flandriam, ix lib. vii sol. xi den. Et pro ustilementis emptis pro operationibus predictis et emendacione aliorum per vices xi sol. Et pro duobus leopardis parvis de ligno faciendis depingendis et deaurandis et limandis Magistro Waltero pictori et assidendis super cathedram de ligno factam per dictum Magistrum Walterum per operationes completas xii sol. iii den. per comptum tactum cum eodem apud Westmonasterium xxvii die Marcii anno xxviii^o

Summa xxxix lib vi sol iii den

British Museum Additional Manuscripts 25,459, Historical Transcripts, f. 62, 20 Ed I.

To the same man for various costs incurred in the work itself regarding a certain throne which the King had ordered to be made of copper in the twenty-fifth year of his reign, after his return from Scotland for the stone over which the Kings of Scotland were accustomed to be crowned, found at Scone in the twenty-third year of his reign, to be placed next to the altar before the bier of St. Edward in the Church of Westminster Abbey. And now the same stone (is) on a certain throne made of wood by Master Walter, painter of the King, in the said place in which previously was ordained a throne of copper as the assessment shows: To wit for a throne made of wood in the likeness of the other throne to be made of copper--100 shillings. --And for fifteen hundred pounds of copper bought along with tin for alloying the same copper--£12, 5 shillings. --And for the traveling expenses and the fees of one artisan making the same chair and preparing a certain model together with moldsand finding this and making it; for the cost of the agreement made with the same individual--£10. --And for the fees of the various workmen in the aforesaid metal after the formation of the same chair in the months of June and July before the first day of August in the twenty-fifth year of the King's reign, on which said day work ceased altogether according to the order of the King because of his passage to Flanders--£9, 7 shillings, 11 pence. --And for tools purchased for the aforesaid operations and the repair of others in turn--11 shillings. --And for two small leopards to be made of wood, to be painted, to be gilded and to be polished by Master Walter the painter and to be set over the throne made of wood by the said Master Walter, for expenses incurred in the completed operations--13 shillings, 4 pence, according to the computation made with the same man at Westminster on the twenty-seventh day of March in the twenty-eighth year of the King's reign.

The sum being £39, 6 shillings, 3 pence

The Rebirth of Fine Arts

A Handful of Young, Talented Artists Created a Southern Renaissance at the College During the Midst of the Depression

By Parke Rouse, Jr.

William and Mary made history in 1779 when it introduced the fine arts as a subject of college study. Professor Robert Andrews that year was encouraged by Governor Thomas Jefferson to introduce it as one of several new subjects to give the school a greater usefulness to independence-minded Virginians.

Alas, the Revolution put an end to most of the college's "new look." Not until the 20th century did fine arts finally take root on the campus and grow as Jefferson had hoped.

This is the story of how it happened.

The rebirth goes back to the Depression summer of 1935. A young Yale architecture graduate named Leslie Cheek Jr. was touring the South, painting watercolors of buildings. He parked his tripod one morning outside the newly rebuilt Capitol, in Williamsburg, and started to paint beneath an ancient mulberry.

Along came young James Cogar, also a Yale graduate and the newly-named curator of Colonial Williamsburg.

"You do a very good watercolor," Cogar told the young man. "Where did you go to school?"

When the two discovered their

Park Rouse Jr. is a Williamsburg writer and historian. He also served until his recent retirement as head of the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation and the Virginia Bicentennial Commission. He met Leslie Cheek Jr. and his infant Fine Arts Department in 1940. Shortly after Mr. Rouse graduated from Washington and Lee and became a newspaper man. He has written 15 books.

mutual interests and Yale background, they became friends. Cogar introduced Cheek to John Stewart Bryan, who had become president of William and Mary the year before and looked for ways to interest students in the newly-begun restoration of Williamsburg.

Enthusiastic, Bryan proposed to Professor Richard Morton of the history department that Cheek introduce history of architecture courses, which he did when school opened two months later.

Cheek photographed pictures of hundreds of historic buildings and details to use as illustrations for his lectures. He stayed late at night in the chemistry department lab to develop and print them to suit his finicky tastes. When school started, he projected them for his students - the first illustrated lectures ever given at William and Mary.

Social History

As part of the course, Jim Cogar lectured for Cheek on period interiors. His classes later developed into a year-long course in "Colonial Virginia Social History," which he taught till he moved from Williamsburg in the 1950s.

The success of the courses led Leslie Cheek to propose to John Stewart Bryan that they become part of an undergraduate fine arts department, similar to the graduate work in those subjects which had recently been inaugurated at Harvard and Yale. He proposed to offer the history of painting, sculpture, and architecture, - not as vocational courses but as background for a liberal education.

He also proposed to include Althea Hunt on the history of theatre and George Small on the history of music. Both were already teaching at the college. Professor Small is living, though retired from teaching.

"Can you organize it?" Bryan asked with instant enthusiasm. He promised Cheek space in Taliaferro Hall, an unused brick dormitory across Jamestown Road from the Brafferton, torn down in 1969. He authorized Cheek to enlist teachers and acquire a library and teaching aids.

That was all Leslie Cheek needed. As teachers he enlisted two fellow Yale graduates, painter Leonard Haber and sculptor Edmund Rust. Haber later left to organize a greeting card firm in New York, Rust to become director of the Memphis School of Fine Art.

Few slides, textbooks, or teaching aids then existed, for few colleges but Harvard and Yale had fine arts departments, none of them in the South. Cheek and his confreres had to plan their own courses and provide their own material.

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching gave a collection of art books while Cheek was redesigning Taliaferro's interior, with help from college bursar Charles E. Duke and college architect Charles Major.

"We gutted the building, tore off the porch, and created our own lecture rooms, library, and even a simple air-conditioning system," Cheek recalls. The latter was to eliminate excess heat in the windowless, flat black projection room of 60 seats. He accomplished it by attic

exhaust fans which forced the hot air through double louvers inserted in the window frames.

"It was the first air-conditioning in Williamsburg," Cheek says. Other firsts were soon to follow.

Pool of Fish

The rooms were rearranged around a three-story open stairwell. In it Cheek designed a fountain with a pool of live fish at its bottom and lighted bas-relief sculptures of nymphs and undersea life, sculpted by Rust, around its sides. The handsome art deco nymphs were covered by large sheets of plate glass, over whose surface water ran down. The effect was highly dramatic.

Rooms were painted light green and gray, with blond wood furniture.

Through the gift of John D. Rockefeller Jr., the original college buildings - the Wren, Brafferton, and the President's House - had just been restored, but the rest of the campus showed effects of the Depression. Against this background the Fine Arts Department stood out as an oasis of fresh elegance.

President Bryan formally opened the building, and Cheek's proud mother came from Nashville. *Art News Magazine* devoted an enthusiastic article to the Southern "renaissance."

The department had many firsts. It had its own departmental library, built around three large tables with 18 overstuffed chairs given by its director. On the ground floor scenery and costumes for college plays were made and painted in a large workroom. The building also had painting and sculpture studios, professors' offices, and a dining room where the staff lunched daily, sometimes with Bryan, other faculty students, or guests.

A recent Vassar graduate, Mary Tyler Freeman, was hired as librarian and secretary, with oversight also of the dining room. The daughter of Douglas Southall Freeman, Richmond editor and biographer, she had met Cheek when her parents came down for her father's monthly college current affairs lectures, given at the behest of Dr. Freeman's newspaper associate, Mr. Bryan.

She and Leslie Cheek were married in June 1939.

Cheek and his staff enhanced Althea Hunt's plays as never before with fine sets and costumes. Their stage was then the original speaker's platform of Phi Beta Kappa Hall,

built in 1926 and partly destroyed by fire in the 1950s. Especially memorable was the performance of Alberto Caselli's romantic melodrama, "Death Takes a Holiday" and a series of Gilbert and Sullivan operas.

Christmas Memories

But Cheek's toughest assignment was to produce Bryan's annual Christmas party and June ball, both given by the president largely at his expense. "Mr. Bryan felt students should go home in December and in June with happy memories of school," Cheek remembers.

The college president used landscape architect Charles Gillette's new Sunken Garden as setting for the June ball. Then came Cheek's work to make decorations, build a dance

floor, arrange an orchestra platform and chaperons' boxes, and to devise lighting to give the garden a magical atmosphere. Townspeople flocked to the ball along with collegians to "see what Mr. Bryan has done this time."

College exams then didn't come till January, so students could go off for Christmas with no worries. For the president's party in Phi Beta Kappa Hall, Cheek and Co. would deck the hall with miles of galerope and dozens of holly wreaths.

The tall, thin Bryan presided from a throne onstage, beneath the royal Stuart coat of arms, and dressed as lord of the revels in a full-bottomed wig and colonial attire. He presided over a melange of medieval and modern entertainment, surrounded by faculty and staffers similarly garbed.

MAGAZINE OF ART

· A Reprint from the March 1938 Issue ·

ART AT WILLIAM & MARY

BY LESLIE CHEEK, JR.



THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF ARTS · WASHINGTON

The Magazine of Art hailed the College's art courses in a six-page article in its issue of March 1938.

A ceremonious master of ceremonies bellowed introductions as distinguished guests entered the hall and took seats onstage. Dr. and Mrs. Freeman were "Sir Douglas and Lady Freeman, of Westbourne," their Richmond home.

Fraternity and sorority skits were acted for prizes, the actors diked out in rented costumes. Once when a lady faculty member complained of the revealing costumes, Bryan asked Cheek if he had censored them. "She thought the goddesses were too Greek," Cheek laughs, fondly.

At midnight came refreshments at a huge buffet table in the Dodge Room and then dancing to music by Hal Kemp's orchestra or some other name band. Cheek decorated the serving tables with gold-colored cornucopias from his Nashville home, Cheekwood, and filled them with fruit. The mild spiked punch was frequently respiked by thirsty guests.

A perfectionist, Cheek spared no pains to get the precise effect he wanted, but he did not want the hall to catch fire. "My worst time came after the party," Cheek remembers. Phi Bete was a wilderness of melted candles, cigarette butts, and sagging decorations.

The most unusual Fine Arts Department party was a Surrealist Ball staged in the basement of the Wren Building in 1938. "Each window recess was a surrealist scene, eerily lighted," Cheek recalls. "Mr. Bryan appeared in academic gown dragging a wheeled toy that made noises. And Leonard Haber arranged the ends of an arrow so he looked like they'd pierced his head."

Purple Cow

Before the building, a white cow was tethered beneath a purple light, to illustrate the nonsense verse, "I Never Saw a Purple Cow." One guest, Director A. Edwin Kendrew of Colonial Williamsburg's architecture department, milked the beast.

"The farmer who rented the cow charged extra for two quarts of milk," Cheek remembers.

An appreciative supporter of Cheek's efforts was Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, who spent several months each year at Bassett Hall with her husband. She gave the college a painting by Georgia O'Keeffe, onetime Williamsburg resident, and prompted the artist's visit in 1937 to receive an honorary degree and have a one-man show at the college.

Bryan continued to head the college until 1942, but Cheek left in 1939 to become director of the Baltimore Museum of Fine Arts. Though trained for architecture, he wanted

to stick with the fine arts. From Baltimore he joined the Army to become a World War II camouflage expert. "Wherever I went," he says, "teaching has helped me."

After serving on the staff of *Architectural Forum* and *House Beautiful*, Cheek returned to Richmond in 1948 as director of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. Since retiring in 1968, he and Mrs. Cheek have been active in art and educational events in this country and abroad, traveling widely.

In 1952 he was awarded the honorary degree of doctor of fine arts by the college.

The department he created in 1937 has grown bigger and more popular. Thomas Thorne succeeded him as chairman before the college instituted a rotating chairmanship. Miles L. Chappell, the present chairman,

presides over a faculty of ten and an enrollment of about 700 each semester. Now too big for the erstwhile Taliaferro, the department has its own Andrews Hall, completed in 1968 adjoining the new Phi Beta Kappa auditorium.

"It should be part of the education of everyone to study something of the arts," says Cheek. "Back in 1937, we weren't aiming to create practicing artists but to build an appreciation of the arts for the deeper enjoyment of life. That remains a worthy ideal."

The college is proud of Leslie Cheek Jr., of Leonard Haber, of Edwin Rust, of George Small, of Althea Hunt, and of those other veterans of the Depression year miracles in Williamsburg.

Like Robert Andrews in 1779, they too were pioneers.

A Fine Time for the Fine Arts

One of the original teachers in William and Mary's new Department of Fine Arts in the 1930s was Theodore Rust, then a young fine arts graduate of Yale and now just retired from directorship of the Memphis School of Fine Art. Writes Ted Rust:

"My memories of those late 30s and early 40s include such happy memories as these:

The remarkable and lovable John Stewart Bryan, then president of the College, who inaugurated and supported the department in every possible way -

Leslie's reaction to the traditional 'doctoring' of all faculty members holding the degree (none of us had it, of course!) by addressing our janitor as 'Dr. Willard,' (I think his name was Willard), much to the disgust of the faculty hierarchy -

A performance of 'Liliom,' beautifully directed by Althea Hunt, for which, at Les's suggestion, our great and good friend in the English department, Charles Harrison, and I did a continuous musical background, complete with leitmotifs, made possible by the recently acquired Carnegie gift of recordings -

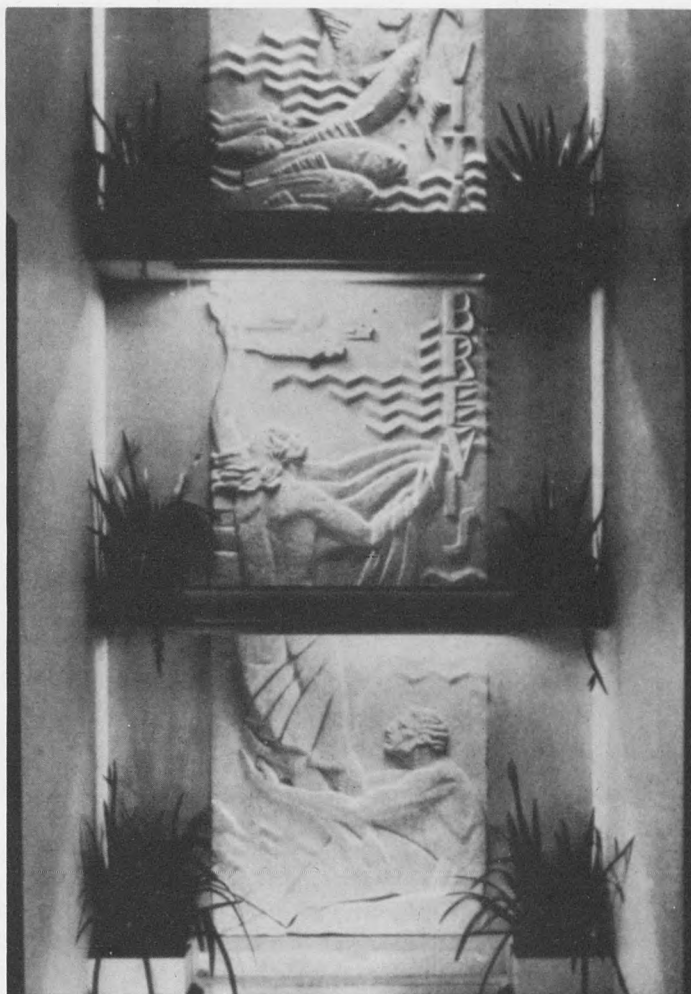
The daily luncheons in the room, handsomely designed by Leslie for that purpose and frequently enlivened by such visitors as Mrs. Rockefeller, Georgia O'Keeffe, and Frank Lloyd Wright -

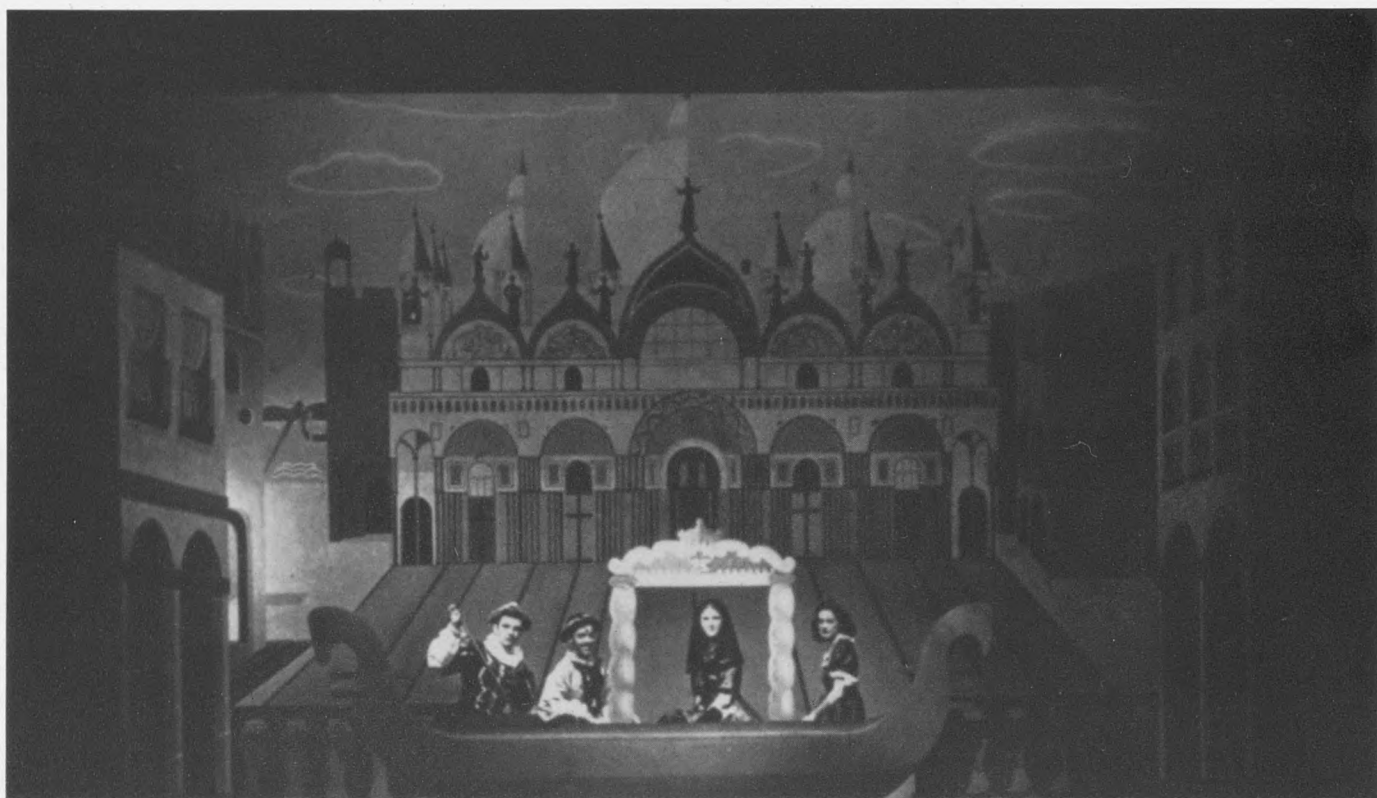
And above all, our relaxed, informal, first-name-basis relationship with a wonderful group of dedicated, talented, and hard-working students.

These were indeed happy years, and I shall forever be grateful for the privilege of having been a member of that first departmental faculty group."

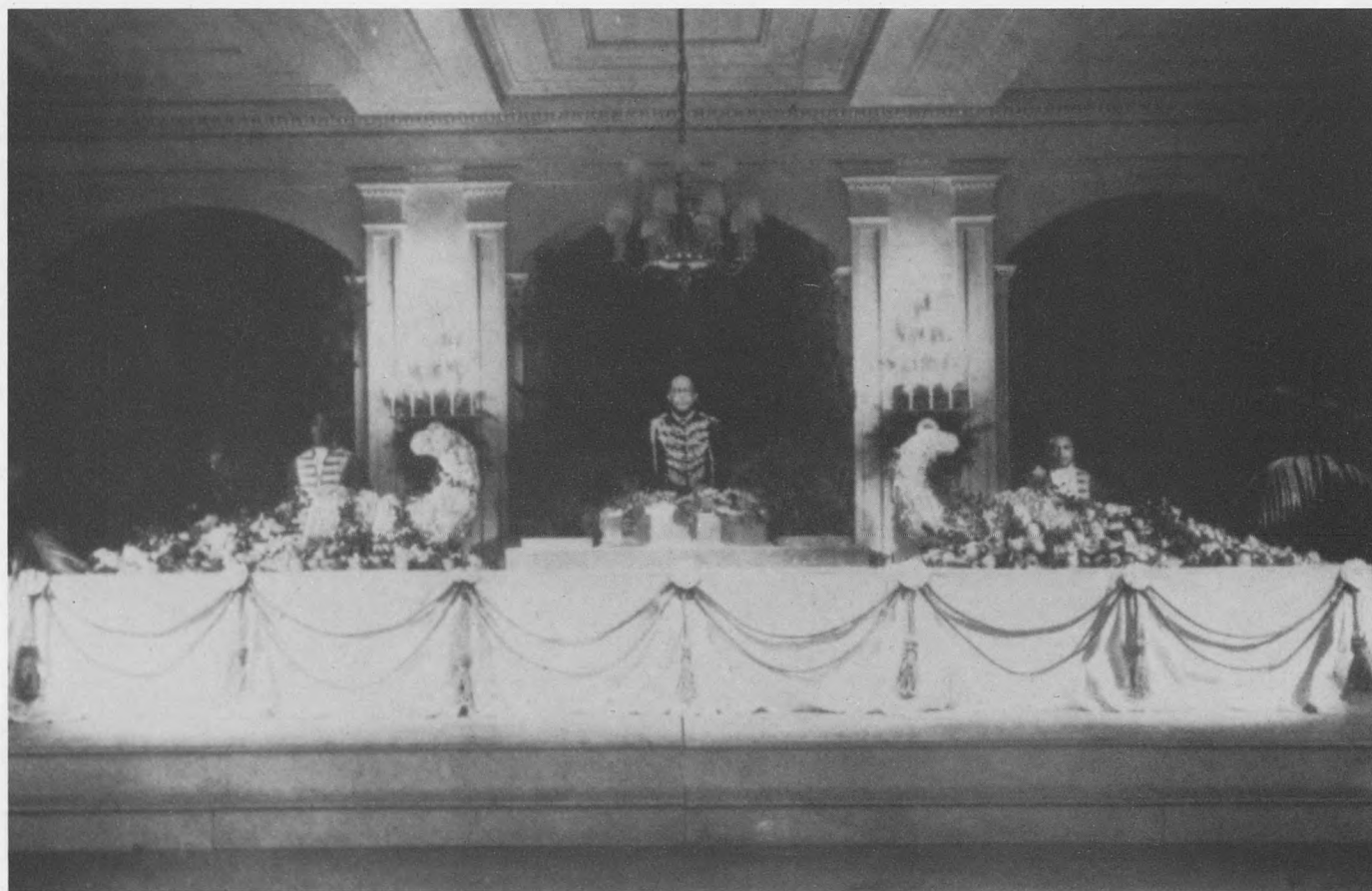
TED RUST

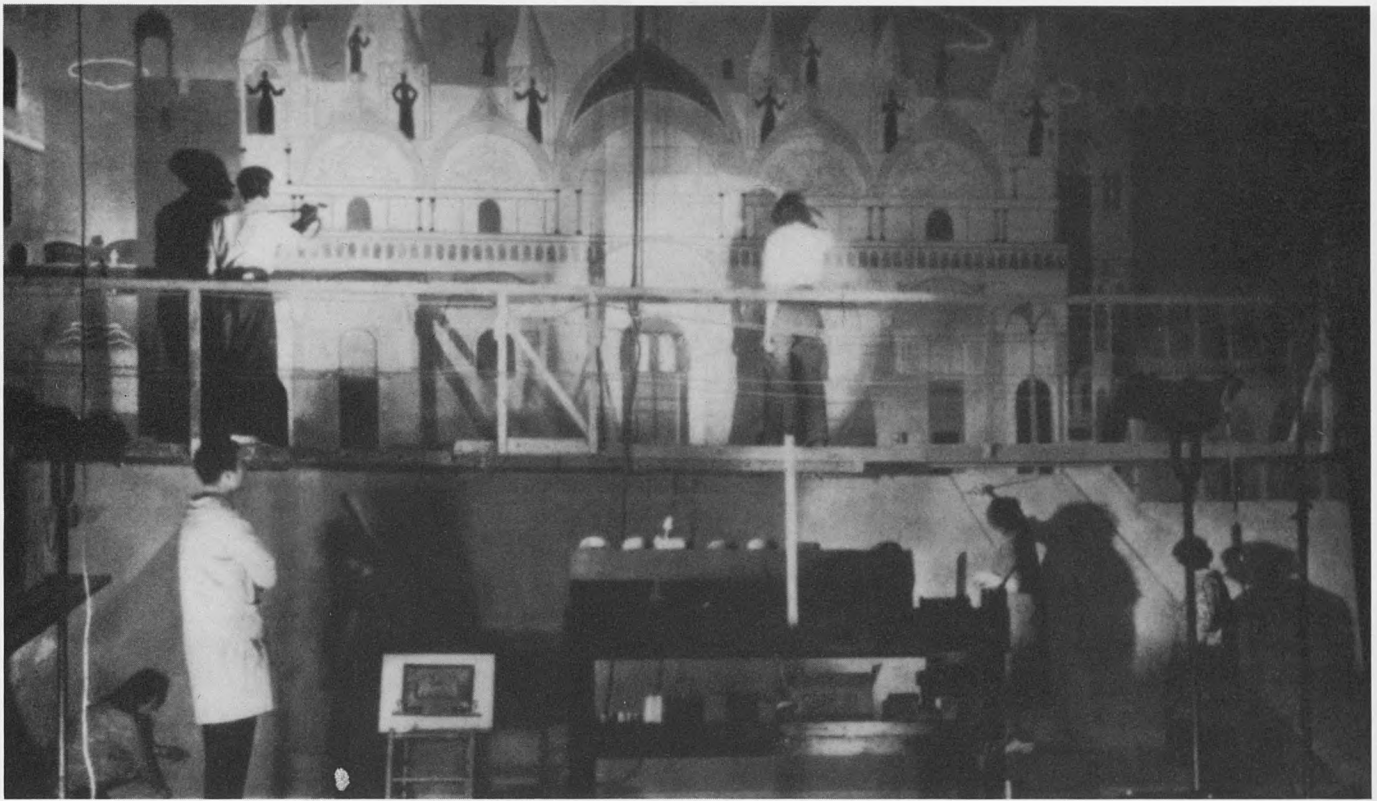
Created in the 1930s, the decor of the first Fine Arts Department was in art deco style. At top right is Professor Edwin Rust's depiction of Venus rising from the sea, a bas relief covered by glass and dramatically illuminated. Below is a corner of the first Fine Arts library, decorated in light green walls and blond wood. Art books given by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching lined the shelves. The first librarian was Mary Tyler Freeman, who became Mrs. Leslie Cheek Jr.





A stylized gondola, above, was propelled across the stage in the College's 1937 production of Gilbert and Sullivan's "The Gondoliers" in Phi Beta Kappa Hall. Below, buffet tables graced with gold colored cornucopias provided refreshments in Phi Beta Kappa Hall at President Bryan's Christmas parties. Leslie Cheek designed and handled decorating.





Critics hailed the theatrical sets and costumes provided by the Fine Arts Department for College theatre productions. Above is the setting by Professor Leonard Haber for Gilbert and Sullivan's "The Gondoliers" in 1937. Below, President Bryan presides onstage as "Master of the Revels" at the Christmas party in the former Phi Beta Kappa Hall. Professor Tucker Jones as "Lord of Misrule" was master of ceremonies. Cheek designed an elaborate Christmas decor for the party and dance which followed.



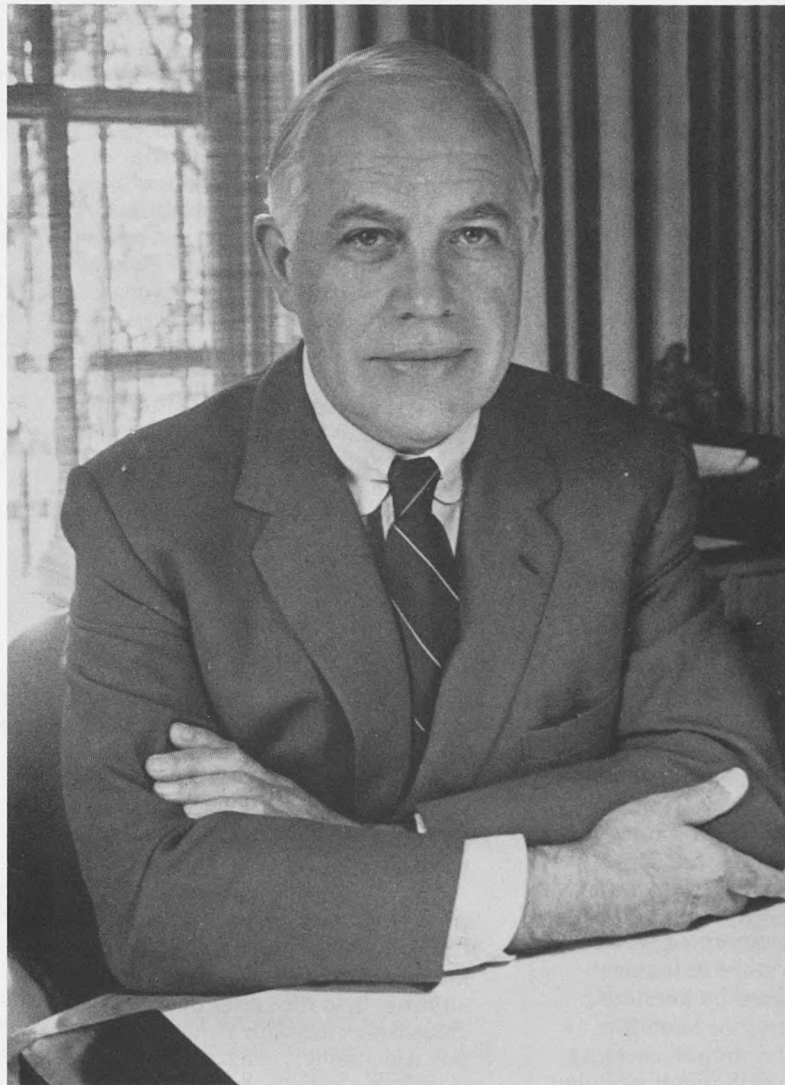


Edwin C. Rust, of Memphis, was first professor of sculpture at William and Mary and designed the two-story wall fountain which surrounded the stairwell in the original Fine Arts Department in old Taliaferro Hall, now demolished.

The lower section of the fountain, shown here, graced the entrance vestibule. Venus is seen rising from the sea, attended by representatives of architecture, painting, and sculpture. Water cascaded over glass plates into a fishpool recessed in the floor.



Under Cheek's direction, the College exhibited the architectural achievements of Frank Lloyd Wright. The famed architect, at left in top photo, examines the display with Cheek, himself a recent architectural graduate of Yale. Below, Leslie Cheek from a photograph from Newsweek in 1967.



The Golden Age of the Student

Colleges and Universities -- Including William and Mary -- Will Need To Be Aggressive, Imaginative and Careful Not to Sell Their Educational Souls

By Thomas A. Graves, Jr.

In the 1980's, the phrase, "college of your choice," will have real meaning for the first time in a generation. It will be the golden age of the student. He or she will be in a position, increasingly, to pick and choose among colleges of quality.

All colleges, and that includes one like William and Mary, will need to be aggressive and imaginative in recruiting superior students. Some colleges, that feel they are in trouble, will work overtime just to recruit warm bodies, and will be in danger of selling their educational souls in the process. Then they will *really* be in trouble.

That is a danger. If our educational institutions start to sacrifice their quality, in the 1980's, in order to attract from a dwindling supply of potential students, generations of our children and grandchildren in the future will be the victims.

I personally believe that it will be much more sensible to close or merge some of the colleges which are *marginal*, in terms of financing, quality and student interest, than to keep them open by prostituting their educational values and standards. Undoubtedly, there *will* be college closings in the 1980's. We must be prepared for that fact, and must not try to invent artificial ways to protect

This article is excerpted from an address on the future of higher education delivered by President Graves at the Virginia Manufacturers Association annual meeting in Williamsburg in September, 1980.

some of our alma maters from that reality. It will be the institutions of lesser quality that will close.

The great majority of our better colleges and universities that are providing an educational service of relevance and quality will remain. Moreover, many of us will not be hit as hard, certainly not as early, as some are predicting. There is always a significant time lag in changes of attitudes and actions, to reflect the realities of population and age shifts.

The 1980's, and into the 1990's, will also be the age of the greying of the faculty, nationally. As the rate of growth of our colleges and universities declines; as our faculties, with little turnover, become more stable; as we begin to feel the impact of the newly mandated federal requirement of retirement at seventy instead of sixty-five; the average age of the faculty will rise. By the 1990's, it may reach fifty-five.

This can be a special danger in an older, more stable institution, like William and Mary. It raises perplexing and challenging questions. In this environment, how do we maximize the strength and liveliness of our continuing faculty? They are the ones who add up to excellence in a university. How do we keep them intellectually alive?

The 1980's will also raise some provocative questions, in the relationships between students and faculty--the one group constantly shifting, and the other becoming increasingly constant. How do we, in our universities, maintain and create, in this environment, opportunities

for flexibility, adaptability, responsiveness to new ideas? It is a delicate balance--that can be absolutely beautiful in the magic of teaching and learning, or that can be deadening and destructive of young minds. How do we hold on to and foster the creative give and take of teacher and student in the years ahead?

Undoubtedly, there will be increasing pressures, in the 1980's, on our colleges, especially those like William and Mary, to move toward preparation for *practical* careers, toward pre-professional training. There may turn out to be sharp differences at times between student preferences and institutional goals (to say nothing of institutional resources). This will be especially true during a period of relatively high unemployment and a scarcity of jobs for newly minted college graduates.

Some of us, who believe strongly in a liberal education, in the value of the arts and sciences, are going to have to lean against the times, if we are to maintain and achieve our objectives.

I believe in the workings of the market place. But if we are convinced of the value of quality education, *liberal* education, we have something to sell in that market place. And as each of you knows, it is great fun to sell a quality product.

All of us in education will need to resist the temptation, to institute *short-run* crash programs to deal with the problems or respond to the pressures of the 1980's. We must resist if we are to provide, in the

long run, education of quality for the citizens and future leaders of the twenty-first century.

A top business executive, who knows William and Mary well, recently wrote me as follows: "While American business certainly needs *well-trained* college graduates, to successfully meet the challenges facing our economy, we need *well-educated* graduates even more." He urged us to hold the line. We intend to do so here in Williamsburg.

The 1980's and into the 1990's will be a period when the *leadership* of education, at the national and state levels, at the primary, secondary, college and university levels must address what Father Theodore Hesburgh, President of Notre Dame, has called the "catastrophe" of secondary education, the broad disaster area of public education.

Public education is becoming so impoverished, without real standards of quality in many areas, that it is having, increasingly, an enormous and adverse impact on the ability of the colleges to maintain quality. Even colleges with competitive admissions are in danger of becoming glorified remedial institutions. Our admissions at William and Mary is highly competitive, very selective. Still we devote, increasingly, a great deal of faculty effort to helping our students read and write with confidence.

We need to confront what must be addressed as the "seamless web of education," kindergarten through college, K through 16. We in higher education cannot ignore what has gone on in the twelve years before college.

Even here in Virginia we must find an approach, in the 1980's, that will move us away from the increasingly sharp competition, for scarce state resources, between higher education and public education. We must move toward a system that will allow us to address *together*, as a *whole*, the educational needs and aspirations of *all* our citizens. This is hard work, for those who are board members at particular institutions, for individuals like me. But we must do it.

We need to recognize that sound education is a continuing and developing process, in which we at the college level have a great stake in the level of excellence, the standards of quality, at the *primary* and secondary levels. Their students today become our students tomorrow. Those of us in the *colleges* had better start caring more than we do about the resources that go into their teaching and learning.

There will be
college closings in
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for that fact.

Another major trend, already underway, that will accelerate in the 1980's, is the move toward *older* students in our colleges and universities. Also there will be relatively many more *women* students. This year, for the first time, there are more women than men enrolled in our nation's colleges. Imagine if that had been predicted back in the 1930's, fifty years ago! But women, of high school age, are more highly motivated, mature faster, achieve higher, than their male counterparts. It shows, as they apply for college.

Older students, more women students, requesting and indeed often demanding, different courses, emphases, curricula, are going to put strains on our faculties, on our resources. How do we respond creatively and flexibly, yet wisely, to this emerging phenomenon?

There is another trend that is much more troubling, nationally, that deserves our careful attention. There is, I believe, increasingly, lawlessness in the land, more violence almost for the sake of violence, less discipline, less *self-discipline*, in our families, our communities, our schools. At the college level, we see this in attitudes, behavior, and conduct that is obusive, abrasive, harassing, and at times destructive. We find it in our high schools and junior high schools. At times it shows up in individual actions that do not respect the rights of other individuals to privacy, to freedom of movement and expression.

All too often this phenomenon is closely related to the illegal use of drugs or the illegal or excessive use of alcohol.

This trend is nationwide. It is down into the elementary schools and up into our colleges. I shall not attempt here to analyze why. I am not qualified. But I can say that we

must not tolerate it. I am not talking about large numbers, but *any* numbers of this kind are too many. We do not tolerate it at William and Mary. We must turn this trend around, for there is a lot at stake.

Our colleges have a special stake and opportunity here, for conflict, the sparking of ideas, is at the heart of an excellent university--but always with personal civility, with a sense of order, with mutual respect. We must insist on these qualities in all our institutions. We must have high standards and expectations, and then act and expect others to act accordingly.

Not quite so evident as the trend I have just described, there is a kind of intangible discontent returning to our campuses. It is nothing like the anger or outrage of the Vietnam era. It is not pervasive, and again the numbers are small. But I feel it is growing. It takes the form of pessimism or cynicism on the part of some *faculty*, a form of sadness or fatalism on the part of some *students*. It may be related to continuing grinding inflation and lack of opportunities after college. I am not sure of the cause. But we have a job to do, to bring back a spirit of excitement and adventure, to education in the 1980's, for *all* our students and teachers.

At the national level there will be major forces at work in the 1980's, raising questions of governance, of the external control of education. We are moving toward an interlocking network of governance, coordination and control. This network of responsibilities will inevitably be, at times, overlapping, conflicting, frustrating and confusing--often without *clear*, and never with *permanent* guidelines. At least that is the way it will seem to those of us in my position.

Both in the private and the public sectors we shall be moving away from the relative autonomy of single boards of governance, away from clear responsibility and autonomy. These trends, these forces, will raise, in the 1980's, difficult and perplexing questions as to whether the integrity of a single institution, whatever its mission, can be maintained; as to whether the mission of a particular institution, with a standard of excellence, can be achieved. These are questions that probably can no longer be addressed effectively, at the national level. But in the 1980's they must be addressed at the state level, and within each institution. They must be addressed here in Virginia.

I know that we must have centralized *coordination* in higher education, but we must resist the temptation



Professional educators will face a decade of unparalleled challenge, according to President Graves, shown here with George Healy (right), vice president for academic affairs at the College.

toward centralized governance.

Also, across the country, in the 1980's and into the 1990's, there will be a momentum, already underway, to lead private or independent institutions of higher education, and public or state-supported institutions, to become more and more alike. Public institutions are increasingly seeking and receiving private funds; private institutions are more and more accepting state and federal support. Independent colleges and universities are finding themselves increasingly under state and federal regulations and guidelines; state supported colleges and universities are seeking ways to establish independent foundations that may be free from state jurisdiction and purview. In some states, like New York and Pennsylvania, this can all result in an impossible bureaucratic mish mash. Even in Virginia, there is danger.

I personally believe that there are significant advantages, for all of us, in separate and strong systems of higher education--independent and public--competitive and clearly differentiated.

Education, because it is so fundamental and inextricably related to almost every major facet of our country's economy and society, is, of course, going to be influenced, at times buffeted, by every other significant trend of the 1980's--living standards, population, energy, inflation, the fate of the auto industry, home building starts, health care, the critical problems of our large metropolitan areas and their inner cities, new markets.

Two areas that have a special

impact on education are inflation and energy. Most of the signs suggest that inflation, averaging ten percent annually if we are fortunate, will be a fact of life of the 1980's and into the 1990's, whether in good times or in the current recession. And while it is too volatile an area for me to make any prediction, in education we see every indication that the cost of energy will be eating up a larger share of our basic budget each year.

How do we preserve the quality of education in a period of inflation? How do we prevent erosion of and inroads into the heart of the academic enterprise in a period of rising costs, relatively lower salary income each year, a larger share of the education revenue dollar going to support non-educational costs? How do we maintain excellence in this environment?

Then, finally, there is a fundamental question that focuses on the citizen's support for education. The heyday was the latter part of the fifties, the sixties, even into the seventies.

But recently the general public has been questioning the relative value, the relative priority, of education. In higher education we are just over the peak of an extraordinary trend in how Americans view the value of a college degree. When my father was in college, he was one in seventy in his age group. When I went to college, I was one in seven. My children are more like one in two or three. That ratio will now remain constant or even move the other way.

A similar phenomenon has also

peaked in primary and secondary education. Think of the enormous sums of state, federal and private funds that have gone into making the American system of educational opportunity the best in the world. But today, despite the irrefutable fact that there is nothing more precious to each of us than our children and their future, the image of school teaching and schoolteachers is neither strong nor high. And the funds, relatively, are no longer there.

In recent years, our priorities, as state and nation, have shifted to mental health, corrections, health services, social welfare--away from education. These are all areas that you and I, as citizens, support. But with both capital formation and the gross national product, as well as other major indicators, declining in relative terms, the available dollars, or their value, just aren't there any more, to purchase all the goods and services that are needed. Those of us in education inevitably must feel the pinch. We do.

There is relatively less money available for the essential tasks of raising and maintaining the educational standards of our schools, of attracting the best people into teaching careers--and rewarding them accordingly. How do we make education a more honorable profession, a more attractive career? How do we protect our children's future?

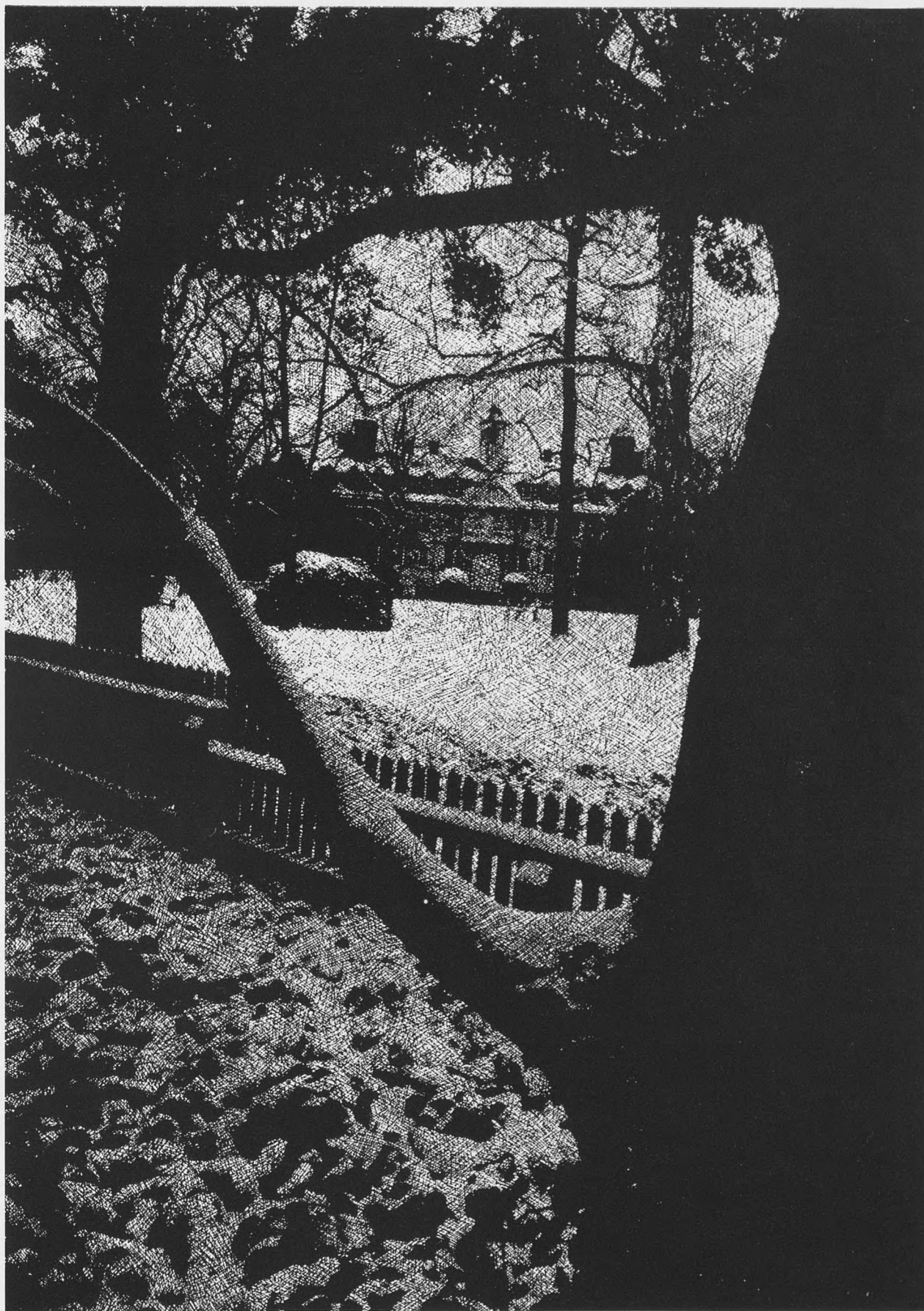
That is how I look, in the fall of 1980, at education in the 1980's.

So let me try to sum up. There is a lot to suggest that the 1980's are not going to be easy years for education. Some of the trends are ominous. The outlook to many appears to be rather bleak.

One of my presidential colleagues at the Southern University Conference this year was overheard to say to his wife, just before a rainstorm, "Let's get out before it gets worse," and some of us thought he might be speaking about more than the weather.

But I do not believe we need to fear the squalls that lie ahead. If we have the leadership, and, therefore, the confidence in our direction, we cannot only negotiate the storms of the 1980's, we can thrive.

There are plenty of professional educators like myself around. But what we really need are the best possible men and women in the lay leadership of our institutions: Informed, caring, supporting, influential people who will stand up, make their voices heard, on behalf of what they believe. We need men and women who have a clear vision of what they believe education should be, and who have the courage and initiative to do something about it.



One of the rare snowstorms that comes to Williamsburg turns the College Yard, with the Sir Christopher Wren Building in the background, into picture postcard beauty in this photo taken by Steve Toth during a winter past.

