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On the cover: Unpublished rough by Alan Dunn, undated.

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News of the Syracuse University Libraries and the Library Associates
The Drawings and Papers of 
Alan Dunn and Mary Petty 
at Syracuse University 

BY ELISABETH KALTENBRUNNER MELCZER

Alan Dunn and Mary Petty were cartoonists whose wit and humor enlivened the pages of The New Yorker from 1926 to 1974. Though they were man and wife as well as teacher and student, their output was distinctively separate in style, mood, and content. Their work has been recognized internationally as providing incisive commentary on the social conventions, the values, and the arts of their New York contemporaries. The bulk of their roughs and finished cartoons are held in the Syracuse University Art Collections and their papers, including correspondence and diaries, are in the George Arents Research Library at Syracuse University.* Unless otherwise indicated, all references are to materials held at Syracuse University.

"I accept the Syracuse offer only because, unlike the Library of Congress and other places that want only drawings, they want everything but old clothes—letters, unfinished mss, almost anything", wrote Alan Dunn in October 1966.† He was elated by the fact that Syracuse University wanted not only drawings. To his mind, a drawing was merely a single facet of the total idea behind the making of a cartoon; also to be considered were sketches, roughs, notes, diary entries, manuscripts, letters, idea-books, caption files—all of them aspects of the itinerarium mentis of the artist.

At the time, Dunn was greatly impressed by the considerable collections of American art and literature assembled at Syracuse Uni-

* Other examples of their work which are not at Syracuse University are in the permanent collections of the Metropolitan Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, The Museum of the City of New York, Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute in Utica (New York), the Wichita (Kansas) Art Museum, and the Library of Congress, as well as in privately held collections throughout the world.
versity. In the same paragraph he wrote: "Now I find, to my surprise, that they have a noteworthy collection of Americana, not only the Sinclair Lewis papers but the bulk of Marcel Breuer's work as well." Dunn was eager to see his own collection of originals and papers, as well as that of Mary Petty, integrated into a comprehensive repository of twentieth-century American art (fig. 1). No doubt, he had a clear sense of the historical value of their work. In a letter of 1967 to Martin Bush, who was at the time Assistant Dean of Academic Resources at Syracuse University, Dunn set down his thoughts on the matter: "The work of one's time is never very popular for the first fifty or more years after its completion, but whoever will hold on to a comprehensive collection of this fabulous century will, in time, have an extraordinary incunabula [sic] and I deeply hope that Syracuse will be such a repository." The pertinent legal matters were handled by David Prager, a Madison Avenue attorney and, at the date of this writing, one of a few still-surviving friends of the couple. By late 1966 the Dunns were ready to ship a substantial part of their drawings and papers to Syracuse. From that year on, the Dunn and Petty art material and personal papers kept arriving at the newly refurbished facilities of the Syracuse University Art Collections and at the manuscripts department of the George Arents Research Library. After their deaths, the final remnant of their donation—several boxes of letters and memorabilia—was brought to Syracuse in 1978 by Richard S. Petty, a younger brother of Mary.

Soon after making this decision to give their work to Syracuse University, the Dunns entered into a period of declining health, which was exacerbated by Mary's unfortunate accident and subsequent deteriorating years. Alan saw himself condemned to struggle with many difficulties, not the least of which was that of having to elicit laughter with his work while he himself was often in despair. Finally, in

2. Letter from Alan Dunn to Martin Bush, 20 Feb. 1969: "Mary Petty was not invited to have a ms. collection at Syracuse and I think she deserves it more than I do in spite of the lesser amount of her output. The Library of Congress was after her work for years but she didn't answer their letters." To date there is no biography of Alan Dunn. For a biography of Mary Petty and a catalogue of her work at Syracuse University Art Collections, see Cheryl A. Saunders' masters thesis (1983): "The Life and Art of Mary Petty: Cartoonist and Illustrator".


4. Peggy Bacon and Isabel Bishop were long-standing friends of the Dunns. In a letter of Peggy Bacon to A. Dunn (28 Dec. 1971) she writes: "Alan dear! Isabel [Bishop] telephoned me shortly before Christmas to tell me the horrifying news of
1974, Dunn suffered a fatal heart attack and two years later Mary herself, long an invalid, passed away quietly in a nursing home.

Prager proceeded to dispose of the remainder of the estate. According to the instructions of the couple, an important endowment what happened to Mary—and to you! . . . And still the delicious drawings keep pouring out of you—the gay, lighthearted, witty pictures! I give you my profound homage."
was bestowed upon Syracuse University, the objectives of which were to augment the already existing collection of American twentieth-century cartoon art at Syracuse and to found a center for the study of cartoon art. In 1978 the Petty-Dunn Center for Social Cartooning was officially established at the Syracuse University Art Collections in fitting tribute to the two artist benefactors. Alfred T. Collette, director of the University Art Collections, and David Tatham, chairman of the Fine Arts Department, have from its inception vigorously supported the project. Much of the actual curatorial work fell upon the shoulders of Domenic Iacono, curator of the Collections, and his assistants. The cataloguing of letters and papers was handled by Carolyn A. Davis, manuscripts librarian in the George Arents Research Library. Hundreds of cartoons and thousands of roughs, letters, and documents had to be processed. Furthermore, exhibitions, lectures, and symposia had to be organized. As a result, Mary Petty's "mood" covers and Alan Dunn's "graphic comment art" have not been allowed to vanish into the oblivion of storage drawers.

Leafing through this bewilderingly rich world of cartoons and roughs, one cannot escape the impression that fifty years of the story of New York City—and, by implication, of America—are parading by. We say story and not history, because Mary's interests were purely feminine and psychological; and Dunn, though an avid reader of newspapers, studiously eschewed short-tempered political comments in favor of the slower-paced but, to his mind, deeper-running social critique.5 Within the broad spectrum of that nearly half a century of metropolitan life, Dunn, whose work comprises the vast bulk of the collection, registered in his cartoons the social evolution as well as the physical alterations of the cityscape. By juxtaposing incongruent elements of the traditional past with samplings of the restless, often fatuous, innovations of the contemporary, he was able to comment with telling insight on the scenes of city life and, occasionally, of the hinterland beyond the Hudson.

5. "... the work of the Social Cartoonist, whose pen is no sword but a titillating feather that reminds us constantly that we do not act as we speak or think. Since, by its very objectivity, it reaches more people and raises fewer hackles, its gentle approach tends to soften and ameliorate the aggravations of one's times and thereby to enlighten." Alan Dunn, "Graphic Comment Art" in: Alan Dunn: A Social Cartoonist Comments on His Times, p. [4]. Exhibition catalogue, The Edward W. Root Art Center, Hamilton College, Clinton, New York, 1968.
In 1935 Lewis Mumford, in the foreword to *The Seventh New Yorker Album*, had levelled an incisive criticism on *New Yorker* cartoonists, reproaching them for not treating adequately the multifarious topical subjects of the city. If such criticism had indeed a measure of validity in the case of some of the cartoon artists (Wolcott Gibbs, answering Mumford on the same pages, thought it had none), it could hardly be applied to Dunn. Over the years, Dunn had again and again returned to the theme of the city, both in explicit references to some of its well-known buildings, squares, or streets, and in generic yet unmistakable allusions to problems or situations indigenous to the city. A cartoon such as Central Park of 1956 (fig. 2) squarely refers to a topical event of the city.

To an even greater extent Dunn was sensitive to the architectural problems of New York’s skyline. Issues relating to the preservation of landmarks were among his foremost concerns, and he did not miss a chance to comment upon them with his usual wit. In this group belong the drawings and roughs of the early sixties, as well as the four published cartoons in The New Yorker and the Architectural Record on the subject of the Pennsylvania Railroad station demolition. One such cartoon (The New Yorker, 26 May 1956, p. 27) shows a heavy demolition truck filled with debris pulling into a city dumpyard. “Where do you want Penn Station?” says the driver to the lot attendant. The notion of demolishing the old and constructing the new went, of course, hand in hand. A 1962 cartoon (The New Yorker, 10 Nov. 1962, p. 47) takes a bold axial view of a street in which, alongside half-finished apartment and office highrises, huge cranes convey the sense of febrile change. “At this rate,” exclaims one fretted dowager to her friend, “pretty soon there won’t be anything left of New York.” Apartment houses generated a fund of inspiration (fig. 3). Dunn turns them into hanging gardens (The New Yorker, 1 June 1963, p. 100, caption: “You’d never know you were in New York, would you?”) or invites from them a view of collapsing civilization (The New Yorker, 14 Aug. 1971, p. 27, caption: “From this floor, you’ll have a splendid view of the collapse of civilization—if and when.”).

Dunn suffered from a number of phobias. Particularly, he was afraid of being trapped by fire in the dense, uncaring warren of New York buildings. Brendan Gill in Here at The New Yorker wrote: “On a few occasions, when he [Dunn] planned to visit a friend in an apartment building new to him, he went so far as to secure copies of the blueprints of the building and ascertain the position of its fire escapes.” The Syracuse collection contains many roughs on the subject of fire departments (fig. 4). Dunn uses the zealous, no-nonsense New York Fire Department in interplay with aristocracy to expose the foibles of the upperclass, a theme dear to both his and Mary Petty’s hearts. In a bustling fire station (The New Yorker, 8 Aug. 1959, p. 33), an of-

7. The New York Times, 18 April 1956, p. 33, carried an article on Central Park mothers vanquishing a bulldozer set to raze a play area in the park. A photograph accompanying the article shows mothers with children and baby carriages busily picketing on the site.
Fig. 3. “And in summer you won’t have to go away—” Unpublished rough, ca. 1963.

ficer takes the call and reports: “Park Avenue at Eighty-sixth. We’re to come as we are.”

Dunn’s deftly satirical pen was also aimed at matters pertaining to the eccentricities of contemporary art on the New York scene. In a rough which later grew into one of the cartoons of *Is There Intelligent Life on Earth?* there is a profusion of Alexander Calder’s mobiles turning in the background of an art gallery. With his hand on the shoulder of a floridly classicized marble bust, the dealer comments to


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his customer: “And no moving parts to get out of order.” A famous 1966 cartoon that made its way into an art exhibit in London shows an apartment dweller screaming to his neighbor in the dead of the night: “Turn down that damn sculpture.”10 But the most well-known piece in this series is the 1964 cartoon showing the Guggenheim Museum at the time of the exhibition of Calder’s sculptures (fig. 5).

From the time that it was built, Dunn did not miss an opportunity to comment incisively on Frank Lloyd Wright’s latest masterpiece. Indeed, everybody had climbed aboard that bandwagon, so it seemed, and Vogue was claiming that cartoonists made small fortunes, so willing was the public to laugh at the Guggenheim Museum. Dunn himself dealt with it in large numbers of roughs and cartoons. The art

editors of The New Yorker were as enthusiastic as the rest to poke fun, for the 28 November 1959 issue carried no less than four full pages of Dunn’s Guggenheim material. He was as much concerned with the architectural structure, layout, and lines of the building—mainly the prodigious spiral stairway—as with the now-astonished, now-bemused reactions of the visitors. The needed adjustment of the feet to the sloping stairway, the clockwise or counterclockwise progression, and the sense of acrophobia one got on the stairs (Dunn himself had suffered that phobia too) gave ample stimulus to his imaginative pencil. And, of course, there were also a colorful variety of silly remarks such as “This is going to be hard to tear down”, “Let’s come again and really look at the pictures”, “Reminds me of the old
Wanamaker's”—all these invariably voiced by aghast female visitors, for Dunn, reflecting the society of the fifties and sixties, was confident of his superior male wisdom. His portrayals of the Guggenheim Museum played heavily on the ice-cream-cone look of the building as well as its resemblance to an ocean liner. “Ah, terra firma”, sighs a bewildered-looking couple as they emerge onto the sidewalk in one of Dunn’s more famous cartoons (The New Yorker, 28 Nov. 1959, p. 51).

Dunn had always been greatly interested in architecture. In his undated “Autobiography in the third person” he confessed to having noted early in life “that architects were more balanced than artists. The former lived in both a structural and an imaginative world.”

From 1937, when O. C. Anderson, the managing editor of the Architectural Record, invited him to submit a monthly cartoon, Dunn was a regular contributor to that leading publication of the New York architectural establishment, a group known for its nervous sensitivities. The readers of the Record were not known for inviting humorous comments about themselves, particularly from critics outside their field. However, the magazine over the years came not merely to accept the honesty that lay beneath Dunn’s insightful commentary but to honor him by promoting him to the position of leading editorial cartoonist. By 1971, a few years before Dunn was to die, the Architectural Record was assembling a second collection of Dunn cartoons to be published as a book. A first such collection had already been published by the Record in 1947 under the title The Last Lath. Working on the title for the second one, Architecture Observed, Hugh S. Dunlan, at the time manager of Architectural Books, a division of the Record, proposed an advertising blurb that would have heralded Dunn as “America’s foremost cartoon critic of the architectural scene”. Though the statement finally agreed upon drastically toned down Dunlan’s original suggestion, the fact remains that Dunn was indeed

12. Letter of O. C. Anderson to A. Dunn, 12 April 1937. On the verso of the above letter Dunn answers: “. . . and I am pleased that my libido towards architecture and construction has come to notice. This subject has always been a major interest with me and I am afraid I have deluged the New Yorker with ideas on that line, the result being that I have many left over. I would be delighted if some of them were worthy of publication in the Record.”
considered America's number one architectural cartoonist. He had for thirty-eight years contributed a monthly cartoon for the *Architectural Record* and, in 1973, received from the American Institute of Architects the Architecture Critic's Citation for his book *Architecture Observed*. Because Alan Dunn was by that time already in fragile health, Walter F. Wagner, the new chief-editor of the *Architectural Record*, went to San Francisco to receive the award for him. Dunn died in 1974 knowing that his reputation was firmly established.

Born in 1900 in his parents' summer home in Belmar, New Jersey, Alan nevertheless considered himself a thorough New Yorker. Although they did not know each other as children, Mary's and Alan's early years were spent in very similar circumstances. Both attended school in the city and lived during the winter months in Manhattan brownstones, secure in multi-layered networks of family connections. Alan was one of three children; Mary the third of seven. Alan's father was a lawyer. Mary's father, the dean of the old New York Law School, was a prominent figure in the city's law establishment as well as the Democratic party. While Alan enjoyed the benefits of a formal art education (fig. 6) at both Columbia University and the National Academy of Design, Mary (perhaps because she was 'only a girl') never went beyond the Horace Mann School. Painfully shy and conscious of not having been understood in her own family, she relied on Alan for guidance both in practical affairs and in her art. They were married in December 1927 and, due to Alan's terrible fear of fire, resided from 1938 onwards in a ground-floor apartment on East 88th Street. In their friendships they were exclusive and intensely loyal. Many late afternoons were spent (exit well in view) at the Century Association or at the Cosmopolitan Club. Alan, who liked to play chess, often sat for a game or two with Hawley Truax, chairman of the board of *The New Yorker* and something like its 'godfather'. Alethea Truax was for many years a particular friend of Mary. Never in robust health, Dunn—slim and dapper, meticulous, worrying—suffered a severe heart attack in the winter of 1968–69. Although he recovered and continued an active and busy life, the experience left him with a raw anxiety about the future.

But more devastating yet was the brutal mugging to which Mary Petty fell victim on the night of 2 December 1971. She never fully recovered her memory or her health after that terrible evening, and it became necessary not long after to commit her to a nursing home.
In their three-room apartment and with his own health declining, Dunn was no longer able to provide the round-the-clock nursing care she now needed. Mary's condition and the inordinate financial burden deriving from it added excruciating grief and hardship to Dunn's own last years. But always, he kept working. "Working is the only therapy of value I know", he wrote to the artist Peggy Bacon for the
New Year of 1974," pouring out (in Peggy Bacon’s words) “gay, lighthearted, witty pictures”, as if nothing had happened, as if Mary and he had just come back, arm in arm, from an opening at the Guggenheim around the corner from their home. In those waning years he must have drawn frequently from the abundance of early experiences and ideas.

Indeed, throughout his artistic career Dunn’s interest would return to certain topical areas, and he would refine or revise a play of ideas already dealt with. A case in point is a 1960 cartoon on wages (The New Yorker, 13 Feb. 1960, p. 31). Seated comfortably in the library of a plush clubhouse, one patron says to another: “And then another wage boost, followed by another rate hike, and so on, ad infinitum. What more could one ask?” Eight years later the same theme emerges in updated form. The caption is singularly reminiscent of the earlier cartoon, though the drawing now shows a girl skipping rope against a working-class row of houses (fig. 7). Her “wage boosts” are followed by “price hikes”, a term which elicits working class anxieties rather than investors’ interests. We do not know to what extent Dunn relied on the first cartoon when he conceived the second one; but we do know that he worked strenuously on the little skipping girl, for no less than four variant roughs of the same are preserved.

At other times, Dunn conceived philosophically profound ideas and set them forth in captionless drawings—statements on the condition and destiny of mankind. In these works humor is strongly understated and, if it appears at all, it is a bitter-sweet humor à la Chaplin, which leads us along a tight-rope between tears and laughter. Of such temper is the famous “Unemployed Apples 15¢” spot drawing that the art editors of The New Yorker bought up without hesitation. In this drawing, which was published in 1949, a man, flat-capped, collar turned up against the cold, stares bleakly into space over his box of apples for sale. No customers are in sight. The mood is one of piercing desolation. An earlier cartoon (The New Yorker, 1 Oct. 1938, p. 74) had already treated the theme of unemployment: “Here’s your

14. See also Dunn’s letter to Peggy Bacon of 25 Sept. 1972. “My beloved Mary is now in a nursing home on 79th Str. . . . When Mary first went to the nursing home it cost me $52,000 a year, which I could just manage. When the night nurse was discharged she only cost 42,000 which, paradoxically, made me feel v. rich! And she’s not insured.” Cf., also, Dunn’s letter to Martin Bush of 2 July 1972. Copy, courtesy of Mr. Bush, in Elisabeth Melczer’s possession.
pin”, says the boss, who stands in front of a field salesmen's wall map that bristles with pins marking the locations of sales. The salesman looks down at the offering with sagging shoulders and disconsolate expression. In a similar vein is the austere and bespectacled WAC with the neckties (The New Yorker, 27 Dec. 1947, p. 57), again a captionless drawing. She is dressed in military uniform and sits next to the Christmas tree amid wrappings from which neckties have been extracted and laid out over the armrest and back of the sofa. From
the box on her knee she holds forth yet another tie. The humor in all these examples hinges on the plight of victims trapped in a situation about which they can find nothing to say. In the cases of the pin and the tie, both objects constitute the graphic centers of their respective pictures and they become the visual embodiment of the sadness that pervades their recipients. We are made aware of a somewhat different psychological reaction in the case of a cleaning woman (The New Yorker, 25 Dec. 1954, p. 17). It is Christmas time. She stands, feather duster at her hip like a sword, in the doorway of the drawing room that she is to dust and glares aggressively about her. The piano top, table tops, mantel—every available surface—is crowded with Christmas cards. How can she dust? There is no caption, for though the reaction is no longer passive, there is again nothing to say. Her position is untenable. In all of these captionless cartoons the protagonists have been trapped in an area of hopelessness for which there is no viable remedy. They view their comic and often heart-rending fates in stunned silence.

Dunn repeatedly enlarged on themes inspired by the New York financial establishment. We see money at work—in corporation board rooms, executive offices, and banks. In a cartoon of 1937 (The New Yorker, 3 July 1937, p. 15), Dunn presented the interior of a bank, drawing it in the style of Brunelleschi’s Santo Spirito, and lined the aisles between the pillars with bankers’ desks. There is an atmosphere of grandeur and reverence. A client, having just concluded his business transaction, asks of the banker: “Could I wash my hands while you compound my interest?” In a cartoon of some thirty years later, Dunn is still at work with money. We see the Super Conglomerate Corporation’s shapely receptionist seated pertly at a round desk, in a round office, and under a globe-like light fixture. “You name it, we own it!” she parrots into the telephone (The New Yorker, 27 April 1968, p. 46).

Another aspect of the financial theme which Dunn exuberantly dealt with over the years was the effect on the individual of owning too much money. We are treated to views of the wealthy, who are caught in the boredom of their plush clubs or in their panelled and brocaded residences, where gloomy dynastic portraits decorate the walls and massive chandeliers hang glittering from ornate ceilings. In almost every case where Dunn treats this second typology, it is a woman, usually long-gowned, bejeweled, and rigidly patrician, who makes an
incongruous, silly, often plainly ignorant remark to her husband over some piece of news she has just read in the papers. These cartoons all come from Dunn’s later period. In one, the lady is apprehensive that, with the cracking of the genetic code, “everyone will want to be Peabodys” (The New Yorker, 28 Jan. 1967, p. 27). In a rough, a variation of the same idea, the lady wants to know whether the guaranteed annual income applies also to them (fig. 8). In yet another, from the Lyndon Johnson era, she notes that people they know “wouldn’t want to belong to the Great Society” (The New Yorker, 26 Dec. 1964, p. 36). Dunn’s published drawings in all of these cases were detailed and elaborate, with a great deal of attention devoted to space apportionment and to description of interiors.15

Back in the twenties, when Dunn set out on his career, New York City was, of course, a fertile terrain for an aspiring cartoon artist. One had only to look around, it seemed. But it was not as easy as that, for many who were talented and clever tried without success. Dunn’s sparkle, his ability to concentrate upon a central idea were indeed rare gifts. For Dunn, a comic idea consisted of a perfectly normal, everyday situation, into which a single disturbing element was introduced by means of a turn of phrase or a gesture to throw the expected standard off balance. The smaller the off-setting component, the funnier the resolution. All of a sudden we are made to view the commonplace in a surprising new light.

It is no wonder that these ideas, sketched in rough (always on 20 × 21 cm. sheets), were jealously guarded secrets traveling back and forth between 12 East 88th Street, the Dunns’ residence, and the twentieth floor of 23 West 43rd Street, where the much-dreaded art meetings of The New Yorker took place. Of these famous roughs—the tentative, preliminary drawings on which Dunn’s miracle of comic creativity first took tangible form—Syracuse University Art Collections has several thousands, a corpus in itself precious beyond say, for it allows us to follow the process of his thinking: the development of a single idea from germination to maturation. Often a central idea, such as that of the woman who hangs on to the phone for a gossip session but who is unwilling to miss the afternoon soap-opera on

15. Such training in naturalistic drawing Dunn had acquired early in life, at the time of his various periods of residency at the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation in Oyster Bay, Long Island, at the American Academy in Rome, and at the Fontainebleau School of Fine Arts in France.
television, had to be redone a number of times in order to try out various angles and points of view
(fig. 9).

Alan Dunn was a fifty-cartoon-a-year man. He had annual contractual agreements with The New Yorker to supply that number of cartoons. For the feverish imagination of Dunn it was indeed no

16. Syracuse University Art Collections does not own any roughs for this cartoon. However, two long editorial notes from J. Geraghty to A. Dunn, dated 11/22 and 11/29/1950, are here relevant: "... except that the woman instead of leaning easily against the wall, should be standing in the doorway, the phone wire stretched as far as it will go, with the phone dangling from the wire as you had it. Ross would like it to appear that the woman can just barely manage to see the television screen. And he thinks the little chair ought to be beside the phone table."

17. See Dunn’s undated letter to Geraghty. It is quarrelsome and revealing in other respects too. The George Arents Research Library has a large collection of Dunn’s and Petty’s financial documents.
problem to turn out the required number of cartoons. The problem was that between a submitted rough and a published cartoon on the pages of The New Yorker was Harold Ross.

Ross was the mighty boss of The New Yorker. He had come to New York City from the West with a modest record in journalism and a library of two books, Webster’s dictionary and Fowler’s Modern English Usage. In the city, with little money but good connections, he established in 1925 his New Yorker publishing enterprise. The magazine was his brainchild. It was to be the embodiment of an idea catering to the cultivated taste of the upper- and upper-middle-class New Yorkers and whatever aspiring cosmopolitans might be perceived along the Eastern Seaboard. In the words of Ross, it would definitely not be “edited for the old lady in Dubuque”. The journal was to be sophisticated, understated, stylish, and to have a careless sense of
gracefulness. Most importantly, The New Yorker was to carry cartoons, some twenty-odd per issue, a formula which has been kept alive to this day. The magazine, however, in the cheerful formula of Alan Fern, would not “explain its inside jokes to outsiders”. Those who know will understand; and those who do not hardly count.

Ross had not merely conceived the idea of The New Yorker, he was its first editor. Year in and year out, until his death in December 1951, Ross attended the weekly meetings of the editorial group—the famous art meetings—to which cartoonists presented their proposals in the form of roughs.

For Alan Dunn these roughs, the editorial meetings, and, in particular, Ross himself were a source of constant concern, at times irritation, and occasionally, despair. Of course, like any of the other New Yorker cartoonists, Dunn had no direct access to Ross or to the editorial meetings where roughs were discussed and their fate decided. But Dunn felt all along—and Mary confirmed him in this—that Ross appreciated him and valued his work in a very special way. Their relationship must have developed from the time of Dunn’s early contacts with Ross in the late twenties, when no middleman of stature was yet around. But with the success and the consolidation of the magazine things changed, and J. M. Geraghty took on for thirty-four years the job of speaking for Ross and the art editors. Malgré lui, his was the middle ground between the cartoonist and the printed pages of The New Yorker. In many ways a key figure on The New Yorker staff, Geraghty was, after the magazine itself, one of Ross’s best inventions. A spirited mind with a consummate professional skill tem-


19. “In a rare display of appreciation”—according to the obituary of Alan Dunn (The New York Times, 22 May 1974)—Mr. Ross climbed into a taxi and delivered to Alan Dunn a gold watch for the artist’s 1000th cartoon. See also in the Arents Library two letters of Ross: one dated “Monday” only, the second, 14 Nov. 1945; and Dunn’s unpublished autobiographical manuscript, p. 2.

20. Art editor of The New Yorker from 1939 to his retirement in 1973, Geraghty had been hired by Ross on the recommendation of Peter Arno. Like Ross, James Geraghty was a westerner and largely self-educated. William Shawn, executive editor of The New Yorker, wrote in the obituary for Geraghty, The New York Times, 20 Jan. 1983: “Geraghty set the magazine’s comic art on its course and he helped determine the direction in which the comic art would go and is still going.”
pered by a great sense of humanity, Geraghty was time and again at pains to proclaim his faithfulness to a constantly difficult, occasionally paranoid Dunn. "If one person in this world were as well disposed toward me, as I am toward you, I would consider myself fortunate", he wrote to Dunn in October 1951, after a particularly strained exchange between the two. Dunn, on his part, had plenty of reason to look at the outcome of the dreaded art meetings with suspicion and consternation. From 1926, the year he began to collaborate with *The New Yorker*, until 1974, the year of his death, he had 2,032 cartoons and nine cover illustrations published in the magazine. That is an imposing figure indeed. Yet, judging from Dunn's roughs in the Syracuse University Art Collections and from his correspondence with Geraghty, it may be safely assumed that Dunn had prepared, during those forty-eight years, some ten thousand cartoon roughs. The majority of these, in one form or another, ended their careers on the table of the art meetings. Thus, even such a formidable publication record as his leaves some eight thousand, and probably many more, roughs among the rejects. Not that many of these were of lesser artistic or comic quality: witness the superb rough of Thomas Aquinas (fig. 10). But for one reason or another—sheer quantity might have been a consideration—they were not accepted. These rejects traveled back from West 43rd to East 88th Street in properly sealed brown envelopes in order to be amended, reworked, filed away, or forgotten. And they were always accompanied by short, occasionally page-long, but invariably type-written notes by Jim Geraghty to "Dear Alan". Many of these notes start out with a brief, uneasy, disappointing comment: "No nibbles in this batch I'm sorry to say", or "None of these went over. Sorry."

Of course, there were also glorious victories; for hundreds, with or without amendments, were accepted. But what agony the failures brought! The chagrin, the anguish, not to mention the intimation of failing abilities that these rejections induced in Dunn's susceptible mind are prominently evident throughout his papers. In part Dunn was uneasy about who was actually judging the roughs. Frequently, we find

21. Letter from Geraghty to Alan Dunn, 10 Oct. 1951. The passage quoted in the text follows a laconic opening: "These three ideas were turned down, I'm sorry to say."

22. This figure was given to Elisabeth Melczer in a letter dated 8 Feb. 1985 from Elizabeth Hughes at the editorial offices of *The New Yorker*. 

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him suggesting that they were being evaluated by the editorial staff only, or by Jim Geraghty, and that they never really reached the desk of Ross. Without fail Geraghty would reassure him: “Hawley [Truax] told me that you and Mary seem seriously to doubt whether Mr. Ross looks at all your ideas. I assure you that he does and always has”; or, “... and Alan, Mr. Ross looks at all your sketches, always”. 23

Geraghty’s efforts were unavailing. Deep in his heart Dunn was

23. Notes from Geraghty to Dunn. The first one is dated 21 Nov. 1951; the second is undated. In the already quoted letter of 10 Oct. 1951 from Geraghty to Dunn, he is again at pains explaining the intricacies of the editorial triangle: “If Ross doesn’t like something that I have faith in, I help the artist to alter it so Ross will like it. I have the feeling that you consider me as a block between you and Ross. Nothing could be further from the truth.”
convinced that if Ross had seen all his roughs—which he apparently did though Dunn thought he did not—even more of his drawings would have ended up on the pages of The New Yorker. Reading excerpts from what must have been Dunn’s dense correspondence with Geraghty, one cannot escape the impression that Dunn worried unreasonably about the judgment of the art editors of The New Yorker. It must be said to Geraghty’s credit that he did all he could—in tones that ranged from fraternal to stern but were always patient, tactful, and understanding—to assuage Dunn’s fears. At one point, in a letter of 7 February 1946, Geraghty, apparently on the edge of exasperation, exclaimed in upper case:

DEAR ALAN AND MARY:

I HOPE YOU PEOPLE HAVEN’T GOT THE IDEA THAT I ENJOY SITTING DOWN TO THE TYPEWRITER AND POUNDING OUT THESE NOTES TRYING ALWAYS TO HIT THE RIGHT KEYS, TRYING TO BE CLEAR AND HELPFUL AND GRAMMATICAL AND NOT FLIPPANT, AND TACTFUL ALWAYS, AND HONEST WHILE BEING TACTFUL, BECAUSE I DON’T.

JIM GERAGHTY
ART HANDLER

Now, apart from the one overriding preoccupation of Dunn concerning the involvement of Ross in the selection of the drawings, there were three more specific areas of turbulence in Dunn’s working relation with The New Yorker. All three had to do with the fundamental fact that he was a man of ideas, a compulsive thinker and evaluator. Geraghty himself once aptly said that in Dunn’s cartoons even a truckdriver looked like a Harvard or Groton graduate. Dunn produced whole ideas, which in terms of cartooning meant both picture and caption. A difficult problem arose from an old practice of Ross to leave any final consideration on the gaglines to the very last and actually to rearrange them all. As Geraghty once explained benevolently to Dunn, “Practically no caption anyone submits is ok with Ross. . . . Mr. Ross has his caption time, once a week, when he puts his mind on the problem. . . .” 24 Dunn, for his part, relied on an old deal he had struck with Ross—or so he thought—long before Ger-

24. Note from Geraghty to Dunn, 18 Nov. 1948.
aghthy had appeared on the scene. According to Dunn’s understanding of the deal, he was to enjoy some special author’s rights, included in which was the restriction against editorial tampering with his work. Nobody, except himself, was to be allowed to change anything, or at least not much, in the captions that he submitted, for they were integral to the essence of his cartoon idea. If the minutest element was to be changed in a caption, he, Dunn, was to approve it before printing. This procedure, however, was too demanding to be carried out without the frequent slip-up, particularly since no other cartoonist was allowed such generous provision, and the changing of captions went on routinely until the very last hour before printing. The caption quarrel blazed from time to time as long as Dunn was around. Though it was never wholly resolved, tempers were contained somehow by deadline compromises contrived by the unerring tactfulness of Geraghty.

Another area of difficulty lay in the over-abundance of ideas. From the art editor’s perspective, Dunn’s immense creativity presented a problem. Dunn would be told, always adroitly, that a certain idea of his was indeed good, but that it was thought unsuitable to his drawing style. At that point some alternate artist would be suggested. Thus, in February 1949, Geraghty wrote Dunn a note proposing that Helen Hokinson should draw the picture to one of his ideas. In this particular case, the point in the argument was that Dunn was incapable of drawing sufficiently stupid figures, an observation that might well have pleased him, but which, in fact, upset him. Another such instance, remarkable because of its outcome, was generated by Dunn’s rough of a young lady unpacking sea shells, a mood-illustration rather than a cartoon, for which Mary Petty was suggested. In Mary’s hands, the subject evoked sufficient interest and end-of-summer nostalgia for an entire cover (figs. 11, 12, 13).

A third problem, predictable with one of Dunn’s suspicious nature, had to do with the fate of those precisely conceived and rendered roughs. They were the cull of his genius and he allowed them

26. In the letter quoted in note 25 above, Dunn impatiently exclaims: “NOW, your Mr. F. forgot to inform me of somebody’s change in the Reagan caption so I have no choice but to protest—demonstrate—rebel—indulge in insurrection and bottle-throwing RIOTING lest I lose my valued author’s franchise. . . .”
Fig. 11. "After Labor Day." Unpublished rough, ca. 1953. A 'spot' drawing is a small, sometimes even tiny, captionless drawing which is used to embellish a page. A 'spot +' is presumably slightly larger.

out of his ken under special circumstances only, that is, for the benefit of the art meetings, and for them alone. If a rough were deemed promising, subsequent development followed in the standard way. If, however, a rough was rejected, which was the rule rather than the exception, then it was returned, often with others, in bunches within a sealed envelope. We have the amusing story of one such envelope which, due to accidental circumstances, was not properly closed and, presumably, reached Dunn's hands open. Apparently, in a letter we cannot trace, Dunn raised the roof. We have Geraghty's charming reply in which he tried to tease away Dunn's serious concern, a hard task, for Dunn considered his roughs to be his most important pos-
Fig. 12. "Unpacking seashells." Beneath, Dunn wrote: "You did say Petty could do this one." Unpublished sketch, ca. 1953.
sessions—"my only real capital", he wrote in 1953 in a despondent letter to Geraghty. But the conviction that his ideas were being stolen or even ignored persisted despite the gentlemanly reassurances of Geraghty. In an undated letter to Geraghty we read: "I can demonstrate that the mag continually prints ideas submitted by others that I have had rejected in prior years. It's not that the board even remembers that I entered the idea previously." Dunn tortured himself with the fear that his ideas might fall into the hands of competing colleagues. A rejection to him was alarming on two counts: because of the rejected idea itself; and again, because—so he felt—the same idea might appear later within the pages of *The New Yorker* over the signature of another.

Though her husband's battles with *The New Yorker* smouldered more or less continuously on the center stage of their life together, Mary Petty too had her sessions of hurt and disagreement with the art editors. Indeed, in the end it was their criticisms that drove her into an early, self-imposed retirement. Unlike Alan or the majority of the cartoonists for *The New Yorker*, Mary had never presented her work in roughs for adjustment or correction. Withdrawn and sensitive, she labored in privacy to refine the finished drawing before other eyes could view it. Mary Petty was less expansive in her interests than her husband. Newspapers, finances, architecture, the common man’s plight did not figure for the most part in her work. Unlike Alan Dunn, Mary was in the main instinctive and spontaneous in her conceptions; and, in the terms of the era in which she lived, she was feminine. Her mind was not compartmentalized by the rigors of intellectual training, but moved freely between the complex and the simple without reverence for delineating boundaries. Her exuberance is disarming. Where Dunn's aristocratic household interiors emerge as analytically representative, hers abound in a Henry Jamesian extravagance of nostalgic minutiae. Her immensely rich homes are filled with objets d'art, Victorian bric-a-brac, fringed lampshades, brocade drapes, and abundant and detailed floral arrangements—every particular lovingly elicited. At least half a dozen of Mary's letters contain passages describing flowers and flower arrangements. "To me it is always strange & wondrous how flowers can bring a wholly new atmosphere to a room—any room—be it splendid or mean. . . . roses with their grace and beauty performed this very magic on the wear & tear of our sur-
roundings."

One senses in her work the deep pleasure that flow-
ers—as well as carpet patterns, wallpaper designs, ruffles, bow ties, and cuff links—brought to her. Delighting in them herself, she rendered them meticulously, as though to share the visual joke of their variety and their profusion. Against the complexity of these back-
grounds of detail, resound the intellectual inanities of her heroes—starched and tuxedoed, sunk without comfort into the upholstered depths of their armchairs—and her chinless, bosomy heroines. She was aware “of a vanished world” and spoke of her pencil that it seemed “to have drifted into a clearly nostalgic vein”. Her charac-
ters are imbued with a disconcerting irrelevance to the current scene. “We ought to do something—we can’t leave everything to the Red Army, you know”, advocates the grande dame in a cartoon of 1942 (The New Yorker, 8 Aug. 1942, p. 12). This is a World War II pic-
ture, evoking some of the national concerns regarding the Soviets. The most subtle and at the same time eloquently understated piece in this series is the 1940 cartoon in which one effete gentleman says to another over after-dinner coffee, “After all, Roderick, I figure we’re put here on earth for some very good reason.” (The New Yorker, 20 Jan. 1940, p. 18).

Within a much reduced compass of interest—if compared to that of her husband—Mary Petty had her own cherished subjects that dealt with the feminine upper-bourgeois and old-money habits of New Yorkers. Memorable in this regard are Mary's fashion cartoons, which poke fun in sundry combinations at poses, styles, and the general ar-
ray of female vanities. Not surprisingly, seamstresses play a signifi-
cant role in such cartoons. Often they provide a sense of the norm against which something incongruous is set. One remembers the fa-
mous “Say when” cartoon of 1939 (The New Yorker, 13 May 1939, p. 24), in which the seamstress, with scissors already inserted into her extravagantly bosomed customer's neckline, asks matter-of-factly how plunging the décolletage should be.

Hats were a particular object of Mary's critical attention since she herself liked to wear them and was acquainted with the doings of milliner shops and hat salons. For years, at the West 43rd Street Wednesday art meetings, Mary appeared wearing a floppy hat and

28. Answer, 23 March 1959, to a fan letter from Sheila Hibben.
carrying a portfolio of her husband's drawings. Hats in those days were crucial to feminine apparel. Ladies of fashion paid inordinate attention to the gear they perched on the tops of their heads. In 1937, inspired perhaps by the pages of *Vogue*, Mary did an exquisite drawing of a fashion-conscious socialite trying on hats. Swathed in silver fox, she is shown leaning into the milliner's mirror to scrutinize the stupendous, pagoda-like creation on her head (*The New Yorker*, 27 Nov. 1937, p. 20). Behind her the saleslady dithers: "There's supposed to be a secret drawer in it somewhere." There are no less than fourteen of these hat-inspired cartoons in the Syracuse University Art Collections.

Mary did most of her work on a drawing board, which she shifted back and forth between bedroom and kitchen as the occasion required. As the official breadwinner and man of the family, Alan had a fixed niche in the living room. Though it is likely that he taught Mary a good bit of what she knew about drafting and though they worked for a lifetime in close proximity to each other, the style of their art greatly differed. Dunn's cartoons are by and large imagined situations on the fringe of verisimilitude. However, one must not assume that observation had no place in their making. It had. But those bits and pieces of closely observed material were collected over long periods of time and only subsequently at the moment of creation recalled, sifted through, selected, and recombined so as to create a wholly fresh perception, a novel situation. Mary's cartoons, on the other hand, particularly those we might call everyday genre scenes, result directly from observation. A moment with the seamstress—a moment shopping, or at Schrafft's, or at a cocktail party in Gramercy Park—is caught in the instantaneous freshness of its happening. Features become charged—in the original, etymological sense of caricature, as Gombrich reminds us—so as to elicit their idiosyncratic peculiarity; the setting perhaps is slightly rearranged. As well as a number of the cartoons just discussed, this group of intimate situation drawings includes some of Mary's most delightful and inimitable gossip sketches, most of them early ones, and all of them—as Alan would probably have expected—with exclusively female protagonists.

The setting of one such gossip session is an elegant restaurant. Two young women are having lunch. One says to the other: "Then his father paid me ten thousand dollars never to see him again. It sort of gives you back your faith in men, don't it?" (*The New Yorker*, 28
Nov. 1931, p. 18). In another, the scene is set on a rooftop New York apartment house, made private by a wooden palisade which rises behind. In the distance can be seen the New York skyline. The subjects here are two obviously privileged girls of college age. “I’ve finally decided to go to college”, says one of them. “All you lose is four years.” (The New Yorker, 12 Sept. 1936, p. 11). In these cartoons there is an appropriate correspondence, a decorum, between drawing and caption. One never has the feeling—prevalent with so many other cartoonists—that a felicitous gagline has been forcibly married to a not altogether appropriate picture. A superb instance of this series is Mary’s 1933 cartoon of three middle-aged ladies bent over a small tea table exchanging gossip (fig. 14).
At the same time that she was producing cartoons of this genre with such admirable adroitness, Mary began to move into yet another direction. In a number of large-size drawings whose first examples we see already in the mid-thirties, she enters into a contemplative and, in a way, even nostalgic world of outstanding poetic beauty. The spirited 1936 "hitting out at life" (fig. 15) and the 1935 cartoon of the amorous chase in the woods (The New Yorker, 17 Aug. 1935, p. 12) with its caption: "Can't I kiss you without going through all this red tape?" certainly belong to this group, as do (though in a somewhat different vein) perhaps even the "Great-Aunt Fanny" (fig. 16) and the "mad Peabody" (fig. 17) cartoons. The mood of all of these drawings is "lyrical" in that a subdued romanticism and dream-like yearning spills into the otherwise staid immobility of background and character. In this category of cartoon we are again and again delighted by the fresh and invigorating breeze that pervades both the underlying ideas and their pictorial realization. The female protagonists of the gently amusing "red tape" and "hitting out at life" are imbued with a remarkable zest for life, with a sense of firm yet wholly unaggressive assertiveness, as they discover the mysterious loveliness of an ever-renewing world and their own, perhaps unexpected, powers in it. Is it Mary Petty, the artist herself, who is sensing at last the energy of her own talent?

Such drawings anticipate the pinnacle of Mary Petty's art: her New Yorker covers. It was James Geraghty who recognized her particular talent in that area. In June 1979 he wrote of Mary's first New Yorker cover. "It's a delightful, delicate, amusing thing. Mary had been doing her wonderful black-and-white drawings for almost fifteen years before she started on covers (and stopped doing black-and-whites). It all came about when one day it struck me that a captionless black-and-white that we had bought from Mary would make an excellent cover, and I suggested she try it, not knowing if she had ever worked in water color. She did it beautifully."30 From 29 June 1940, when her first cover was published, until 19 March 1966, the date of her last one, no less than thirty-six Petty watercolors saw the light on the covers of The New Yorker.31 There was of course a great diversity in the temper of the covers of the magazine in general, and Brendan Gill is wholly justified in claiming that "one cannot say that there is

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30. Letter from J. Geraghty, 23 June 1979, to Elisabeth Melczer.
31. Of the total, Syracuse University Art Collections owns twenty-eight.
Fig. 15. "That's what I first liked about her—the way she hit out at life." The New Yorker, 4 July 1936, p. 11. © 1936, 1964 The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.
"The Indians had him completely at bay. He saved his last shot for your Great-Great-Great Aunt Fanny." The New Yorker, 8 June 1940, p. 14. © 1940, 1968 The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.
such a thing as a New Yorker cover”, that is to say, a single typology valid for all. The close to three thousand covers have not only presented a great variety of subject matter and style but demonstrated

the artistic sensitivities and ironic perceptions of its more than one hundred contributing artists. However, in the case of Mary Petty's art, we find some constants that make her work, without repetitiousness or tedious uniformity, immediately recognizable. On her covers a quiet, satiric humor is bathing in soft light. A finely-shaded palette is as much the essence of the whole as are the lavish mansion, the brownstone interiors, or lucid garden scenes—as are, too, the dignified and complacent inhabitants of her depicted world, a world that is forced to a standstill by the opposing pulls of wealth, inertia, and boredom. The domineering, stiff, yet not altogether unsympathetic Dowager Peabody is one of these inhabitants, along with the three generations (not including dogs) of her entourage, of whom we catch a fleeting glimpse as they pose with cups of tea for a family portrait in the garden of their Victorian mansion (*The New Yorker*, 31 July 1948).

Compared to Mrs. Peabody, Fay, that most enchanting of Mary's creations, springs to life airily—a fragile, yet firm, adroit, and commonsensical creature. "She has snap", Mary was known to claim proudly. As Fay goes about her duties in that household of luxury, without criticism or question, serving water for the limousine radiator from a polished silver pitcher (*The New Yorker*, 16 May 1953) or changing the electric bulbs of a crystal chandelier (fig. 18), she provides a sense of trust and warmth of feeling against which the pretentions of her upper-crust employers are measured. Throughout it all, she stays level and human, even in her most enchanted flights of imagination: as, for example, when we see her dressed as always in her wing-shaped pinafore ruffles and ribboned maid's cap, break into spirited dance at the sound of her mistress's piano (fig. 19).

The same lyricism we perceived in some of Mary Petty's cartoons is strongly evident on her covers for *The New Yorker*. The difference lies in the softening on the covers of the social satire in favor of the pervasive mood, be it boredom, excitement, hope, or nostalgia. In fact, by far the majority of the Mary Petty covers are mood illustrations, combining a mild, satiric swipe with a feel for place or season.

Moved by a perhaps unconscious romantic yearning for the turn-of-the-century, upper-class life, Mary created in her art subtle ambiances and only by inference turned them into gentle social satire. Alan, on the other hand, was deeply involved in the contemporary human and architectural cityscape of New York, and was single-
Fig. 18. Fay cleaning the chandelier. Cover, The New Yorker, 24 September 1955. © 1955, 1983 The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.
Fig. 19. Mrs. Peabody at the piano. Cover, The New Yorker, 21 October 1961.
© 1961 The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.
mindedly committed to social-comment art. It is wonderful to think that these two distinctively different artists did indeed flourish for over forty years within the walls of a small ground-floor apartment. But the point is, precisely, that the two modes of creativity did not merely coexist side by side; rather, they sustained and supported each other in countless ways during a long period of time. Seldom does one find in the history of art a marriage in which each of the partners succeeds in maintaining his or her own artistic individuality while at the same time giving so much to the other. Alan, in the early days of their marriage, had literally taught Mary the art of drawing; and then, for the rest of their life, he tirelessly, without ever overwhelming her, encouraged her to pursue her own art. Mary, for her part, had spent much of her time "trying to pick thorns out of his [Alan's] path, & [to] strew it with anything that looks faintly like a rose".33 She had been carrying his portfolio, searching for endless references, looking up quotations and dates, and cooking "at #12 [East 88th Street]; spagh. en cass.; string beans; rice and egg, etc.", as Dunn remembers faithfully in his charming and nostalgic "Eternal Moments".34 It is hard to escape the overall impression that, though at variance in their artistic sensitivities, the two suited and complemented each other remarkably well.

In the final years, while Mary was quietly fading away in the nursing home, Dunn's mind was still working feverishly. In fact, he was determined to die nothing short of a soldier, his critical-cartoon arms, so to speak, in hand. On a 3 × 4-inch card dated only days before his death, ideas poured forth from his pen with the freshness of a youthful mind: Penn Central is here again to be melted down for scrap; Croesus, Rex Lydiae, is busy figuring out his net worth; the perils of atomic generating plants loom ominously. There is no end to it. The pulsating life of the big city punctuated by ridiculous incongruities kept surging. "We do not exist merely to survive but to prevail", so Brendan Gill once paraphrased Faulkner's visionary dictum.35 That is

34. Cf. p. 6. This is a six-page autobiographic document in which Dunn registers under eight general headings particularly happy moments in his life. The list was compiled during the last few years of his life.
35. Invitation card for a cocktail party celebrating the 78th anniversary of the Municipal Art Society, June 1970.
what Dunn too must have felt all his life, what must have kept him going to the very end.

The cartoons of Mary Petty and Alan Dunn have summed up for future generations something of the vibrancy of New York. That they loved the city goes without saying; it was their home, their way of life. It was the source of the benevolent satirical vein of their art as well as the reason for the more frankly bitter tone of their letters. Women in New York no longer wear floppy hats, and old Penn Station is no longer standing. Nevertheless, those years of transition with all the human comedy inherent in them live on, captured with insight and grace in the cartoons of Petty and Dunn.
Delmore Schwartz: Two Lost Poems

BY ROBERT PHILLIPS'

Upon the death of Delmore Schwartz (1913–1966), his first literary executor, Dwight Macdonald, arranged for the majority of his papers to be deposited at the Beinecke Library at Yale University. However, Syracuse University, where Schwartz taught in the English Department for several years before his death, holds a few very interesting Schwartz manuscripts in its collections. In June 1985 Mark F. Weimer, Rare Book Librarian at the George Arents Research Library, wrote to me from Syracuse concerning two manuscript poems which had drawn his attention: “My predecessor purchased these poems and others in the late 1960s from the autograph dealer Charles Hamilton. All the poems in this lot were typescripts, apparently published either in [Schwartz’s 1959] Summer Knowledge¹ or in your 1979 collection [Last and Lost Poems of Delmore Schwartz],² except the enclosed.”

The enclosures were photographic copies of two manuscript poems by Schwartz written one on each side of a 3-ring notebook sheet of paper. I recognized the handwriting as Schwartz’s immediately. The poem entitled “Poem for Jacques Maritain and Leon Trotsky” [sic] was dated 6 December 1934. Undoubtedly, the other, “Poem to Johann Sebastian Bach”, which appeared on the recto of the sheet, had been composed near that time as well.

¹ Robert Phillips is the literary executor of the Estate of Delmore Schwartz. In the spring of 1986 New Directions will be bringing out his collection of Schwartz’s comic essays under the title Kilroy’s Carnival. Mr. Phillips, who received his B.A. (1960) and M.A. (1962) degrees from Syracuse University, is also a critic, a poet, and a fiction writer on his own account.


This recto poem carries a dedication, "For Julian". The dedicatee might well have been Julian Sawyer, a high school classmate and New York friend to whom Schwartz had written a series of long and fascinating letters during his freshman year at the University of Wisconsin (1931–32). At the time of the composition of these poems, however, Schwartz was attending Washington Square College of New York University, where he had transferred for financial reasons, and was living at home once again.
Schwartz was only two days short of his twenty-first birthday when he wrote “Poem to Johann Sebastian Bach”. While the poem is more opaque than his mature work, it is a remarkable production for someone so young and offers the additional interest of having been re-worked and published twenty-five years later in Summer Knowledge. A comparison of the two versions is instructive for the study of the development of Schwartz’s eventual control over thought and rhyme.

The original poem of the Syracuse manuscript reads:

Poem to Johann Sebastian Bach
For Julian 12/6/34

Out of the watercolored windows, when you look,
Each is but each, and plain to see, not deep:
So does the neat print in an actual book,
Marching as if to true conclusion, keep
The illimitable blue immensely overhead
And the night, night of the living and the dead.

Brother and brother, of one Father,
Near and clear and far,
How indeed we mistake each other.
Despair, and fear, and care.

I drive in an auto all night long to reach
That place where all wheels grip no place and cease,
I never end the turning world, the breach
Where no spring is, nor winter is, but peace:
The only absolute stillness is the frieze
Of the escalator where the damned crowds rise.

Brother and brother, of one Father,
Near, and clear, and far,
How, afterward, we will know each other.
Beware, and share, and care.

The lines are irregular, often iambic pentameter, with a rhyme scheme of (a) (b) (a) (b) (c) (c), (d) (e) (d) (e), (f) (g) (f) (g) (h) (h), (d) (e) (d) (e). One sees the young Schwartz already involved in words and word play.

In the published revision, the twenty lines have been reduced to
twelve. The title has been changed to “Out of the Watercolored Window, When You Look”, eliminating the tenuous relationship between the narrator and Bach. (The link between Schwartz’s titles and the subsequent poems is often puzzling.) The apostrophes to a “brother” are gone as well. The rhyme scheme has been retained, but almost invariably Schwartz has substituted less expected, more interesting words: “deep” becomes “steep”, “keep” becomes “reap”, “breach” becomes “speech”, and “rise” becomes “disease”.

In the original, Schwartz devotes four lines to describing the narrator’s destination, a peaceful, quiet place reminiscent of T. S. Eliot’s “still point of the turning world”. In the revision, the trip takes but two lines and is expressed with great originality:

I drive in an auto all night long to reach
The apple which has sewed the sunlight up: . . .

The “place where all wheels grip no place” has been discarded in favor of the fresher image of an “apple which has sewed the sunlight up”. Overall, the more compact published version is the superior one. It gives evidence that contrary to common opinion, Schwartz was strongly in command of his materials during the time when he was selecting and rewriting for his last collection. Here is the final revision:

Out of the Watercolored Window, When You Look

When from the watercolored window idly you look
Each is but each and clear to see, not steep:
So does the neat print in an actual book
Marching as if to true conclusion, reap
The illimitable blue immensely overhead,
The night of the living and the day of the dead.

I drive in an auto all night long to reach
The apple which has sewed the sunlight up:
My simple self is nothing by the speech
Pleading for the overflow of that great cup,
The darkened body, the mind still as a frieze:
All else is merely means as complex as disease!

(Reprinted with permission of New Directions Publishing Corp.)
In both versions, Schwartz expresses a theme that was to concern him all his career—spiritual isolation in the modern world, and his longing for unity and communion with that world. I myself regret that he substituted “complex as disease”—despite its improved rhyme—for the more graphic, even Dantesque, “escalator where the damned crowds rise”. He was undoubtedly correct in dropping the “Brother and brother” chorus, which ends the original poem anticlimactically.

In the Bach poem, as in the one on its reverse side, a typical Schwartz strategy is employed. He first establishes a scene of action, and an anonymous observer who is at once attached and detached from it. The observer/narrator attempts to encompass the event with his ironic and knowledgeable consciousness. The poem to Bach begins with a window view of “the illimitable blue immense overhead”. For Schwartz, blue signified that which was beyond sensual experience, perhaps the Deity. Mechanical objects—an automobile, an escalator—represent the quotidian world he wished to escape. Yet the narrator does not achieve “the turning world, the breach / Where no spring is, nor winter is, but peace”. As in his well-known poem, “Socrates’ Ghost Must Haunt Me Now”, the blue sky is forever unattainable. He concluded that poem:

Socrates stands by me stockstill,
Teaching hope to my flickering will,
Pointing to the sky’s inexorable blue
—Old Noumenon, come true, come true!

The other unpublished Syracuse poem, entitled “Poem for Jacques Maritain and Leon Trotsky”, is in itself perhaps the more interesting of the two. The year before it was written, Schwartz had attended a seminar in contemporary philosophy with Sidney Hook at N.Y.U. From James Atlas’s biography of Delmore Schwartz we know that Schwartz read Hook’s From Hegel to Marx, which saw Marx’s arguments as “the poetry of passion”. Schwartz evidently was more interested in Marx as a determinist who fashioned an intellectual system than as an ideological radical. His own political allegiance lay with Trotsky, whose Literature and Revolution was one of Schwartz’s vade mecums.

Religion was another strong interest of the undergraduate Schwartz. At Wisconsin he was introduced to the work of Maritain and became fascinated (according to Atlas) by the aesthetic component of Catholicism. We know that portions of text in his copy of Maritain's *Trois Réformateurs* were underscored and that he quoted the French Catholic's ideas in letters to both Allen Tate and John Berryman.  

Once again, in this "Poem for Jacques Maritain and Leon Trotsky", Schwartz establishes a scene of action and an observer for it. This time the narrator looks out his window at the night and addresses his musings to a Marxist. Through reference to Gentile history and world literature, they take on a universal relevance. Replacing the color blue, Schwartz gives the poem symbolic weight with images of starlight and snow. Snow, as noted by Alfred Kazin, Richard McDougall, and other critics, recurs throughout Schwartz's stories and poems; snow represented the transformed, purer other world to which he aspired. Indeed, his first extended poem, written when he was seventeen, was called "Having Snow".  

In the early sonnet to Maritain and Trotsky, the stars still the mechanical energy of the everyday world, and the snow represents a joy to be dreamed of. The harsh reality of the city is contrasted with a vision of private happiness, and, as occurs frequently in his poetry, the morning is a symbol of rebirth. Hope, the savior from despair, another theme prominent in the work of Schwartz, figures prominently.

In theme and symbol, "Poem for Jacques Maritain and Leon Trotsky" resembles another of his early sonnets, "O City, City", in which he juxtaposed a mechanical, deadly city with a dream of life and love. The subway of "O City, City" is associated with spiritual anguish expressed in the octet; in the sestet, the whiteness of a bed summons the familiar yearning for purity. Again, Schwartz is seeking the source of his ideal world. From where will it come?

Whence, if ever, shall come the actuality
Of a voice speaking the mind's knowing,
The sunlight bright on the green windowshade,
And the self articulate, affectionate, and flowing,

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Ease, warmth, light, the utter showing,
When in the white bed all things are made.

In the Maritain/Trotsky poem, traffic replaces the subway, and the whiteness of the moon replaces that of the bed. The effect is the same. Technically, this poem is a combination of the Shakespearian and Miltonic sonnets. The rhyme scheme is (a) (b) (b) (a), (c) (d) (d) (c), (e) (f) (e) (f) (g) (g). It is two quatrains followed by a divided sestet, which itself concludes with a clinching, hammer-blow couplet. The poem illustrates Schwartz’s love of puns (“gentle” becomes “Gentile”), his penchant for literary allusion (as in his reference to Tiresias), his lifelong fascination with photographic film (the image of the newsreel), and his unexpected use of language (for example: the looked for “more than morning” becomes “more than meaning”).

Poem for Jacques Maritain and Leon Trotsky

The Gentile night and the white stars in congress
Still the traffic’s racked energy;
And the hurdy-gurdy newsreel of memory
Flashes the past in its stilted sadness,

Standing on what brink then? By my room’s window,
Thinking of the sources of situation
—Of the people’s confrontation
When they see themselves dirty in another’s shadow!

O Marxist drunk at the teats of Tiresias,
Is night still close to morning? Will the morning
Once more from rumorous darkness release us?

Tonight is more than night and more than meaning.
Stars are the buds of morning, do you know?
Look, in the West, at the white moon dreaming of snow.
The “Black Dream” of Gerrit Smith, New York Abolitionist

BY JOHN R. McKIVIGAN AND MADELEINE LEVEILLE

In October 1859, John Brown and twenty-one followers undertook a daring raid on the United States arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia (now West Virginia). Brown later claimed that he had planned to capture weapons at the arsenal to establish a base in the southern Appalachian Mountains in the southern states from which slaves could be assisted to escape to freedom. Within two days, Brown was captured and most members of his small band were either killed or had fled. Virginia authorities discovered among Brown’s possessions documents revealing that a small group of northern abolitionists had financed his raid.

One of the northerners implicated was Gerrit Smith, a wealthy landholder from Peterboro, New York. When the demand for a thorough investigation into the conspiracy behind the Harpers Ferry incident rapidly swelled, Smith was committed by his family to the New York State Insane Asylum at Utica. Only eight weeks later, after Brown was executed by Virginia authorities and the public outcry for revenge diminished, Smith was released and allowed to return to his home and business. Until his death in 1874, Smith steadfastly refused to admit any intimate connection with the planning of the Harpers Ferry raid.

Both contemporaries and historians have commented on Smith’s behavior in this affair, but no consensus exists regarding whether the

*About the authors: John R. McKivigan, Ph.D., is a lecturer in the history department at Yale University and also the associate editor of the Frederick Douglass Papers at the same university. He has written several articles on abolitionism, and his book, The War Against Proslavery Religion, was published recently by Cornell University Press. Madeleine Leveille, Ph.D., is a licensed psychologist in private practice; she also is employed as a counselor at Greater New Haven State Technical College, North Haven, Connecticut. Their earlier article, “‘He Stands Like Jupiter’: The Autobiography of Gerrit Smith” appeared in New York History, April 1984.
abolitionist truly suffered a psychological breakdown or feigned one in an attempt to escape prosecution as an accomplice of Brown. Research in the vast collection of Smith's correspondence at the George Arents Research Library at Syracuse University and in surviving case notes in the Utica asylum archives sheds considerable light on this issue and offers a tentative answer to an intriguing historical question.

Gerrit Smith was born in Utica, New York, in March 1797, but resided for practically his entire life in the small community of Peterboro in Madison County, New York. Gerrit's father, Peter Smith, was a partner of John Jacob Astor in the fur trade and land speculation ventures and eventually acquired nearly a quarter-million acres of undeveloped land scattered across the states of New York, Vermont, Michigan, and Virginia. The younger Smith graduated from Hamilton College in 1818 and soon thereafter received responsibility for the management of much of his father's landholdings. In the late 1830s, the Smith fortune was endangered by a nationwide financial depression, but Gerrit ultimately survived the crisis richer than ever. In the 1840s and 1850s, Smith's annual income from his landholdings typically exceeded $60,000.¹

Smith's great fortune allowed him to become one of the leading philanthropists of the early nineteenth century. Although he was anti-sectarian in his personal religious beliefs, Smith gave generously to the American Bible Society, the American Tract Society, and the American Sunday School Society. He also devoted much of his time and fortune to assisting numerous reform movements popular in up-state New York's famous "Burned-Over District" during the 1830s, 1840s, and 1850s. Smith became a leader and major financial sponsor of state and national organizations promoting temperance, prison reform, women's rights, international peace, and land reform.

The cause that captured the greatest portion of Smith's attention was the campaign to end slavery. At first Smith had been a supporter of efforts to colonize slaves in Africa, but in 1835 he joined the more militant abolitionist movement that demanded the immediate, complete, and uncompensated emancipation of the slaves. He also supported self-improvement efforts of northern free blacks as a means of combating the pervasive racial prejudice. Following a series of fissures in the antislavery movement in the 1840s, Smith became the leader of a small faction of uncompromising political abolitionists who nominated him for President of the United States in 1848, 1856, and 1860. In 1852, a coalition of abolitionists and more moderate anti-slavery voters elected Smith to Congress. Smith experienced considerable frustration in promoting his abolitionist program in Washington and eventually resigned his congressional seat before his term expired. Smith's growing despair concerning the failure of political antislavery tactics made him more inclined in the 1850s to consider other approaches to free the slaves.²

Events during the 1850s helped convert Smith into a proponent of violent abolitionist tactics. Smith strongly detested the Fugitive Slave Bill of 1850, which required northern citizens under penalty of law to assist public officials in the recapture of runaway slaves. In September 1851, he joined a mob in Syracuse, New York, that stormed a police station and freed an escaped slave, Jerry McHenry, who was awaiting rendition to the South. Smith and twenty-five others were indicted for their role in the "Jerry Rescue", but only one was convicted; and the other cases, including Smith's, were later dismissed.

For the remainder of the decade, New York State abolitionists gathered annually to celebrate this bold action and Smith was prominent among them.³

Sectional turmoil in the Kansas territory following passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill in 1854 also helped persuade Smith of the need to use force to combat slavery. Settlers entering that territory who opposed the admission of slavery into Kansas encountered violent harassment from armed proslavery “Border Ruffians” from neighboring Missouri. Smith joined many other northerners in forming “emigrant-aid” societies to settle antislavery families in the Kansas Territory and to provide them with sufficient arms to defend their homesteads against proslavery forces. In 1856, Smith wrote a letter to the Syracuse Journal, proclaiming, “Hitherto, I have opposed the bloody abolition of slavery. But now, when it begins to march its conquering bands into the Free states, I and ten thousand other peace men are not only ready to have it repulsed with violence, but pursued even unto death, with violence.”⁴ Smith eventually contributed an estimated $16,000 to various free-state groups in Kansas and let it be known that he had no objection to the money being used to purchase weapons for self-defense.⁵

The most important influence on Smith’s conversion to the use of violent antislavery tactics was his friendship with John Brown. On 1 August 1846 Smith advertised that he would divide 120,000 acres of undeveloped land in the Adirondack Mountains of northern New York into lots for blacks to farm. A year and a half later, John Brown approached Smith and requested permission to settle among these blacks “to aid them by example and precept”.⁶ Smith was immediately impressed by Brown’s self-reliance, religious nature, and commitment to aiding the blacks and sold him a 244-acre tract at North Elba, Essex County, New York, for a bargain price of $1 an acre. Brown lived on that farm from 1849 to 1851 and settled his wife and

⁴. Syracuse Journal, 31 May 1856; Oates, To Purge This Land, 231; Boyer, John Brown, 8.
⁵. Boyer, John Brown, 111; Rossbach, Ambivalent Conspirators, 96.
daughters there in 1855 before he moved to Kansas to join the free-staters’ struggle. Although Smith originally advised Brown to remain at North Elba, he presented his friend’s cause to a Syracuse political abolitionist convention in 1855 and collected $60 to assist him in migrating to Kansas. In June 1857, Brown met Smith in Chicago where Smith gave him $350 and loaned him another $110 to help finance the campaigns of a small band of free-state guerillas that Brown had recruited.7

On a visit to Smith’s home in February 1858, Brown revealed the general outlines of an even bolder plan to combat slavery than the skirmishing with Border Ruffians in Kansas. As described to Smith and a few other trusted abolitionists, including Franklin B. Sanborn of Massachusetts, Brown’s rough plan involved seizing a federal arsenal in the South (Harpers Ferry was only one of several named as possibilities) and using the weapons captured there to establish a stronghold deep in the Appalachian Mountains from which to strike at nearby plantations and liberate their slaves. Those slaves who did not wish to remain in the mountain fortress to help rescue additional slaves would be assisted to escape to the North, and ultimately, Canada.8 Smith’s somewhat reluctant acquiescence to this visionary project was revealed in his statement to Sanborn:

You see how it is; our dear old friend has made up his mind to this course, and cannot be turned from it. We cannot give him up to die alone; we must support him. I will raise so many hundred dollars for him; you must lay the case before your friends in Massachusetts, and ask them to do as much. I can see no other way.9

Sanborn, in fact, returned to Massachusetts and recruited a few collaborators from among previous contributors to the Kansas free-state campaign. Organized in great secrecy, this small group included physician Samuel Gridley Howe, industrialist George Luther Stearns, and two Unitarian ministers, Theodore Parker and Thomas Wentworth Higginson, in addition to Smith and Sanborn. Of this group dubbed the "Secret Six", Stearns and Smith were by far the largest financial backers of Brown's plan.

Smith's contributions to Brown, however, should not be regarded as evidence that Smith had resolved all doubts about the propriety of violent antislavery tactics. Like the other early abolitionists, Smith originally had hoped that "moral suasion" would influence the southern slaveholders to emancipate their slaves. However, what he perceived as aggression by the South in the Fugitive Slave Law and in the Kansas territorial controversy convinced Smith that violent means would be required if slavery were ever to be ended. Nonetheless, Smith's pacifistic religious values remained at odds with the concept of inciting a slave insurrection. One way Smith dealt with his ambivalence regarding violence was to insist that he not be informed by Brown of the specific details regarding how his contributions would be spent. On several occasions, Smith even considered disassociating himself entirely from Brown's plot. Ambivalence as well as erratic and impulsive behavior, such as his resignation from Congress, was noticed repeatedly during Smith's public life to the delight of his enemies and the exasperation of his friends.

The first indication of Smith's unsteady commitment to Brown's violent methods occurred when the conspiracy almost became exposed more than a year before Harpers Ferry. In June 1857, Smith gave $150 to Hugh Forbes, a British mercenary, who was engaged to train Brown's Kansas followers in military tactics. Brown and Forbes soon fell to quarreling over money and over the best tactics to be used in the contemplated invasion of the South. Forbes parted from Brown and traveled to Washington, where he revealed to a number of Republican politicians what he knew of Brown's plot and its back-

ing by wealthy abolitionists. In the spring of 1858, Smith and most of the conspirators persuaded Brown to delay the attack and temporarily return to Kansas to create doubts about the British mercenary's revelations. Smith's panic at that time was acute, and he wrote Sanborn that he "was never convinced of the wisdom of this scheme" and that to continue under the circumstances would be madness. In July 1858, Smith even told Sanborn that he wanted no more information about Brown's activities. That fall, Smith's faith in political means to end slavery revived somewhat during his campaign for the office of governor of New York. Despite delivering more than fifty speeches and spending over $5,000 in the campaign, however, he received only a few thousand votes.

Smith's anger at his poor showing in the fall 1858 election helped to rekindle his interest in Brown's plot. At roughly the same time, members of the Secret Six recovered their confidence in Brown following his daring raid into Missouri in December 1858, which liberated eleven slaves. Smith restated his support for Brown during the latter's final visit to Peterboro in April 1859. At a public meeting in the village during that visit, Smith pledged another $400 to aid Brown and declared to the audience: "If I were asked to point out—I will say it in his presence—to point out the man in all this world I think most truly a Christian, I would point out John Brown. I was once doubtful in my own mind as to Captain Brown's course. I now approve of it heartily, having given my mind to it more of late." After this April meeting, Smith continued to forward to Brown additional large sums of money.

As Brown proceeded during the summer and fall of 1859 with the final preparations for his attack on Harpers Ferry, Smith's public statements showed little evidence of any remaining ambivalence toward the use of violence. In August 1859, he declined to take his usual place as principal speaker in the annual celebration of the Jerry

McHenry rescue in Syracuse. Smith addressed a letter to the event's organizers to persuade them that more militant tactics were needed if slavery was ever to be overthrown. Smith's letter revealed that he had lost faith in the abolitionist movement and believed that the slaves must act to free themselves. Bloody slave insurrections would soon break out in the South, Smith predicted: "It is, perhaps, too late to bring slavery to an end by peaceable means, —too late to vote it down. For many years I have feared, and published my fears, that it would go out in blood. These fears have grown into a belief." 15

On the evening of Sunday, 16 October 1859, John Brown and twenty-one followers, including three of his sons and five black men, launched their attack on the Harpers Ferry arsenal and armory. Both sites and the principal transportation lines in and out of the small valley community were in the raiders' hands by the following dawn. Brown sent a small party into the countryside to liberate slaves, but only twelve were brought back and none voluntarily joined the insurrection. By the following evening, local militia units and armed townsmen had cut off Brown's party from all potential escape routes to the surrounding mountains. A detachment of United States Marines arrived by train from Washington, and by noon on Tuesday Brown and six surviving raiders were captured. In the two days of fighting, Brown's insurgents killed five men, including one marine, and lost ten of their own numbers. Brown was quickly brought to trial for treason and sentenced to death on 2 November. Virginia Governor Henry A. Wise rejected all pleas for clemency, and Brown was executed on 2 December. The other captured raiders were also speedily tried and executed. 16

Within a few days of the raid the nation's press carried descriptions of documents found among Brown's possessions, which implicated various members of the Secret Six and other supporters of the plot, such as the black abolitionist Frederick Douglass. Among those items were a letter from Smith to Brown written on 4 June 1859 and a canceled bank draft from Smith to Brown for $100, dated 22 August 1859. In addition, a letter from Brown to one of his sons de-

15. Utica Daily Observer, 2 November 1859; Wilson, John Brown, 353–54; Oates, To Purge This Land, 285; Rossbach, Ambivalent Conspirators, 208–09; Dillon, Dissenting Minority, 228–231.
16. Oates, To Purge This Land, 274–80, 290–302; Boyer, John Brown, 8–9, 16–18.
scribing some of Smith's past financial contributions stated that "G.S." would be good for one-fifth the costs of the planned slave insurrection to be incited by the raid on Harpers Ferry.  

While in captivity awaiting trial, Brown refused to name any individual who had assisted in his scheme. Very damning evidence against Smith, however, came from John E. Cook, one of the captured Harpers Ferry raiders, who revealed many of the details of the conspiracy in the vain hope that he might be spared the death sentence. Cook gave the names of Smith and three Massachusetts abolitionists, Sanborn, Howe, and Thaddeus Hyatt, as the principal financial backers of Brown's plot. The New York Times, the New York Herald, and other newspapers published accounts by Hugh Forbes, the British mercenary who had deserted Brown's company more than a year earlier, charging that Smith had been a principal financial backer of the conspiracy and had personally paid Forbes to travel to Kansas to train Brown's men. The press also remembered Smith's earlier prediction of slave revolts and deemed it further evidence that Smith had prior knowledge of Brown's intentions.  

Northern newspapers carried stories contending that Governor Wise was actively seeking the extradition of Smith, Sanborn, Howe, and Douglass. Rumors spread that southern agents, aided by sympathetic federal authorities, were seeking to capture anyone guilty of assisting Brown. The New York Herald, the state's leading Democratic newspaper and a longtime virulent critic of Smith and all abolitionists, even editorialized in favor of Smith's extradition to Virginia. Another Democratic newspaper, the Rochester Union and Advertiser, branded Smith guilty of treason and called on the governor of Virginia to move more aggressively to arrest and punish all of Brown's

accomplices.²¹ Such threats unnerved practically all of Brown’s backers. Of the five Massachusetts members of the Secret Six, Parker was already traveling in Europe for health reasons, and Sanborn, Howe, and Stearns all felt sufficiently in danger to flee to Canada for a time. Only Thomas Wentworth Higginson remained immune to the growing panic among the conspirators.²²

In late October the upstate New York press carried stories contending that Smith had been advised to flee the country rather than risk extradition to Virginia. According to the Hamilton Union: “On the reception of the news from Harper’s Ferry, reports say that this gentleman conferred with Hon. Timothy Jenkins [Smith’s attorney] about what he had better do, who advised him to leave the country. Rumor says gerrit is about to start for Canada.”²³ Other newspaper accounts claimed that armed guards had been stationed around Smith’s Peterboro mansion for his protection. Not only Peterboro, but most towns in Madison County were reported to be in a highly agitated state, and preparations were made to resist any attempt by authorities to arrest Smith.²⁴

The best indication of Smith’s panicked state of mind following news of Harpers Ferry was his action to destroy all evidence connecting himself to Brown. Smith burned all letters in his possession that bore on the plot. Charles D. Miller, Smith’s son-in-law, also traveled to Massachusetts and Ohio to find and destroy letters from Smith to the Secret Six and members of Brown’s family. Smith was also reported as having privately denied involvement in the Harpers Ferry conspiracy. The Syracuse Journal carried a story credited to one of Smith’s business associates who visited with him at Peterboro after the Harpers Ferry incident and was told that the $100 draft to Brown was intended to be used for “Kansas work” alone. This individual claimed that “Mr. Smith says distinctly that he had no knowledge or the least suspicion that Brown was engaged in planning an insurrection.”²⁵

22. Oates, To Purge This Land, 312–15.
The New York Herald dispatched a special reporter to visit Smith at Peterboro in late October to obtain more information concerning the abolitionist's ties to Brown and the Harpers Ferry raid. The only statement the reporter could get from Smith was this remark: "I am going to be indicted, sir, indicted! You must not talk to me about it. . . . If any man in the Union is taken, it will be me." This reporter had covered Smith's gubernatorial campaign the previous fall and made some very interesting comments upon the changes in Smith since that time. Concerning the controversy which followed the raid, the reporter observed:

[It] has not only impaired his health, but is likely to seriously affect his excitable and illy-balanced mind. . . . His calm, dignified, impressive bearing has given place to a hasty, nervous agitation, as though some great fear was constantly before his imagination.

The Herald reporter concluded from his visit with Smith:

He is in evident alarm and agitation, inconsistent with the idea that his complicity with the plot is simply to the extent already made public. I believe that Brown's visit to his house last spring was immediately connected with the insurrection, and that it is the knowledge that at any moment, either by the discovery of papers or the confession of accomplices, his connection with the affair may become exposed, that keeps Mr. Smith in constant excitement and fear."26

The Herald account was only one of several reports of Smith's increasing state of agitation in late October and early November. The Rochester Daily Express reported that Smith had been "constantly wringing his hands and bemoaning the fate of poor Brown" and that the abolitionist's friends were "apprehensive that his reason would give way under the load of grief and anxiety. . . ."27 The Albany Argus related that a visitor to Smith's home shortly after the time of the raid reported that "his eye was wild and his appearance haggard, and

his motion spasmodic and uncertain, but unceasingly restless”. Smith’s sleep and eating habits became increasingly erratic. He was despondent and his family feared he might attempt suicide. He even talked of going to Virginia to share John Brown’s fate. Finally, on 7 November, friends and family members were able to persuade Smith to accompany them to the state asylum at Utica by assuring him that he was on his way to Virginia.

The public reactions of contemporaries to news of Smith’s hospitalization came swiftly. What is most striking about those statements is how little skepticism was voiced at that time regarding the timing of Smith’s mental collapse. Both friends and enemies pointed to long-existing traits in Smith’s personality that they felt had brought on the breakdown.

Several newspapers published reports that Smith’s insanity might have been hereditary. The New York Evening Post wrote: “Mr. Smith

is said to have an hereditary disposition to insanity. His father, Peter Smith, though the possessor of an immense estate, and surrounded by every circumstance of property, was subject to fits of profound despondency, during which he was under the impression that he would die a beggar. . . . The late Peter Sken. Smith, the brother of Gerrit, was for some time an inmate of a lunatic asylum though when he died he was generally regarded as in possession of his reason. . . .”

Other newspapers commented on other evidence of Smith's longstanding instability. The Republican *New York Tribune* praised Smith's benevolence and intellect but then declared that "he lacked practical commonsense, was credulous to the last degree, and wholly devoid of that robust personal courage and strength of character essential to useful action or even successful endurance". A columnist of Smith's longtime foe, the *New York Herald*, commented that the abolitionist's mind was "never exempt from a tendency to be unhinged".

The Democratic party press led by the *New York Herald* attempted to use Smith to tie the Republican party to the Harpers Ferry plot, but Republican editors responded that Smith was an abolitionist, not a Republican. Most Republicans were eager to dissociate themselves from the violence of Brown's actions and so were quite willing to dismiss him and his supporters as mad. For example, the *Utica Herald* observed:

Never was an enterprise more rashly undertaken—never was an essay at once more wild and hopeless. It had not the method of the madness of Hamlet. It had no consistency of plot or purpose. It was simply the rushing upon destruction of men whose passion had completely swamped their reason. . . . Granted that Gerrit Smith and others are implicated, what does it prove? Simply that there are madmen North as well as South.

Thurlow Weed, one of the more conservative New York State Republican leaders, was inclined to believe Smith had gone insane due

34. *Utica Morning Herald*, 24 October 1859.
to his excessive zeal for reforms such as abolitionism. Weed editorialized in his *Albany Evening Journal* that:

With those who have known Gerrit Smith longest and most intimately, his present melancholy condition is more a matter of regret than of surprise. His mind has hovered upon the borders of insanity for more than a quarter of a century. His physical health was destroyed, many years ago, by his peculiar habits in regard to temperance and diet. . . . His giant mind, ever too active, wildly possessed by one idea, has finally, by various “declensions,” fallen. 35

Joshua Giddings, a Republican congressman from Ohio, who was more sympathetic to the abolitionists than most in his party, visited Smith’s family in mid-November and publicly reported that friends of the Peterboro abolitionist had been alarmed at his “monomania” and acute dyspepsia several months prior to the time of the Harpers Ferry raid. Giddings also related that:

Everybody now speaks well—indeed, they speak in the highest terms—of Gerrit Smith. I have not heard an individual express any other than profound respect for him, for his manly virtues, for his pure religious life, his nobleness of character. All men throughout the State mourn over this sad affliction which now rests upon the community. 36

Another individual with some prior knowledge of the Harpers Ferry raid, the black abolitionist Frederick Douglass, expressed sorrow rather than surprise at the reports that his longtime friend and financial benefactor had gone insane. After having himself fled the United States to Canada to avoid possible arrest, Douglass wrote back to his own newspaper in Rochester:

I have learned from the New York papers that my great hearted friend Gerrit Smith’s health has broken down, and that his mind has become deranged. The thought that “oppression

"maketh a wise man mad" came home to me with tenfold force when I saw this sad telegraphic announcement. I cannot but think that the good man has been under far too great restraint about this Harpers Ferry insurrection. He should have been allowed to pour out his whole mind concerning it. His is a mind that has never known the fetter, and those who have fettered him must take the responsibility for the present—God grant that it may have ere this passed away—affliction and disturbance of mind. Mr. Smith has done nothing in his relation to dear old Ossawatomie Brown for which posterity will not bless his name and memory.37

Perhaps the most immediately significant reaction to Smith’s hospitalization came from Virginia Governor Henry A. Wise. In a letter to Andrew Hunter, the state’s special prosecutor at the trials of the Harpers Ferry prisoners, Wise declared: “Gerrit Smith is a stark madman, no doubt! Gods, what a moral, what a lesson. Whom the gods wish to make mad they first set to setting others to destroying.”38 Wise’s belief in Smith’s insanity probably explains why Virginia did not push harder for his arrest.

Scholars have disagreed considerably regarding whether Gerrit Smith’s insanity was genuine and, if so, what had provoked it. Octavius B. Frothingham, who wrote a biography of Smith only four years after his subject’s death in 1874, was extremely solicitous toward the family’s desire to preserve Smith’s reputation. After praising Smith’s many philanthropies, Frothingham conceded that the abolitionist had been an “enthusiast”, subject to frequent “oscillations” of mood, and uncritically accepted the diagnosis of the abolitionist’s psychological breakdown following Harpers Ferry.39

Writing in the 1930s, Ralph V. Harlow, Smith’s only modern biographer, concluded that the abolitionist was “temporarily insane”, but admitted that “while the fact of the illness is easy to establish, the cause or causes are not so clear”. Denying that Smith’s physical health had been exceptionally poor in the years or months immediately before Harpers Ferry, Harlow would not credit the “organic"

37. Frederick Douglass’ Paper, 16 December 1859.
explanation of the abolitionist's insanity provided by the Utica asylum. Harlow instead believed that the breakdown was a consequence of "what moralists would call a guilty conscience and . . . a terrific nervous strain resulting therefrom". 40

Later commentators relied heavily on Harlow for factual information concerning Smith's illness, but most were less charitable concerning the causes of his hospitalization. One John Brown biographer, for example, accused Smith of "willing himself into insanity as a means of escaping the responsibility that was his". 41 Another Brown biographer accused Smith of seeking a "safe haven" in the Utica asylum. 42 Many historians noted Smith's sufficient presence of mind to attempt to destroy all evidence linking him with Brown and expressed skepticism regarding the speed of his recovery once the danger of arrest had passed. 43

The most recent student of the activities of the Secret Six, Jeffery Rossbach, was one of the few historians to disagree with Harlow's contention that Smith was suffering from "temporary insanity" while at the Utica hospital. Rossbach conceded that Smith might have experienced a "breakdown under pressure" but doubted that actual insanity occurred. Rossbach gives equal weight to the possibility that Smith and his family decided that the "asylum was the perfect sanctuary in which to avoid any proslavery retribution and to await the conclusions of those who were investigating the possibility of conspiracy". 44

The considerable disagreement between nineteenth- and twentieth-century assessments of Smith's behavior following Harpers Ferry

42. Abel, Man on Fire, 340.
43. Oates, To Purge This Land, 65, 313; Scott, Secret Six, 299-300, 312-13, 315-16.
presents a difficult problem to those seeking a better understanding of this abolitionist's character. Fortunately, a large body of materials has survived from the time of Smith's hospitalization at Utica that makes it possible to offer some informed speculations upon his psychological state at the time.

The New York State Lunatic Asylum at Utica, today known as the Utica-Marcy Psychiatric Centers, was created by an act of the state legislature in 1836. Its main building was a massive Greek Revival structure of grey limestone, which cost what was then considered an astounding sum of $285,000 to construct. The asylum received its first patients in 1843. By the late 1850s, the average number of patients on the grounds reached over 500, about one-third of them private admissions. The main building had been severely damaged by a fire in 1857 but was completely restored by 1859. The hospital conditions by decade's end were reported to be crowded.45

John Perdue Gray, M.D., the medical superintendent of the asylum, was one of the most prominent psychiatrists of the day, and he personally oversaw the treatment of Gerrit Smith, a private patient. Born 6 August 1825 in Half Moon, Pennsylvania, Gray received his medical degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1845. In 1850, he was made assistant superintendent at the Utica asylum, and in 1854, at the age of twenty-nine, he was appointed superintendent, a position he held until his death in 1886. At first he continued the "moral treatment" of patients as established by his predecessors, in which patients were treated kindly, with respect, and without undue restraint. Gray instituted the systematic recording of case notes, postmortem examinations, and other scientific research at the asylum. In his later years, Gray's contributions to medicine and psychiatry were acknowledged by his colleagues, who elected him to the presidency of many professional organizations.46

During the time of Smith's hospitalization, Gray's ideas regarding

the causes of mental illness were shifting from the position that mental disturbances were caused by a combination of moral weakness and physical illness to one in which insanity was regarded as springing primarily from physical disturbances that might be exacerbated by inherited predispositions to disease and by environmental stresses.\textsuperscript{47} According to Gray, emotional disturbances could aggravate mental illness, but they alone could not induce insanity. At an annual meeting of the Association of Medical Superintendents of American Institutions for the Insane, Gray noted that mania and melancholia are two of the most common disorders that develop over time.\textsuperscript{48}

Smith's case certainly fit Gray's views. He had suffered from typhoid in 1857 and continued to suffer from chronic alimentary-tract disturbances. The onset of his illness and his recovery were not immediate. Although Smith was admitted to the asylum on 7 November 1859, three weeks after John Brown's raid, Gray's case notes indicate that Smith began to show serious manic symptoms during the spring of 1859, and was hypomanic for some time before that. As reported in the case notes, Smith on arrival was agitated, unable to


sleep, delusional, and experiencing hallucinations.\(^{49}\)

In a letter to Smith's nephew dated 16 December 1859, Gray wrote about Smith:

The fact is the cause or causes of his present attack go back beyond the Harpers Ferry affair. That shock was but "the last straw". He never fully recovered from the attack of fever in New York. Following convalescence there he had dropsical limb and other indications of impaired Constitution—The swelling of his limbs subsided and in a few months returned and gave him trouble. The part he took in the last gubernatorial contest imposed upon him for months excessive labor, and immediately afterward he was attacked with serious indigestion and sympathethic disturbances of the action of the heart. He, however, rather increased than diminished his labors, both physical and mental, and aggravated dyspepsia and greater impairment of health was the consequence. He realized his depreciating strength but not the probable end. For months before he came here he had periods of depression and intellectual exaltation only to be accounted for on the theory of then existing cerebral disturbance and the approach of serious brain trouble. Indeed in carefully reviewing his case and condition I am inclined to think the Harpers Ferry shock only hastened the development of a disease which at no very remote period would have appeared in a more unfavorable form.\(^{50}\)

Smith's treatment at the hospital included rest, isolation from stimulation, special diet, and restricted visitation by his family, whose presence contemporary theory suggested would lead to associations that would propel regression.\(^{51}\) Smith was cared for by his own personal attendant, who had been one of his servants at Peterboro. Although the psychological theory of the day called for isolation, Smith was permitted visitors. It is reported in the case notes that he failed to

\(^{49}\) Utica-Marcy Psychiatric Centers, "Case Notes of Gerrit Smith" (7 November 1859). (Hereinafter cited as Case Notes).

\(^{50}\) John P. Gray to John Cochrane, 16 December 1859, Gerrit Smith Papers, George Arents Research Library, Syracuse University. Unless otherwise noted, all letters cited in this article are from the Smith Papers.

recognize one visitor, E. A. Wetmore, one of his business agents. Smith's wife visited him and had Thanksgiving dinner with him. As Smith's health improved, Gray took the highly unusual move of bringing the patient to live in the superintendent's own home on the asylum grounds.

Gray's case notes indicate that as Smith's mania was subsiding and the depression becoming more pronounced he was afraid to mix with the other patients. Reports in The Opal, the magazine edited by the patients of the asylum, however, indicate that at least some patients were aware of Smith's institutionalization and the raid on Harpers Ferry. A column entitled "The Editor's Table" remarked that "facts elicit the unquestioned complicity of numerous leaders of the Anti-Slavery party". The next paragraph identified Smith as a member of this party.

An unsigned article in the American Journal of Insanity written near the time of Smith's hospitalization prescribes cod liver oil, brandy, essence of beef, and mechanical restraint as part of the "moral treatment" in the case of a patient suffering mania with spiritual delusions. Although it is not known if Gray wrote that article, as editor of the journal he had the reputation of seldom giving "a hearing to those who disagreed with him". The case notes on Smith indicate that his treatment was similar to that described in this article. Patients today experiencing a manic episode initially would be given an antipsychotic medication such as chlorpromazine followed by extended administration of the chemical lithium as well as psychother-

52. Case Notes (7, 13 November 1859).
53. Gray to Mrs. Smith, 19 December 1859.
55. Case Notes (25 November 1859).
57. Anon., "Editor's Table", The Opal 9 (December 1859): 278.
apy and environmental support; Smith was given cannabis, which is commonly referred to today as marijuana, apparently to calm him. Later he was given morphine.

The diagnosis Smith was given by the hospital was acute mania. During the nineteenth century the term mania frequently referred to a patient who was wild and out of control. Such violent behavior today would most likely be identified as some form of psychosis. Psychosis involves a mental disorder that is sufficiently severe as to result in personality disorganization and loss of contact with reality. According to the case notes, when Smith was brought to the institution he was loud, histrionic, agitated, incoherent, and charging conspiracy against his person by the hospital staff. Clearly his behavior had crossed the bounds of normality.

Smith's behavior shortly before his admission and during his hospital stay is suggestive of a bipolar disorder, more commonly referred to as manic-depression. Smith's increased loquacity, sleeplessness, and grandiosity, while in the asylum, are typical symptoms of this mood disorder. Furthermore, as indicated in correspondence between his family and Gray, Smith wanted to attend John Brown's trial. Preoccupation with activities that have a high potential for painful consequences, which are not recognized by the patient, also is diagnostic of a bipolar disorder.

Smith's own description of his illness highlights his depression as well as his manic behavior. In a letter to Charles Sumner, Smith portrays this period as a "black dream". Five months after his release from the asylum, he wrote to William Goodell, the editor of the New York Principia, a monthly antislavery magazine, that "his

60. Case Notes (7, 11 November 1859).
65. Smith to Sumner, 7 June 1860.
wildness was gone" and that during the hospitalization he "sank so low as not to know one of the persons around me". He reported having felt utterly unworthy of others' kindnesses.66

Smith further reported to Goodell that for years before the hospitalization he experienced physical and neurotic complaints such as dyspepsia, vertigo, and heart palpitations despite a robust and healthy appearance.67 In a short autobiography penned in the mid-1850s, Smith described himself during his congressional term as "drivingly busy" and as plagued by anxieties such as fear of "falling in the streets".68

While it is possible that Smith was malingering merely to avoid prosecution for his complicity in the John Brown affair, as some historians have insinuated, the consistency of his symptoms, his long-standing preoccupation with bodily functions, and his periods of enormous activity alternating with periods of dormancy and bed rest give credence to a psychiatric disability.69 Also to be considered is the fact that psychological research has shown bipolar disturbances to be familial.70 Smith's father, Peter, had the reputation of being "queer" or peculiar in his later years and was said to have suffered periods of despondency. He relinquished the management of his vast land to Gerrit when he (the father) was only fifty-one and the son was twenty-one; this was shortly after the death of Gerrit's mother to whom both he and his father were extremely attached. Alcoholism, often a reaction against depression, plagued Smith's brother Peter Skenandoah Smith, who had been treated earlier at the Utica asylum. A younger brother, Adolphus Lent Smith, manifested serious, chronic psychological problems that made him unable to care for himself.71 There is some argument that bipolar disorders are more common in people from the upper socio-economic classes, with the hypothesis that the energy associated with mania

67. Smith to Goodell, 1 May 1860, reprinted in Douglass' Monthly 3 (June 1860): 280.
70. J. H. Boyd and M. M. Weissman, "Genetics" in Handbook of Affective Disorders, ed. E. S. Paykel (New York: Guilford Press, 1982), 122.
71. Harlow, Gerrit Smith, 3.
drives people to succeed financially. 72 Psychoanalytic theory suggests that manic individuals have strong narcissistic needs which they attempt to fulfill by amassing power, money, and recognition. 73 Smith certainly drove himself to attain financial success and fretted that his family would become penurious whenever he experienced financial setbacks. He became the most successful member of his family, surpassing even his father in wealth and fame. He apparently set higher standards for himself and his family, and complained to John Gray when his son Green was not living up to the ideals that he had established. 74

Other facets of the Smith case are consistent with current research on the bipolar disorders. For example, the peak age of admission for persons suffering from manic-depressive episodes is between forty-five and sixty-four. 75 Gerrit Smith was sixty-two at the time of his admission to Utica. The average duration of a manic episode is between 53.7 days and four months, and Smith spent 52 days at Utica. 76 Environmental stress often precedes a manic attack, 77 and mood and energy changes in bipolar patients precede the development of the first definite affective illness by some years. 78 The Harpers Ferry incident was a definite source of stress for Smith, who was displaying mood and energy changes for several years before this affair, in fact at least as early as his days as a congressman in Washington.

Smith resided at the asylum and Gray’s home for approximately eight weeks. He was released and allowed to return to Peterboro on 29 December 1859. Gray apparently had misgivings about letting Smith return to Peterboro so soon. In letters to Smith and his family after

74. Gray to Smith, 6 May 1860.
76. W. Coryell and G. Winokur, “Course and Outcome”, in Handbook of Affective Disorders, ed. E. S. Paykel (New York: Guilford Press, 1982), 94.
77. American Psychiatric Association, Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, 216.

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Smith’s return to Peterboro, Gray repeatedly cautioned against overexertion and warned of the dangers of a relapse. As he noted in a letter to Elizabeth Miller, Smith’s daughter, “I cannot conceal the fact that this staying at home greatly reconciles me to his being at home.” In fact, he advised Charles Miller, Smith’s son-in-law, that Smith not be permitted to go to Washington to appear before a congressional committee investigating Harpers Ferry.

For the remainder of his life, Smith adamantly denied any foreknowledge of John Brown’s raid on Harpers Ferry and twice brought suits against individuals who publicly accused him of having been a conspirator along with John Brown. In October 1859, an ad hoc group of Democrats, calling themselves the New York Vigilant Association, accused Smith of being part of a secret band that had planned the Harpers Ferry raid. These Democrats had no solid evidence regarding the conspiracy, however, and recanted their claim rather than engage in an expensive legal battle with Smith, who threatened them with a libel suit after he was released from the Utica asylum. In 1865, the Chicago Tribune published articles insinuating that Smith had actively aided Brown in the Harpers Ferry raid and had feigned insanity in order to avoid prosecution as an accomplice of John Brown. Smith issued a denial of any specific knowledge of Brown’s attack and sued the newspaper.

John Gray served as an important ally of Smith’s in the long court battle with the Tribune. After Smith’s discharge from the asylum, he and Gray maintained a correspondence that extended through the remainder of Smith’s life. These letters indicate that Smith continued to turn to Gray for medical advice, and that Gray prescribed medications and regimens to aid Smith’s digestion and cautioned Smith against overexertion. Letters from Gray and his wife to Smith show that they benefited from Smith’s generosity, and called upon Smith to use his influence to counter a negative editorial regarding psychiatric treatment.

79. Gray to Elizabeth Miller, 13 January 1860.
80. Gray to Charles Miller, 9 April 1860.
81. Harlow, Gerrit Smith, 414–21, 450–54; Scott, Secret Six, 315–16.
82. Gray to Smith, 6 May 1860, 6 May 1864, 27 August 1866, 20 March 1869, 29 March 1870, 27 November 1873, 1 February 1874, 18 February 1874, 3 April 1874, 24 May 1874, 27 November 1874.
83. Mrs. Gray to Smith, 13 April 1860, 18 April 1860; Gray to Smith, 16 April 1860, 29 November 1868, 1 February 1874.
When asked, Gray indicated his willingness to testify regarding Smith's mental state after the Harpers Ferry incident as part of the libel suit against the Chicago Tribune. During the Civil War, Gray had gained a reputation as a medical expert at trials. For example, testifying at the trial of Dr. David M. Wright, who had killed a Lieutenant Sanborn in Norfolk, Virginia, he concluded that Wright was not insane.\textsuperscript{84} He argued that insanity does not instantly manifest itself nor instantly disappear. In a later trial Gray testified that the defendant Lorenzo C. Stewart was eccentric, not insane. He noted that "insanity cannot be predicated on any manifestations of moral depravity or intellectual peculiarity, not the offspring of disease. Insanity is a changed state, an abnormal condition, caused by disease alone."\textsuperscript{85} In these and other cases, Gray expressed serious reservation about using the insanity defense to absolve people of responsibility for their actions. He wrote, "the excuse of moral insanity could be used in court only if the defendant were shown to be suffering from impaired reason."\textsuperscript{86} Otherwise, a person should be punished for his actions.

After more than two years of legal maneuvering, the Tribune finally published a retraction. The newspaper acknowledged that competent medical evidence existed proving that Smith had gone insane following Harpers Ferry.\textsuperscript{87} Gray wrote Smith congratulating him on the agreeable outcome of the suit.

The honorable and satisfactory settlement of the suit has given me great relief—I did not dread a journey to Chicago, in fact it would have been a pleasure & I have become, in a measure accustomed to appearing in court but I did feel unhappy

\textsuperscript{86} Anon., "Annual Meeting of the Association of Medical Superintendents for the Insane", The American Journal of Insanity 20 (July 1863): 63–106. Two decades later Gray became a national celebrity when he testified at the trial of Charles Guiteau, who had assassinated President James A. Garfield. In retaliation for his testimony that the defendant was sane, Gray was shot by a friend of Guiteau. This injury so weakened Gray that it led to his eventual demise in 1886 at the age of sixty-one. Memorial History of Utica, 20.
\textsuperscript{87} Harlow, Gerrit Smith, 450–54; Villard, John Brown, 46; Scott, Secret Six, 315–16.
at the thought of detailing the symptoms of insanity of a friend in open court to be published in newspapers and talked over. All the more too, knowing how you would feel it.\(^88\)

The fact that Gray was willing to testify publicly on Smith's behalf in the suit against the Chicago Tribune is one final piece of evidence that he truly believed that Smith had been insane.

Historians and Smith's contemporaries have been amazed at Smith's persistent denial of his involvement with John Brown. Unkind critics have recalled Brown's remark to Higginson that he believed that Smith was a "timid man".\(^89\) Frothingham speculates that Smith maintained his innocence regarding Harpers Ferry because he was afraid that dwelling on his behavior at the time of the incident would lead to a recurrence of his insanity.\(^90\) This interpretation agrees with the psychoanalytic view of bipolar disorders.\(^91\) Finally, it agrees with Smith's own views of his behavior. Writing to an abolitionist friend, he stated, "What is unhappiest in my case is, that I have to avoid looking back upon the year 1859, not only because a part of it is full of darkness to my eye and of anguish to my heart, but because of the painful uncertainty and confusion which overhang other and larger parts of it."\(^92\)

Although a conclusive diagnosis is impossible without the opportunity for personal observation of the patient, surviving evidence contradicts charges that Smith had feigned a breakdown to prevent his arrest and punishment as an accomplice of John Brown. Instead, the greatest part of this material supports the conclusion that the stress which Smith felt following Harpers Ferry had triggered a psychological episode that required hospitalization for what today would be called a bipolar disorder.\(^93\)

88. Gray to Smith, 13 July 1867.
90. Frothingham, Gerrit Smith, 246–66.
92. Smith to Goodell, 1 May 1860, reprinted in Douglass' Monthly 3 (June 1860): 280.
93. The authors thank the following individuals for their assistance: Lyle Engell, archivist of the Utica-Marcy Psychiatric Centers, the staff of the George Arents Research Library at Syracuse University, and Gwen G. Robinson of the Courier.
French Literary Manuscripts at Syracuse University

BY EDWARD LYON

An unexpected and largely unrecognized strength of the George Arents Research Library lies in French literary manuscripts of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Authors’ letters, autograph manuscripts and typescripts, and revisions in proof, as well as publishers’ records, offer essential biographical, textual, and bibliographic documentation. Even though French literature has not been a primary collecting area, Syracuse University has had the good fortune to acquire individual items and collections of variety and depth. The summary that follows is offered as both an introduction to these collections and an invitation to scholarship.

French literary manuscripts at Syracuse University range in date from Chateaubriand and Tocqueville to Marguerite Yourcenar, the first woman elected to the Académie Française. Researchers will find authors, not always native-born, who have written influentially in French, and other figures prominent in French cultural life. Authors include Honoré de Balzac, Gustave Flaubert, Anatole France, Charles-Augustin Sainte-Beuve, and Émile Zola. Details on individual holdings appear in the checklist. Notes on other major collections follow.

Two collections of intimate nineteenth-century letters reflect the personal side of two very public poets, Victor Hugo and Alphonse de Lamartine, both of whom played an active part in political life. Of great general appeal are forty-six letters written to Victor Hugo by Juliette Drouet, the actress who was his companion for fifty years. Many of these letters date from the autumn of 1878 when the couple returned to Guernsey while the poet recovered from a stroke. Alphonse de Lamartine, the virtual head of the provisional government in the Revolution of 1848, is represented by 176 letters that span almost all of his literary and political life. One hundred fifty-four of these letters are addressed to his favorite niece, Valentine de Cessiat, whom he presumably married late in life.
Recognizing the importance of publishers' correspondence to literary research, Syracuse University acquires records of publishing houses and literary periodicals. Some of these, such as E. P. Dutton and Grove Press, hold significant letters and manuscripts of French authors. E. P. Dutton published Henri Barbusse and, a generation later, introduced Françoise Sagan to America. Grove Press, acquired by Barney Rosset in 1952, quickly captured Simone de Beauvoir as one of its initial authors. Soon the works of Jean Genet and Eugène Ionesco appeared over the Grove imprint. By the 1960s, Grove had added Marguerite Duras, André Pieyre de Mandiargues, Robert Pinget, Alain Robbe-Grillet, and Boris Vian. Grove's ties with the European literary community were further strengthened by the appointment of Richard Seaver as managing editor; he had been editor of the English-language literary quarterly Merlin in Paris. Evergreen Review, founded by Grove in 1957 and edited by Rosset, provided a widely accessible forum for new literature and experimental theater.

One 'French' author who is properly included here is Samuel Beckett. Although born in Dublin, he has written primarily in French, which he then translates into English. He first visited France in 1926, later met James Joyce there and became his assistant, and in 1937 moved permanently to Paris. After World War II, having already written in French for literary journals, Beckett began to write novels and plays in his adopted language. He was relatively unknown when Barney Rosset first met him in Paris in 1953. Grove Press published Beckett's own translation of En Attendant Godot the following year and continues to be Beckett's American publisher. The thirty-year correspondence between Grove and Beckett now exceeds 600 items.

Jean Cocteau, the versatile poet and artist, filmmaker and experimenter in the visual media, donated manuscripts to Syracuse University. When approached by the library in the summer of 1963, Cocteau responded by writing that he intended to send the bound manuscript of the film L'Aigle à Deux Têtes. On 11 September he wrote again from Milly-la-Forêt: "Je vais voir si quelque manuscrit moins indirect qu'un oeuvre de films se trouve à ma campagne et, malgré mon écriture illisible, serait, pour votre bibliothèque, un document plus humain et plus amicale." To this letter, Cocteau appended a postscript: "Beaucoup de mes manuscrits ont été volés et vendus." Cocteau died at his country house on 11 October. What arrived at Syracuse, postmarked on 2 October, was a folio volume of manuscript poems, colorfully inscribed to Syracuse University. With
this gift as a beginning, the library added substantial purchases be-
tween 1967 and 1971, assembling over 200 letters and many manu-
scripts. The artist's fluid hand is evident in these albums of manu-
scripts, their accompanying drawings, and the Cocteau signature with paraph star.

The Albert Schweitzer manuscripts, letters, and notebooks consti-
tute the principal research collection in the United States on the
theologian, music scholar, organist, and medical missionary. Born in
Alsace and educated at the University of Strasbourg, first in theology
and then in medicine, Schweitzer in 1913 established a hospital at
Lambaréné in French Equatorial Africa. Most of the collection was
formerly in the possession of his daughter, Rhena Schweitzer Miller.
In addition to manuscripts in German, there is material in French
that includes hundreds of letters written from the Lambaréné hospi-
tal, Sunday sermons preached there, and the appeal "Paix ou Guerre
Atomique?", broadcast from Oslo in 1958. The Rhena Schweitzer
Miller Collection arrived at Syracuse University primarily through the
efforts of Professor Antje B. Lemke, with support from the Syracuse
University Library Associates.
The following checklist is selective; more than one hundred authors are represented in the collections. Entries list manuscripts, proof corrections, letters, and documents, in that order. Information is given sufficient for identification, but many of these items deserve more detailed analysis than is possible within the scope of this article. Titles are quoted in full as they appear on the manuscript, as are places and dates; supplied information is bracketed. Manuscripts that are listed without dates may be assumed not to carry them. Dates, unless quoted, have been anglicized and are standardized to day-month-year form. Because of the variety of forms of modern written communication, the word letters may be used collectively to describe all items of correspondence, including cablegrams, telegrams, and postcards. Routine presentation inscriptions in books are not listed.

CHECKLIST OF MANUSCRIPTS AND LETTERS

Adamov, Arthur (1908–1970)
Typed letter signed, 26 September 1958; with copies of letters (3), 1959–61, from Grove Press to Adamov.

Arrabal, Fernando (1932–)
Typed letters signed (8), 1959–73, mostly to Richard Seaver of Grove Press; with copies of letters (10), 1959–73, from Grove Press to Arrabal, and other letters that reflect international concern over Arrabal’s imprisonment in Spain in 1967.

Balzac, Honoré de (1799–1850)
Scènes de la vie privée, Autograph manuscript, fragment, [ca. 1830].
Proof sheets to Mémoires de deux jeunes mariées, with Balzac’s corrections and revisions, 2 leaves, 4 September 1841. Proof pages to Mémoires de deux jeunes mariées, with Balzac’s corrections and revisions, 4 pp., 29 October 1841. Proof for the covers of Scènes de la vie privée iv (Paris, 1844), with Balzac’s corrections and revisions.
Autograph letters signed (8), 1832–44 and n.d.
See also: Hanska, Eveline Rzewuska.

Barbey d'Aurevilly, Jules Amédée (1808–1889)
Ce qui ne meurt pas, Autograph manuscript, 1 p., corresponding to pp. 16–17 of the Lemerre 1884 edition.

Barbusse, Henri (1873–1935)
“Notice. Titre: Les Enchaînements, visions.” Autograph manuscript signed, 8 pp., [1924].
Autograph and typed letters signed (3), 1919–24.

[Beauvoir, Simone de] (1908–)
The Grove Press editorial files and other files on its editions of America Day by Day and The Marquis de Sade.

Beckett, Samuel (1906–)
“Serena III” Autograph manuscript, 2 pp., [ca. 1934].
Letters (296), 1953–81, from Paris, Ussy-sur-Marne, and other locations, mostly to Barney Rosset or Richard Seaver at Grove Press. Most of the letters are in English. Also, letters (366), 1953–72, in retained carbons, addressed to Beckett from Grove Press; and files of letters addressed to Beckett, care of Grove Press, but not forwarded. Tape recordings (7 reels), made during the shooting of Film in New York in June 1964, of conversations between Beckett and Alan Schneider, Boris Kaufman, and others.
Also, the Grove Press editorial files and other files on its editions of Beckett titles. Additions to the Grove Press records are expected.

Berlioz, Hector (1803–1869)
Autograph letter signed, n.d., to “Mon cher Damke” [sic].

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Blanc, Louis (1811–1882)
   Autograph letter signed, 29 February 1864.

Boissonade, Jean François (1774–1857)
   Autograph letter signed, n.d., to Émile Egger.

Bourget, Paul (1852–1935)

Breton, André (1896–1966)
   Autograph letter signed, 10 May 1932, to Peter Neagoë.

Buloz, François (1804–1877)
   Autograph letters signed (6), 1848–52. Also, one letter, 17 April 1836,
      from Alphonse de Lamartine to Buloz.

Chadourne, Marc (1895–1975)
   Absence (novel, 1932), successive drafts in holograph; with typescript
      synopses in French and English, 8 pp. and 9 pp., respectively.
   Cécile de La Folie (novel, 1930), successive drafts in holograph and type-
      script.
   Dieu créa d’abord Lilith . . . (novel, 1937), successive drafts in holograph
      and typescript, and corrected page proofs.
   Le Mal de Colleen (novel, 1955), holograph and typescript (incomplete),
      [1952].
   Restif de la Bretonne (biography, 1955), successive drafts in holograph
      and typescript.
   Vasco (novel, 1927), successive drafts in holograph and typescript (in-
      complete).
   “Vaudou, Synopsis de Marc Chadourne” typescript, 7 pp.
   Letters (8), 1963–67; with carbons of letters (13), 1963–70, to Cha-
      dourne.

Champfleury [pseud. of Jules Husson, dit Fleury] (1821–1889)
   “Voyage autour de ma bibliothèque” Autograph manuscript, 6 pp.,
      n.d., with a transcript, 6 pp., n.d., by Champfleury’s secretary, Jules
      Troubat, and Troubat’s letter of transmittal, [8? July 1890], to Paul
      Eudel.

Chateaubriand, François René, vicomte de (1768–1848)
   Letters signed (3), 1814–23.

Cocteau, Jean (1889–1963)
   “Un Ami dort” Autograph manuscript signed (in initials), 1946 (2
      drafts), 12 pp. altogether, with 2 pencil drawings. Holograph, 8
   “Le Bel indifférent” Holograph and typescript, 10 pp.
“La Belle et la bête: Scénario imaginé d’après le conte de Madame Le-
prince de Beaumont” Autograph manuscript, 6 pp.
[on Christian Bérard] Autograph manuscript signed, 1 p., 1960 (2
copies).
[on Coco Chanel] Autograph manuscript signed, 1 p.
“Cinématographes” Autograph manuscript, 7 pp.
“La Crucifixion” Holograph, 25 + [1] pp., 1946, with 5 layout drawings,
“Commence au bassin d’Arcachon continué à Paris et en Touraine
terminé à Morzine Haute Savoie”.
[on Sergei Diaghilev] Autograph manuscript, 2 pp.
“Diaghilev” Autograph manuscript of a radio talk given by Cocteau,
12 pp.
“Drôle de panache” Autograph manuscript signed, 2 pp.
“Escales” by Jean Cocteau and André Lhote. Text in Cocteau’s holo-
graph, with 10 ink drawings and 6 pencil sketches by André Lhote,
30 leaves; conjugate with “Musée secret”.
“Les États-Unis ont ceci d’admirable que bout en exigeant . . . [incipit]”
Autograph manuscript signed, 2 pp.
“Fantômes et vivants” Autograph manuscript signed, 2 pp.
“La Fin du Potomak” Autograph manuscript signed, 58 pp., folio, “1er
mai—5 mai 1939”; with “Le Clef de l’oeuvre de Jean Cocteau” Auto-
graph manuscript, 4 pp.
“Fin d’une rétrospective” Autograph manuscript signed, 4 pp.
“Homage à Serge de Daighilew [sic]” Autograph manuscript signed,
9 pp.
[on “La Machine infernale”] Autograph manuscript signed, 2 pp., n.d.;
with a typescript copy, 1 p., 20 January 1949.
“Madame se meurt” Autograph manuscript, 5 pp.
“Marie Laurencin” Autograph manuscript signed, 6 pp.
“Max [Jacob]” Autograph manuscript signed, 2 pp.
“Musée secret” Autograph manuscript, 5 leaves; conjugate with “Es-
cales”.
Le Mystère laïc, Holograph revisions in a copy of the first edition (Édi-
tions des Quatre Chemins, [1928]).
“Notes sur la crucifixion” Autograph manuscript, 5 pp.
“Notre Dame de Paris, La Fille aux yeux d’or” Autograph manuscript, 4
pp. (incomplete).
[Ode to Picasso] “Prospectus” Autograph manuscript, 2 pp., and “Pré-
face” Autograph manuscript, 1 p.
[Oedipe roi] Typescript, 21 pp., heavily revised in Cocteau’s holograph,
Honoré de Balzac's proof corrections and revisions to a passage of Mémoires de deux jeunes mariées, 1841.

with 3 full-page drawings of set and costume designs and 2 smaller drawings.


"Le Pélican de Ray[mon]d Radiguet" Autograph manuscript, 1 p.
“Poèmes” Autograph manuscript, 13 leaves.
“Poèmes” (cover title) Holograph, 28 pp. of text in a bound folio notebook of 33 leaves. Inscribed on the front cover “A Syracuse University ces quelques calculs d’un mathématicien du verbe avec l’amitié de Jean Cocteau 1963”.
“Poèmes de jeunesse” (wrapper title) Autograph manuscript, pp. 8–157, containing 90 individual poems.
“Procès de l’inspiration” Autograph manuscript, 5 pp.
[on Raymond Radiguet] Autograph manuscript, 2 pp.
[Return of Ulysses to Ithaca and Penelope’s welcome] Autograph manuscript, 8 pp.
[on Raymond Rounce] Autograph manuscript signed, 3 pp.
“Une Rétrospective de J. E. Blanche” Autograph manuscript signed, 6 pp.
“Romantisme” Autograph manuscript signed, 4 pp., “fait pour la radio italienne. Rognoni, le 29 Sept. 1950.”
“Satie” Autograph manuscript signed, 2 pp.
“Satie est mort, vive Satie” Typescript signed, with Cocteau’s revisions, 3 pp.
“Sources des films” Autograph manuscript signed, 6 pp.
“Suite d’un rétrospective” Autograph manuscript signed, 5 pp.
“Les Tragédiens (Jean Desbordes)” Autograph manuscript signed, 5 pp.
“Vocabulaire” Holograph, 6 pp.
“Voilà deux ans que je me refuse d’écrire quelques lignes sur le numéro Barbette. [incipit]” Autograph manuscript, 9 pp.
Letters (217), 1921–63 and n.d., to various correspondents, principal among them Maurice Sachs. Other addressees include Max Jacob, Georgette Leblanc, and Marcel Raval.

[Colet, Louise née Revoil] (1808–1876)
Letters (2), 16 August 1853 and n.d., from Flaubert to her.
Coppée, François (1842–1908)
    Autograph letter signed, n.d.

[Dabit, Eugène] (1898–1936)
    Letters (6), 1927–35, from André Gide to Dabit.

[Daudet, Alphonse] (1840–1897)
    Letter, 2 December 1880, from Émile Zola to Daudet.

Drouet, Juliette (1806–1883)
    Autograph letters (47), a few of the earlier letters signed (“J. Drouet” or “Juliette”), 1839–78 and n.d., all but one of them to Victor Hugo.

Dumas, Alexandre, père (1802–1870)

Dumas, Alexandre, fils (1824–1895)
    Autograph letter signed, 21 October 1886. Also, 1 letter, 4 August 1877, from Charles Gounod to Dumas fils.

Duras, Marguerite (1914– )
    Autograph and typed letters signed (3), 1965–66; with copies of letters (20), 1960–70, from Grove Press to her.

Éluard, Paul [pseudo of Eugène Grindel] (1895–1952)
    Autograph note signed, 19 June 1950, with memorabilia and photographs, including 6 snapshots.

Flaubert, Gustave (1821–1880)
    “Livre de Néhémias” Autograph manuscript signed, 2 pp.
    “Proverbes de Salomon” Autograph manuscript signed, 3 pp.
    Autograph letters signed (27), 1853–72 but mostly n.d., to correspondents that include Louise Colet, Paul Dalloz, Alphonse Lemerre, and Philippe Leparfait. Also, a letter, [14 June 1871], from George Sand to Flaubert.

France, Anatole [pseudo of Jacques Anatole François Thibault] (1844–1924)
    “Le mauvais ouvrier” Autograph manuscript signed, 1 p.
    Autograph letters signed (18), [ca.1877 and 1915–18], 17 of which—those from World War I—are addressed to Jean-Paul Oury.

Genet, Jean (1910– )
    Autograph and typed letters signed (9), 1952–68 and n.d. Also in the Grove Press records are files of correspondence, 1952–67, with Genet’s translator into English, Bernard Frechtman.
Gide, André (1869–1951)
Autograph and typed letters signed (6), 1927–35, to Eugène Dabit.

Gounod, Charles François (1818–1893)
Autograph letters signed (123), 1850–93, to various correspondents.

Guizot, François (1787–1874)
Autograph letter signed, 17 August 1848.

Hanska, Eveline Rzewuska, comtesse (1801–1882)
Autograph letter signed, n.d., to the book-dealer Noël François Thibault, called “Père” France, the father of Anatole France.
Document, Paris, 26 September 1850, concerning Balzac’s estate.
Also, letters (3), n.d., from Paul Lacroix to Armand Dutacq that refer to her and her sister, Mme. Jules Lacroix.

Hugo, Victor Marie, vicomte (1802–1885)
Autograph letters signed (8), 1842–69 and n.d., to recipients that include his son Toto. Also, 46 letters, 1839–78 and n.d., from Juliette Drouet to Victor Hugo.

Ionesco, Eugène (1912–)

[Jacob, Max] (1876–1944)
Letters (17), 1918–25 and n.d., from Jean Cocteau to Max Jacob.

Lacroix, Paul [“le bibliophile Jacob”] (1807–1884)
Autograph letters signed (3), n.d., to Armand Dutacq.

Lamartine, Alphonse Marie Louis de Prat de (1790–1869)
“Les Conditions personnelles [for establishing a political newspaper]”
Autograph manuscript signed, 2 pp., n.d. Also, “La Fleur des eaux, Romance de Valentine” Manuscript, in Valentine de Cessiat’s holograph, 4 pp., 28 May 1845.
Autograph letters signed (176), 1829–67, including 154 letters, 1841–56, to his niece, Valentine de Cessiat; with 3 letters 1853–54, from Valentine de Cessiat to Lamartine. Also, 12 letters from Marianne (Birch) de Lamartine to various correspondents.

Lavedan, Henri (1859–1940)
Autograph letter signed, 28 June 1906, 5 pp.

Louys, Pierre (1870–1925)
“L’Île” Autograph manuscript, 72 pp., [n.d., but ca.1905].
Macdonald, Jacques Étienne Joseph Alexandre, duc de Tarente (1765–1840)
Autograph letters signed (143), 1807–40, to three generations of the Billacoys family, with related documents.

Maritain, Jacques (1882–1973)
Typed letters signed (2), 11 January and 7 April 1943, to Dorothy Thompson; with 2 letters from her to Maritain.

Maupassant, Guy de (1850–1893)
Autograph letters signed (2), 1872 and 8 May 1890.

Maurois, André [pseud. of Émile Herzog] (1885–1967)
Autograph and typed letters signed (5), 1941 and n.d.

Milhaud, Darius (1892–1974)

Mistral, Frédéric (1830–1914)
Autograph letter signed, 29 October 1867.

Nodier, Charles (1780–1844)
“Le vieux marinier” Autograph manuscript, 4 pp.

Pailleron, Édouard (1834–1899)
Autograph letter, n.d., 3 pp., that includes 2 ink sketches.

Peyre de Mandiargues, André (1909–)
Autograph letters signed (15), 1958–69; with copies of letters (15), 1958–69, from Grove Press to Peyre de Mandiargues.

Robbe-Grillet, Alain (1922–)

Rodin, François Auguste René (1840–1917)
Autograph letters signed (2), 3 May 1884 and 28 March 1906.

Rolland, Romain (1866–1944)
Autograph letters signed (2), 7 July 1918 and 14 October 1920.

Romains, Jules [pseud. of Louis Farigoule] (1885–1972)
Typed letter signed, 9 October 1940.

Sagan, Françoise [pseud. of Françoise Quoirez] (1935–)
“L’Homme étendu” Typescript, 8 pp.

Sainte-Beuve, Charles-Augustin (1804–1869)
Proof corrections in galleys to 3 reviews by Sainte-Beuve in Le Constitu-

Autograph letters signed (21), 1851–66 and n.d., including 19 to Antonia Devaquetz, dite Mme. de Vaquez. Also, 1 letter, 30 June 1851, of A[ntonia] de Vaquez to her mother; and 1 letter, 3 December 1855, from Thomas Devaquetz to Monsieur Saint Boeuf [sic].

Sand, George [Lucile Aurore Dupin, baronne Dudevant] (1804–1876)

Autograph letter signed, [14 June 1871], 3 pp., to Gustave Flaubert.

Schweitzer, Albert (1875–1965)

[Lectures and essays, in German, on subjects of religion, philosophy, music, medicine, and peace] Holograph and typescript (21 items), 1906–32 and 1963.

"Message pour le centenaire de Brazza" Typescript, 1 February 1952, 2 pp.

[Notebooks (37), the so-called blue notebooks], 1940–65, mostly in French, some in German, on subjects that include medical supplies for the Lambarene hospital, schedules for Schweitzer's trips to Europe, and nuclear power.


[Sermons (14) preached at Lambarene, 22 June—20 July and 3 August—28 September 1930] Typescript, 52 pp., in French.

Letters (647), 1912–65, including 180 to his daughter Rhena; 396, 1950–65, to the photographer Erica Anderson; and others to correspondents that include Rudolf Bultmann. Also, letters addressed to Schweitzer, 1944–45, from Hermann Hagedorn, author of the biography Prophet in the Wilderness.

Sue, Eugène Marie Joseph (1804–1857)

Autograph letter signed ("M. J. Sue"), 20 September 1826.

Also, 218 letters and documents, 1826–52, 1868, and n.d., relating to the author's step-mother, Rosella de Milhau Sue Niles; the American diplomat Nathaniel Niles (1791–1869); and their families.
Tocqueville, Alexis Charles Henri Maurice Clérel, comte de (1805–1859)
Autograph letters signed (2), 19 June 1839 and n.d.

Verne, Jules (1828–1905)
Autograph letter signed, 18 April 1874.

Vielé-Griffin, Francis (1864–1937)
Autograph letter signed, 14 November 1929.

Vigny, Alfred, comte de (1797–1863)
Autograph letter signed, 1859.

Yourcenar, Marguerite [pseud. of Marguerite de Crayencour] (1903–)

Zola, Émile (1840–1902)
Autograph letters signed (32), 1864–1902 and n.d., to correspondents that include Alphonse Daudet.
“Une Amazone”, the only manuscript of Dumas père (1802–1870) at Syracuse University, was acquired in July 1985 by the George Ar- ents Research Library. This is the same story printed serially in Le Siècle between 29 September and 3 October 1845. A slightly modi- fied version, entitled “Herminie”, appears in the Calmann-Lévy edi- tion of Dumas’ works (volume 10 of 275 volumes, pages 191–274). Very minor stylistic differences between “Une Amazone” and “Her- minie” suggest that there might have been an intermediate version. “Herminie” first appeared in print in 1858.

The Syracuse manuscript is incomplete. A comparison of it with the Calmann-Lévy text suggests that eight pages of an estimated thirty-two are missing. Altogether the Syracuse manuscript contains the following text as printed in Calmann-Lévy: “Avant-propos”; chapter I; all but the first eighteen lines as printed of chapter III; chapters IV, V, VI; and an epilogue.

“Une Amazone” is a typical ‘bal masqué’ story of the French Ro- mantic period. It takes place in 183—, whereas “Herminie” takes place in 185—, but that is the only noticeable change. The mood is not as sentimental as that of Musset’s stories—one thinks, for example, of Musset’s “Les Caprices de Marianne”—nor is the tone as morbidly pessimistic as that of Maupassant’s stories later in the century; but the story is both lyrical and bitterly ironic, and Dumas claims in a brief foreword that, save for an alteration in the names, it is a true story.

The young hero, Edouard, is a blasé enfant du siècle who pretends, quite typically, to be far more worldly a seducer than he is in fact. As the story opens, the young man has had the good fortune of find-
ing a bachelor’s flat in the faubourg Saint Germain—rare luck, apparently, judging by the number of times the subject of finding one’s own quarters comes up in the course of the story. Edouard has been carrying on a casual love affair with one of his many girlfriends, Marie, when he meets a fascinating, mysterious lady at a masked ball at the Opéra. Having found at last a woman worth pursuing, Edouard inquires further about her identity and learns that she is none other than the exquisite young woman who lives across the street from him in a luxurious town house. He also learns from his concierge that the young woman’s name is Herminie de — and that she has been trained from her earliest youth to ride horses “comme une amazone”.

One need not be too perceptive a reader to detect here a reworking of the Amazon myth, that is, a story of an unconquerable woman. Edouard resigns himself, quite happily at first, to his role of centaur. Once the expected billet doux has arrived from Herminie, enjoining Edouard to pay her a nocturnal visit across the street, our hero will be allowed to enjoy the Amazon’s favors. But on two conditions: he must slide a ten-foot plank from his window to hers every night at midnight in order to make his way across the street; and he must never breathe a word to anyone about their affair—if he does, the Amazon will kill him.

After two months of crawling across the plank Edouard has begun to tire of the Amazon and to find her conditions annoyingly restrictive. He secretly packs his bags for a four-month trip to “les pyramides”, and sublets his flat to his heretofore hapless friend Edmond. (This Edmond is the typical anti-hero of the Romantic short story, an anti-Edouard who has been unable to locate either flat or mistress so far.) In the meantime, Marie, Edouard’s jealous ex-girlfriend, has let the Amazon know that she is aware of her love affair with Edouard.

The dénouement of the story is quick, ironic, and cruel. On the night following Edouard’s departure, Edmond substitutes himself for his friend on the plank. As he nears the edge of Herminie’s window, he suddenly feels the plank give way and plunges four stories to an unsavoury death. Thinking it was Edouard, Herminie had decided to punish him for revealing their love affair to the world.

Dumas père was a most prolific writer, with more than three hundred titles to his credit at the time of his death. Like Balzac, he wrote to make a living; unlike Balzac, whose manuscripts and galleys are saturated with corrections and addenda, Dumas does not seem to have
second-guessed himself very often. The manuscript of “Une Amazon” indicates a swift, fine, firm, legible hand (for Dumas père was trained as a clerk and was reputed for his calligraphy) and contains very few emendations. In every case, the emended version, to this reader at least, is an improvement over the original. Let one example suffice: on page [4] of the manuscript, Edouard is first described as “un de ces individus qui que les femmes ont en horreur parce que tout en ayant l’innocence d’un écolier et affectant l’impertinence d’un débauché”. Dumas must have realized here that he was being too judgmental toward his hero; so, he remodeled the material I have italicized to read: “quoique n’ayant sur leur compte que la théorie d’un collégienn ils affectent avec elles l’impertinence d’un roué.” In toning down Edouard’s portrait from “debauché” to “roué”, Dumas has exchanged a bludgeon for a rapier; and a “theorizing student” hits the mark far better than “an innocent schoolboy”. Dumas might have recalled the fine remark by Talleyrand, that master roué of statesmanship: “Tout ce qui est excessif est sans portée.” Anything excessive falls short of the mark.
The author of hundreds of articles and reviews and more than a dozen books, including literary criticism, biography, and an autobiography, Granville Hicks was one of the most prominent American intellectuals of his time. His political odyssey, beginning in the thirties with an open and vocal commitment to Marxism and membership in the Communist party, moving through disillusionment to moderate liberalism, was similar to that of many of the distinguished intellectuals of his generation. Malcolm Cowley, Edmund Wilson, and Richard Rovere, who had been, if not party members, at least close associates, followed a similar course. For Hicks, as for many of the others, it was the 1939 Nazi-Soviet Pact that led to his break with the party; but his political maturing also owed a considerable debt to the town in which he lived—Grafton, New York.

It was 1932. Hicks was teaching English at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York, and renting a house in that city. His desire to own his own home, however, brought him that year to Grafton, a small country town not far from Troy. Hicks thought of it as a place where he and his family could spend weekends and summers, but R.P.I. three years later in 1935 forced a change of plans. Citing its need to retrench, it refused to renew his contract as assistant professor. Hicks always believed, probably correctly, that it was his radical politics that had led to his dismissal. His views, he was convinced, did not endear him to the business interests that set the policies of the school. He had become an editor of the New Masses, a Communist weekly, although he did not join the Party until the

* Leah Levenson, free-lance writer, and Professor Jerry Natterstad are currently at work on a full-scale life of Granville Hicks.
Granville Hicks at home (Photo: Carl L. Howard, Hicks Family Collection).
following year. 2 Whatever the precise reason for his departure from R.P.I., the result was that he, his wife Dorothy, and their eight-year-old daughter Stephanie joined his mother and unemployed father, who were already living in the Grafton house. The family were now full-time town residents.

At that time Grafton had a population of 633 (a figure which would grow by only a couple of hundred during the next decade). It is situated fifteen miles east of Troy in the heavily wooded hills, capped with graywacke, between the Hudson and Hoosac valleys. In its early years the town was a logging center, supplying lumber, firewood, charcoal, and tanbark to the surrounding communities; still later, after available timberland was diminished, it became a farming community where sheep were raised and some dairies established and where potatoes and oats were grown. Although the soil was grudging, the landscape was scenic and known for its some twenty-five lakes and ponds scattered among firs, oaks, maples, and white birch. By the early thirties Grafton had become a kind of poor man’s resort town. A new concrete highway, built the year Hicks purchased the house and replacing the old macadam road, opened the area to the summer people and to those who merely wanted to drive through the countryside. 3 Tourism never brought prosperity, however, and many of the residents were engaged only in subsistence farming. Richard Rovere, a close friend of the Hickses from the late thirties on, remembered Grafton as “a rural slum—a kind of Tobacco Road North”. 4

Located on the Taconic Trail, which stretched from Troy to Williamstown, the town center consisted of fewer than a dozen houses, well-kept but characterless, clustered around a common. Just to the west there was an abandoned store and beyond it, on one corner of the common, a tiny general store diagonally across from the Methodist church. On the north side of the green there was a Baptist church and, to the east of it, a Catholic church. On the eastern edge of the common there was a white one-room school. Even with its scattering of maples and firs, the town was not much to look at. To Hicks,

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2. Part of the Truth, 118–19, 128–33.
though, it was "comfortable and homelike—not dignified, not impressive, certainly not beautiful, but not unattractive".5

About two miles northwest of the town center, off a rutted, stony dirt road that rose steeply from the highway leading into Grafton from the west, Hicks had discovered an old, story-and-a-half clapboard farmhouse with corrugated iron roof and attached woodshed. In its simple, starkly graceful lines it seemed particularly well-suited to the landscape, blending with the angular lines of the winter maple branches that framed it. From Hicks's first inspection of the place, which stood at an elevation of sixteen hundred feet and provided a view to the east of the Taconics rising a thousand feet higher, he was captivated. That the road leading there could turn into a winding ribbon of mud during the spring rains and could become glazed with ice or clogged with snow in the winter appeared not to diminish his enthusiasm—nor did the fact that the house, without electricity, left them dependent on wood- and oil-burning stoves for heat and was without telephone or adequate plumbing.

Though Hicks had never lived in an urban center, the small town was nonetheless a new experience for him. He had been born in Exeter, New Hampshire, had moved to Quincy, Massachusetts, a few years later, and then, when he was about eleven, to Framingham, Massachusetts. He had also lived in Cambridge while he attended Harvard and in Northampton, Massachusetts, while he taught at Smith. None of these towns, however, even remotely resembled Grafton, either in size or atmosphere.

It does not seem likely, however, that during his early association with Grafton, Hicks had his mind on social or cultural differences. He had begun to think seriously about communism in 1931, when the capitalist system seemed on the verge of collapse under the strain of the steadily worsening depression. In the autumn of that year, he and a handful of like-minded people formed a small group in Troy to study Marx's writings, and, about the same time, his contact with the New York office of the New Masses began. Within three years, he was named book review editor of that publication and was already becoming established as perhaps the country's most promising Marxist critic and as the most visible spokesperson for the thirties' prole-

5. Granville Hicks, Small Town (New York: Macmillan, 1946), 3–4. All further references to Small Town (abbreviated ST) and to the Journal (abbreviated J and dated) appear in the text.
tarian movement in literature. In the winter of 1934–35 he took the next logical step by joining a Communist unit in New York City.

As far as the townspeople were concerned, this slightly built, bespectacled man with his New England accent and scholarly air must have seemed little different from the other summer people who came and went at the changing of the seasons. Even though, from 1935 on, Stephanie was attending the one-room schoolhouse and, as a consequence, the Hickses were now members of the P.T.A., they were still considered outsiders. At the time, it seemed to Hicks that his visibility as a prominent radical was not a problem to the townspeople. It made him, he felt, something of an eccentric—a rather harmless one—for being a Communist was only a little worse than being a Democrat in that heavily Republican town. Looking back on
that period, however, he concluded that the problem had been more serious than he had realized and that the local gossip had been considerable.

In 1939 when Hicks broke with the Communist party, his relationship with the town changed. It was then that he began to involve himself deeply in Grafton life, and the town, as a consequence, took him more seriously. Hostility toward the Hickses soon developed, and pro- and anti-Hicks factions formed. Hicks was putting his heart, his time, and his energy into town affairs, but acceptance was slow in coming and perhaps in the deepest sense never came. Still, he attributed his difficulties not to his being a radical, though that certainly was a factor in this conservative area, but to his being an intellectual—a word Hicks disliked but defined as “a person who is temperamentally, as well as professionally, concerned with ideas”. (ST, p. 19n)

The various writings of Hicks during the 1940s—particularly his journals, now housed with his other papers in the George Arents Research Library at Syracuse University—give a detailed and occasionally vivid account of an intellectual’s efforts to become part of a small community and of the new insights that emerged from his experiences. To have a sense of belonging to a group had always been of great importance to him. This desire had been satisfied as a youth by church groups, during the thirties by the Communist party, and later by his participation in the affairs of Grafton.

The problem of putting down roots was complicated by the need to earn a living by writing and his duties as a manuscript reader for the Macmillan Publishing Company, based in New York City. There was plainly no way in which he could cut himself off completely from urban life nor would he have wanted to do so. Plays, concerts, visits to friends and other writers were intellectually revitalizing. Nevertheless, with extremely rare exceptions, he was happy to return to Grafton.

The exceptions did occur, of course. “The great thing about being in New York”, he wrote after one of his many trips, “is seeing people who are in the know.” (J, 10.15.43) There was Richard Rovere, his friend and protégé who was already making a reputation in New York literary circles; Malcolm Cowley, on the staff of The New Republic; Edith Walton, a magazine editor who was becoming known as a radio panelist. His close friends Henry and Zoe Christman, both deeply
involved with writing and publishing, gave him news of the publishing world. Hicks enjoyed taking their anecdotes and their ideas from one to another, and he enjoyed telling them Grafton stories in return. “People seem to like to hear them”, he commented. “In fact, people seem glad to see me, and that makes me feel good.” (J, 10.15.43) The bonds were strong, and once, after a week-long visit, he noted: “All the time I was gone I had an unusual feeling that I was fed up with Grafton, and this lasted for a day or two after my return, though it is waning now.” (J, 5.22.44)

During the years between 1939 and 1942, Hicks did manage to begin to establish himself more firmly in the community and, in addition, to write two novels, articles for the Saturday Review of Literature and The New Republic, and to fulfill various speaking engagements. One of these novels, Only One Storm, had as its locale a small town remarkably like Grafton. Since some of the townspeople upon reading it felt they recognized unflattering portraits of themselves, its publication added to Hicks’s difficulties. Coming home from the general store one day, Dorothy brought the news that the proprietor, a member of the pro-Hicks faction who had heard people criticizing Only One Storm, took it upon himself to ask if they had read it. Often they hadn’t. Whereupon he would say, “Well, shut up then!” (J, 8.18.42)

Somewhat later, another Grafton friend surprised Hicks by saying that he had not only read Only One Storm but liked it. He added, however, “But for Christ’s sake, you might write another one and I wouldn’t like it worth a damn. What God damn difference does it make whether I like your book or not? I might like all the books a guy ever wrote and still think he was a horse’s ass.” (J, 8.18.42) This was the kind of remark that convinced Hicks that his neighbors had “a better grasp of human realities” than some intellectuals. “The tradition of rural shrewdness is not a myth”, Hicks once wrote. (ST, p. 110)

If a time when Hicks began to feel a recognized, accepted member of the Grafton community could be set, it would probably be shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor, when “The Defense of Grafton”, as he termed it in his journal, began. (J, 1.15.42) Early in 1942 he wrote a friend: “Dottie and I are devoting practically all our time to defending Grafton. We realize that this is probably not a major objective of either the Nazis or the Japs, but it’s our job, and by God
we’re going to do it. She is co-chairman of the Grafton Defense Council, and I am chief air raid warden.”

The establishment of the Grafton Defense Council had not been accomplished without a hitch. Though more than a hundred attended the organizing meeting—a surprising turnout for Grafton—they were an apathetic lot. It was obvious to the Hickses from the start that the Republican boss took for granted his ability to commandeer the necessary votes to elect his choice for chairman and co-chairman of civil defense. The man he selected to endorse for chairman was a newcomer to the town, a professor teaching at Russell Sage College in Troy and someone the politician was sure he could

control. Dorothy Hicks was elected co-chairman because of her secretarial abilities and her reputation for working hard.

When it came to the selection of a chief of the auxiliary police, however, the Hickses decided to put up a fight. Aided by the professor who had been elected chairman, they approached the man they thought would make the best candidate. He balked at first, convinced that politicians always got their way anyhow, but finally agreed to make the run. After a great deal of maneuvering, he was at last appointed with a guarantee of a free hand. Temporarily, at least, the local politicians had been defeated.

Hicks was never blind to the fact that striking a blow for democracy in Grafton was of small international significance. Nevertheless, mindful of the threat posed by both communism and fascism worldwide, he felt that an attempt to preserve and improve democratic government on the local level was at least a start—and a crucial one. At a P.T.A. meeting, for example, an attempt had been made to ban books that certain super-patriotic organizations had branded as subversive. The discussion that followed succeeded in airing the dangers of blindly following leaders who talked smoothly. This could, Hicks felt, in a small but important way serve as an object lesson.

Organizing civil defense was time-consuming, but Hicks felt it was worthwhile. As he became more deeply involved in the life of the community, however, other needs became glaringly apparent to him. The town had no library, no fire department, and the schools throughout the district were suffering from incompetent teachers and a lack of money. Free now of the heavy demands of Communist party activities, he began to explore the many areas in need of improvement and to take action.

The man who once thought he could change the world now set out to change Grafton. As he would write in his 1954 account of his experiences with communism, Where We Came Out:

The more you work with people, the more you realize that they are unpredictable. A few are pretty bad most of the time and a few are pretty good most of the time, but most people are always turning out to be a great deal worse and a great deal better than you expect them to be. There is so much inefficiency and irresponsibility, so much malice, so much la-
iness, that you don’t see how anything can possibly be accomplished, and yet somehow, in spite of everything, things get done. One of the old standbys does a heroic job; somebody you hadn’t counted on gives a boost; waning enthusiasm suddenly revives—and you have your new school building or your fire truck or whatever it is you want.  

In his account of this period Hicks made it clear that his efforts were “not received with humble gratitude as the favors of superior beings”, nor were they performed “with Olympian detachment”. (ST, p. 56) Nearly every gain was won after a hard fight—a fight based on firm conviction which often generated anger on both sides. As one of his local friends bluntly put it, “Nobody has done more for this town than the Hickses, and look at the shit they have to take.” (J, 3.13.44) When Hicks was not notified of a meeting at which action was to be taken of which he disapproved, he wrote: “The lines have been drawn, and the Hickses are the issue.” He commented to a fellow Graftonite, “I’m not criticizing the town board for what they did, but I am sore at the way they did it. They’re a bunch of yellow-bellied fools.” He was told, “You haven’t any idea how they talk behind your back.” (J, 8.14.43)

Hicks did hear a great deal of the talk indirectly. When, thanks to the Hickses, agitation began for the establishment of a free library in Grafton, it was reported to him that one of the locals, very drunk, had come into the general store one night and said, “What’s all this about building a library so Hicks can store his old books? He can put ’em in my bam if he wants to get rid of ’em.” (J, 8.14.43)

As with most rumors, this one was based on a certain amount of fact. In 1943, the year Granville Hicks’s father died, his mother sought to establish a library as a memorial to him, and the family planned to get the library started with books in their possession. The P.T.A. had approved the idea and passed the matter on to the town board, where it died. It was not until two years later, when the project was turned over to the Community League, that action was taken, a librarian hired, and volunteers recruited. The number of books donated and the amount of interest the opening of the library generated surprised Hicks. He was also amused, as well as annoyed, by some

of the remarks passed on to him at the time. "Hicks is always thinking of ways of spending money", one of the anti-Hicks faction had said. "Look at the library." (J, 8.13.45) A friend summed the situation up this way: "I think you're a chump. You're the best educated and the smartest man in town, and you're doing more for the town than anyone else, and everybody hates your guts." (J, 8.11.45) Hicks, however, could tolerate the harsh words, for one of his goals had been reached—the town now had a library—and from its inception he and Dorothy were among the most enthusiastic and loyal volunteers for library duty.

Hicks had encountered gossip before he moved to Grafton, and it had always annoyed him. But now he was beginning to feel that interest in, and discussion of, his affairs might be preferable to the chilly impersonality of the big city. Though the gossip was often uncharitable, at least it was not indifferent. With it went something he had come to value highly: neighborliness. From the first, he had been aware of his dependency upon his closest neighbor. Mr. Agan, sixty years old when Hicks bought the house, had been born in it, was able and willing to do almost any work necessary to improve it, and all his life took a proprietary interest in it and its occupants. "Neighborliness", Hicks decided, was "the small town's transcendent virtue". (ST, p. 160) Within the older generation, and even among the younger members of the community, it was a strict code that one would not readily turn aside any request made by a neighbor in trouble.

If neighborliness was Grafton's "transcendent" virtue, prejudice, Hicks quickly found out, was its basest imperfection. Perhaps it is easier to detect racial prejudice in a small town. Certainly he was well aware of its depth in Grafton, listing incident after incident of it in his journals. When, in the mid-forties, he was giving some of his time to an interracial committee in Troy, it did not go unnoticed. Citing a newspaper item, one of the townspeople commented: "Did you see the picture of Hicks speaking to the niggers? He's a menace to the country." (J, 2.22.44)

Intolerance was not limited to blacks. It extended to Jews, homosexuals, and Catholics, and the town at one time could even boast a branch of the KKK. That prominent figures in the community had been members of it seemed to be taken for granted. When Hicks questioned one of them, no longer a member, he said that he had joined it as he would any "fraternal organization". The branch was
never against the Jews, he said, and went on to explain that the Klan was 100% American and the reason they were anti-Catholic was that Catholics were “under the domination of a foreign power”. The reason the Klan was against the Negro, he said, was that they believed in white supremacy. “Would you want your daughter to marry a Negro?” he asked. Hicks, showing a restraint he would have found difficult a few years before, said that he wouldn’t mind except that in society as it was then constituted they might be unhappy. He was pleased to see that his neighbor accepted that as a reasonable reply. (J, 8.4.44)

Perhaps the KKK branch had not been overtly against Jews, as Hicks’s informant had maintained; nevertheless, anti-Semitism was in the air. One woman informed Dorothy Hicks that Jews were all right if they kept their place. She was sure, she added, that when the boys came home from the war they would “clean things up”, and she cited the election of Lehman as governor of the state as “the greatest mistake the people of New York ever made”. (J, 7.14.43)

Of the two general stores in Grafton, one was owned by Sam Salkin, commonly referred to as “the Jew”. Salkin knew this and accepted his status as an outsider. “I can talk to you”, he said to Hicks once, “because you and me—we’re different, you might say, from the rest of the people in town.” (J, 10.18.43)

Homosexuals were not spared. Referring to the sexual preference of one of the town’s leading citizens, a neighbor said: “I hate those guys.” He told Hicks, with obvious admiration, about a man he had worked with who searched out homosexuals, got them into a secluded spot, and then “beat hell out of them”. When Hicks pointed out that beating was not the answer, he was informed that the man was not interested in reform, “he just liked to paste guys like that. It was a hobby with him.” (J, 9.11.42)

As an intellectual, and a liberal one at that, Hicks was understandably distressed by the bigotry he found as well as by what often seemed absence of vision and resistance to change. But, as he saw it, at least in the small town the problems were more easily defined and the possibility of correcting them greater than in large, amorphous

8. Hicks makes one notation that is an example of prejudice against Jews in reverse. Sam Salkin, the storekeeper, once asked Hicks if Earl Browder, head of the Communist party, were Jewish, and, when he got a negative answer, said: “How did he get to be so smart?” (J, 11.14.44)
urban centers with their faceless masses. On a radio program called *Town Meeting of the Air*, popular in the mid-forties, he debated the advantages of small-town life with Charles Jackson, author of *The Lost Weekend*, who defended living in New York City. "The problems of the big cities", Hicks said, "can be solved only by specialists and the solutions can be put into operation only by mass propaganda. The small town's problems can be solved by people like you and me if we are willing to make the effort."

The importance of this belief to Hicks can be traced in his 1952 novel, *There Was a Man in Our Town*, when the central character, Hicks's persona, says of a friend:

Ellery is seeking a faith. . . . He's betting that he, with his good will and his knowledge, can make a recognizable difference in the life of this particular town. Because if he can, you see, it proves to him that society is amenable to intelligent human control, even if he and his blessed sociologists haven't quite got the hang of it. 10

This sense of the significance of individual action was new and important to Hicks, and it was by no means the only fresh dimension to his outlook that he acquired, for Grafton altered his “scale of values” in numerous ways. He had, he knew, developed admiration for certain qualities that previously he had underestimated: physical strength, physical courage, manual dexterity, and most of all intelligence. “I place a higher estimate on sheer intelligence than ever before in my life”, he wrote. “Knowledge—to say nothing of erudition or sophistication—seems less important, but intelligence seems more so.” (ST, p. 154)

Grafton, then, had taught Hicks the value of non-intellectual attributes. It seems also to have developed in him a deep love of nature. One January morning he wrote in his journal:

When I went for the water, the stars were out—Sirius in the west, Arcturus almost overhead. . . . When I came home the mountains were sharp, and little clouds were just turning pink. I had had my second cup of coffee and was up in the study before the sun rose, and by then there was no cloud anywhere. . . . The snow glistens, and the shadows are blue. (J, 1.6.43)

As he said in his debate with Jackson, he liked the “physical setting” of his life and, when in New York City, wondered how people lived “without quietness and without clean, fresh air”. 11

It is altogether possible, however, that Hicks would have been less content to remain in Grafton if New York City had not been so readily accessible to him by train from Albany. He understood that his life could not be lived fully in what he called “small town terms”, for the

11. “Would You Rather Live in a Small Town or a Big City?”, 4.
arts flourished more prolifically in the big city. Nevertheless, as he well realized, the intellectual who was locked into the small town atmosphere need not be deprived of "the world of the mind". He could listen to the radio (and, later, watch television), read the best periodicals, listen to good recordings, and read as many worthwhile books as he wished. (ST, p. 174)

Hicks would have admitted that any final judgment of the values of small-town living must be based on the needs of the particular individual. His own needs were not met by the impersonal life of the city. As he put it to Charles Jackson, he liked to be able to know as "human beings" the people with whom he dealt. "Our grocer isn't just a grocer", he said. "He's also the collector of the school district, of which I am trustee. Our road superintendent isn't just a man who keeps the roads in shape. He's also a member of the fire company, as I am, and his wife is our librarian." 12

In the mid-forties, Hicks wrote: "I believe that small town life has values that should be preserved"; significantly, he added "if they possibly can be." (ST, p. 207) Already he was well aware that the existence of the small town was threatened and its extinction probably inevitable. Between 1941 and 1945 a large proportion of the men and women in Grafton were working in war-related industries in Troy, Albany, and even Schenectady. After the war, many of them continued to work in the nearby cities; and, also, with the shortage of housing, city people were moving to Grafton. A new kind of small town was emerging—the suburb.

When, a few years later, Hicks wrote an article dealing with the rise of the new small-town community, he did not minimize the advantages that had come to Grafton with its changing character: economic prosperity and the sociological and psychological effects that it brought with it. Previously he could drive along the back roads in Grafton and see houses badly in need of paint and repairs, junk-filled yards, and children who looked half-starved and were shabbily dressed; now he saw television aerials on almost every roof, painted houses, neat yards, healthy-looking, clean children, and he knew the houses would be equipped with refrigerators and washing machines. 13

The psychological effect of this new prosperity could be witnessed

12. Ibid., 5.
in town and school meetings and at the polls. "I used to be distressed by the hangdog faces I saw, especially on the women", he wrote. "Now these same women hold their heads up, and when they have something to say, they say it." At the same time, he saw what was lost. Except for fresh air, more space, woods in which to take long quiet walks, and land upon which to plant a garden and grow vegetables, living in Grafton was becoming very much like living in any of the cities in the Albany metropolitan area.

What remained of rural delights was enough, apparently, for Hicks still felt that living in a small community had much to be said for it. "At least we are a long way from urban impersonality and anonymity", he wrote. The newcomer to Grafton, thanks in large measure to the efforts of Hicks and his wife, would find it possible to establish personal relationships in the flourishing P.T.A., the volunteer fire department, the Citizens' Council, and the Community League.

Early in September 1957, looking back over the previous year, Hicks called it one of "almost complete withdrawal from town affairs", and his feelings about it "completely mixed". (J, 9.9.57) His reaction was both understandable and typical. Years earlier, when he had been asked to be district chairman of the national war fund drive, he had been extremely pleased even though he had realized how great a demand it would make upon his time. His reaction, he felt then, emphasized his "dual personality". He wrote in his journal: "On the one hand, I want to be doing things, want to have things happening. On the other hand, I want to have time to read, listen to music, and work outdoors." (J, 10.30.43) At any rate, for a variety of reasons—health and pressure of work among them—his weekly stint in the library was now his main community activity.

In his autobiography, Part of the Truth, which appeared in 1965, Hicks summarized his feelings at the time of his decision to devote less time to Grafton. "Thus ended fifteen years of intensive community effort", he wrote. "Though less had been accomplished than I had dreamed of, the accomplishments were not to be laughed off." Neither was what Grafton had accomplished for him. The knowledge gained about small-town life had formed the basis for three novels: Only One Storm, Behold Trouble, and There Was a Man in Our Town; and for his non-fiction Small Town. Hicks felt, too, that the

15. Ibid., 235.
16. Part of the Truth, 283.
experience had helped him to moderate a strain of intolerance, with which, incidentally, he states he had been born. 17 When one examines his thirties' reviews, that intolerance is not hard to find. Reviewing the novelist Floyd Dell’s autobiography, Homecoming, for The Daily Worker, Hicks said: “There is one thing about it: Dell neither takes a superior attitude towards the quasi-liberalism of his past, as some of his contemporaries do, nor attempts to set forth his particular brand of treachery as the latest, simon-pure brand of Marxism, as other contemporaries have done.” And Hicks concludes: “There is no place and no excuse for Floyd Dells in the revolutionary movement today. The revolution has need of intellectuals but not of moon-calves”—a reference to Dell’s 1920 novel Moon-Calf. 18

This unequivocal, dogmatic manner disappears in the later Hicks reviews. His 1967 review of The Lost Revolutionary: A Biography of John Reed by Richard O’Connor and Dale Walker—a book decidedly inferior to Hicks’s own biography of Reed (1936)—is indicative of the change. “When I picked up the book,” Hicks wrote, “I was afraid it might be the kind of slapdash biography that could easily have been knocked together by a couple of bright journalists; but O’Connor and Walker have done a competent job of research. They have made good use of Reed’s own books and of the large collection of Reed material at Harvard, and they have consulted many books by and about Reed’s contemporaries.” Hicks did point out, however, that the authors made “a good deal of Jack’s playboy years, telling some stories whose authenticity is open to question” and showed little interest in Reed as a poet and a revolutionary, or even in poetry or revolution per se. 19 Still, he would not have been so kind thirty years before. It is, of course, difficult to say to what extent this mellowing was due to Grafton, for his abandonment of the Communist party and his age no doubt played a role.

When Part of the Truth appeared, the literary critic Malcolm Cowley, who had known Hicks for many years, reviewed it for The New York Times Book Review. Speaking of the various courses that ex-Communists had taken, Cowley wrote: “Hicks chose a more reasonable and moderate course than almost any of these. He retired from

17. Ibid., 301.
the national scene, but not—being a ‘critical liberal’, in his own phrase—from all political activity.” Cowley notes that Hicks says in one of his other books: “I decided to be active where I could test what I was doing by observable results—specifically in the small town in which I lived.” It was due in large part to Hicks, Cowley points out, that Grafton now had a firehouse, a library, and a modern school accessible to its children. “It also seems to have developed more local pride and a stronger sense of community, than is possessed by most of the surrounding villages”, Cowley noted. But, he argued, Grafton could not be considered “a beacon light for the nation”, and he could not help but regret that “for twenty years Hicks’s talent for leadership, his doggedness, and his social conscience were chiefly confined to that narrow field”. 20

Cowley’s regrets were shared by many of Hicks’s friends, but they were not shared by Hicks. Though Grafton had been unknown to him until he was thirty-one years old, it became what his friend, the novelist Wright Morris, called “the home place” for him, for his parents, and for his friends. The house, as Hicks correctly states, was not impressive either outside or in, but, after more than thirty years, he could still describe it warmly. “If you walk into the field on a summer day and look back at the house,” he wrote, “with lawn all around and with the gardens full of bloom, it is a handsome sight. It is handsome in the autumn, too, with the maples flashing on two sides. And for that matter it makes a pretty picture in the snow.” 21 When, because of teaching assignments, he and Dorothy had occasion to be away from home for four or five months at a time, they were homesick and delighted to receive word of town events. Upon their happy return, they found Grafton “beautiful”. 22

“I can’t easily imagine life anywhere else”, Hicks writes at the conclusion of his autobiography. “Sitting in my study, with my books around me, with my filing cabinets close at hand, looking out on lawn and garden and fields and woods, I know that this is where I belong.” 23

21. Part of the Truth, 305.
22. Ibid., 289.
23. Ibid., 306.
In observance of the centennial of the birth of Ezra Pound, the George Arents Research Library has prepared an exhibit of Pound letters and rare first editions to be on display in the Spector Room from the end of October 1985 through January 1986.

The most important and influential leader of the modern revolution in poetry and the arts, Ezra Pound was born in Hailey, Idaho, on 30 October 1885. His long career as a poet and critic began in 1908 with the appearance of his first volumes of poetry in Venice and London. The years that followed saw his involvement in such pioneering modernist movements as Imagism and Vorticism. His many publications included creative translations of Provençal, Chinese, Anglo-Saxon, Japanese, and classical poetry; numerous volumes of original poetry and criticism; and, as the culmination of his lifework, the successive volumes of his "forty-year epic", *The Cantos*, appropriately still in process at the time of his death in Venice in 1972 at the age of eighty-seven.

The George Arents Research Library is fortunate to have a strong and growing collection of Pound’s correspondence and publications. The letters in the Ezra Pound Collection include sixty-six items, mostly by Pound, with a few, from the Saint Elizabeth’s years, by or in collaboration with Dorothy Pound, addressed to editors, friends, and other poets. Especially rich in its holdings of early titles, the book collection includes more than seventy first editions of unusual literary and bibliographical interest. Among these are such rare titles as the author’s second published work, *A Quinzaine for This Yule* (1908), *Personae* (1909), *Cathay* (1915), Hugh Selwyn Mauberley (1920), a highly rare author’s proof copy of *A Draft of XVI. Cantos* (1925), and *A Draft of the Cantos 17–21* (1928).

Items exhibited include the following:

113
Then set we to breakers, forth on the godly sea, and
Bore sheep aboard her, and our bodies also
Heavy with weeping, and winds from sternward
Bore us out onward with bellying canvas,
Circe's this craft, the trim-coiled goddess.
Then sat we amidships, wind-jamming the tiller,
Thus with stretched sail, we went over sea till day's end.
Sun to his slumber, shadows o'er all the ocean,
Came we then to the bounds of deepest water,
To the Kimmerian lands, and peopled cities
Covered with close-webbed mist, unpierced ever
With glitter of sun-rays;
Nor with stars stretched, nor looking back from heaven,
Swardest night stretched over wretched men there.
The ocean flowing backward, came we then to the place
Aforesaid by Circe.
Here did they rites, Perimedes and Eurylochus,
And drawing sword from my hip
I dug the ell-square pitkin;
Poured we libations unto each the dead,
First mead and then sweet wine, water mixed with white flour.
Then prayed I many a prayer to the sickly death's-heads;
As set in Ithaca, sterile bulls of the best
For sacrifice, heaping the pyre with goods,
A sheep to Tiresias only, black and a bell-sheep.
Dark blood flowed in the fosse,
Souls out of Erebos, cadaverous dead, of brides
Of youths and of the old who had borne much;
Souls stained with recent tears, girls tender,

"The First Canto" from A Draft of XVI. Cantos of Ezra Pound (Paris: Three Mountains Press, 1925). The initial, by Henry Strater, and the title are in red; the photograph has been reduced from folio size.
1. Autograph letter to “Mr. Centrobus”, from 10 Church Walk, Kensing- ton, [1909]. One of Pound’s early London letters giving his idea of the nature of proper style.


4. Cathay: Translations by Ezra Pound, for the Most Part from the Chinese of Rihaku, from the Notes of the Late Ernest Fenollosa, and the Decipherings of the Professors Mori and Ariga. London: Elkin Mathews, 1915. 31 pp. The imagistic translations of Chinese poetry, based on Ernest Fenollosa’s notebooks, that inspired T. S. Eliot to describe Pound as the “inventor of Chinese poetry for our time”.

5. Gaudier-Brzeska: A Memoir by Ezra Pound, Including the Published Writings of the Sculptor, and a Selection from His Letters, with Thirty-eight Illustrations. London: John Lane, 1916. 168 pp. A memoir of Pound’s friend and fellow Vorticist, the revolutionary young sculptor killed in the Great War.


9. Typed letter to Richard Johns, from Rapallo, 3 November 1930. Reference to his close friend and fellow poet, William Carlos Williams, as a “bloomin’ dago” and to his involvement with the literary magazines The Dial and Hound and Horn.


12. Typed letter to Hayden Carruth, from St. Elizabeth’s Hospital, 14 November [1956].

of the final group of cantos to be published: "I have tried to write Paradise...."

Walter E. Sutton, Professor of English
Mark F. Weimer, Rare Book Librarian

ANOTHER RUDYARD KIPLING GIFT

Over the last few decades Chancellor Emeritus William P. Tolley has privately been acquiring Rudyard Kipling materials and giving them to the George Arents Research Library. To this eminent collection, which already comprised more than 500 letters, a dozen manuscripts, photographs, and early Kipling drawings, Dr. Tolley recently added further items of great interest to the researching scholar. This latest gift of some 55 letters, autograph notes on world politics, and memorabilia is remarkable particularly for its inclusion of an extensive correspondence with Lady Milner, who was the wife of Viscount Alfred Milner, Governor of Cape Colony during the reconstruction years after the Boer War, and who was herself the friend and confidante of Kipling for many years.

Dr. Tolley’s love of books and scholarship, his foresight, and his extraordinary generosity have made the Kipling Collection at Syracuse University internationally outstanding.

PROGRAM FOR 1985–86

The Syracuse University Library Associates program for the academic year 1985–86 is as follows:

On October 24, 1985    David J. Holmes, rare book dealer, spoke on “Reconstructing Hardy’s Library”
On November 21, 1985  George Arents Research Library Tour
On February 27, 1986  Rudolf Bultmann Symposium
In Spring 1986        Don F. Cortese will conduct a tour through the print and papermaking areas of the Experimental Studios
On April 18, 1986     Albert Schweitzer Lecture
Three sketches of Rudyard Kipling by Sir George Frampton, drawn on the back of a seating plan for the annual dinner of the Royal Academy of Arts, London, 30 April 1904.
IN MEMORIAM

On 18 September 1985 J. LEONARD GORMAN, Editor Emeritus of the Post-Standard, died at his home. Members of Library Associates will remember him especially from his annual presentation of the Post-Standard Award for Distinguished Service to the University Libraries. A lover of language and of books, Mr. Gorman had established this award in 1955 with the encouragement of Chancellor William P. Tolley. In 1979 Chancellor Melvin Eggers surprised him with “A Special Award for Exceptional Services to Syracuse University and Its Libraries”.

Through his editorials, described as “carefully prepared and hard-hitting”, as well as through his quietly effective participation in many local organizations—among these, the Board of the Syracuse and Onondaga County Public Libraries—he has played a vital role in our community.
THE SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY ASSOCIATES, founded in 1953, is a society whose efforts are devoted to the enrichment of the special collections of the Syracuse University Libraries. The Associates' interests lie in strengthening these collections through the acquisition of unusual books and manuscripts, items which are rare and often of such value that the Libraries 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 Libraries' facilities and resources, as well as invitations to exhibitions, Associates-sponsored lectures, and special events of the University Libraries. In addition, members will receive not only copies of all our incidental publications, historical tape recordings, and typographic keepsakes, but also, semiannually, a copy of the *Syracuse University Library Associates Courier*, which contains articles related to unusual and interesting aspects of the Libraries' holdings and, in particular, to the holdings of the George Arents Research Library for Special Collections.

SUGGESTED MEMBERSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS are as follows: full membership, $30; introductory membership, $20; student and senior citizen membership, $10. Checks made payable to Syracuse University Library Associates should be sent to the Secretary, 600 Bird Library, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY 13244-2010. Telephone (315) 423-2585.

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