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In September 1956 an automobile accident ended the life and promising future of thirty-four-year-old Michael Ventris, a brilliant English architect, scholar, and cryptographer. Ventris's celebrated accomplishment, announced only four years before his death, was to decipher the Mycenaean script known as Linear B, found on clay tablets from Knossos, by recognizing it as the earliest form of the Greek language. At the moment of his premature death Ventris's book presenting the evidence and results of the decipherment, and written in collaboration with John Chadwick, a classicist at Cambridge, was about to be published.¹ In the foreword to that book Alan J. B. Wace put the significance of Ventris's achievement into historical perspective. He described it as one of the landmarks in the revelation of the prehistoric civilization of Greece whereby Mycenaean culture was now definitively understood to be Greek—to be an early stage of a continuous Greek civilization from which Periclean Athens evolved.²

The research in the Marcel Breuer Papers in Syracuse and in Washington, D.C. that led to this article was facilitated by a New York University Research Challenge Fund Grant and a grant for travel to collections from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Division of Fellowships and Seminars. I am grateful to these institutions for their support.

1. Michael Ventris and John Chadwick, Documents in Mycenaean Greek (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1956; reprint 1959). Chadwick published a second edition in 1973 with a new preface and a moving dedication: "This second edition is dedicated to the memory of Michael Ventris 1922–1956 whose name can stand alongside Schliemann's as the founder of a new branch of study".

By decoding the Mycenaean language and perceiving it to be Greek, Ventris had succeeded in closing the gap between Classical Greece and its prehistory. Yet, amazingly, his profession was neither archaeology nor classical philology, but architecture. In 1948, five years before his first publication relating to the famous decipherment, Ventris had received an honours diploma from the Architectural Association School of Architecture in London (his training having been interrupted by wartime service as navigator in a Royal Air Force bomber squadron) and two prestigious scholarships, the RIBA Henry Jarvis Scholarship and the Henry Florence Scholarship. As an architect and planner he joined, in 1950, the Ministry of Education’s Development Group for the design and construction of school buildings. At the time of his death he was the first holder of The Architects’ Journal Research Fellowship; his project was to use his analytical and organizational skills to investigate the subject of “Information for the Architect”.

To the brief but impressive and interesting career of Michael Ventris a footnote can now be added. There is on deposit at the George Arents Research Library at Syracuse University a large collection of documents forming the Marcel Breuer Papers. Breuer, one of the most important figures in European modernism, who studied and taught

3. The decipherment had been announced in a radio broadcast in 1952 and then published as a joint article with John Chadwick in *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, no. 73 (1953): 84–103.


5. Marcel Breuer first donated papers and drawings to Syracuse in 1966; material continued to be acquired through 1987. Another collection of Breuer’s papers, given by Mrs. Constance L. Breuer, is in the Smithsonian Institution Archives of American Art in Washington, D.C. I am grateful to the University Librarian at Syracuse University, David H. Stam, for permission to carry out research in the Breuer Papers at Syracuse, and to its staff in the George Arents Research Library, particularly Carolyn A. Davis and Kathleen Manwaring, for exceptional assistance.

I am preparing a full-scale study of the architecture of Marcel Breuer; for this I am
at the Bauhaus in Weimar and Dessau and who vastly enriched American architecture and design between his arrival in the United States in 1937 and his death in 1981, had practised in London (in partnership with F. R. S. Yorke) from 1935 to 1937. During that period, in 1936, he designed and decorated a spacious flat for Mrs. Dorothea Ventris, a cultivated and enthusiastic supporter of modern art and design. Located in the London suburb of Highgate, her flat was one of the large, light-filled apartments in the building block known as Highpoint, which with its gardens, ramps, terraces, tea-room, and rooftop garden-promenade was among London's most advanced examples of modern-apartment-house planning in the 1930s. Designed and built in 1934–35 (a second block was added in 1938) by Berthold Lubetkin (who occupied one of the sixty apartments) and his Tecton firm of architects, Highpoint was formed as an eight-story double cruciform with a cantilevered balcony extending from the living room of each apartment. Constructed principally of reinforced concrete, the building also had some sections of traditional brickwork on its ground floor. The complex won high praise from Le Corbusier who called it “the seed of a vertical garden city”.6 The furnishings for Mrs. Ventris's apartment included examples of Breuer's new Isokon plywood furniture of organic shape, the tubular steel and cane chairs later to become a worldwide design success for Breuer, and wall-hung cabinets and unique light fixtures also of his design.7

After Breuer left England in 1937 and settled in the United States, he and Mrs. Ventris corresponded. Their letters, as well as an ex-

indebted to Mrs. Constance L. Breuer for her assistance and for her permission to use the restricted Breuer material in Washington, D.C., which, along with the Syracuse material, forms the basic research source for Breuer studies. I am also grateful to William McNaught, New York Regional Director of the Archives of American Art, and to the Archives of American Art staff in Washington, especially Cathy Keen, for their consistent help.


7. Mrs. Ventris's apartment (47 Highpoint), its plan, and its furnishings are described and illustrated in Christopher Wilk, Marcel Breuer: Furniture and Interiors (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1981), 142–45. Also see Wilk, 126–46, for Breuer's furniture design in general during his years in England.
change of letters between Breuer and seventeen-year-old Michael Ventris in the summer of 1939, are preserved among the Breuer papers. Reflecting on what she perceived to be a generally sluggish response to modernism in English architecture at that period, Mrs. Ventris lamented (2 November 1938) that “with the loss of you and Professor Gropius the light has been completely extinguished here in England, and one does not see any prospect for it being rekindled anywhere in Europe . . . [but] I refuse to see only war in the future. There must be a development of all that is implied in the work of the original Bauhaus.” She tells Breuer how much she cherishes the living space he created for her, and mentions her son, Michael: “I count myself extraordinarily fortunate for this little centre which you have made. I like it more and more: not Highpoint [the apartment house] which is noisy and blatant, but your interior with its shapes and colours and textures of which I never tire. Other people appreciate it too, but no one as much as Michael, who has such a firm affection for his room that I am sure he will never let me give up the flat.”

Michael Ventris was sixteen at the time his mother wrote that letter; he had already demonstrated exceptional intellectual gifts and a remarkable facility for learning ancient and modern languages. A

8. Along with more serious subjects, Breuer and Mrs. Ventris discussed Breuer’s appreciation of porcelain tableware manufactured in Holland and used by Mrs. Ventris in her London apartment. Breuer asked Mrs. Ventris’s help to order and ship at his expense a dinner set of the same pattern for the new house he had built for himself in Lincoln, Massachusetts in 1939. “It is . . . of white porcelain, a little grayish, and has very nice shapes.” Breuer to D. Ventris, 26 July 1939. George Arents Research Library, Syracuse, Box 8. Unless otherwise cited, all Breuer correspondence mentioned hereafter is from the Marcel Breuer Papers, Syracuse University Library.


10. Ibid. Michael was to confirm this himself a little later. Writing to Breuer on 25 June 1939 he says: “I am getting even fonder of 47, Highpoint as time goes on, and I can’t imagine what it would be like now living anywhere else. The whole flat is getting a very mellow appearance, and I don’t think we have ever had a visitor who did not take to it immediately” (Box 54). Michael’s room is illustrated in Architectural Review 82 (November 1937): 260, where the text refers to the “range of cupboards which transform the boy’s bedroom into a valuable individual living space”.

few months later (18 March 1939) Mrs. Ventris again wrote Breuer in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and remarked that "... Michael is now very keen on technics and architecture and I sometimes wonder whether it would be possible for him to study at Harvard. Gabo thinks he has real feeling for architecture which is natural under the stimulus of having met you and lived in the midst of your work." Naum Gabo, the Russian-born pioneer Constructivist sculptor, was a friend of Breuer. Gabo, too, had settled in London by 1936 and was part of the circle of architects, artists, gallerists, and patrons frequented by Breuer. (Later, in 1957, Gabo would complete a monumental outdoor construction for Breuer's De Bijenkorf department store in Rotterdam.) In January 1938, after Breuer was already in America, Gabo had a one-man exhibition of his Constructions in the London Gallery and from this show Dorothea Ventris bought his Construction on a Line (made in 1937) for her Breuer-designed Highpoint flat. London Gallery had been founded by Lady Peter Norton (Noël E. Norton, known as Peter), another of Breuer's friends and the wife of Clifford Norton, British ambassador to Warsaw just before the war. It was Breuer who did the interior design for Lady Norton's gallery in 1936, the same year he installed the Ventris flat, furnishing the gallery, too, with pieces of his Isokon plywood furniture. Lady Norton had been introduced to modern art by Breuer's great friend and Bauhaus colleague, the artist Herbert Bayer. At least by 1936 Mrs. Ventris had also acquired a sculpture by Henry Moore, a half-length female nude, that took its place among the works of art in the Highpoint flat.

Pursuing her thoughts about Michael's professional education in architecture, Mrs. Ventris, in the same letter of 18 March 1939 to Breuer, wrote that Michael "is now nearly seventeen and I suppose

12. D. Ventris to Breuer, 18 March 1939, Box 8.
15. This information comes from a note written by Breuer on the reverse of a photo of the Moore piece. Marcel Breuer Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., Ventris Apartment photographs.
he ought to start as early as possible, though his classical education would normally go on till the age of twenty-three". Writing to Breuer again a few months later, she said both she and her son “rather mistrust” modern architects in England; she saw them as merely followers of the Masters (Gropius and Breuer and what she called “the original Bauhaus”) and described them as “only epigones”. It was from Breuer, therefore, that she urged Michael to seek advice. Accordingly, between June and August 1939 letters were exchanged between Breuer and Michael Ventris about Michael’s future in architecture.

“What has Michael decided to do?” asked Breuer of Dorothea Ventris in a letter of 26 July 1939. “He wrote to me recently for some advice about his professional plans.” In that letter written on 25 June 1939, while he was still at school, Michael Ventris had put the question to Breuer: “Dear Mr. Breuer, I am still at Stowe, and I have not yet decided what I want to do after I leave . . . I am studying Classics here, but we are still wondering whether I might not do architecture afterwards. So we wanted to ask your advice on the subject, if I happened definitely to decide on it. Where would be the best place to go—of course I should love to do it with you—but are there really good places here in England. And before I actually go somewhere, do you advise me to spend the interim with carpentry [sic], or something like that?” Replying to Michael, Breuer made three suggestions: one, that he get his professional education at London’s Architectural Association (“the best place in England to study architecture . . . a fresh wind seems to blow there”); two, that he consider the Technische Hochschule in Zurich; and three, that he try Harvard. Breuer then explained the system for obtaining first the bachelor’s and then the master’s degree (“This is the class which Mr. Gropius and myself guide”) at Harvard.

16. D. Ventris to Breuer, 18 March 1939, Box 8.
17. D. Ventris to Breuer, 2 November 1938, Box 8.
18. D. Ventris to Breuer, 18 August 1939, Box 8.
21. Breuer to M. Ventris, 10 July 1939, Box 54.
careful advice”, Dorothea Ventris on holiday in France replied to Breuer (18 August 1939).22 “Zurich might be an idea,” she went on to say, “but at present Michael’s ambition is still to study under you eventually. Only the six years at Harvard first rather appal us! And we think it would be too expensive”,23 she claimed, not fully comprehending Breuer’s explanation of the timetable for the Harvard master’s degree in architecture.

In his letter to Breuer, Michael Ventris mentioned almost offhandedly and with seemingly little interest that his tutor at Stowe assumed that he was “preparing to take a scholarship to Oxford . . . Oxford is the chief thing here”.24 An alternative to Oxford is what interested Michael, but for Breuer the value of Oxford was not so easily disregarded: “. . . having to take into consideration conditions as they are [in England] the Oxford education is a fact, perhaps not a professional one but a social one and I am wondering if you shouldn’t go through this education for one or two years, before you go to the A. A.”25 Neither mother nor son would be dissuaded, however, from the notion of Michael pursuing an education that would evoke the Bauhaus ideals they so much admired—the development of manual skills, the knowledge of materials, and the training in crafts workshops. “I am not convinced about Oxford”, wrote Michael, “we both feel it would be rather a waste of time”.26 Indeed, it was Michael Ventris who had asked Breuer about taking up carpentering, and it was now Dorothea Ventris who was determined that it would be useful at this point for Michael to have firsthand experience with the design and manufacture of modern furniture. In a letter of 12 December 1939, the winter following her letter about the difficulties Harvard represented, Crofton E. Gane, Director of P. E. Gane, Ltd., furniture manufacturers in Bristol and an early supporter of modern furniture design and production in England, wrote to Breuer in Massachusetts that “Mrs. Ventris urged us to take her son for practical work in our factory, I doubted its wisdom but asked them to come and see and talk it over. As circumstances have not

22. D. Ventris to Breuer, 18 August 1939, Box 8.
23. Ibid.
25. Breuer to M. Ventris, 10 July 1939, Box 54.
26. M. Ventris to Breuer, 18 August 1939, Box 54.
made it necessary for her to leave her flat she is getting him training in her home City!" 27 The "training" Gane refers to is not described in the correspondence.

Throughout this period, and later, Naum Gabo continued to be a congenial friend to both mother and son. In her 18 August 1939 letter to Breuer, Mrs. Ventris spoke about returning to London from France when Michael's holidays were over and "when I shall no doubt be seeing Gabo. He is the one person who harmonizes with your interior which of course he appreciates as much as we." 28 Of the Gabo Construction acquired in 1938 for her Breuer flat, Mrs. Ventris had written to Breuer in November of that year describing the sculpture as looking "very well with your design, but what is more important [Gabo] will help me keep the rooms as you would like them to be. (I never dare to change a thing! . . .)" 29

By 1939 Dorothea Ventris had in fact made some changes in the furnishings of the flat—replacing "cheap John Lewis cupboards with simple ones made by Gane". 30 More significant, however, was the addition of "two new pictures both by Picasso". 31 It was important for her to assure Breuer that they were in harmony with his decor. "One hangs in the dining room, and is flat cubist 1923, with very strong masses of brown, grey, white and terracotta against a back-

27. Gane to Breuer, 12 December 1939, Box 8, and see n. 30.
28. D. Ventris to Breuer, 18 August 1939, Box 8.
30. D. Ventris to Breuer, 18 March 1939. She is referring in this letter to the furniture manufacturing company in Bristol, P. E. Gane, Ltd., where furniture of modern design was produced. The director, Crofton E. Gane, was a friend, admirer, and client of Breuer. In 1935 Breuer had remodelled Gane's residence in Bristol, and in 1936 he designed the company's exhibition pavilion at the Royal Agricultural show in Bristol. Later, in 1958, when Breuer was asked to name the buildings of which he was most proud, his answer was "UNESCO, Paris, and Gane's Exhibition Pavilion, Bristol, England". Breuer to R. A. Jacobs, 11 November 1958, Correspondence box 2, Marcel Breuer Papers, Archives of American Art.
31. D. Ventris to Breuer, 18 March 1939, Box 8.
ground of lilac and yellow. The lilac and yellow are marvelous with your blue table.”32 The other Picasso was for Michael. “[It] is one of Picasso’s flat cubist-essays in Ripolin colours, in this case chiefly brilliant reds and greens with a touch of blue and white against the blacks and greys which remind one of Africa. Date 1922.”33 In the same letter Dorothea Ventris went on to observe that “The new Picassos on view at Rosenberg’s are the rage of Mayfair. Already they look like Old Masters so of course they can safely be bought to go on panelled 18th century rooms. And every woman is wearing ‘the new Picasso colours’ on her head.”34 The reference is to the exhibition in March 1939 at Rosenberg & Helft in London of thirty-two recent works by Picasso, which had come from the exhibition held in January at Paul Rosenberg’s gallery in Paris.35

Fond as she was of her Highpoint flat, Dorothea Ventris imagined the possibility that “the time will come when I shall want a new place”.36 Her esteem for the architecture of Marcel Breuer was, however, firmly rooted: “If that happens I hope some stroke of fortune will allow me to live in a house built by you. For that is always my dream!”37

Michael Ventris, an accomplished classicist and linguist even before entering architecture school, came of age surrounded by the exciting new shapes and colors of the art—Breuer, Gabo, Moore, and Picasso—that he and his mother most appreciated. He was directed toward his career in architecture by his mother’s strong interest in the profession and in Bauhaus ideals of crafts training, by their connections to the small but passionate group of other pioneer modernists in London in the late 1930s, and most especially by their shared admiration, even reverence, for the particular modernist work of Marcel Breuer.

32. Ibid.
33. Ibid. It may be meaningful that the date of the painting corresponds to the year in which Michael Ventris was born. The work perhaps was purchased with that in mind.
34. Ibid.
36. D. Ventris to Breuer, 2 November 1938, Box 8.
37. Ibid.
It was Crofton Gane who, on 12 September 1956, sent to Breuer the obituary notice for Michael Ventris that had appeared four days earlier in the *Manchester Guardian*. In his accompanying letter Gane wrote: “The enclosed might not have reached you through your newspapers, so I enclose it as I remember that you probably saw quite a bit of Mr. Ventrice [sic] when you were assisting his mother at Highpoint, Highgate. It is evident that much has been lost to classical studies through his death.”38 In reply to Gane’s news Breuer wrote: “I was depressed to learn of Michael Ventris’ fatal accident. I knew him as a boy when we . . . designed his mother’s apartment, and also I met him as a man and architect on one of my [later] visits to London.”39

38. Gane to Breuer, 12 September 1956, Correspondence box 2, Marcel Breuer Papers, Archives of American Art.
39. Breuer to Gane, 26 September 1956, Correspondence box 2, Marcel Breuer Papers, Archives of American Art.
Toils and Perils of Scientific Publishing in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries

BY EILEEN SNYDER

It is perhaps not realized by the modern armchair naturalist what hardships attended his ‘explorer naturalist’ predecessor in the early 1800s. In the George Arents Research Library there is an intriguing—indeed, quite outstanding—group of volumes, landmarks in the history of the natural sciences, by American, British, and French botanists, ornithologists, ichthyologists, entomologists, and herpetologists. A study of the various prefaces, introductions, and accompanying advertisements reveals the overwhelming problems that not only attended every fact-gathering expedition, but seemed as well to plague every stage in the publication of the new materials.* Nevertheless, undaunted, these explorers were inspired to do what had not been done before, namely, a firsthand, on-site description of natural history. They disdained to rely on the reports of others or on preserved specimens. “I always did them while just gathered, and the animals, particularly the birds, I painted them while alive”, wrote the naturalist Mark Catesby, who explored the Southern colonies in the 1720s. By foot, by canoe, by horse, by ship, toting guns, pencils, notebooks, brushes, paints, paper, and bottles, these discoverers, always zealous to push back scientific frontiers, traveled thousands of miles into unexplored wilderness. This was an era when, all over the world, people seemed stirred to describe natural history. The questing spirit was irrepressible.

*All titles of books mentioned are in the collections of the George Arents Research Library. The separating ornaments have in each case been taken from the work of the author immediately following. The tailpiece, a *Bufo clamosus* (ventral view), comes from Holbrook’s *North American Herpetology; or, A Description of the Reptiles Inhabiting the United States*.
Frederick Pursh, a German botanist and an associate of the botanist Benjamin Smith Barton in Philadelphia, grandiosely described the boundaries of his proposed subject as being the “flora of North America”. At the time of his expressed ambition, little of the American interior had been botanically described. Besides his own gatherings, Pursh described in his work a small collection of plants brought back by the Lewis and Clark expedition, because of which he subsequently received criticism for having treated as his own findings. However, he apparently did give appropriate credit, for in the preface he told of receiving the plants from Meriwether Lewis himself and, in his descriptions of the plants, distinguished them by the words “v.s. in Herb. Lewis” after their names. Pursh recounted his experiences in his Flora Americae Septentrionalis; or, A Systematic Arrangement and Description of the Plants of North America (two volumes, London, 1814).

He expressed his determination with conviction:

Accordingly, in the beginning of 1805, I set out for the mountains and western territories of the Southern States, beginning at Maryland and extending to the Carolinas, (in which tract the interesting high mountains of Virginia and Carolina took my particular attention,) and returning late in the autumn through the lower countries along the sea-coast to Philadelphia. The following season, 1806, I went in like manner over the Northern States, beginning with the mountains of Pennsylvania and extending to those of New Hampshire, (in which tract I traversed the extensive and highly interesting country of the Lesser and Great Lakes,) and returning as before by the sea-coast.

Both these tours I principally made on foot, the most appropriate way for attentive observation, particularly in mountainous countries; travelling over an extent of more than three thousand miles each season, with no other companions than my dog and gun, frequently taking up my lodging in the midst of wild mountains and impenetrable forests, far remote from the habitations of men.

Pursh’s lonely journeys through wild terrain demonstrate the tenacity and resourcefulness of all these adventurers who did not allow themselves to be deterred by adversity. Neither storm nor illness,
brigand nor marauding Indian, ferocious beast nor voracious insect, hunger, thirst, shipwreck, nor impecuniousness stopped their drive to discovery, publication, and fame. The explorer-naturalist needed a variety of abilities to succeed (and not all lived to finish their ambitious projects even so). Crucially, he required the necessary scientific background to know what might add knowledge to his chosen discipline, how to identify it, and where to find it. Also important to his success were the skills to survive in wild areas; health to per-
severe in the sometimes appalling conditions; artistic capabilities to record his findings; and a nose for business and dealing with people, so that he could see his finished book financed and through publication. At this time most works in natural history relied on subscribers to underwrite the costs of publication. Accordingly, the author (including John James Audubon for his *The Birds of America* [London, 1827–1838]) or his agent had to sell subscriptions before the work could be published.

Mark Catesby, author of *The Natural History of Carolina, Florida, and the Bahama Islands, with Observations on the Soil, Air, and Water* (two volumes, rev. ed., London, 1754), was a man who demonstrated the necessary characteristics to succeed. Heading off into the wildest terrain, he confronted and survived hardships to bring back completed and beautifully executed paintings of theretofore unknown plants and animals. On occasion his adventures were extraordinary. In a letter to a friend he wrote:

> An odd accident happened last February. A negro woman, making my bed a few minutes after I was out of it, cried out: "a rattlesnake!" We being drinking tea in the next room, surprised with the vehemence of the wench's bawling, went to see the cause and found a rattlesnake actually between the sheets in the very place where I lay, full of ire, biting at everything that approached him. Probably it crept in for warmth in the night, but how long I had the company of the charming bedfellow, I am not able to say.


Catesby was a self-taught English artist and ornithologist, who spent twenty years in North America traveling and recording with pen and brush. After so long a time, he suffered the loss of his once enthusiastic patronage, yet eventually saw his volumes through every stage of publication including the engraving and coloring of his own plates.

Edward Donovan, British ichthyologist, undertook the description of British fishes in The Natural History of British Fishes (five volumes, London, 1802–1806), a task, given his scientific perfectionism, not exempt from difficulty. Not satisfied with the decomposing offerings that enthusiastic friends landed upon his desk, he took to sea in
order to gather a live, representative collection whose natural iri-
descence he could paint with accuracy.

It was not enough to visit those coasts, but to seek the objects in request in the depths and recesses of the ocean; and in the accomplishment of which [the author] could only avail himself of such opportunities of venturing to sea as the accommodation of the fishing craft, or open boats of such remote and unfrequented places, would allow. Those, it may be conceived, were not at all times calculated for comfort or even convenience, nor wholly free from peril. This mode of procuring the specimens proved, however, in the end, successful; in the space of a few months, devoted at different periods to this purpose, many extremely scarce and curious articles were obtained, not only of the Ichthyology kind, but in every other class of marine productions; and with respect to the fishes of the country in particular, it afforded the best, if not the only means of ascertaining with accuracy the precise characters of those perishable beings. By this means also the author was enabled to delineate a variety of the more

brilliant species in the highest state of perfection, and while they yet glowed with the vivid hues of life. This was assuredly a matter of serious importance, as it is obviously known that nothing can be more fugitive in general than the colours of the more resplendent creatures of this tribe, many of which while alive and vigorous display the most fascinating emanations of colour; but snatched from their native element, those fervid hues alternately fade and revive with the transitory struggles of life, and, evanescent as their breath, are lost entirely in the expiring gasp of death.

Alexander Wilson, Scots-American ornithologist, traveled thousands of miles in order to publish a “description and representation of every species of our native birds, from the shores of St. Laurence to the mouths of the Mississippi, and from the Atlantic ocean to the interior of Louisiana... the whole Ornithology of the United States”. His monumental American Ornithology (nine volumes, Philadelphia, 1808–1814) was the first work in science to be published totally in America—even to the engraving of the plates and the manufacturing of the paper.

It had been a sore point with Wilson that so much of North American natural history had been described by Europeans and published in Europe. In his preface to Volume III, Wilson enlisted a network of observers to send him their sightings and descriptions of unusual birds. “By such combined exertions, and reciprocity of information, we shall do honour to this branch of science; and be enabled to escape, in part, that transatlantic and humiliating reproach, of being obliged to apply to Europe for an account and description of the productions of our own country.”

In order to realize his ambitious and expensive undertaking, Wilson tramped the country. As he said in the preface to Volume III:
Should there appear in some of the following accounts of our native birds, a more than common deficiency of particulars as to their manners and migration, [the author] would beg leave to observe, that he is not engaged in copying from Museums the stuffed subjects they contain; nor from books or libraries the fabulous and hearsay narratives of closet naturalists. A more laborious, and, as he trusts, a more honorable duty is prescribed him. He has examined the stores of living Nature for himself; and submitted with pleasure, to all the difficulties and fatigues incident to such an undertaking. Since he had last the honor of presenting himself before the public, he has traced the wilds of our western forests, alone, for upwards of seven months; and traversed, in that time, more than three thousand miles, a solitary, exploring pilgrim.

Not only did Wilson make his own pen and pencil sketches of his subjects—"the feathered tribes"—he was forced to travel many more thousands of miles to enlist subscribers to the venture. He eventually secured 458 subscribers who paid $120 each for the set of the projected nine volumes. But, despite all his efforts, delays plagued him and expenses of publication rose. In several of the prefaces we find statements of regret over the delay of publication. In Volume III, for example:

Unforeseen and unavoidable circumstances, which it is unnecessary to recapitulate, and over which the author had no control, have retarded the publication of the present volume beyond the usual and stated period. Complaints and regret, for what is irrecoverable, would be as unavailing, as apologies for what could not be prevented, would be improper. [The author] will only on this subject remark, that a recurrence of similar obstacles not being likely to take place, and the plates of the fourth volume, now in the hands of the engraver, being in considerable forwardness, every exertion will be made, consistent with the correct execution of the work, to atone for past delays, by its early and prompt publication.
Again, in Volume IV, he was regretful but hopeful:

The success which [the author] has met with in his late shooting excursions and the arrangements made with the engravers and others engaged in the work, will enable him to publish the remaining volumes with more punctuality than it has hitherto been possible for him to do. At the same time, the correct execution of the plates will be rendered more secure, by the constant superintendence [sic] of the author; and by the whole of the coloring being performed in his own room, under his immediate inspection. The great precision requisite in this last process, and the difficulty of impressing on the mind of every one whose assistance was found necessary, similar ideas of neatness and accuracy, have been a constant source of anxiety to the author, and of much loss and delay.

Improvement of the plates by printing them in color in order to give greater softness and effect to the plumage made a heavy addition to the expense of publication. But Wilson was intent on his goal, and "no obstacles of a mere pecuniary nature have been permitted to stand in the way".

The hardships of preparing this remarkable work in only ten years (Audubon took thirty) were so wearing to his constitution that he died (1813) at age forty-seven while Volume VIII was in press. George Ord, his devoted friend, saw that volume through publication and supervised the completion of Volume IX. As Ord wrote in his preface to Volume VIII about Wilson's unremitting problems:

The historical part of the present volume was fully completed and printed off; and all the plates, except one, were engraved, under the superintendence of the author himself. But from the defection of those on whom he had relied for assistance in the coloring of his subjects, and the great difficulty of immediately procuring others competent to the task, that branch of the work did not keep pace with the rest; and hence the publication of the volume has been delayed, by causes beyond the control of those on whom, at Mr. Wilson's death, his affairs devolved. But this delay, we trust, has
been of benefit to the work, as it enabled us to employ an artist who formerly gained the confidence of the author by his skill and attention to the duties assigned him; and who has given assurance of continuing his assistance until the whole is completed. With such a coadjutor, our labors in that department will be considerably lightened; and with deference we hope that the public will not so readily perceive the absence of that hand, whose delicate touches imparted hues and animation to the pictured “denizens of the air,” which might almost vie with the interesting originals themselves. . . . Mr. Wilson intended coloring the chief part of the plates himself; but that design, which sprang from the most refined sense of duty, and so fondly cherished, he did not live to accomplish.

As Wilson said of himself in the preface to Volume III: “What with truth and accuracy he could do, he has done”; and, in Volume IV: “. . . that, without patron, fortune, or recompence, he brought the greater part of these [birds] from the obscurity of ages, gave to each ‘a local habitation and a name’—collected from personal observation whatever of their characters and manners seemed deserving of attention; and delineated their forms and features, in their native colors, as faithfully as he could, as records, at least, of their existence”.

In 1822 ornithologist Charles Lucien Jules Laurent Bonaparte (Prince of Canino and Musignano, nephew of Napoleon) came to Philadel-
phia, where he studied American ornithology. Although Wilson had
died nine years earlier, Bonaparte became a disciple of his work and
determined to continue it with an extensive supplement. To illus-
trate this supplement, entitled American Ornithology; or, The Natural
History of Birds Inhabiting the United States, Not Given by Wilson (four
volumes, Philadelphia 1825–1833), he engaged Alexander Lawson,
who had engraved all of Wilson's work and was reputed to be the
foremost engraver of this time in America. In his preface, Bonaparte
wrote of Lawson:

With the birds always before him, Mr. Lawson has trans-
ferred our drawings to the copper with his usual unrivalled
accuracy and ability. This artist, who acquired so much dis-

Red-breasted Snipe, Pectoral Sandpiper, Glossy Ibis. Drawn by Titian Ramsey
Peale for Charles Lucien Bonaparte's American Ornithology; or, The Natural History
of Birds Inhabiting the United States, Not Given by Wilson, volume IV (Philadelphia:
Carey and Lea, 1833), plate 23.
tion by the engravings in Wilson's work, has become perfectly master of his art, and so intimately acquainted with the various parts of a bird, that he may be justly styled the first ornithological engraver of our age.

Lawson, for his part, was so assured of Wilson's scientific exactness and certitude that when Bonaparte wanted him to engrave some drawings of birds by John James Audubon for the supplement, Lawson refused on the ground that Audubon's work was art, not science. The single exception was "The Great Crow-Blackbird" in Volume I, the first bird painting of Audubon ever to be engraved and published. For his own The Birds of America, Audubon was obliged to go to England where his dramatic, animated approach had a more cordial reception.

However, Bonaparte, being himself an ornithologist, was more ad-
miring of Audubon's achievements. In the preface to his second and third volumes, he commented:

Mr. J. J. Audubon, painter-naturalist, who has devoted twenty years of his life to studying nature in the forests of the West, has gratified us with the sight of several drawings of new species which will appear among the plates he is now engaged in publishing. It is greatly to be wished, for the advancement of American Ornithology, that while his work, so magnificent, but necessarily so slow in coming forth, is preparing, a scientific abstract of his discoveries should be drawn up without delay.

John Edwards Holbrook, author of *North American Herpetology* (two volumes, Philadelphia, 1836–1838), and *Ichthyology of South Carolina* (Charleston, 1860), was a physician-naturalist and a professor of anatomy at the University of South Carolina. Internationally accepted as one of the leading zoologists of his time, his publications are today rare—the one on reptiles being extremely valuable.

As did Pursh and Wilson, he too determined to tackle a vast topic. But in spite of his professional standing, Holbrook suffered from the exigencies of his time. Although he did not travel far afield for his subject, he nevertheless encountered his own peculiar hardships.

About his *North American Herpetology* he wrote:

In undertaking the present work I was not fully aware of the many difficulties attending it—indeed they could hardly have been anticipated. With an immense mass of materials, without Libraries to refer to, and only defective Museums for comparison, I have constantly been in fear of describing animals as new that have long been known to European Naturalists. In no department of American Zoology is there so much confusion as in Herpetology. This is to be traced partly to the earlier Naturalists, partly to the practice of describing from specimens preserved in alcohol, or from prepared skins.

I have endeavoured to avoid error in this respect by describing in every instance from the living animal, and often after a comparison of many individuals.
His troubles continued, as he recounted, in his *Ichthyology of South Carolina*:

The great delay in the publication of the *Ichthyology of South Carolina* has been caused by the destruction of all the plates, stones, and original drawings, in the burning of the "Artists' Buildings," in Philadelphia, several years since.

This made it necessary to have new drawings made of all the different fishes, which has been done at great expense;—so great, indeed, that the work could not have been carried on without the aid of the State, which has been freely given. The new drawings are from nature, and have been made by the best artists,—as A. J. Ibbotson and A. Sonrel. The colour of the fish has been, in almost every instance, taken from living specimens, by J. Burkhardt, an artist of great merit.

The delay in the publication of the work has, however, enabled me to give more accurate and highly finished plates, and to correct some errors in the letter-press.

As but few numbers of the work were distributed previous to the destruction of the original plates, &c., and the present edition is so much improved, I have decided to recall the former numbers, and to replace them by those of the new edition, without expense to the present holders.

On 25 January 1825, Captain Frederick William Beechey (later Rear Admiral) of the British Royal Navy set sail for the Pacific in
command of the HMS Blossom in order to explore the natural history of that area and to rendezvous in the Bering Strait with a polar expedition coming from the east. Previous to this assignment he had participated in the 1818 Franklin expedition to the Arctic.
From the specimens collected during the exploration came the material described in *The Zoology of Captain Beechey's Voyage...*. During a Voyage to the Pacific and Behring's Straits Performed in His Majesty's Ship Blossom, in the Years 1825, 26, 27, and 28 (London, 1839), by some of the most eminent scientists and foremost illustrators of the day. These included the anatomist Richard Owen; the palaeontologist Rev. William Buckland; the botanist William Hooker; and, most notably, the zoologist John Edward Gray, Esq., F.R.S., &c. The illustrators included George Brettingham Sowerby of the well-known natural-history publishing family, and Edward Lear.

The story of the voyage itself was published by Captain Beechey in a two-volume narrative. In his preface to the *Zoology*, a separate publication, he thanked the contributors for their financial, scientific, and artistic support in seeing the publication realized:

It must be well known to those who are conversant with matters of science that a work of this nature could not have been presented to the public without a considerable loss to the publisher, had there not been among the community gentlemen, who were eminently qualified for the task, sufficiently liberal to bestow gratuitously their time and their talents upon the descriptions; and had not the Government with its accustomed liberality and desire for the promotion of science, contributed towards the publication by granting a sum of money to defray the cost of the plates.

Captain Beechey then thanked individual contributors by name and concluded his encomia as follows:

I wish I could with sincerity have included with the above-mentioned names that of MR. J. E. GRAY, who undertook to describe the shells, but the publication has suffered so much by delay in consequence of his having been connected with it, that it is a matter of the greatest regret to me that I ever acceded to his offer to engage in it. This delay has from various causes been extended over a period of eight years, and I cannot with justice or propriety conceal from the government, the collectors, and especially from the contributors to the work, whose MSS. have been so long printed, that it
has been occasioned entirely by MR. GRAY's failing to furnish his part in spite of every intercession from myself and others: promising his MS. from time to time, and thereby keeping the department in his own hands, yet always disappointing the printer, until at length, from other causes, the publisher (Mr. Richter) fell into difficulties, and all the plates and letterpress were sold by the assignees and lost to the government.

The plates and sheets thus dispersed were however with difficulty and at considerable expence [sic] brought together by the spirited conduct of the present publisher, MR. H. G. BOHN, who anxious that the work should if possible be completed, again applied to MR. GRAY, but much against my wishes. That gentleman however repeated his offer of assistance, but as before it served only to delay the work another year. At length MR. G. B. SOWERBY was engaged to complete the Conchology, and to revise the unprinted portion of MR. GRAY'S MS., and thus after an unprecedented and vexatious delay, and with a considerable additional expense, I am now only able to submit the work to the public.

F. W. BEECHEY.

JULY, 1839
"Interviewing" Mr. Larkin

BY ROBERT PHILLIPS

The following commentary contains quotations from letters of Philip Larkin to the author, a letter to George Plimpton, and portions of a published interview with Mr. Larkin. They are used with permission of the Estate of Philip Larkin, and Mr. Plimpton. The Larkin letters and drafts of the interview are now part of the Robert Phillips Papers in the George Arents Research Library at Syracuse University.

When asked what he thought he looked like, the late Philip Larkin replied, "A balding salmon". He did not have great self-regard. He was overweight, he stammered, and he had poor eyesight. He was nearly deaf, and he had very little hair. Further, he was appalled at the thought of having to "pretend to be himself". Consequently, he avoided television cameras, classrooms, and poetry readings. He prided himself upon his privacy and perhaps even upon his uncooperativeness. Like A. E. Housman, he was a Romantic born out of his age.

This enigmatic man wrote some of the best poetry in the English language of the twentieth century. His work had a lasting effect upon readers. After that of Sir John Betjeman, Larkin's verse was probably the best-loved of any contemporary poetry in the United Kingdom. When his last single collection, High Windows, was published in England in 1974, it sold 6000 copies within three weeks. His posthumous Collected Poems was published on 10 October 1988, and the first printing of 10,000 was over-subscribed on publication day. There have since been two more impressions, with a total of 22,000 copies sold within three months. During his lifetime Larkin attributed his popularity to the fact that he so often wrote about unhappiness: "Most people are unhappy, don't you think?" he asked. Once he remarked of his poetry, "Deprivation is for me what daffodils were for Wordsworth".

After Betjeman's death, many assumed that Larkin would become the Poet Laureate. But he told his friend, the novelist Kingsley Amis,
that he once dreamed of receiving it—and woke up screaming. The truth was, he had stopped writing poetry in the last decade of his life. He inscribed another friend's copy of High Windows with the words, "A few last creaks from an old gate". When he died on 7 December 1985 from cancer at age sixty-three, he was hardly in his poetic prime. Knowing now that he would have held the post only a year, it seems a pity that he did not take on the Laureateship and receive the glory. On television news the day he died, a British commentator announced, "And now, after the break... the man said to be the best Poet Laureate Britain never had, dies in Hull".

Larkin disliked giving interviews almost as much as he disliked giving readings. But he did relent on a few occasions. I was fortunate enough—or unfortunate enough, given his waspish temperament—to have conducted what was perhaps his last interview.

For years I had wanted to write a small book about his poetry. I never did. But I decided to put what I knew of his work to use, and came up with the notion of an interview. Accordingly, I approached the editors of The Paris Review, on whose masthead I've found my name for some years, and in whose pages the celebrated series of literary interviews, "Writers at Work", appears. They were enthusiastic to go ahead if Mr. Larkin would agree to cooperate. They reminded me, however, that he wasn't called "The Hermit of Hull" for nothing.

I wrote Larkin on 21 August 1981, testing the waters. Were he to reply in the affirmative, I was prepared to go at my own expense to Hull, where he lived and worked as University Librarian. The reply, signed "P. A. Larkin", came on 29 September of that year. On the letterhead, after his name, paraded the following degrees and honors: C.B.E., C. Lit., M.A., D. Lit., D. Litt., F.R.S.L., and F.L.A. He wrote:

Personally, I think I have been interviewed far too much already; I always say the same things, and it must be getting very boring by now. However, The Paris Review series is of course known to me, and I can see I should be in good company.

Two points: in the event of my participating, I should like the interview to be conducted by post. You will get much better answers that way. And secondly, as I have no agent,
I am bound to ask whether one gets paid for it, and if so, how much?

This latter point was rather a sticky one. For years *The Paris Review* had paid its interviewers, but not the interviewees. I approached George Plimpton, the editor, who took pause, then replied that Vladimir Nabokov had made a similar request and had been paid. Plimpton came up with a figure I could offer Larkin, and on 20 October 1981 I wrote a second time. Larkin replied on 10 November:

I am glad we can do the interview by post, and await your questions. In self-defense, I had better say that I don’t promise to answer anything you care to ask, but I undertake not to plead the Fifth Amendment except in emergencies.

I proceeded to reread all of Larkin’s work and compiled a list of eighty-one questions. On 28 November I mailed it. I also enclosed some clippings I thought would interest him—one on his friend, the novelist Barbara Pym, a second on another poet-librarian, Archibald MacLeish.

I did not hear from Larkin until 2 March 1982. I had begun to worry. But he then returned sixteen closely-typed pages with a covering letter: “Here at last is your interview. It has taken rather a long time because to my surprise I found writing it suffocatingly boring.”

Immediately I went to work on those sixteen pages. I saw he had answered fifty-six of my eighty-one questions—not bad. But the answers rambled in all directions. I worked to establish a flow and continuity. At times I made his written answers sound more colloquial. I submitted five additional questions before sending him the reshaped interview. I also asked him to explain an allusion which at the time escaped me. He wrote back immediately, “I am a little dismayed by your ignorance of what I have written”. I fired back, “After 86 detailed questions, I am dismayed that you’re dismayed”.

Next, he asked to receive three copies of the issue of the magazine when the interview appeared, claiming, “I have an aged bibliographer to support”. I assured him his three copies and, holding my breath, air-mailed him the finished draft of the interview for ap-
proval. My work on the interview being virtually finished, I wrote to ask if he would sign some of my Larkin books, offering to mail them along with return postage.

A long silence ensued. I kept wondering if Larkin were upset with my additions and changes. The silence, it turned out, had nothing to do with what I had done. Julian Barnes, a British novelist, had in recent weeks approached the London office of The Paris Review and suggested that he interview Larkin. They somehow cleared the project with the managing editor of the New York office, who agreed, "By all means!" Mr. Larkin, suspicious, took it upon himself to write to George Plimpton:
Mr. Barnes’s enquiry suggests one of two things: either that The Paris Review has got its wires a little crossed, or that Mr. Phillips is misrepresenting himself. In the circumstances, could I ask you to confirm by return that Mr. Phillips is acting on behalf of The Paris Review? I will then disillusion Mr. Barnes, and the way would also be clear for you to send me my fee . . . which was to be paid on receipt of typescript. If Mr. Phillips is not acting for you, the situation becomes more complicated.

The managing editor, one Hallie Gay Walden, then wrote Larkin that she had “momentarily forgotten” that they had an interview with him already under way with Mr. Phillips—a confession I’m sure Larkin found less than flattering.

Larkin finally resumed corresponding with me on 5 May of that year and returned the draft interview. He had made additions and corrections in bright pink ink. There were no major changes. I was relieved. His letter did contain this curious reply to my request for his signature: “As regards autographing books, I try to limit this, in order not to devalue items already autographed for friends. But if you would like to send one book I will sign it for you.” I thought this rather ungenerous, considering the extent of our shared work on the interview. Nevertheless, I posted High Windows to Hull. It was returned chastely signed, “Philip Larkin”. Nothing more.

While preparing the interview for publication, I had written Larkin and asked him for a photograph. He replied that he liked Fay Godwin’s photo, but did not himself have a print. His New York publishers did not have one on file, I discovered, but it had appeared on the jacket of one of his books. I had the jacket photographed, and sent one print to The Paris Review and one to Mr. Larkin. With the photograph, the typescript of the interview, and a facsimile page of Larkin’s manuscript of “The Whitsun Weddings”, the interview was ready to be considered for publication.

I have since heard that the submission was highly controversial when it arrived at Plimpton’s office. Some of the staff hated what they saw as the pomposity and rudeness of Larkin’s replies. Others thought it captured him to the nines. (I had deliberately left in his railings against me, for instance, which would have been easy to delete, but which would have robbed the piece of flavor and bite.)
Issue 84 of The Paris Review with the Larkin interview promptly appeared in the summer of 1982. Such speed is indicative of how pleased Mr. Plimpton was to have the piece, which he considered a coup. Some interviews, unfortunately, have languished in his files for numbers of years before seeing print, since he attempts to strike a balance among writers of fiction, poetry, and criticism, and between Americans and foreign writers, as well as men and women. The Larkin interview took up thirty-one pages of the magazine. I was pleased with it and wondered if Larkin was.

I never heard from him again. He did, however, write the magazine and request three more copies of the issue, and to make three nit-picking corrections he wished to incorporate if the piece were ever reprinted in an anthology. One was the deletion of a comma.

In 1983 Larkin collected his prose in a volume called Required Writing. I bought the volume, of course, and discovered it contained my Larkin interview intact. No one had asked my permission, or offered payment, although I found out subsequently that Mr. Plimpton's permission had been sought. It was one of only two interviews Larkin chose to reprint. Clearly, the piece did not displease him after all.

The interview has since been reprinted elsewhere, and I find it quoted in essays and reviews on Larkin in particular and on modern poets and poetry in general. But perhaps no more surprising use of it could be found than in its transformation into a play. The British playwright Ron Hutchinson (author of "Rat in the Skull", "Babbit: A Marriage", and other plays) created a one-act, two-character play based on the interview. Incorporating lines from many of Larkin's poems as well as the interview and with live jazz music on stage, the play premiered at the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles on 18 October 1988. Its title was simply: "Larkin". It starred William Glover as the poet and, for the increase of dramatic tension, one supposes, Cristina Rose in my place as interviewer. The play, produced by Jessica Teich and directed by the playwright, received a favorable review in the Los Angeles Times.

Following are sample excerpts, representing a little more than a third of the entire interview. I have retained some comments on Larkin's poetry and career as a librarian, while for reasons of length I have deleted sections devoted to his fiction and to his extensive
involvement in the editing of *The Oxford Book of Twentieth-Century English Verse*. Those who are interested may wish to read the original interview in its entirety. It is most readily available in Philip Larkin's *Required Writing* and in *Writers at Work: The Paris Review Interviews, 7th series*, ed. George Plimpton (New York: Viking Penguin, 1986).

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INTERVIEWER: Can you describe your life at Hull? Do you live in a flat or own a house?

LARKIN: I came to Hull in 1955. After eighteen months (during which I wrote “Mr. Bleaney”), I took a University flat and lived there for nearly eighteen years. It was the top flat in a house that was reputedly the American Consulate during the war, and though it might not have suited everybody, it suited me. I wrote most of *The Whitsun Weddings* and all of *High Windows* there. Probably I should never have moved if the University hadn't decided to sell the house, but as it was I had to get out and find somewhere else. It was a dreadful experience, as at that time houses were hard to find. In the end friends reported a small house near the University, and I bought that in 1974. I haven't decided yet whether or not I like it.

INTERVIEWER: How many days a week do you work at the library, and for how many hours a day?

LARKIN: My job as University Librarian is a full-time one, five-days a week, forty-five weeks a year. When I came to Hull, I had eleven staff; now there are over a hundred of one sort and another. We built one new library in 1960 and another in 1970, so that my first fifteen years were busy. Of course, this was a period of university expansion in England, and Hull grew as much as if not more than the rest. Luckily the vice-chancellor during most of this time was keen on the library, which is why it is called after him. Looking back, I think that if the Brynmor Jones Library is a good library—and I think it is—the credit should go to him and to the library staff. And to the University as a whole, of course. But you wouldn't be interested in all that.
INTERVIEWER: What is your daily routine?

LARKIN: My life is as simple as I can make it. Work all day, cook, eat, wash up, telephone, hack writing, drink, television in the evenings. I almost never go out. I suppose everyone tries to ignore the passing of time: some people by doing a lot, being in California one year and Japan the next; or there’s my way—making every day and every year exactly the same. Probably neither works.

INTERVIEWER: You didn’t mention a schedule for writing . . .

LARKIN: Yes, I was afraid you’d ask about writing. Anything I say about writing poems is bound to be retrospective, because in fact I’ve written very little since moving into this house, or since High Windows, or since 1974, whichever way you like to put it. But when I did write them, well, it was in the evenings, after work, after washing up (I’m sorry: you would call this “doing the dishes”). It was a routine like any other. And really it worked very well: I don’t think you can write a poem for more than two hours. After that you’re going round in circles, and it’s much better to leave it for twenty-four hours, by which time your subconscious or whatever has solved the block and you’re ready to go on.

The best writing conditions I ever had were in Belfast, when I was working at the University there. Another top-floor flat, by the way. I wrote between eight and ten in the evenings, then went to the University bar till eleven, then played cards or talked with friends till one or two. The first part of the evening had the second part to look forward to, and I could enjoy the second part with a clear conscience because I’d done my two hours. I can’t seem to organize that now.

INTERVIEWER: Does, or did, writing come easily for you? Does a poem get completed slowly or rapidly?

LARKIN: I’ve no standards of comparison. I wrote short poems quite quickly. Longer ones would take weeks or even months. I used to find that I was never sure I was going to finish a poem until I had thought of the last line. Of course, the last line was sometimes the first one you thought of! But usually the last line would come when
I'd done about two-thirds of the poem, and then it was just a matter of closing the gap.

INTERVIEWER: Why do you write, and for whom?

LARKIN: You've been reading Auden: "To ask the hard question is simple." The short answer is that you write because you have to. If you rationalize it, it seems as if you've seen this sight, felt this feeling, had this vision, and have got to find a combination of words that will preserve it by setting it off in other people. The duty is to the original experience. It doesn't feel like self-expression, though it may look like it. As for whom you write, well, you write for everybody. Or anybody who will listen.

INTERVIEWER: Do you share your manuscripts with anyone before publishing them? Are there any friends whose advice you would follow in revising a poem?

LARKIN: I shouldn't normally show what I'd written to anyone: what would be the point? You remember Tennyson reading an unpublished poem to Jowett; when he had finished, Jowett said, "I shouldn't publish that if I were you, Tennyson." Tennyson replied, "If it comes to that, Master, the sherry you gave us at lunch was downright filthy." That's about all that can happen.

But when we were young, Kingsley Amis and I used to exchange unpublished poems, largely because we never thought they could be published, I suppose. He encouraged me, I encouraged him. Encouragement is very necessary to a young writer. But it's hard to find anyone worth encouraging: there aren't many Kingsleys about....

INTERVIEWER: How did you come to be a librarian? Had you no interest in teaching? What was your father's profession?

LARKIN: Oh dear, this means a lot of autobiography. My father was a city treasurer, a finance officer. I never had the least desire to "be" anything when I was at school, and by the time I went to Oxford the war was on and there wasn't anything to "be" except a serviceman or a teacher or a civil servant. In 1943 when I graduated I knew I couldn't be the first, because I'd been graded unfit (I sup-
pose through eyesight), nor the second because I stammered, and then the Civil Service turned me down twice, and I thought, Well, that lets me out, and I sat at home writing *Jill*. But of course in those days the government had powers to send you into the mines or onto the land or into industry, and they wrote quite politely to ask what in fact I was doing. I looked at the daily paper (the *Birmingham Post*: we were living at Warwick then) and saw that a small town in Shropshire was advertising for a librarian, applied for it, and got it, and told the government so, which seemed to satisfy them.

Of course, I wasn’t a real librarian, more a sort of caretaker—it was a one-man library—and I can’t pretend I enjoyed it much. The previous librarian had been there about forty years, and I was afraid I should be there all my life too. This made me start qualifying myself professionally, just in order to get away, which I did in 1946. By then I’d written *Jill*, and *The North Ship*, and *A Girl in Winter*. It was probably the "intensest" time of my life.

INTERVIEWER: Is Jorge Luis Borges the only other contemporary poet of note who is also a librarian, by the way? Are you aware of any others?

LARKIN: Who is Jorge Luis Borges? The writer-librarian I like is Archibald MacLeish. You know, he was made Librarian of Congress in 1939, and on his first day they brought him some papers to sign, and he wouldn’t sign them until he understood what they were all about. When he did understand, he started making objections and countersuggestions. The upshot was that he reorganized the whole Library of Congress in five years simply by saying, I don’t understand and I don’t agree, and in wartime, too. Splendid man.

INTERVIEWER: What do you think of the academic world as a milieu for the working creative writer—teaching specifically?

LARKIN: The academic world has worked all right for me, but then, I’m not a teacher. I couldn’t be. I should think that chewing over other people’s work, writing I mean, must be terribly stultifying. Quite sickens you with the whole business of literature. But then, I haven’t got that kind of mind, conceptual or ratiocinative or whatever it is. It would be death to me to have to think about literature as such, to say why one poem was “better” than another, and so on. ...
INTERVIEWER: Can you describe your relationship with the contemporary literary community?

LARKIN: I'm somewhat withdrawn from what you call "the contemporary literary community," for two reasons: in the first place, I don't write for a living, and so don't have to keep in touch with literary editors and publishers and television people in order to earn money; and in the second, I don't live in London. Given that, my relations with it are quite amicable.

INTERVIEWER: Is Hull a place where you are likely to stay put? If so, have you as a person changed since the writing of the poem "Places, Loved Ones"—or is the speaker of that poem a persona?

LARKIN: Hull is a place where I have stayed. On my twenty-fifth anniversary, I held a little luncheon party for the members of my staff who'd been there as long as I had, or almost as long, and they made me a presentation with a card bearing the very lines you mean. Touche, as the French say.

INTERVIEWER: As a bachelor, have you sometimes felt an outsider? Or, like the speaker of your poems "Reasons for Attendance," "Dockery & Son," and "Self's the Man," have you enjoyed being single and remained so because you liked and preferred living that way?

LARKIN: Hard to say. Yes, I've remained single by choice, and shouldn't have liked anything else, but of course most people do get married, and divorced too, and so I suppose I am an outsider in the sense you mean. Of course it worries me from time to time, but it would take too long to explain why. Samuel Butler said, Life is an affair of being spoilt in one way or another.

INTERVIEWER: Is the character John Kemp in any way based upon your own youth? Were you that shy?

LARKIN: I would say, yes, I was and am extremely shy. Anyone who has stammered will know what agony it is, especially at school. It means you never take the lead in anything or do anything but try to efface yourself. I often wonder if I was shy because I stammered, or vice versa.
INTERVIEWER: Was your childhood unhappy?

LARKIN: My childhood was all right, comfortable and stable and loving, but I wasn't a happy child, or so they say. On the other hand, I've never been a recluse, contrary to reports: I've had friends, and enjoyed their company. In comparison with some people I know, I'm extremely sociable.

INTERVIEWER: Do you feel happiness is unlikely in this world?

LARKIN: Well, I think if you're in good health, and have enough money, and nothing is bothering you in the foreseeable future, that's as much as you can hope for. But "happiness," in the sense of a continuous emotional orgasm, no. If only because you know that you are going to die, and the people you love are going to die. . . .

INTERVIEWER: Have you ever attempted a truly long poem? I've never seen one in print. If not, why?

LARKIN: I've written none. A long poem for me would be a novel. In that sense, A Girl in Winter is a poem.

INTERVIEWER: What about a play or a verse play?

LARKIN: I don't like plays. They happen in public, which, as I said, I don't like, and by now I have grown rather deaf, which means I can't hear what's going on. Then again, they are rather like poetry readings: they have to get an instant response, which tends to vulgarize. And of course the intrusion of personality—the actor, the producer—or do you call him the director—is distracting.

All the same, I admire Murder in the Cathedral as much as anything Eliot ever wrote. I read it from time to time for pleasure, which is the highest compliment I can pay.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever meet Eliot?

LARKIN: I didn't know him. Once I was in the Faber offices—the old ones, "24, Russell Square," that magic address!—talking to Charles Monteith, and he said, "Have you ever met Eliot?" I said no, and to my astonishment he stepped out and reappeared with Eliot, who must
have been in the next room. We shook hands, and he explained that he was expecting someone to tea and couldn’t stay. There was a pause, and he said, “I’m glad to see you in this office.” The significance of that was that I wasn’t a Faber author—it must have been before 1964, when they published The Whitsun Weddings—and I took it as a great compliment. But it was a shattering few minutes: I hardly remember what I thought. . . .

INTERVIEWER: Can you drink and write? Have you tried any consciousness-expanding drugs?

LARKIN: No, though of course those of my generation are drinkers. Not druggers.

INTERVIEWER: Can you describe the genesis and working-out of a poem based upon an image that most people would simply pass by? (A clear road between neighbors, an ambulance in city traffic?)

LARKIN: If I could answer this sort of question, I’d be a professor rather than a librarian. And in any case, I shouldn’t want to. It’s a thing you don’t want to think about. It happens, or happened, and if it’s something to be grateful for, you’re grateful.

I remember saying once, I can’t understand these chaps who go round American universities explaining how they write poems: it’s like going round explaining how you sleep with your wife. Whoever I was talking to said, They’d do that, too, if their agents could fix it.

INTERVIEWER: Do you throw away a lot of poems?

LARKIN: Some poems didn’t get finished. Some didn’t get published. I never throw anything away. . . .

INTERVIEWER: Your introduction to All What Jazz? takes a stance against experiment, citing the trio of Picasso, Pound, and Parker. Why do you distrust the new?

LARKIN: It seems to me undeniable that up to this century literature used language in the way we all use it, painting represented what anyone with normal vision sees, and music was an affair of nice
noises rather than nasty ones. The innovation of “modernism” in the arts consisted of doing the opposite. I don’t know why, I’m not a historian. You have to distinguish between things that seemed odd when they were new but are now quite familiar, such as Ibsen and Wagner, and things that seemed crazy when they were new and seem crazy now, like *Finnegans Wake* and Picasso.

INTERVIEWER: What’s that got to do with jazz?

LARKIN: Everything. Jazz showed this very clearly because it is such a telescoped art, only as old as the century, if that. Charlie Parker wrecked jazz by—or so they tell me—using the chromatic rather than the diatonic scale. The diatonic scale is what you use if you want to write a national anthem, or a love song, or a lullaby. The chromatic scale is what you use to give the effect of drinking a quinine martini and having an enema simultaneously.

If I sound heated on this, it’s because I love jazz, the jazz of Armstrong and Bechet and Ellington and Bessie Smith and Beiderbecke. To have it all destroyed by a paranoiac drug addict made me furious. Anyway, it’s dead now, dead as Elizabethan madrigal singing. We can only treasure the records. And I do.

INTERVIEWER: Have you any thoughts on the office of poet laureate? Does it serve a valid function?

LARKIN: Poetry and sovereignty are very primitive things. I like to think of their being united in this way, in England. On the other hand, it’s not clear what the laureate is, or does. Deliberately so, in a way: it isn’t a job, there are no duties, no salary, and yet it isn’t quite an honor, either, or not just an honor. I’m sure the worst thing about it, especially today, is the publicity it brings, the pressure to be involved publicly with poetry, which must be pretty inimical to any real writing.

Of course, the days when Tennyson would publish a sonnet telling Gladstone what to do about foreign policy are over. It’s funny that Kipling, who is what most people think of as a poet as national spokesman, never was laureate. He should have had it when Bridges was appointed, but it’s typical that he didn’t—the post isn’t thought of in that way. It really is a genuine attempt to honor someone. But
the publicity that anything to do with the Palace gets these days is so fierce, it must be really more of an ordeal than an honor.

INTERVIEWER: Your poetry volumes have appeared at the rate of one per decade. From what you say, though, is it unlikely we’ll have another around 1984? Did you really only complete about three poems in any given year?

LARKIN: It’s unlikely I shall write any more poems, but when I did, yes, I did write slowly. I was looking at “The Whitsun Weddings” [the poem] just the other day, and found that I began it sometime in the summer of 1957. After three pages, I dropped it for another poem that in fact was finished but never published. I picked it up again, in March 1958, and worked on it till October, when it was finished. But when I look at the diary I was keeping at the time, I see that the kind of incident it describes happened in July 1955! So in all, it took over three years. Of course, that’s an exception. But I did write slowly, partly because you’re finding out what to say as well as how to say it, and that takes time.

INTERVIEWER: For someone who dislikes being interviewed, you’ve responded generously.

LARKIN: I’m afraid I haven’t said anything very interesting. You must realize I’ve never had “ideas” about poetry. To me it’s always been a personal, almost physical release or solution to a complex pressure of needs—wanting to create, to justify, to praise, to explain, to externalize, depending on the circumstances. And I’ve never been much interested in other people’s poetry—one reason for writing, of course, is that no one’s written what you want to read.

Probably my notion of poetry is very simple. Some time ago I agreed to help judge a poetry competition—you know, the kind where they get about 35,000 entries, and you look at the best few thousand. After a bit I said, Where are all the love poems? And nature poems? And they said, Oh, we threw all those away. I expect they were the ones I should have liked.
Past and Present in Hope Emily Allen’s Essay “Relics”

BY JOHN C. HIRSH

Syracuse University has for many years had a strong interest in the Oneida Community. The George Arents Research Library holds the Oneida Community Collection, which includes both correspondence and writings of Hope Emily Allen. Over the years the Library Associates have sponsored a number of lectures on the history of the Community and maintained a special relationship with Oneida descendants.

One of the most important statements the distinguished American medievalist Hope Emily Allen (1883–1960) made about her interest in the past is here printed for the first time. Hope Allen was a descendant of New York State’s Oneida Community and made important scholarly contributions to the study of medieval mysticism, particularly in the works of a fourteenth-century mystic, Richard Rolle, and a fifteenth-century devout woman, Margery Kempe. She also wrote a number of essays, not all of which appeared in print during her lifetime, and the essay which follows is one of these. The drafts which the text underwent and the interest she took in its publication suggest that she valued it greatly, and indeed it seems to have sprung from a particularly trying period in her life.

Hope Allen probably began work on the essay after she returned to Oneida from Britain in 1912. That year had been very difficult for her, with ill health and a breakdown. The following year the death of her mother all but curtailed her academic work. In the subsequent period, familial obligations, health, and the advent of the First World War kept her away from the European libraries on which her work depended, and she turned to material already in hand, or

* Those interested in reading more on Hope Emily Allen are referred to Professor Hirsh’s recently published Hope Emily Allen: Medieval Scholarship and Feminism (Norman, Okla.: Pilgrim Books, 1988).—Ed.
to essays based upon her Oneida home. It was in this period too that, as "an antiquary bred in the bone", she began to record stories current among the Oneida Indians, some of whom she had known well since childhood. Of the essays she took up during this period, "Relics" was her most important effort, combining as it did both her interest in her home and in the past. She lavished upon it all that memory, imagination, and learning could provide, and the resulting essay was as much a personal and philosophical statement as a description of the past history and present memories of upstate New York.

By 1918 the essay was finished, and in that year a New York magazine, The Unpartisan Review, previously called The Unpopular Review, accepted it for publication, having rejected it the previous year as too long. But delay followed delay, and the essay did not appear in print. In 1919, probably on 11 August, Hope Allen wrote to the editor, who had earlier that year refused a second essay, asking (among other things) what had become of "Relics". On 16 October the editor, the New York publisher Henry Holt, wrote in answer, sending a check for thirty dollars and a letter (now in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS. Eng. misc. c. 484, fol. 127) promising attention to the matter. But five years later the essay had still not appeared, and Hope Allen now wrote again. This time she offered to return Holt's payment (which she did: his letter of receipt dated 16 September 1924 is in the same collection, fol. 131) and requested the return of her manuscript. With the manuscript in hand, Hope reviewed the piece, had it retyped, and probably tried to place it elsewhere, though no other offer of publication has survived. The last contemporary record of the essay is to be found in another letter in the Bodleian (fol. 137), dated 14 June 1930, to a literary agent, offering the essay for sale. But it never appeared in print.

"Relics" reveals a range of cultural and historical considerations that appear only rarely in Hope Allen's medieval scholarship. It is sensitive to the way in which present interests and present power are related to past injustices, recalling "the man who first applied the white man's law to an Indian criminal ... when he hanged a squaw outside the town for murdering her rival". The essay discovers modern echoes of this harsh attitude both in the farmer who—disregarding Indian culture—had a tribal boulder "dug out because it annoyed him to have visitors come to see it", and among those who mistook
Hope Emily Allen
(Photo through courtesy of Oneida Community Mansion House, Inc.)
a human jawbone for a "relic". The image of a civilized white man (representing progress) hanging a woman who has kept to traditional ways serves to remind the reader of past realities over which true relics stand guard. These relics, made by human hands or adopted to human use, are bridges between present and past that require no apology and only a little explanation. They form a link that carries the past into the present, identifies its quality, and reminds the present that it too will shortly pass away.

The essay thus is concerned more with the value of the past than with the past itself. The encroachments of progress, with its destruction of sensibility, feeling, and memory, are held in check by the recollection of those who were here before, what they made and what they owned. Things are important because of what they communicate about their makers, their owners—not for themselves alone. "The influence of the majority here is oppressive", Hope Allen wrote, but remarked too that the collector must never forget, in preserving the past, that "the vital element of life" is often "one's self, placed in the real and immediate present". The interaction between past and present is complex, and the antiquary must not turn sentimental. Things have their season; attitudes will change. Youth may attempt to escape the past, or to ignore it, but time will bring to many a consciousness of what has been lost, a desire to regain it, and with that a sympathy for those humane values that are at the heart of history.

Throughout the essay there is an implicit sympathy for the values of those who stand outside the American mainstream. Women and Indians share a concern with values that humanize and do not dominate, that inform rather than rule. Throughout, Hope Allen's concern for the values of these two groups is exemplary, not confrontational. The historian understands better than most the way important influences often lie hidden, and how the apparently weak speak to values that lie at the center of the society all live in.

Thus the essay is also about the present, about the importance of not forgetting those, good and bad, who were here before us. Sustained by memory, the community of the past will touch our living present. It is an historian's defence of her profession.

I have presented the text exactly as Hope Allen submitted it, and have not specified persons or places which she knew, but intentionally left abstract, though references to certain of the places con-
cerned appear in the Bodleian Library collection. The hill village that she alludes to is Peterboro, N.Y. (fol. 128), and the barge, on which she had also written a poem, was by Chappawa Creek: “it burned soon after the Niagara Power Development”, she recalled in 1930 (fol. 138). The focus is clearly on the countryside around her native Oneida County, and the piece as a whole responds to the pleasure she took in her New York State surroundings. The essay is also one of her clearest and earliest statements about her love for the past, her concern for those—women and Indians in particular—who are often forgotten, but whose values, both as an historian and as a woman living in time, she deeply shared.

RELICS

“Relics” seems to be the generic word for antiquities developed in indigenous America. I knew it in my childhood, when I lived beyond the reach of cosmopolitan influences, and I lately came to an old-fashioned hill-village, where I found it still in use. I have found here in connection with “relics,” a state of things as obsolete as the technical use (so to speak) of the word. I have found an environment where love of “relics” is still accounted an eccentricity, since here the antiquarian fashion has not yet come in. Housewives here, I believe, generally still pride themselves on house-furnishings consistently new—as proof, in part, of their means of providing such—and I have been sometimes for a moment aghast, when, in the home where I am staying, which is probably one of the most envied interiors of the village, I have suddenly realized that not a stick of furniture antedated the last fifteen years. It seemed a comfortless life, to live altogether divested of the material things that are enriched by memories, and it made me wonder if the humanity that lived with the furniture was itself faithless to memory, and careless of the sentiment and idealism that memory brings. The impiety seemed the greater, since the house is an historic one, though now made over so that its original features are almost lost. The fireplaces are gone, the fanlight over the front door is gone, and the delicate tracery that used to join it on either side, is gone,—the space being filled in on the inside by convenient cupboards, and clapboarded over on the outside, (facing the new porch,) as if nothing else had ever been. The neat ornamentation that used to run under the eaves was a
matter of so much indifference to the orderly modern owner that he has evidently relied on its not being seen, for he has left gaps in the rows of little rectangles by which it was constructed. Yet this was the house of the man who first applied the white man's law to an Indian criminal, and when he hanged a squaw outside the town for murdering her rival, he all but raised an insurrection of the tribe.

Now, even the woodshed of Captain Petrie's house is void of "relies," for its owners are as neat as they are progressive. In some village homes the roomy woodsheds still contain pretty "stands," and quaint chairs, and in the woodshed next door a high old secretary is used for a tool-chest. The master of this house is a man who, above all, has his utensils satisfactory, and he would tolerate no such make-shift. He has a solid workbench, and his wife's pantry equipment is of the best and newest. I see that when the mistress of the house does all her own work, (as is the case throughout this village,) convenient and handsome kitchens and pantries are the result. There is a sincerity about the effect that I find pleasing.

I myself am, I believe, an antiquary bred in the bone, and I would have been sorely tried if I had been born into a race of nomads, collecting their paraphernalia anew at each camping ground. My inclination for "relies" is something inscrutable and inevitable in my composition, which forms a chain of connection with my most distant borderland of infancy. In my childhood I felt my heart swell with emotion at the sight of any material thing with which I could connect a long past, and before my teens I lay on the floor, drawing out genealogical charts, because I always instinctively sought to trace the past of every person, thing, and place in my experience, myself among the rest. I early acquired a local reputation as a "relic-lover," of which the results sometimes abashed me. I have had men excavating for a house send for me to receive some shreds of human thigh-bones and rusty nails which they had turned up,—the latter vouched for as ancient because "handmade." I have even been presented with the jaw-bone of an Indian as a "relic." On my side I have had times of carrying my antiquarianism to grotesque extremes, for I have had moments of wishing to communicate with parrots and tortoises, domestic companions of man whose span of life exceeds his, and, even in childhood, I sought the conversation of the "oldest living inhabitant." I seem to have always a craving to touch the great human mystery of Time, and a sensitiveness of emotion when
it strikes me by concrete example. This instinct is, I believe, an effort on my part to transcend the narrow limitations of the individual, but it must be my idiosyncrasy to regard it so philosophically, or it would be an experience which the rest of humanity would share,—as they do not. Though to me my antiquarian impulse is the mortal's inevitable groping after a vision beyond mortality, to the majority of my brothers and sisters it is only an individual peculiarity. Yet I have lived to see my habit of mind, which is the instinctive habit only of the minority, become a fashion. Persons who were in my memory most careless of ancient things and their memories, have become great lovers of "the antique," and seekers of antiquities. Persons who sold, lost, neglected, destroyed, all sorts of memory-laden belongings in their youth, now fill their houses with treasures that some one of another instinct has tenderly preserved. It is a wonder to me sometimes that the new housemates do not rise in reproach for their brothers, whose destruction their present guardians allowed. I own that I have, in this connection, moments of wonder extending to vexation. Altogether, therefore, when I come to an environment like that of my hill-village, where the integrity of type in these matters is preserved, I find something refreshing in the spectacle, even though this is a civilization that makes no provision for my own type.

Here, where the natural divisions of humanity in the matter of antiquarianism is undisturbed, it is still visible how distinct is the variation which the human race naturally presents in this regard. There is always a farmer or two in the neighborhood who is making a collection of Indian relics—which his children usually neglect; and I am told that Indian "skinning knives" are preserved by the butchers for actual use in their trade—this is, of course, an entirely utilitarian matter. The family that gave their name to the most interesting Indian site of the region—where Champlain fought a battle,—lived there a generation or more with no interest in the stone and bone curiosities which the site afforded. Only once, I am told, the son procured an Indian pipe—which fell from a woodchuck's hole. These people were, however, public benefactors in a passive capacity, since they refused to allow the huge boulder, that had made the tribal symbol, to be removed; and in this they were unfortunately not imitated by the farmer who owned the oldest Indian site in the neighborhood. He had his boulder dug out because it annoyed him to have
visitors come to see it. The owner of another scene of Indian habitation—where a furrow still marks the line of the palisade, though the corn-pits are gone, such as still remain on Champlain's battle-field,—this farmer could not remember whether he had any Indian relics or not; but he finally brought some forth—from his screw box, and his wife's button-box! I said to this wife, "I am very fond of all old things," and she replied in a puzzled way, "How very queer that is!" Her specialty is "fancy-work," in which, I am told, she "always keeps right up to the fashion." She represents the majority, and their influence would be oppressive to one of the minority, permanently caught in the meshes of this environment.

That the influence of the majority here is oppressive, I can see by the way in which the instinctive antiquarians deport themselves. There is one relic-lover who for years went buggy-riding everywhere over the hills to collect relics,—and she inherited twenty-five homespun blankets and coverlets. Yet she houses her collections for the most part in the lumber-room and attic, and only sometimes, for the pleasure of a visiting kindred spirit, she brings down and hangs over the "comfortable modern furniture" with which she lives, some of her homespuns—blue, red, brown, or green, woven with plaids, roses, and "birds of paradise." I am hoping to stay here till she does her "fall cleaning," for I am told that then all her relics sun themselves. I should feel better about the gloomy existence of her coverlets all the year, if I could feel that they lay in beautiful chests, like Homeric weavings of old,—the best laid tenderly lowest of all, so that all were turned over lovingly to find the favorite. For such things a "hoard" is a fitting resting-place, if reverently prepared; but beautiful chests were no part of the pioneer inheritance of this region, and there is no knowledge how ignobly the beautiful weavings that did abound here may now be lying.

I feel that the case of the relic-lover just cited,—who stores her treasures and lives among modern objects of indifference,—is an example of the triumph of environment over the individual. An almost symbolical instance, in which the same battle was fought and won, was told me by another woman. "When my uncle came back from the Civil War," she said, "my mother took his army blanket for the ironing board, and when I was a girl I used to iron on it. But as I ironed, and ironed, it didn't seem right, and the older I grew and the more I got to know, the worse I felt about it. Finally I couldn't stand it any longer, and I took that blanket off the board, and I have
it now, with the "U. S. A." all scorched by the ironing. I've always been glad that I took it off, and I think a heap of that old thing."

This woman owned that she had always "loved nothing better than a relic," but she also has made a compromise with her environment; for she lives with modern furnishings, and she has gilded the old brass-candle-sticks, snuffers, and so forth—which she has preserved so carefully as relics. As a general thing, if there is any old-fashioned article still in use in the village, it is either gilded or painted white, and old bedsteads have furnished benches very generally to the farm lawns hereabout. There is no house in the village which has preserved an old-fashioned interior, though many of the houses are beautifully old-fashioned from without, and they have many of them now even gone back to the green and white paint, for which they were built. But you will find that the old brass knocker has been painted over with the door.

Thus the collective strength of the instinct of the majority influences even the habit of the minority, in this scene of the unhampered working out of the antiquarian and iconoclastic impulses of man. And here, sometimes even I can glimpse the point of view of the majority; for antiquarianism is not what it is in the world at large. In a town left behind for a generation, only the material details of life can be progressive, and those only imperfectly so. Where you still have to communicate with the outside world by a slow daily stage, and run your household by hewing wood and drawing water, perhaps the inconvenience and sense of backwardness is mitigated if you have no material monuments of the antique living in your home. Perhaps to cling to material antiquities in a world of institutions so ancient would stifle the last breath of life stirring in your organism. I knew an ancient town where, on a stream once used for commerce, and now abandoned, a barge with graceful mast, pointed hulk, and chains that clanked in the wind, rotted at the rotting dock for twenty years. I delighted in it as the perfect symbol for the town, pointing up above the landscape for many miles; children delighted in it as a playground. But I remember that when it was destroyed by fire, an old resident of the town rejoiced in my hearing, and when I remonstrated with her because it was a picturesque landmark gone, she said to me: "Oh, it is all very well for you to like it as the symbol of the decay of the town, but if you were a part of the town, you would be glad to see such a symbol go."

Thus, though my own place is pre-ordained, I have learned in old
towns something of the other side of the quarrel of antiquarian and
iconoclast. Antiquarianism as a reality to be lived, is very different
from antiquarianism as an aesthetic pleasure in the midst of a pro-
gressive environment. I even see that it is for the good of the whole
that the antiquarians are in the minority in the human race, and I
desire more and more, as I grow older, to keep my own antiquarian
impulse within bounds. I have seen homes where the present gener-
ation was crowded out by the accumulations of their forebears. I
have a friend who has a wealth of family jewelry, yet always wears
modern pieces, because she says that only thus can she feel herself.
The old pieces are surcharged with the personalities of the past. I
can now conceive how life in an environment solidly filled in with
memorials from the past might in certain moods and circumstances,
be a torment haunted by incessant ghosts.

Upon reflection, I am not sorry that the people of this village, for
the most part, lack the indiscriminate piety of the antiquarian, for if
unchecked this would reach the cluttering ancestor-worship of the
Chinese. There is here a refreshing sincerity and freedom from false
sentiment, in the attitude generally manifested towards the past. Since
the people here lack a developed sense of beauty, therefore, even in
this age of ugly manufactures, they naturally prefer the new to the
old. If I lived in an age which made beautiful houses and furnishings,
I decide that I also might prefer new homes to old; and I understand
the iconoclasm of the Gothic builders who built always according to
the latest fashion, however incongruous that was with what had been
built before. Their iconoclasm was the natural effect—and perhaps
the cause—of the creative age of art in which they lived. There is,
after all, something wholesome and forward-looking in “keeping up
to the fashion.” The vital impulse of life at the most important
moments is, after all, to be one’s self, placed in the real immediate
present. Anything that cramps or deadens that impulse is malign and
intolerable. Life is most fruitful when seen simple and directly chal-
gling. I, or any other antiquarian, could work myself into frenzies
of sophisticated regret,—grieving over old houses torn down or made
comfortable, old landmarks removed, old treasures lost. I remember
that as a child I went into agonies of regret over realizing by what a
narrow margin I missed the possibility of seeing “Old London Bridge”—
for which, perhaps, the game, “London Bridge is falling down,” had
given me specially romantic associations. At times I have wished
passionately that material things—for example, fine highboys hidden in farm-house attics, when I was passing, or carved Indian pipes buried in the earth, over which I was walking,—had methods of signalling those who were seeking them. After some experience of this waste of emotion, I have realized that "this way madness lies," and I have even come to have moments of oppression at the very thought of the leavings of past generations. I have seen that there may have been profound insight, even from the point of view of the living, in the custom among primitive people of burying their belongings with the dead. It was a way to lay all ghosts.

Perhaps there was also something of the instinct of self preservation in another act of my friend who owned the jewelry. She inherited also a chest of homespun linen, brought over by an English ancestor, all of which she sent at the beginning of the Great War to the English Red Cross, because the original owner, as she said, would so have loved to have it go there. This cutting up of ancient linen shocked my antiquarian instinct, and the use for mean purposes of what was of considerable value shocked my practical sense. But I have the suspicion that my friend,—owner of a large hereditary accumulation,—felt herself freed for a moment, when, as it were, she put some of her ancient goods at the disposal of their original owner quite as truly as if she had buried them in the owner’s grave.

Thus, as a reality in human experience, it is as “dead men’s goods” that the treasures of the antiquarian often appear to the average man; and this implication seems conveyed by the old indigenous American term “relics.” This word seems to suggest more the departed owner than the object, and it makes connection with the old use of the word “relict” for widow, once also common in indigenous America. Some peoples, as we know, included the widow with the goods of the dead man which were sent after him at his death, and our indigenous American inclusion of both under the same word might, in some imaginative moments, seem the vaguest possible stirring of the same instinct. Seriously, however, the indifference, half-repugnance, of the average man for “relics” does perhaps, in the depths of its subconsciousness, touch a foundation of the same primitive psychology as the primitive burial or funeral pyre. We have an expression of the same instincts in the custom formerly followed by the Indians of this vicinity, of abandoning a dwelling,—which would be a bark house in this case,—in which a death had occurred. My gentle Indian
char woman tells me a terrible ghost story told her by her grandmother, which was founded on this custom. It relates the ghastly experiences of some travellers who, when ready to drop on the trail, took refuge in an abandoned hut. A folk-lorist tells me that the story is a famous one among the tribes of this region. And they went even farther in their shrinking from the dead and the memories of the past. At a certain interval after death, a feast was held, at which a place was laid for the dead and furnished with everything on the board. Some ritual was recited, and after this time the ghost, which up to then had remained near the scene of its earthly life, took its departure, and from this hour mourning was to cease. The original date at which the feast was held was a year from the date of death, but the period of mourning was later shortened to ten days. Nothing could better illustrate the instinct of self preservation inherent in primitive peoples. When last year the Indian laundress of my next door neighbor fell dead, it was a "ten days' feast" that was celebrated in her honor, after the newer Iroquois custom.

In any modern environment there is doubtless too much sensibility to allow the curtailment of mourning, though—perhaps for reasons of economy in part—the outward badges of mourning are rarely seen in this village. But because of the strength of sensibility existing here, I feel sure that nowhere is the essential of the piety involved in antiquarianism better observed. Indiscriminate collecting is "queer," indiscriminate preservation is oppressive, but the preservation of ancient objects of special personal interest is always understood. I am reminded of the saying of a naturally iconoclastic friend who, since the age of forty, has become a delightful teller of tales of a generation ago. "We all become, to a certain degree, antiquarians as we grow older," he says, "for we all become sentimental about our own past." In the same sense, the people here are one and all interested in their own past, and reverent of the forebears whom they have known. They probably feel as much sentiment as the exigencies of human life can afford. Though they shrink from subjecting themselves to the whole environment of their ancestors, yet they cherish objects of personal use by departed parents, with a tenderness that proves, without theology, the immortality assured to those of the human race that are parents. In the house in which I am staying there is one ancient object,—the favorite chair of the owner's mother. A village woman of the iconoclastic type (who preserves her mother's
"camphor bottle") was speaking to me of the house of a childless couple which she once dismantled. "So sad!" she said, "Everything was just as they left it, and there was nobody to care. We packed up everything in boxes. There was his tobacco-box on the table, and her thimble in the sewing basket. That hurt me more than anything. Nobody to care for her thimble! Why, my mother's thimble is a thin little old thing, but when she was through with it, I just loved it, and now it's gone to my daughter, and her little girl is going to have it."

I don't believe that this thimble would have been called a "relic." I believe that it would have been called a "keepsake." The world now-a-days talks impersonally of "antiquities"—thus speaking aesthetically, from the point of view of the object. The old American world speaks of "relics," inclining to emphasize the relation to the dead owner, but they have another term. In "keepsake" they put a delicate emphasis on the living rather than the dead, and it is in relation to "keepsakes" that this village shows its understanding of the essential piety of antiquarianism. Perhaps we have in its attitude to the whole subject an example of the fundamental tact in dealing with life, which the human race can generally be trusted to exhibit when it acts naturally.
The Punctator's World: A Discursion

BY GWEN G. ROBINSON

Part Two

The Grammarians: A.D. 250–A.D. 1250

Part One of this serialized survey (Courier, Fall 1988) dealt with the emergence of a late-classical and early-Christian interest in eliciting, with 'euphuistic' punctating techniques, the voice patterns inherent in text. Part Two, herewith, gives attention to the Middle Ages. In this haphazard era, logical punctuation, which concentrates on syntactical structures and is therefore more appealing to eye than ear, begins its faltering growth.

Rhetoric occupied an exalted perch in the hierarchy of ancient scholarly disciplines. Ambitious young men sought the best teachers to master its principles; and ambitious old teachers sought to display mastery by deepening their inquiry into the properties of language: its structure, its plasticity—the whole science that underlay the magic of words. Accordingly, beginning with the Sophists and Protagoras and continuing through Aristotle, elements of grammar came to be scrutinized and the fruits of discovery usefully applied to the prestigious activity of textual criticism and interpretation. Verbal moods, genders, case endings were identified; patterns noted; and connections between sound and meaning investigated. But it was the Alexandrians in the third and second centuries B.C., who, following suit in the language and metrical studies of their Attic precursors, reduced the inherited oddments to a grammatical system.1

Crates of Mallos, a stoic from the Pergamene school and a contemporary of Aristarchus at Alexandria, assembled the first known collection of grammatical facts, introduced etymology to a respected

position in the study of grammar, and attempted a reform in Greek orthography. Following the stimulus of his lectures in Rome, where he was ambassador in 159 B.C., Greek and the comparison of it with Latin came to be studied avidly by philhellenistic young bloods, for it was the popular opinion of the times that Latin was a dialect of Homer’s sacred tongue. With this prevailing reverence for all that was Classical Greece, scholarly output from the East was warmly received in Rome.

Dionysios Thrax (fl. 100 B.C.), a student of Aristarchus in Alexandria before the intellectual diaspora under Ptolemy VII, settled in Rhodes, a traditional center for philosophy and rhetoric and a haven for wandering grammatikoi (for the term was in full usage). There, he wrote his famous Techne grammatica (Τέχνη γραμματική). This slim handbook, codifying past scholarship on grammatical systems, was a classic instructional text for the young in Athenian and Alexandrian schools of the fourth and fifth centuries. As a result it was translated extensively and so survives today. The two most complete extant manuscripts, written in Armenian, date from the late fifth century. The Techne begins with the following definition: “Grammar is the empirical knowledge of what is for the most part being said by poets and prose writers”. The overlap with what had theretofore been the domain of rhetoric is obvious. But what is also interesting is that writers of prose, that res grossior so voracious of punctuation, are being taken reverently into account.

‘Reading’ (by which is meant reading aloud) Dionysios defines as the art of rendering faithfully through (spoken) words all that is written, be it in verse or in prose. One must do it with discernment, observing the rules both of prosody and of division (punctuation), for it is by such discernment that one can apply to each discourse the appropriate tone; it is by the prosody that one can modulate that tone; it is by the division (punctuation) that one can make the relationships of the ideas distinguishable amongst themselves. The divi-

2. Pfeiffer, Classical Scholarship, 274.
3. Ibid., 253, 266. Cicero studied in Rhodes under Molon, who taught him how to control his voice when making speeches.
sions are marked by οπιμάω (points), of which there are three: 1) the final point, which indicates that the sense has been achieved; 2) the medial point, which indicates that the sense is not entirely finished; 3) the hypostigma (mini-point), which indicates that a meaning has been launched but has yet some need of completion. “And how is the medial distinguished from the hypostigma?” asks Dionysios. “Ah! It is distinguished by time.” The medial designates the longer pause and the hypostigma, the shorter one. Having thereby dispatched the matter of punctuation, he sweeps onward through poetical tropes, obsolete words, epithets, surnames, analogies, and literary criticism—none of which quite tallies with the modern idea of grammar—then finally to the familiar ground of alphabet sounds, the concept of generic and particular, and the various parts of speech.

The Techne of Dionysios Thrax was published in Rome in the time of Pompey, and Latin grammars modelled upon it or at least inspired by it—most notably the twenty-five books, De lingua Latina, by Marcus Terentius Varro (116–27 B.C.)—were soon forthcoming. Those were days when philological pursuits were fashionable, much as they were in the days of the Grimm brothers, one imagines, or indeed are now under the stimulus of Chomsky. For example, Julius Caesar, whose energies are as surprising to the modern reader of history as they were to the ancient Gauls, was a grammar fan. He not only coined the term ablative for that Latin case omitted by the Greeks (to the relief of modern schoolboys), but wrote a treatise on the philosophy of language, De analogia. And so it was, in very general outline, that the rhetorician transmogrified into the grammarian and in that guise continued to harass the public about linguistic proprieties.

Punctuation by now was very much alive. After the Hellenistic period, scholarly grammarians dealt with it increasingly as a necessary element in the art of writing. Text needed division, for how else

5. Ibid., 5–9.
6. Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th ed., s.v. “grammar”. The Romans were the great transmitters and codifiers of essentially Greek ideas. Both Donatus of the fourth century A.D. and Priscian of the sixth century—the two big guns of medieval grammatical pedagogy—were essentially retrospective, rather than original.
was the reader to breathe? Thus, in that essentially oral world, where solitary readers still absorbed visual information by whispering it, the conscientious scribe conformed with grammatical example by placing pausal markers here and there along the line. But the practice was not up to its theory. The impetus for activating the new tool was feeble—almost, it seems, a moody 'Use it if you want to'.

The following puncts (or points)—all written as dots—were the ones most consistently advocated by grammarians until the Carolingian revival. Generally thought to have derived from the Alexandrian schools of the third and second centuries B.C., they were for the most part ignored or misapplied by confused scribes in succeeding generations. Donatus (fourth century A.D.), in his enormously influential Ars grammatica, directed their use in terms of breathing efficiency, not syntax. Others, riding in his wake, did the same. And thus it happened that Aristophanes of Byzantium’s original system of stops (see Part One) came to be known and discussed in the following way:

The distinctio, a dot placed at letter height above the line (‘), corresponded to our period and offered the opportunity for a deep breath. It appeared at the end of a periodos, that

7. For an interesting discussion of reading and writing habits in the Middle Ages see Marshall McLuhan's Gutenberg Galaxy, 82–95. Also to the point is Quintilian’s advice in his Institutio oratoria, X, chap. 3, where the writer is urged to pronounce repeatedly the phrases he wishes to set down, modifying them for the best rhythms and for the smoothest connection with what is to follow.
9. Walter J. Ong, “Historical Backgrounds of Elizabethan and Jacobean Punctuation Theory”, PMLA 59 (1944): 349–60. A periodos according to Aristotle (cf. “Art” of Rhetoric, III, chap. 9) was a gathering of words which has “independently in itself a beginning and ending, and a length easily taken in at a glance”. Thus, it is comparable to our modern ‘sentence’, though—the periodos being more in thrall to sound than to syntax—the comparison is not exact. Under the ministrations of rhetoricians and grammarians, the concept of periodos rigidified and became freighted with elaborations, ornamentations, regulations about parallelism, apportionment, rhythms, correspondences of sound, etc.—indeed, a very complicated affair.
is, at the end of a conceived unit of thought, and thus, like the paragraphos, represented a true sense marker. Aristotle, it will be remembered, had given his attention to both.

The distinctio media, a dot placed at midway-height in the line (·), indicated a pause of semicolon/colon/comma value. Its area of applicability was extremely vague. Donatus recommended using it somewhere near the middle of the periodos. Fifth-century grammarians refer to its presence as spiritually refreshing.

The subdistinctio, a dot lying upon the line and equivalent approximately to the modern comma, was recommended for the near-end of the periodos. It offered the reader a charge of oxygen to see him to the finish.

Many hundreds of grammarians wrote down their thoughts during the first millennium and almost always inserted some notes on punctuation. Mostly, they followed the tracks of their predecessors and refined the dictates of authority according to the wattage of their own lights. Change was slow.

After Donatus (whose pupil was St. Jerome), the dominant figure in early grammatical exegesis was Cassiodorus (490–585), who founded the monastery of Vivarium on the Gulf of Taranto and endowed it with a good working library and a scriptorium noted for accurate copying. In the educational program expounded in his Institutiones, Cassiodorus reaffirmed the virtues of the three distinctii, likening them to "paths of meaning and lanterns to words, as instructive to readers as the best commentaries". In the seventh century, Isidore of Seville in his monumental Etymologiae rather confused matters by regular use of only two of the three available points. However, from the modern point of view, he redeemed himself by pinning the distinctii to a logical interpretation, that is, as devices "for marking off the sense into ... colons [clauses], commas [phrases], and periods [sentences]", where the voice "sets down". The subdistinctio (the hy-

postigma of Dionysios Thrax, and our phrasal comma) he left to float for breathing purposes. Though the concept of sentence formulation was still riddled with physiological imperatives, syntactical issues, too, were beginning to press.

Stimulated, one assumes, by reverence for these growing ranks of august scholars, the common Greek and Roman scribe had begun to point his product, albeit erratically: his own declining literacy precluded a sure and appropriate placement. Happily for the reader, he began also to separate words from each other—in an endeavor, no doubt, to make sense for himself of the text he was producing, for most likely he would have spoken a language quite different from that which he found himself transcribing. But however it was, fashions in punctuating marks might well have added to the confusion. If the scribe had had the opportunity to study volumes from scriptoria in other regions, he would have noticed at the periphery of his focus a tremendous array of pointing possibilities: dots with tails, dots afloat, dots piled in pyramids—not to mention virgules, and differing methods of initiating paragraphs and chapters. Clearly, there were things here to ponder. In fact, what exactly did one punctuate for? To reproduce the authentic sound of speech? To monitor the reader’s breathing? Should one try to reflect the shape of the thought, the psychological structure of the thinking act—in so far as it could be ascertained—or attempt to distinguish the logical structures of syntax? To those few who were noticing, the problem was now full-

13. Einar Lofstedt in his book Late Latin (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1959), 3–4, mentions eighth-century extant manuscripts that show a mix of correctly constructed legal and ecclesiastical formulae with deviations from the classical forms as well as out-and-out vulgarisms. Often these latter were pure blunders, but as many again are evidence of the contemporary street language. The syntactical change was slow to show its head; morphology and phonology were, on the other hand, rapid: for example, suus replaced eius very suddenly in the mid-eighth century. Benedict of Nursia (d. ca. 547), scholar and founder of Monte Cassino, used striking vulgarisms, such as the genitive talius instead of tallis by analogy, presumably, with the genitive nullius of nullus. Is this to be explained by his wishing to be understood by the unlettered? Or, should one take such usage as reflecting the common speech habits of the sixth century (p. 17)? The ninth century witnessed the firm establishment of the definite article. Between the progressive spoken language and the conservative written language a cleavage grew, until at last the great mass of people no longer understood Latin. The school systems had collapsed in the political turmoil of the times, and so, traditional learning dwindled (p. 13).
blown. The written line was a different animal from the spoken one, and it required to be assessed in its own right.

In the period of barbaric disruption up until the reforms of Pippin the Short, scholarship slubbered along, making very little progress towards apocalyptic truth or even a flushed horizon. Priestly knowledge of Latin was thin. Boniface (675–754) reports having heard a baptism of dubious efficacy: *in nomine patria et filia et spiritus sancti* (in which mistaken case endings conjure up apparitions of fatherland and a daughter). In another memorable instance, the author of a sermon was under the illusion that Venus was a man. Latin literature, so much of which has been preserved only in palimpsest—supplanted by Christian writings less threatening to morals—had from 550 to 750 virtually ceased to be copied. In this intellectual gloom various determined figures moved to shore up the subsidence and to preserve what remnants of culture remained. A groundswell of intellectual activity—a mini-renaissance, if you will—resulted and was approved and abetted both by church and royal authority. Along with the general movement towards culture, classical Latin took on a special aura of desirability. Accordingly, vulgarisms from colloquial speech, from late Latin comedies, from popular church language—all of which had been creeping into manuscript texts—were no longer deemed proper. Classical Latin was what people needed. And so, a resurrection was ordered up. In extant manuscripts one can see purity returning, traditional norms being reinstated: for example, *illut que* became again *illud quod*; *pristetirunt* changed back to *praestiterunt*; *ipsius monastiriae* to *ipsius monasteri*. To aid the instigators of these activities in their program of enlightenment, biblical and liturgical as well as classical manuscripts were urgently gathered for scribes to copy. Herein lay trouble, for the bulk of copying in medieval scriptorium was being done by boys or young monks who were chosen for these intellectually undemanding labors for the very reason that they were not much given to study or reading. Copying was deemed to be merely a physical chore. Charlemagne, seeing the folly of this, in 789 issued his *Admonitio generalis*, which stipulated that important religious books be copied by men of mature age; for dependability

15. Ibid., 72–74.
was the key to scribal success, not energy, nor even intellectual creativity.\(^{17}\)

Prominent in these endeavors to conserve ancient knowledge and church documentation was Alcuin, Charlemagne's chief assistant in his program of reform. From 796 to 804, during the time that he presided as abbot, the monastery of St. Martin of Tours along with the scriptoria of St. Gatian's and Marmoutier (also in Tours) became principal centers for the tremendous spate of Carolingian publication,\(^{18}\) and for the reformation and dissemination of the scribal arts. Alcuin oversaw the refinement and universal acceptance of the clear, rounded, non-cursive script that came to be known as 'Carolingian minuscule' and that would eventually supersede the less readable Gothic.\(^{19}\) Also, he encouraged fresh standards of spelling. As for punctuation, there is no evidence of a clear system in the extant manuscripts of Tours before Alcuin. Alcuin's appreciation of the power that a deliberative punctuating policy might inject into the page was in keeping with the tradition of Donatus and Cassiodorus.\(^{20}\) To impress on his pupils the wisdom of proper pointing, Alcuin wrote:\(^{21}\)

\[
\text{Per cola distinguant proprios et commata sensus,} \\
\text{Et punctos ponent ordine quosque suo;} \\
\text{Ne vel falsa legat, taceat vel forte repente} \\
\text{Ante pios fratres lector in ecclesia.}
\]

Apparently, it was an up-hill battle. With a very uncertain sense of the \textit{commata} and the \textit{cola} (phrases and clauses),\(^{22}\) the eighth-cen-


\(^{18}\) Reynolds and Wilson, \textit{Scribes and Scholars}, 87. These publications ranged from creative poetry, through history, biography, hagiography, theology, philosophy, and biblical exegesis, to the handbooks on rhetoric, dialectic, metrics, and grammar.

\(^{19}\) Ibid., 81.


\(^{21}\) Clemoes, "Liturgical Influence", 11. "They should bring out the proper sense by clause and phrase and put each point in its place so that the reader does not read falsely nor by chance fall into sudden silence before his pious brothers in the church."

\(^{22}\) Rand, \textit{Manuscripts of Tours}, 31.
The fine distinctions between stops of varying levels were too complicated for unpractised scribes. The above is a sample from an eighth-century Anglo-Saxon minuscule manuscript of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* (Cambridge University Library Kk.V. 16, written ca. 737, two years after the death of Bede) from vol. 2, *Codices Latini Antiquiores*, 2nd ed., edited by E. A. Lowe (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), pl. 139. Here, the medial point is used for most pauses; the other punctuation marks, according to Professor Lowe, have been added later. Courtesy of the Syracuse University Library.

tury scribes at Tours found punctuating, in general, far too complex. Says the perturbed Alcuin: “Although distinctions and sub-distinctions are the finest ornaments of sentences, yet their use has almost fallen into abeyance because of the rusticity of the scribes”. To his great disgust, the Turonian scribes appeared to like the medial stop very much, for they accorded it the duty of marking indiscriminately both half-pauses and whole pauses. In time they took up the distinctio; but the wispy _subdistinctio_, so useful to those with bad colds, was dropped. One imagines Alcuin, a precise man in an imprecise age, pulling out handfuls of hair that was not always his own.

Many manuscripts from St. Martin's scriptorium bear punctual corrections in another ink. It is impossible to say when these corrections were made. E. K. Rand conjectures that they were inserted “by the director or a corrector especially assigned to the task, who would return the new book _requisitum et distinctum_. It would have seemed “unreasonable to expect the scribe while at work to

solve the often delicate questions of punctuation; his mind [was not to be] diverted from his proper task of reproducing in clear and beautiful forms the words of the original with little attention to their sense. 25

However, Alcuin's scriptorial attentions could not all have ended in frustration, for undoubtedly, during his own time, he was enjoying tremendous success with the reassertion of classical purity in Latin and scholarly production. Also, evidence survives of material that was made under his certain direction and to his apparent satisfaction, in which a new punctuating system (one used by many subsequent Turonian correctors down to the end of the ninth century) 26 has been put into operation. Interestingly, since Charlemagne himself founded a school of song and personally supervised the work done there, 27 the system deployed two new symbols drawn from musical notation. These, the rising stroke (\(\uparrow\) = a half-pause) and the descending stroke (\(\downarrow\) or . = a whole pause) indicated where the reading voice should raise or lower its pitch. 28 This 'up-down' vocalized system addressed the special needs of hinterland monastic communities, where unenlightened monks might stumble over Latin archaisms but were well accustomed to chant.

The Carolingian renaissance flashed like a beacon, allowing a brief intellectual advance over unlikely terrain. Though the monastic and cathedral schools and the scriptoria established by Charlemagne and Alcuin were in place to save what they could of the small harvest, 29 no printing press existed to codify and promulgate it. Thus, when Charlemagne's empire fragmented in 843 under the pressures of invading barbarians and internal political disagreement, popular ignorance resumed its sway. One needs only to glance at the French, medieval Latin, and Anglo-Saxon interlinear glosses in manuscripts of the tenth to thirteenth centuries to realize how desperately ignorant of the classical tongues the would-be literate folk had become. Indeed, even at his pinnacle Alcuin's Greek had been shaky; his

25. Rand, Manuscripts of Tours, 30.
26. Ibid., 31.
28. Southern, Eadmer, xxxiii.
29. Reynolds and Wilson, Scribes and Scholars, 91.
Hebrew, apparently non-existent. The Benedictine spirit seemed to be dying. Society, now generally illiterate, had retrogressed into a primitive orality where reading was for the elite, and writing no more than a scribal craft.

Matters would stand this way well into the thirteenth century, despite another renascent period in the twelfth century and the sporadic successes of a number of enterprising intellects. Most memorable of these was Alfred the Great, who in the ninth century labored to resuscitate the Golden Age of Aldhelm (at Canterbury), Bede (at Jarrow), and Alcuin (at York as well as at Tours). Yet, despite his good works, four centuries later would find Roger Bacon in his Opus majus railing at the sloppy scholarship and the pervasive ignorance of his day.

For corruption of the text takes place without limit by the addition, subtraction, alteration, union, division of statement, word, syllable, letter, diphthong, mark of breathing, so that not only the letter but the literal and spiritual sense is changed. The faults are found not only in one statement, but in many, nay they affect many folios.

Modern scribes, paying no attention to the difference in translations, nor considering what translation they were using, have inserted the negative on their own authority and in the first instance someone noted among the best did this. In this way a terrible error was spread abroad, since a contradiction is given for its opposite.

In such an environment, grammarians and scholars must have been extremely wary of any recently produced texts they were studying. When scribes do not understand the materials that they are copying, punctuating marks tend to wander, producing havoc of the sense.

A page from Alexander Neckham's twelfth-century description in Latin of how a novice scribe should proceed will give an idea of this awkward stage of the craft. 33

The writer should have a razor or whetstone to rub the impurities from the parchment or skin; and he should have an abrasive pumice, and a plane for cleaning and making even the surface of the parchment; he should have a drawing lead and a flax string, or ruler, with which the page may be lined and the margin left free all around, just as much on the flesh side as on the hair side.

He should have a four-leaf quire; not, I say, a quaternion who marks out his army in a number of parts. [This is a joke: a military quaternion had four soldiers under his command.] He should have the leaves joined on the top as well as on the bottom with binding strips. Also, he should have the book cord and the pricker to which he might say: "I have pricked my quire, not pierced it". He should sit in a chair in order to write, with raised arms on each side bracing the back of the chair, with a footstool appropriately placed for his feet, so that he may sit more firmly.

The writer should have a brazier covered with a screen. Let him have a knife, with which to shape his pen so that it may be maneuverable and suitable for writing, with the marrow extracted from the quill. Let him have the tooth of a boar or a goat or an elephant to polish the parchment so that the elements won't drip—I'm not talking about the weather [a pun, apparently, as elementum also means a letter of the alphabet]—or if a blotch should be made or letters written wrongly, he will be able to erase without inserting.

He should have a glossed speculum [a compendium of all knowledge] lest he make a costly delay because of error. Let him also have live coals in his brazier so that he can quickly dry the black ink on the parchment in humid or wet weather. Let him have a louver to let in light if by chance the assault

of the north wind strike the window; let the window be furnished with a linen curtain or piece of parchment colored green or black. For green and black are soothing to the eyes. But brilliant white scatters the vision and obscures colors far too much. Let him have vermilion in order to form rubrics, and punic or phoenician and capital letters. Let him have black powder, or blue, obtained from Salamon.

The notary or repairer of books ought to know where he should write the short accent and where the long, where the omega, where the omicron, where delta, where eta, where epsilon, where digamma, where the upsilon, the iota, the sigma, where the antisigma [marked ‘i.x.’ in the gloss and probably meaning the horseshoe signal that two lines are essentially interchangeable], lest in speaking or writing barbarically, he incur a solecism as if he were a false writer. Let him be called barbarian whose manner is barbaric.

He should also know where the eírmos [a punctuation mark] and the hyperbaton [a mark of transposition] should be drawn, and where the apostrofós should be superscribed or put, and where the virgule representing the diphthong.

For there is one way allotted for writing notarial signatures and deeds, documents, and transactions, and another for writing texts and another for glosses. For the gloss should be brief and to the point; it should be written over the related words.

THE MEDIEVAL CURSUS

In coordination with the pausal marks (the dots, virgules, and what not) that were so pragmatically allied to the requirements of breathing, rhythms marking the termination of clauses and sentences

34. Varying rhythms were recommended as well for the beginnings of clauses and sentences, the bisyllabic so-called spondee being a favorite. The pervading idea was that the points of articulation should stand out as pleasing markers in the passage of words. In this way the end of sentence A gracefully adjusts to the opening beats of sentence B, which in turn terminates for the enhancement of C's entrance. Though a cursus beginning the sentence might also be considered a type of punctuation, for the purposes of this general survey, it is enough to keep the discussion to ending cursus only.
continued to be used during the Middle Ages. Within a string of words a single syllable can be differentiated from its neighbors by three fairly obvious methods. First, there is pitch change, which is used in English speech, but not for syntactical distinctions. For example:

\[
\text{to the honor and glory of Thy name.}
\]

Then, there is accentuation, or stress. Certain syllables are selected for louder production, creating a sense of metrical beat:

\[
\text{to the honor and glory of Thy name.}
\]

And finally, there is the means of lengthening or quantifying the vowel sound:

\[
\text{to the ho-onor and glo-ory of Thy name.}
\]

In the drama of medieval Western punctuation, all three have played a part. \textit{Cursus} was the word used in medieval times for the accentual formulaic word groups. These were the descendants of the quantitative \textit{clausulae}, a concept of very ancient origin, dilated upon by Cicero in his rhetorical writings and disseminated by Quintilian’s very popular \textit{Institutio oratoria} (see Part One). Generally speaking, the Latin \textit{cursus} flourished well into the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in France and in Italy, and was alive, though somewhat less exuberantly, in Germany up through the eleventh. \textsuperscript{35} England saw its peak of influence in the fourteenth century, when it was already degenerating into rigid tricks of style. \textsuperscript{36} After the Renaissance it declined in vigor—blighted both by the disdain of classical scholars, who, misinterpreting its ancient quantitative origins, pronounced it vulgar, \textsuperscript{37} and by the unwholesome expirations of the vernacular lan-

\textsuperscript{37} Albert C. Clark, \textit{The Cursus in Mediaeval and Vulgar Latin} (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910), 21. Interestingly, Clark points out that he was able to find examples of accentual \textit{cursus} in Cicero’s very personal and private (hence, probably, most
guages, which were notoriously 'laid back' in matters of finicky detail. The *cursus* revitalized, however, to ingratiate itself into common English, a language ill-suited to accommodate its original classical ambitions. Nevertheless, with a relaxed demeanor, it survived the alien atmosphere, the effects of Anglo-Saxon retrogressive accents and single-syllabled words, to lend a glow to elevated prose: sermons, collects in the English Book of Common Prayer, and the writings of such as Sir Thomas Browne, Edward Gibbon, Walter Pater and a great many others, whose pleasure it was to expatiate grandly.38 But the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, conspicuous for their prevailing intellectual ferment and their zest for discovery, offered no real livelihood to such frail, antique ornamentation. Nor does the modern era.

One's notion of the word *cursus* should take account of its classical meaning—'way', 'course', 'orbit'—and project the resultant visual image onto an acoustical field. For until printing, ears were the primary receptors of language (both spoken and written). A *cursus* was a stylistic device; its mission, to measure off word-flow and euphoniously to ease the path of expression. It appeared at the ends of schematically balanced, alliteratively interwoven segments of the rhetorical *periodos*.39 Its recurrent patterns activated the perception of cadence,

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39. Croll, "The Cadence", 324-25. See footnote 8, above. The Gorgianic schemes were groups of words paralleling each other in matters of syllable count, verb positioning, etc. They derived from the rhetorical teachings of the Sophist Gorgias in the fifth century B.C. Albert Clark, in his study of the *cursus*, gives a good example of the medieval use of Gorgianic schemata. The lines are taken from Johannes Anglicus, writing in Paris ca. 1270 to illustrate the 'stylus Isidorianus' (based on the soliloquies of Isidore), which was said to be a good style for sermons. The lines run as follows: "... prius legunt quam sillabicent, prius volant quam humi currant. ... Prius montes scandunt quadrivii quam per valles incedunt trivii, volant ad astra nec pennas possident." The sounds that bring out the balanced antitheses are italicized. From them one sees quite readily how pleasurably mesmerizing these repetitions and parallels can be.
of a cohesive sense group within the track of semantically conjoined, often (in early manuscripts) physically unseparated, words. The cursus, as had the clausula, offered an almost sensuous resolution to a logical problem. One might think of it as a muffled timpanic flourish, celebrating the finish to a stretch of thought. Today’s speedreader (with his visual sense expanded by print) would not notice, let alone savor, the delicate pleasures of a cursus. But the device thrived in times when what was read was read aloud and, one imagines, slowly—script being a difficult medium. In that way, words rendered their full sonority. The eye passed them to the ear with all their accents and rhythms intact. Thus, the cursus, when interjected into an rhythmic prose to distinguish a completed sense unit, both embellished and elucidated the written line.

The rhythmical cadences found in the medieval Latin authors who adopted the cursus were manifest in the final two (usually two) words of clauses and sentences. Although a variety of possibility was now and again put to use, the steadiest in popularity were: cursus velox (hominem recepistis); cursus planus (illum deduxit); and cursus tardus (ire tentaverit). The presence of these formulas, in areas where the voice might pause or fall in speech, was especially prevalent in (though by no means limited to) epistolary literature, where the writer is present in the intimacy of voice sounds. Although this might seem complicated to the modern eye, it can easily enough be drummed into one’s system by unremitting repetition. Our nimble ancestors attacked the problem from the security of cursus collections, which listed fine phrases (necessarily clichés) with inbuilt rhythms ready for plucking. But for twentieth-century plodders who are truly eager to master the principles of the cursus, the following mnemonic verse is offered. It originated probably in Bologna before the thirteenth century and was found as marginalia in an Oxford formulary.

40. These cursus, according to Croll (and his exposition with examples is convincing), are also frequently to be found embedded within, as well as at the end of, segments of periodoi. See Croll, pp. 335–38. They emerge most powerfully in being read aloud, for their rhythmic beat emphasizes the unity of the few words they give cadence to. For example: “In holiness and righteousness [pause] all our days”. Quintilian, too, had noted the mini pauses within periodos segments.

41. Janson, Prose Rhythm, 10, 37.

42. Denholm-Young, “Cursus in England”, 37. By the words ‘long’ and ‘short’, which would be suitable for classical Latin, one should understand ‘accented’ and ‘unaccented’. The piece translates:
Quando trissillaba medium producere debet
In precedenti longam penultima prebet. [Planus]
Si tetrassillaba penultima longa probatur,
In precedenti penultima corripiatur. [Velox]
Si tetrassillaba penultima corripiatur,
In precedenti penultima longa locatur. [Tardus]

The cursus was regularly used throughout the Middle Ages both in Latin and Greek. Initially, the device was mixed (cursus mixtus) with the ancient, long-short differentiations of vowels; but later, it purified into formulas of accented syllables, in keeping with the accentual tendency of late Latin and the vernacular languages. Grammarians, however, did not begin to exposit its virtues until the eleventh century, when the Roman Curia adopted it officially in order to authenticate documents and make forgery more difficult. Thereupon, the artes dictandi (textbooks on the whole art of prose composition, with special relevance to the writing of letters) took over, to generate detailed analyses and to broadcast the good news. Usually, these treatises included short notes on punctuating, along with more detailed treatment of the figures of speech and rhetorical colors. The cursus subsequently became very popular, since the prose style of the period was largely epistolary—the output consisting not only of private letters, but more generally of elaborately choreographed 'informal' compositions for diplomatic and ecclesiastical purposes. Although the cursus was not always employed according to the dictates of the Roman Curia, it was present in recognizable form in a vast body of late-medieval Latin literature, where it operated with the arrogance of a legitimate pedagogical principle. Albericus at Monte Cassino (ca. 1100) wrote the first (as far as we know) ars dic-

43. In Greek, from the fourth century A.D., accents became the dominant factors of rhythmical cadences. From this date to the fall of the Byzantine Empire, it was the fashion in prose for an interval of "at least two unaccented syllables to come before the last accent in the colon or period." See Clark, The Cursus, 21.
tandi, entitled *Breviarium de dictamine*. He himself did not give rules for the application of *cursus*, but nevertheless employed it throughout. He advised that prose should be *sonoram et distinctam, id est quasi currentem*.45 Details of the medieval *cursus* were discussed by the experts in familiar terms—like 'spondees' and 'dactyls' (for their classical aroma), but with altered duties. Any bisyllabic word was called a spondee, regardless of vowel lengths; whereas a monosyllable was 'half a spondee'. Dactyl described a word like *dóminus*, where a stress fulfilled the requirement of the traditional long ō. Prescriptions for the perfect *cursus*, one must remember, varied over the centuries and between places, both the Italians and the French schools offering their own authoritarian recommendations.

The *cursus* flowered late in England. Imported in the twelfth century by cosmopolitan Englishmen studying on the continent, and by documents from the papal chancery, it had come to be taught as a formal part of grammar by 1350 at Oxford University. Foreign notaries working in the English chancery in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries reinforced the prestige offered by its presence on the page. Evidence of continued *cursus* usage during the fifteenth century is strong in extant English manuscripts.46

To demonstrate how the *cursus* distinguished the clausal cadences within and at the end of a sentence, an example is presented below. It comes from a letter written by Héloïse in the early twelfth century to Abelard. The commas, which Albert C. Clark either inserted himself or followed the habit of print in transmitting, have been discarded, but his accent marks left in, to illustrate better the demarking power of the *cursus*, as Héloïse first put it to action. The lines should be read aloud to get the full impact. Also, the positioning of the verbs should be noted, as they too tended to indicate terminations of clause and sentence constructions. The location of the original manuscript is not given.47

45. "Sonorous and punctuated [or marked off, or separated], that is, almost flowing." The material for a large part of this paragraph comes from Clark, *The Cursus*, 10–14.
47. Clark, *The Cursus*, 19. "When you were seeking me with a view to earthly pleasures, you were plying me with letters, and putting your Héloïse's name on everybody's lips with your frequent songs."
Cum me ad temporales olim voluptātes expēteres (cursus tardus) crebris me epīstolīs visitābas (cursus velox) frequenti carmine tuam in ore omnium Heloīssam ponēbas (cursus planus).

Insinuated into English, these signaling pulses were no longer so easily scanned by metres of any sort—the new language being so different in nature from medieval Latin. Instead, at fertile cursus spots, a rhythmic obeisance was made—as close an imitation to the velox, planus, or tardus as could be managed. But the interesting element is this: that the urge to wind down, to slow the speed and lower the energy of the intonation by succeeding the long (in classical Latin) and accented (in medieval Latin) syllables with short thumps—like the clatter of shard after the impact of breakage—remained in place. The strong drive towards these rhythmic cadences suggests the possibility of a universal psychological or physiological necessity. At the very least it affirms the vitality of a well-documented tradition inherited from ancient Greek and Latin.48 Morris Croll speculates on the origins and principles of cursus usage in the following way:49

The physiological explanation of verse is to be found in the dance in which it originated. In the dance the regularity of the beats is the means by which energy is artificially maintained at a uniform level, higher than that of the ordinary human occupations and movements. In the same way in poetry the regularity of accent stimulates the energy of utterance, which always tends to flag and die away, and keeps it at an artificial height throughout a line or a stanza. And, of course, this energy of utterance accompanies, interprets, stimulates energy of emotion. Prose, on the other hand, even oratorical prose, cannot, does not aim to move uniformly on this high level. Its foundation is laid on the basis of common and matter-of-fact speech: instead of forcing the physiological processes to adapt themselves to it, it yields and adapts itself to them. It rises constantly at certain points above the level of mere logical or matter-of-fact speech, heightening the intensity of its utterance to indicate the occurrence of

49. Ibid., 353.
these points, but it at once begins to fall away again toward it as the breath begins to fail, and the energy of utterance fails with it.

Cadence, then, is perhaps the euphonious way of accompanying in speech this natural fall of subsidence of energy.

How the rhythmic system—first *cursus mixtus*, then pure *cursus*—was passed on through the early medieval centuries is something of a mystery. It was certainly kept alive somehow, for its protean touch is evident in a great many extant manuscripts, in works dating back as far as Xenophon. Tore Janson conjectures that its preservation owes much to oral guidance. Though indeed no one knows, "It may well be that sometimes the teacher just drew...attention to the fact that certain cadences were desirable and recommended and/or prescribed the usage found in certain texts". 50 To a pupil attuned to such notions, that might well have been enough.

In England the greatest degree of combined ornateness and rhythm, of elaborate phraseology, was reached during the reign of Edward III in the fourteenth century. Thereafter, interestingly, as rhythm and balance declined in importance, writers adopted a less cliché-ridden, and a more complicated, self-conscious turn of phrase. 51 In other words, the release from schemata and rigid metrical formulas rendered practicable a flexible expression of ideas. As the latitudes of written language expanded, so the writer relied on new forms of punctuation, to put order into the shifting structures of his text and to clarify ambiguities. Through experience with fresh perspectives, his grip on logic and syntax had firmed, and he could give rein at last to his fancy in the free spaces of his imagination.

**LITURGICAL INFLUENCES: THE INTONING OF PHRASES**

The *cursus* was used by major participants of the Carolingian renaissance, though Alcuin himself appears never to have taken it up. 52 He, ostensibly, favored the simpler 'up-down' method of punctuating, which, as it turned out, was the prime inspiration for the most

complex and sensitive set of pointing refinements ever to be developed. These *positurae* expanded the 'up-down' notation into subtler classifications of meaningful rises and falls of voice pitch. They grew to be widely used and reached their peak in the twelfth century—the second notable period of intellectual daylight before the Renaissance.

It is important to remember that although medieval monasteries were often centers of learning, monastic orders in general included all types of men, a great many of whom were ignorant, superstitious, ordinary folk-of-the-day, who (to judge by comments of Ambrose and Augustine) suffered the affliction of clonic inertia when it came to spiritual matters. The reinforcement by melody of the sometimes nebulous precepts of religion was considered by church authorities to have a quickening effect on monkish sloth. Harmonious music was added to the Psalms, said John Chrysostom (d. 407), "so that those who are still children should in reality be building up their souls even while they think they are only singing the music".53 St. Augustine (354–430) felt similarly, approving "the use of singing in the church, that so by the delights of the ear the weaker minds may be stimulated to a devotional frame". But he worried about his own emotional response to the "dangerous pleasure" of music, lest a "clear and skillfully modulated voice" should distract his attention from the content of what was being sung.54 Admittedly, it was a keen line that needed to be drawn between the body of Christian tenets and their dulcet trimmings. As one would expect, there was conflict: word against note, a tug-of-war that divided plainchant into two stylistic camps. Liturgical recitative stayed close to the text. It was held on a single recitation tone, which was broken by inflections of pitch to mark off perceived divisions in the flow of language: flex for a mini-section; metrum for a more important segment; and a full stop for a major one. "A question, or at least its final phase, normally [began] on a lower reciting tone and [ended] with a rising inflection. Most tones have a special formula to mark the conclusion of the text."55 The success of such an operation lay in the quality of the performer and

54. Ibid.
implied a facility with Latin sufficient to render a meaningful text while in the full spate of song. In his *Anthology of Medieval Music*, Richard H. Hoppin gives an example of the use of these musical puncts. It is the “Reading of the Epistle of St. Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians”, and the chant begins:

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Le-cti-o E-pi-sto-la-e be-a-ti Pau-li A-po-sto-li a-d Co-rin-thi-os
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The entire line is sung on only four notes. On Hoppin’s sample a mark denoting the *metrum* appears strangely over the *Pau* of Pauli, directly following a drop of two intervals. A *flex* is indicated over the *po* of Apostoli; a *full stop* over the rising two-noted syllable *ad*; and a *flex* over the low *rin* of Corinthios. No other ‘grammatical’ marks in this chant appear to have survived into modern notation; but later transcriptions have added double bars throughout the work at phrase and clause endings to mitigate the confusion.

What is known as free composition took off from this basic liturgical recitative and, in varying degrees of complication, provided distinctive melodies which were sung by unaccompanied men’s voices. The official mission of all liturgical music was functional: to enhance religious doctrine in the purest way. Not surprisingly, from time to time, a natural exuberance carried that melody into proscribed areas of excess—too much ornamentation, too much pagan-associated emotion, too many sense-confounding elaborations of unaccented syllables. All these vanities colluded to eclipse the sacred text. But once the orgy was over, the fundamental principle of enhancing the words, of keeping the music aligned to speech modes, would reassert itself to remain the dominant expectation in medieval church music.

Being endowed with melody, Gregorian chant fell into the category of free composition, of which it became the supreme expression. At its best, it appropriately shaped musical phrases to correspond

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59. Ibid., 30–67, passim.
with those of text, and exercised over all a comely restraint. Like all chant it was a formalized system of heightening the intonations of speech—as one does when speaking to be heard in a large room—to form a sort of speech song. “The melodic outline reflected the normal accentuation of the medieval Latin words by setting the prominent syllables on higher notes or by giving such syllables more notes” (the multi-noted syllable being called a *melisma*). Rhythms were modeled after the natural sounds of words, rather than metrical song, for which reason they were both flexible and irregular. The standard Gregorian phrase took the shape of an arch: that is, a gradual rise to a peak, followed by gradual descent to a cadence—similar in outline to the pronouncement of a speech phrase. Indeed, the theory of the prose *periodos* is built on the rise and fall of the voice. There, internal roughness is permissible as the sentence storms forward, but peace (through the beneficence of *clausulae* or *cursus*) must be restored at the finish of it. Similarly, the body of a recitation was introduced and terminated graciously by a formula of notes (often melismatic) in lower registers. The closing figure that referred the ear back to the dominant monotone (that is, the reciting note) was the more florid one. Its presence in this terminating position intimates a familial likeness to Cicero’s rhythmic *clausulae* (see Part One) and therewith, a congenerous affinity to the medieval cadenc-

61. Grout, *History*, 40. Grout cautions, however, that Gregorian obeisance to text was a rule with exceptions, as witness the many appearances of extended *melisma* on unimportant syllables and also the *jubilus* (the long *melisma* that stretched out the final *a* of ‘alleluia’).
62. There is much unresolvable argument over the nature of Gregorian rhythms. Hoppin in *Medieval Music* (pp. 85, 89) is critical of the Solesmes Monks’ usage (for their own acclaimed performances) of post medieval chantbooks in determining rhythms. He feels strongly that the Solesmes interpretation of mensural equality for all notes (except the dotted ones taken from newer manuscripts) is erroneous. “Again and again, theoretical treatises of the early Middle Ages make it clear that the chant did use long and short notes.” If that is the case, then Gregorian Chant was very much liberated to follow the measures of speech.
65. Scholes, “Plainsong”.
ing cursus. Again, the characteristic rise in pitch level (rather than the classical elongation of sound) to represent the accented syllables reflects the spoken Latin of post-classical times.\textsuperscript{66}

The Gregorian advance, as far as punctuational excitements are concerned, lies in the development of the mediation—a mid-verse cadence that marked a breathing post and inclined, as did the ending cadence, to appear at the end of a sense group. In the old Roman chants, individual melodic phrases flowed directly into each other. The cadence of the first part completed only with the opening of the second part.\textsuperscript{67} Gregorian phrasal schemes, on the other hand, are definitively cadenced. To give a sample of how the melodic inflections of voice constituted a sort of punctuation in a prose text where meaning was paramount, we will turn to the Credo as published by the monks of the French Benedictine Abbey of Solesmes, where much research into, and restoration of, ancient chants has taken place. In this rendering of the Credo there is “no grandiloquence or superfluous ornament. The words themselves suffice, set to a sober line of melody. The composition gives an impression of liberty combined with strict logic in the treatment of the literary prose and adaptation of the melodic formulae to the necessities of the literary cadences.”\textsuperscript{68}

“Credo in unum Deum” [I believe in one God] is introduced by a descending and rising horseshoe of eleven notes. The next phrase is carried along, modulating essentially among three notes: “Pátrém omnipoténtem factórem cæli et térrae” [Father almighty maker of heaven and earth] and ends thus: ••••̶. Then: “visibilium ómnium et invisibilium” [of all visible and invisible things] ••••̶. “Et in unum Dóminum Jésum Christum Fílium Déi unigénum” [And in one Lord Jesus Christ only son of God] ••••̶. “Et ex Pátre nátum ante ómnia saécula” [And born of the Father before all time] ••••̶. This cadence motif reappears throughout, with slight variations, such as: ••• or •••̶ (which seem to signify no increase in emphasis), and the piece ends with a melismatic flourish for the Amen.

Thus, though not explicitly manifest, plainchant (of which Gre-

\textsuperscript{66} Hoppin, Medieval Music, 85.
\textsuperscript{67} “Gregorian Chant”, The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians.
\textsuperscript{68} Justin Bayard Ward, “Chant Grégorien” (phonodisc brochure, accompanying Chant Grégorien, London Records A4501), 8–9.
gorian represented the artistic pinnacle) paralleled the course of natural speech with signals rather akin to the mini-pauses between short phrases, which have little to do with sentence structure and which, in what has come to be known as logical punctuation, would not be indicated. Since monastic life centered on the celebration of the tenets of Christian belief, the resultant interplay between talk, chapel, and scriptorium is not surprising.

Two distinct scribal traditions had now been brought together: manuscript pointing and musical notation. "It was the association of musical cadences with the close of *commata*, *cola*, and *periodoi* which was the peculiar contribution of the liturgy to the development of punctuation." 69 To guide the reader in his breathing pauses, a book scribe had theretofore had the alternative of laying out his text with *caesurae*, indentations, or fresh lines (that is, Jerome's *per cola et commata* formula—see Part One); or, of carrying on the line (as became the tendency both with majuscule and with minuscule manuscripts) and applying capital letters and puncts to indicate where breaths should be taken and intonation changed. Generally, divisional distinctions consisted of the capital letter (often colored and jutting into the margin) to mark the beginning of a sentence or chapter; points for intermediate use; and a bigger array of points to mark the end of a main pause or section end. Meanwhile, the music scribe had been dealing with a system of sixth-century musical neums (or neumes, from G. *pneuma*, meaning breath), which were essentially the grave and acute accents derived from graphical representations of hand movements to guide voice inflection along a line of familiar melody. In simple plainsong (liturgical recitative) they had marked a prolonged phrase, or group of notes, sung to a single syllable at the end of a sense group. As a guide to the varying cadences of liturgical readings, the point was combined with the neum to produce four *positurae*, which were used in service reading books from the late tenth to the fifteenth centuries in England. 70 Given the natural pitch cadencing in human speech and the examples set in Gregorian chant, it was inevitable that the *positurae* be associated with certain syntactical constructions: for example, the drop in one's voice preceding the clausal conjunction 'and'; and again, the rise—reflect-

70. Ibid., 12.
ing a suspension in the idea being given expression—at the close of an introductory subordinate clause, or a non-final vocative.  

The four *positurae* are:

- The *punctus circumflexus* (\( \gamma \) or .) was used at the end of a comma (phrase) and followed by a lowercase letter.
- The *punctus elevatus* (\( \upgamma \)) was used at the end of a colon (clause).
- The *punctus versus* (\( \gamma \) or .) and the *punctus interrogativus* (\( \delta \)) were used at the close of a period and often followed by a capital letter.

It is not surprising that so expedient and so supple a convention as this was soon adopted by the textual scribes. Here was a system very closely related to the vocality of speech; and facility with it, aided by regular repetition in church, came more easily than did the rigid dot hierarchy of the grammarians. To illustrate how such a method looks in text, the following few lines are presented, from a tenth-century homily by Aelfric in which two of the *positurae* (the *punctus circumflexus* and the *punctus elevatus*) are put to use.  

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Nu andet ure geleafa cristes settl / forðan he he is se soða dema lybbendra 7 deadra. 7 se eadiga cybere stephanus hine geseah standende. forðan he he waes his gefylsta swa swa we aer saedon;
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A later sample is the following excerpt, the opening lines of the gospel according to St. John, from a twelfth-century Worcester Bible.  

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IN PRINCIPIO erat uerbum. et uerbum erat apud deum \( \gamma \) et deus erat uerbum. Hoc erat in principio \( \gamma \) apud deum.
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72. Ibid., 17. "Now confess your belief in Christ’s throne, how he is the true judge of the living and the dead, and the blessed Martyr Stephen beheld him standing, how he was his support just as we are told." A surer division would have given a *punctus elevatus* again before the second *forðan*.
73. Ibid., 13. From the Corpus Christi College Library (C.C.C.C. 48).
Omnia per ipsum facta sunt et sine ipso factum est nihil. Quod factum est in ipso uita erat. Et vita erat lux hominum et lux in tenebris lucet. et tenebre eam non comprehenderunt. Fuit homo missus a deo cui nomen erat iohannes. Hic uenit in testimonium ut testimonium perhiberet de lumine. ut omnes crederent per illum. Non erat ille lux sed ut testimonium perhiberet de lumine.

As scholarly activities shifted from the monastery to the university, so the *positurae* became less controlled by the liturgical traditions of intonation and more adapted to the increasingly logical structure of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century prose. As has been suggested, they first came into the English vernacular through the homily. The *punctus elevatus* mark, the most significant of the *intra-sentence* puncts, was used with growing frequency as we today use the comma. Denoting a major clausal break, it served both the antiphonal Hebrew psalms and Old English poetry, where the pause central to each line required a marker. In time it established itself in legal documents as well as in historical and didactic treatises.74

Professor Clemoes regrets the fading away of complex intonational pointing. To show how it might yet be used to advantage—that is, to give added precision to the balance and antithesis of clearly articulated logical units—I will tackle a few lines of Edward Gibbon, whose un-English faith in melodious verbiage makes him a satisfying author to quarry for this purpose. The sample beneath is taken from chapter twenty-seven of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,*75 and has been pointed with *positurae* at spots where he himself pointed only with commas.

They were encountered on the sacred threshold by the archbishop, who thundering against them a sentence of excommunication, asked them in the tone of a father and a master whether it was to invade the house of God that they had implored the hospitable protection of the republic. The suspense of the Barbarians . . .

74. Ibid., 14–19.
The liturgical positurae mark the opening of the grand era of euphuistic, or elocutionary punctuating, of which Eadmer (twelfth-century English historian, and monk at Canterbury) represents, by general consensus, the zenith. His extant works give proof of the scrupulousness with which he handled pointing details. Southern has described his writing as follows:

Perhaps the structure of Eadmer's sentence can best be expressed by an image: each sentence resembles a stretch of country which is either flat or hilly. If it is flat, the stages are marked by a succession of medial points. If it is hilly, the point where it rises to a peak is marked by ~ and a subordinate peak by $. Both in rising and declining the sentence may be punctuated by medial points, but the symbol ~ is reserved for a relaxing of tension when an upward is replaced by a downward movement.

To illustrate with Eadmer's own writing:

Cum constet solos malos in inferno torqueri · et solos bonos in caelesti regno fovere ~/ patet nec bonos in inferno si illuc intrarent ~/ posse teneri debita poena malorum · nec malos in caelo si forte accederent ~/ frui valere felicitate bonorum ·

Eadmer's punctuation follows the melody of his simple and straightforward prose, but at the same time illuminates understanding, even when read silently. Euphuistic in intention, it was a style that coordinated well with Gorgianic patterns but came to maturity in sinuous partnership with speech. Primarily it adhered to the urges of music, and derivatively to those of drama, poetry, hymn, and song. At its best this style of punctuation did not obtrude its own goals upon the perquisites of logical syntax.

76. Southern, Eadmer, xxx.
77. Southern, Eadmer, xxix. "Since it is agreed that only the bad are tortured in hell · and only the good are comforted in the heavenly kingdom ~/ it appears that the good if they enter hell ~/ cannot be held there as a punishment owed for their wickednesses · nor the bad if they should happen in heaven by chance ~/ be able to enjoy the happiness of the good."
As euphuistic pointing continued its march out of the twelfth-century renaissance, it would grow less sensitive, more disposed (in spite of meaning or syntax) to divide and interrupt—as though the reader, like an uncouth child, were not to be trusted with too large mouthfuls.

Although by the thirteenth century there were signs of significant settling down in the formal shape of a textual line, the lack of overall agreement about punctuation choices often meant that time values for the pause symbols were not fixed. Full stops, commas, or semicolons were indicated by idiosyncratic symbols and might fleck (“as if from a pepper-box. It is their way”) the pages of a single work scribed by a single man, yet demonstrate no hierarchical distinction. If a pause was desirable, then of what determination should it be? Was it better to mark off sentence segments of equivalent measure, or to indicate that something subsidiary was being presented? Joe Scribe seemed not to care. If indiscrimination of this sort regularly marred a single man’s product, imagine the ravages of inconstancy in a whole library of manuscripts. Without a scribal newsletter to keep him up-to-date, Antonio of Bologna had no idea what fashions or theories were alluring to Demetrios in Alexandria. Both time and distance (not to mention a pervasive and appalling illiteracy) worked against a scheduled education for this deliquent and uncoordinated juvenile, punctuation.

UNFOLDING INTO ENGLISH

In a highly inflected language such as Latin or Greek, where the accreting sentence ramified inwardly, the relationship between discontiguous words was manifest. Pausal divisions internal to the conceived periodos were not imperative for comprehension. Of course the danger of misinterpretation was minimized when the scribe punctuated the major breaks (the ends of sentences, fresh paragraphs, and chapters) in the continuum of the text. But whether he did or not, the reader was helped by the formality of the language and the tendency of the verb to ride at the end of the sense group. In prose modeled after the precepts of Cicero, the rhythms of the finalizing

clausulae alerted the reader; in prose modeled to “Attic” (or Senecan) criteria, the periodoi were brief and in any case the Senecan syntax was easy, more direct and simple. When medieval Latin rhetorical studies had popularized the Gorgianic and Isocratean schemata—patterns for the balancing of phrase with phrase and clause with clause within the sentence—they too, by virtue of providing standard expectation, would have encouraged comprehension. Additionally, the reader could rely on ‘ties’ within the text to render coherence—ties being, in very general terms, words (conjunctive, pronomial, lexical, or even just ‘understood’) that refer anaphorically to material already set down and cataphorically to material about to come. All languages use ligatures of some sort to bind, to cross-reference, to anticipate the direction—so that the heaps and strings of words can be wholly comprehended within the context. English, being syntactically open-ended, is particularly reliant on them.

But of paramount importance to the reader’s easy understanding was his familiarity with the subject at hand. Be it legendary, homilectic, or biblical, he would have strong anticipations from the topic under focus. Much of today’s reading is of texts that convey ‘news’: rapidly dished-out ideas, events, and information that the reader has not previously encountered. He is no longer the passive absorber that he used to be when the big stories came out of the Bible or well-known oral lore. In the old days refinements of heroic problems tended to slow but not to demolish the narrative pace. When a sword was drawn, the reader was not informed of percentages of iron and bronze, or labor squabbles at the forge. He was told that the hilt was exquisitely tooled, that the blade shone in moonlight, was sharp, and that


the giant's head, which the reader already knew was going to come off, came off cleanly at the first swipe.

Classical Latin, incorporative as it was of modification and abrupt in sound, acquired a special megalithic quality which was foreign to the more pliant, vocalized, and quickly paced classical Greek. Con-
sonantal clusters in lines like this one, for example, randomly found in Catullus (Loeb III, 2)

\[
et \text{quantumst hominum venustiorum}
\]
do not trip lightly off the tongue. Compare with this the highly vocalized chain of sounds from the opening line of the Iliad:

Mainin aïde, Thea, Peleïado Achilaios

This line, rendered into Latin by Leonizio Pilato in the fourteenth century, took on three plosive consonants and squeezed the vowel songs of Peleus and Achilles onto a single note, becoming:

Iram cane, dea, Pelidae Achillis

But it was Latin, not Greek, that prevailed in Western Europe and left its heavy imprint on the English language, whose essential make-up is so different. Whereas Latin is terse, inflexible, patterned into tight mosaics and strongly finished with a verb, English expands with munificence from a basal vocabulary of predominantly single-sylla-
bled Anglo-Saxon words, tacking idea to idea with couplings of ‘ands’ and ‘but’s’ that often straggle to a finish. There is a superfluity of words; a vagueness as to boundaries; subordination does not always accord with syntactical position. Necessarily, English is consuming of punctuation. George P. Marsh in his Lectures on the English Lan-
guage describes this well.

There is a necessity, or at least an apology, for the use of punctuation in most modern languages, English especially,

82. Reynolds and Wilson, Scribes and Scholars, 122.
84. Marsh, Lectures, 414.
but which applies with less force to Greek and Latin. I refer to the otherwise inevitable obscurity of long sentences, in languages where the relations of the constituent words are not determined by inflection, but almost wholly by position. The use of commas, semicolons and brackets, supplies the place of inflections, and enables us to introduce, without danger of equivocation, qualifications, illustrations and parenthetical limitations, which, with our English syntax, would render a long period almost unintelligible, unless its members were divided by marks of punctuation. Without this auxiliary, we should be obliged to make our written style much more disjointed than it now is, the sentences would be cut up into a multitude of distinct propositions, and the leading thought consequently often separated from its incidents and its adjunct. The practice of thus framing our written style cannot but materially influence our use of language as a medium of unspoken thought, and, of course, our habits of intellectual conception and ratiocination. It is an advantage of no mean importance to be able to grasp in one grammatical expression a general truth, with the necessary limitations, qualifications and conditions, which its practical application requires, and the habitual omission of which characterizes the shallow thinker.

Before beginning any concrete comparisons, it will perhaps be useful to the reader who has not recently dispatched a chunk of Cicero to refresh his memory of the sculptural quality of classical Latin prose. 85

GENTLEMEN OF THE JURY: Whatever talent I possess (and I realize its limitations), whatever be my oratorical experience (and I do not deny that my practice herein has been not inconsiderable), whatever knowledge of the theoretical side of my profession I may have derived from a devoted literary apprenticeship (and I admit that at no period of my life has the acquisition of such knowledge been repellent to me),—to any advantage that may be derived from all these

my friend Aulus Licinis has a pre-eminent claim, which belongs to him of right.

One sees how this extract (dismantled into the more linear English) demands distinction at every turn. In Latin the piece adheres by virtue of its inflections. English renditions (like the Loeb Classical Library’s Cicero volumes from which this came) give aid to the reader by appropriate insertions of both parenthetical and pausal marks.

But to Cicero and his highly literate audience, punctuating would not necessarily have been a vital matter, for “the fulness of the ancient inflections was a sure guide through the intricacies of the most involved period”. Though he was renowned in his own time for the force of his oratory, Cicero wrote down his speeches for posterity after they had been given—a common practice of the time. Thus, what subsequent generations inherited for compositional paradigm was actually ‘rhetoric’, well contemplated in private. His embedded ornaments, parenthetical concessions—all the subsidiary complications—introduced an architectural dimension to his statements.

One can imagine a scribe in the early centuries A.D. timidly implanting a point, perhaps the very first point, to mark the way through a Ciceronian thicket that he had labored to assort. And if such courage had indeed been mustered, one can again (recalling Roger Bacon) imagine how it happened that a succeeding scribe—this time a bored potato-head whose personal language mixed pigfarm patois with Latin church versicles—might land that point on the line beneath the line where timidity had first placed it, and from where over the centuries it might very well migrate and breed wantonly. Through sheer scholarly ignorance, written Medieval Latin had parted company with its learned ancestor. No longer so structurally compact, so incorporative of tiered modification, it had begun to flow like melody.

To illustrate more specifically the change in language formulation over a multi-century period, we will look at a single periodos from Cicero’s De senectute as it was written down in three manuscripts (now in the British Library) of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; then as it is found translated into fifteenth-century English in a

86. Marsh, Lectures, 412.
Caxton edition printed in 1481; and finally, as it appears in the modern 1953 English translation from the Loeb Classical Library. In the selected passage Cicero is making his dedication to Cato, whose calm and philosophic dignity at the approach of old age he commends. Take note how punctuation grows to assert itself; how it battens on the fecundity of the English language. But first, let us see how Loeb has laid out this sentence in Latin—commas, colons and all—for modern, fully-interiorized literary consumption. 87 (For the English translation, see the last page of this article.)

Nunc autem visum est mihi de senectute aliquid ad te conscribere, hoc enim onere, quod mihi commune tecum est, aut iam urgentis aut certe adventantis senectutis et te et me ipsum levari volo; etsi te quidem id modice ac sapienter, sicut omnia, et ferre et laturum esse certo scio.

All three British Library manuscripts exhibit the phenomenon of word separation. Only one carries an estimated date on its catalogue card. This one, from the thirteenth century and the apparent oldest physically as well as the most archaic conceptually, includes in this selection of lines only two punctuation marks. The first, a line dot after “conscribere” (followed by a lowercase h in “hoc”), indicates a short breath pause, which in this case does not run counter to the sense. The remaining lines, to the final word “scio”, are free entirely of punctuation of any sort; “scio” itself is succeeded by a line dot and a capital S for the subsequent “Sed”. Indicative of a final stop, this line-dot-with-following-capital-letter marks the finish to a contained and complete idea, and is present in all the inspected Latin and English examples of this passage, not excluding the Loeb version.

Another manuscript from the British Library, written in very legible Carolingian script, carries an array of pausal marks. It runs as follows (note the repositioned “mihi” and the fact that the passage is now split into two shorter sentences, the second beginning at

"Hoc"): "Nunc autem mihi visum est: de senectute aliquid adte scribere. Hoc enim onore quod . . . senectutis: et te et me . . . volo: etsi te . . . omnia: et ferre . . . scio. Sed . . ." The three colons of the last sentence give equal weight to: a) the details of their advancing age (which is the burden he wishes to ease for himself and for Cato); b) the main subject, the main verb, and the two pronoun indirect objects; c) subject of the infinitives not present in this segment, along with descriptive adverbs; d) the clausal verb and controlling infinitives. For logical lucidity the break between b and c, the break that distinguishes the although-yet clausal notion, needs to carry more weight, just as it does in the Loeb rendition.

The last of these manuscripts (written in dense Gothic) seems more modern in its punctuating divisions. It, too, breaks into two sentences but at the "volo", where "etsi te" introduces the retracting clause, and where Mr. Falconer of Loeb placed a semicolon, mindful perhaps of consultations with other early manuscripts where the entire passage, indeed the whole paragraph might have appeared as a monolithic whole. But in the manuscript at hand, the two sentences are each divided once. The first pause appears after "scribere" (completing segment a)—a line dot and a lowercase h in "hoc"; and the second after "sapienter"—a line dot followed by a lowercase s in "sicut". This second placement leaves the fragment "sicut omnia" (attached in meaning to "modice ac sapienter") to cling somewhat counterintuitively to the final "et ferre" phrase, though interestingly, its unity is preserved by a line break. Indeed, the line breaks in this gothic sample appear to express some vigor of their own. They are placed where well-sculptured sense might call for minute refinement: after "onere", after "senectutis", and after "omnia". In the thirteenth-century manuscript, line breaks fall willy-nilly when the scribe reaches the end of his line, despite phrase mutilation and word slicing. Clearly, the concept of writing out segments of the spoken language, either per cola et commata or with pausal stops, was nothing to him. As for the Carolingian scribe, he neither marred nor enhanced his text with line breaks. The modern reader, of course, is inured to the tortures provided by the 'justified' margins of printed text. The delicacy of line breaks engaging with perception is accessible to him only in poetry.

Next comes a translation of the same sentence from William Cax-
ton's *Tullye: Of Olde Age and Frendship* (translated by John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester) and printed at Westminster in 1481. But nowe me semyth it is good that I write unto the som thyng of the worship and recomendacion of auncient age for I wyll that thou & I bee re-comforted/ and releved of that sore burthen whiche is comyn both to the & me, that is to Bite of Age whiche nowe constreyneth us and that full certaynly comyth & noyeth us I will by this boke conforte the and me not withstondyng that I wote certaynly that nowe thou suffirst & endurist attemperately & wysely all thyngys which comyn unto the.

The charm of this passage to the modern eye lies in the word choice, not the lucidity. A modern editor would be compelled to 'clean it up', and a major tool in doing so would be punctuation.

Now, finally, we turn to the 1953 translation made by William Armistead Falconer for the Loeb Classical Library. In this cohering sample, logical pointing is shown at the summit of its powers. But for the moment in this long story of punctuation, that triumph lies far in the future.

However, at the present, I have determined to write something on old age to be dedicated to you, for I fain would lighten both for you and for me our common burden of old age, which, if not already pressing hard upon us, is surely coming on apace; and yet I have certain knowledge that you, at all events, are bearing and will continue to bear that burden, as you do all others, with a calm and philosophic mind.


89. Cicero, *De senectute*, Loeb Classical Library, 11.
If for sooth my very friend Attitus I knowe and understand the temperance and the naturall sake of Justice in thy courage exercisado and also I knowe and understand that by the magnifysing of thy science and understanding, I knowe not one only in the sole study of Athens of so great latde and vertuome to be of as that thou hast of Worship in that "minister", but many men knowe there understand the great leng" nes the attempance and also the presence of the in that behal, and that thou hast these excellent vertues fourmounting others yet I tolke and done that thou art Someynne medled and troubled in thy spirites for the said causes ministering. Therof I am of the same disposition my self. Therupon thou must nodis have gotten comfort thane I may pese the at this tyme, thefor I shall abode to recomferte the full at othe tyme, But note me sempth it is good that I write unto the som thynge of the Worship and remendacion of auncient age for I wyl that thou 
be 
comferte and exalted of that for burther Whiche is compy both to the me that is to Wike of Age Whiche note constreyneth vs and that full certenyly comyth to newth as I wike by this boke comferte the and me not withstanding that I note certenyly that note thou sufyst 7 endurest atteempaney 7 dysely alle thinges Which compy Into the Hereseth Whanne my boke Has to wike any the of the age of auncientes I re
membred of the as of hym Whiche was Worthy for to have this present booke of Whiche ech of Vs shal nothe

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

The George Arents Research Library has recently purchased an interesting addition in the area of women's studies—a holograph valedictory address. Written on three-and-one-half pages and folded in the manner of a letter, it exhorts an obviously female audience to eschew "the libraries of romantic writing, with which chiefly we have been from necessity contented . . . filling our minds with extravagant and lawless images". It is necessary, says the author, to take on "the more solid, improving and Really delightful pursuits of philosophy, Mathemetic, literature, and the acquisition of useful languages". For women are "destin'd to be the companions of men of sense and learning, and not only the mothers, but the instructors of their offspring; who teach their first ideas how to shoot, and make those impressions which no length of time can erase".

This earnest and eloquent appeal is both unsigned and undated. Though its provenance has not been fixed, the evidence suggests that it was written for delivery by an American woman sometime between the American Revolution and the War of 1812.

Carolyn A. Davis
Reader Services Librarian

The George Arents Research Library is now the official repository for the non-current records of the Central New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. These materials will join the other architectural collections already at Syracuse. The chapter archivist intends to organize a series on each member firm with histories, biographies, renderings, and drawings. Among the firms represented are: E. F. Thresh, Inc., Melvin L. King, Granger and Gillespie.

Amy S. Doherty
University Archivist
REPORT OF THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATES ANNUAL MEETING

MEMBERSHIP: Mark F. Weimer, Secretary, reported that membership in the Library Associates now stands at 489, including 36 Life Members, and 33 institutional subscribers to the Courier. In recognition of her continuing generous support of the Library Associates, Barbara Goldsmith was enrolled as a life member.

PROGRAM: Eileen Snyder, Chairman of the Program Committee, announced the following speakers for 1989–90: Alan Fern, Director of the National Portrait Gallery; Michael Smethurst, Director General, Humanities and Social Sciences Division, The British Library; Lola Szladits, Curator of the Berg Collection, New York Public Library; Mary Marshall, who will speak on Marguerite Yourcenar; and Deirdre Stam, who will speak on Melvil Dewey. Vartan Gregorian, President of Brown University and formerly President of the New York Public Library, will give the address at the annual luncheon. Also, in November there will be the usual fall book sale, and in December the holiday reception at the Chancellor's house. The program schedule will be sent to all members at the opening of the academic year.

ACQUISITIONS: David Stam, University Librarian, reported the acquisition of a collection of letters from Margaret Bourke-White to Erskine Caldwell. This purchase was made possible through funds provided by the Library Associates. These eleven letters, which date from July to November 1936, add strength to our well-known Bourke-White collection and will be described more fully in a subsequent Courier.

NOMINATIONS: Vice-Chancellor Michael Sawyer presented a slate of officers and trustees that was unanimously approved by the Board. The following names are new to the list: Dorothea Nelson (as treasurer) and Arthur Ecker (for a three-year appointment on the Board). Our long-standing supporters and loyal friends, Dorothy Witherill and Metod Milač, have been made honorary trustees.
David F. Tatham

POST-STANDARD AWARD CITATION, 1989,  
FOR DAVID F. TATHAM

David Tatham, distinguished scholar and author, you have made significant contributions to the study of art history, to Syracuse University, and to the Syracuse community at large.

Nationally known for your outstanding research on nineteenth-century art in America, you have not only inspired and guided many students, but you have also shared your learning enthusiastically with wider audiences through your lectures and fine exhibition catalogues. Your originality and humor, reflected in the title of your first book, The Lure of the Striped Pig: The Illustration of Popular Music in America 1820–1870, published in 1973, have delighted us all—colleagues and students alike. During your career you have written and spoken widely on the role of art, especially that of Winslow Homer, in the social and cultural life of America. In 1961, just a year after you received
your master’s degree at this University, you joined the Library Associates, and from the beginning showed your knowledgeable, indeed inspiring, interest in the research collections at Syracuse. From the time of your election to the Library Associates Board of Trustees in 1974, you have served on a great many committees, often as chairman, always with a vigorous energy and interest. With your donations of valuable books, prints, manuscripts, and rare sheet music, you have added more than can be mentioned here to the Library collections. With deep gratitude, both for your leadership and for your kindnesses, we are happy to present to you the Post-Standard Award for Distinguished Service to the Syracuse University Library.

After the award was given, Michael H. Hoeflich, Dean of the Syracuse University College of Law, gave the luncheon address. His talk was entitled “The Image of Law in Victorian Literature”.
IN MEMORIAM

JOHN M. CRAWFORD, JR., a life member and strong supporter of the Syracuse University Library Associates, died in New York City in December 1988. Although he considered himself only "a temporary custodian", Mr. Crawford was in fact an expert collector of calligraphy and oriental art, as well as fine books and manuscripts. He will be much missed by all who hold these interests in esteem, and most especially by his colleagues and friends in the Library Associates.
THE SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY ASSOCIATES, founded in 1953, is a society whose efforts are devoted to the enrichment of the Syracuse University Library and especially the rare book and manuscript collections. The Associates' interests lie in strengthening these collections through the acquisition of unusual books, manuscripts, and other research materials which are rare and often of such value that the Library would not otherwise be able to acquire them.

The Associates welcome anyone to join whose interests incline in the direction of book collecting or the graphic arts. The perquisites of membership include borrowing privileges and general use of the Syracuse University Library's facilities and resources, as well as invitations to exhibitions, Associates-sponsored lectures, and special events of the University Library. In addition, members will receive our incidental publications, typographic keepsakes, and the Syracuse University Library Associates Courier, a semiannual publication that contains articles related to unusual and interesting aspects of the Library's holdings and, in particular, to the holdings of the George Arents Research Library for Special Collections.

SUGGESTED MEMBERSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS are as follows: Benefactor, $500; Sustaining member, $200; Individual member, $50; Faculty and staff of Syracuse University, $30; Senior citizen and student, $20. Checks, made payable to Syracuse University Library Associates, should be sent to the Secretary, 100 E. S. Bird Library, Syracuse University, Syracuse NY 13244-2010. For further information about the programs and activities of the Library Associates, telephone (315) 443-2697.

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