Dorothy Thompson: Withstanding the Storm
By Michael J. Kirkhorn, Associate Professor of Journalism,
New York University

Dear Kit, Dear Skinny: The Letters of Erskine Caldwell
and Margaret Bourke-White
By William L. Howard, Assistant Professor of English,
Chicago State University

Ted Key, Creator of "Hazel"
By George L. Beiswinger, author and free-lance writer,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Five Renaissance Chronicles in Leopold von Ranke’s Library
By Raymond Paul Schrodt, Ambrose Swasey Library,
Colgate Rochester Divinity School

The Punctator’s World: A Discursion
By Gwen G. Robinson, Editor, Syracuse University
Library Associates Courier

News of the Syracuse University Library and the
Library Associates
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY ASSOCIATES COURIER contains articles relating to the holdings of the Syracuse University Library, most especially the George Arents Research Library for Special Collections, and to the interests of the Library Associates membership.

Authors are invited to submit their manuscripts to Mrs. Gwen G. Robinson, Editor of the Courier, 600 Bird Library, Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York 13244-2010.

Published Spring and Fall
Yearly subscription: Thirty dollars
Single numbers: Fifteen dollars

EDITOR
Gwen G. Robinson

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Edward Lyon

ON THE COVER: Dorothy Thompson, as portrayed by the American sculptor Jo Davidson (1883–1952). This bronze bust, given by Dorothy Thompson to Syracuse University, stands in the reading room of the George Arents Research Library. (Photo: Steve Sartori)

ISSN 0011-0418
Copyright 1988 by Syracuse University Library Associates
Dorothy Thompson: Withstanding the Storm

BY MICHAEL J. KIRKHORN

The "unremitting terror" of totalitarianism was Dorothy Thompson's nightmare. She witnessed the atrocities of Nazism, and later, after the Second World War, the cruelty of Soviet communism. The violent will to power that she described for her millions of readers was for her the nemesis of all hope and goodness. It could not be appeased, it could not be satisfied; it had to be resisted. Her profound recognition of that single necessity, and her frustration with the complacency with which this great threat was met at home drew her, one of the great political journalists of the century, into misjudgments that sometimes jeopardized her reputation.

Like all other professions, journalism depends on the daily proficiency of those who practise it. Such proficiency abounds in American journalism, but it is rare to find journalists who are in every way competent at their business and at the same time see with some consistency the meaning of the unfolding events they witness. In this combination lay Dorothy Thompson's surpassing professional endowment: she possessed both the aptitude and the durable outlook that produce a great journalistic career.

She had the vocation of journalism and a vision beyond vocation. She was an upstart and a pioneer, she was brainy and deeply intelligent, nervy and courageous, headstrong and wise, brash and knowing. She was an observer and a witness. If some of her judgments seem in retrospect to have been wrong—as she was wrong, probably, to try to be both an independent journalist and an anticommunist propagandist after the Second World War—these were the errors of a passionate nature that was not broken by the horrible events of the 1930s and 1940s.

Journalism always has been a refuge for waywardness and heterodoxy, but only to a point. The circumstances of journalism, the relentless daily deadlines, the unshakable routines, the rituals, the
clannishness, all conspire to prevent the emergence of an adventurous and independent temperament such as Thompson's.

Journalism is an occupation governed by a creed of "objectivity" that provides both an opportunity and a restraint. It allows the observer, the reporter, to work freely and independently, but requires that observer and observed be firmly separated. There is nothing unusual here. Scientists, scholars, police officers, and business managers carry out their duties according to their own accepted views of objectivity. But journalism of the kind that Dorothy Thompson practised tends to put at risk the poise necessary for a cool assessment. The journalist who recognizes the danger of being engulfed by his convictions, but nevertheless retains hope and independence of judgment, is the observer that society needs. Thompson tried heroically throughout her career to maintain that professional identity. It was never easy. There were practical demands. Urgency, deadlines, fatigue, workload (Thompson said she wrote 250,000 words one year), travel, correspondence, personal obligations—the odds were stacked against the survival of a consistent, well-reasoned, and resolutely asserted outlook. Her success by these standards made Dorothy Thompson exceptional.

Born in 1894, the daughter of an itinerant Methodist clergyman, Dorothy Thompson graduated from Syracuse University in 1914—"cum laude only, because of those math and physics marks"!—and after working as a woman suffrage organizer, an advertising copy writer, and a social worker, she took her $175 in savings to London, determined to be a writer.

She sold some reports on the civil war in Ireland and used the fee to move to a hotel room on the Boulevard Raspail in Paris, where she "visited British and American newspaper offices and wangled feature assignments at space rates—$10 to $15 a column". Hearing about a general strike in Rome, she jumped on a train to cover it. She used the money from that job to get to Vienna and then to Budapest, where she interviewed the deposed King of Hungary, who had just failed in an attempt to regain his throne.

She recalled: "I consider the many scoops of those first two years

1. Dorothy Thompson to Mrs. C. B. Wade, 23 March 1951, Dorothy Thompson Papers, Syracuse University Library. The subsequent two autobiographic quotations come from this same letter.
in Europe as nine-tenths attributable to a run of luck, but they gave me a reputation ‘in the trade’ for a remarkable ‘nose for news’, and in 1922 I was offered a job as Vienna and Balkan correspondent of the Curtis press. For the first time since leaving home, I had a salary.” She was paid $50 a week to cover nine nations. That summer she became acting chief of the Philadelphia Ledger’s Berlin bureau (Curtis owned the Ledger). When her position was confirmed in 1924, she became the first woman ever to head an overseas bureau for an American newspaper. In 1922 she married the Hungarian writer Josef Bard. That marriage, the first of three, lasted until 1927.

During her years in Berlin, her reputation grew steadily. It must be mentioned, however, that she, like others, underrated the potential of Adolf Hitler. After an interview with him in 1931, she noted his “startling insignificance” and predicted that he would never rule Germany. It was not uncommon for journalists of the period to look closely at the rising dictators and decide that they could not possibly be worth all the fuss. Stalin and Franco were small in stature, and Hitler’s strutting and strident oratory seemed comic when compared with the solemn dignity and imperial grandeur of the fallen old regimes. As for Mussolini—depending on which newspaper you were reading—he was either the ruler who had brought efficiency to Italian life or a thug, but no titan. Measured against the fanaticism they inspired, the scope of their power, and the suffering they caused, these surrogate humans all seemed to be miniatures. Thompson was not the only correspondent to mistake their potency.
It did not take her long to readjust her earlier sentiments. To her credit, she provoked the Nazis so fearlessly that they finally expelled her from Germany. Back in New York, she made headlines in 1939 by laughing loudly and derisively at a rally of the German-American Bund in Manhattan. The rally, attended by 19,000 supporters of American Nazi leader Fritz Kuhn and protected from anti-Nazi demonstrators by 1,700 police, glorified Kuhn and denounced President Franklin Roosevelt. The uproar of the occasion attracted the attention of Dorothy Thompson as she drove uptown past Madison Square Garden. Using her press pass to get through police lines, she found a seat in the press section. Her response to the anti-Semitic oratory was a series of piercing guffaws. Tempers flared, and she departed under police escort.

In 1936 she began to write a three-times-a-week column for the New York Herald Tribune, a job that confirmed her importance as a political observer. In 1937 (the year of her separation from another vivid and troublesome companion, her second husband, the novelist
Sinclair Lewis) she undertook the writing of a monthly column for the *Ladies' Home Journal*, whose editors allowed her to depart from politics and write essays on whatever topic she pleased. Her magazine features, which she continued to write for twenty-four years, gave her access to such an enormous audience that by the late 1930s only Eleanor Roosevelt was a better-known American woman. The inventory of the Dorothy Thompson Papers in the Syracuse University Library lists more than 500 articles written about her.

She recognized that her *Ladies' Home Journal* articles reached an audience of limited experience, but she rejoiced in the personal tone of these articles, worked very hard at composing them, and never talked down to her readers. The manuscripts of these graciously conceived articles are in her papers at Syracuse. Reading them, one has the impression that they were intended to entertain and to fortify other women with the lessons Thompson herself had learned in her travels, her three marriages, her assessment of both the nobility and

Dorothy Thompson’s industry as a reporter earned her the admiration and affection of her colleagues (photo ca. 1940).
the treachery of the public figures she had observed. She exuberantly described her experiences as a gardener and as a resident of New York City, with all the perplexities and frustrations that metropolitan living inflicts on the ordinary daily routine. In her magazine columns, Thompson did not impose her authority. She was only herself, engaging her readers with wise and timely commentary.

A published collection of her magazine columns called *The Courage to Be Happy* (1957) was divided into five parts: Art and Artists, On Children, Elderly Reflections, On Public Affairs, and Observations of Everyday Life. Here was Dorothy Thompson in her tranquil moments; and, taken all together, the columns serve as the autobiography that she never wrote. They are true revelations of character, written conversationally as if for friends.

In one of those columns she overturns the sardonic prejudices of her beloved adversary Sinclair Lewis, who in his popular *Main Street* skewered the false heartiness and frowning morality of the midwestern small town. “How does today's Main Street differ from the one described in Sinclair Lewis's famous novel of 1920?” asked Thompson, who, at the height of her career, was addressing attentive audiences in small towns across the country. “I have spoken in towns of 5000 and upward,” she wrote, “always rejoicing when my schedule gave me a free day in which to meet people and look around”. She continued:

> And if there are any small towns without proportionately as many civilized, informed, public-spirited and wide-awake people as there are in the great cities, I haven't been in them. Their local civic consciousness, I think, is higher than that of the Big City populations. In the great cities people vote for reforms. In the little towns they undertake the reforms. And the old provincial tightness is disappearing.

On children, a knowing commentary:

> Probably the greatest injustice we do to children is our contemporary idealization of them. In the modern book if a child misbehaves or is 'socially maladjusted', it is all the fault of its parents or other adults. The child in this picture comes into the world pure as snow and the characteristics it subse-
quently develops merely reflect its environment. There is never the necessity to reform the child. What is needed is the reform of its parents, preferably with the aid of a professional psychiatrist. . . . All this leaves out of account the fact that healthy children are, among other things, little animals, who only slowly evolve (if they ever do) into civilized human beings, and that the process of evolving is painful to them, and to their caretakers as well, even under the best conditions. Children are not naturally 'good', according to any standards ever set by a civilized society. They are natural barbarians.

On tolerance:

But the word 'tolerance' does not suggest that everything is supportable and that any amount of deviation is allowable. It suggests that one's principles and standards should be tempered with patience, and with readiness to subject them to modification, through practical or intellectual tests. But it does not suggest that one should have no principles or standards. In the contemporary world, I find that for many people this is, however, exactly what they mean by tolerance: a vapid openness to the condoning of anything. Tolerance carried to this conclusion is anarchy.

And finally on the consolations and trials of old age:

But the luxury of such late efforts [useful work done in old age], as I contemplate them for myself, is that they are performed without external ambition, without desire for praise or fear of blame. One joy of old age is that in it we lose such ambitions—the ambition for applause, recognition, popularity; the fear of an endangered 'career'; the pain of the slight. . . . In old age we remember our own youth and try to help the young to realize the ambitions we have ourselves abandoned. And this brings a new, refreshing form of freedom.2

2. Dorothy Thompson, The Courage to Be Happy (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1957), 213, 67, 185, and 115 respectively. This book was published at the end of her twenty years of column-writing for the Ladies' Home Journal.
The peace after 1945 introduced a crisis for journalists as well as for everyone else. The agony of that harrowing post-war period, the regret that afflicted those who had fought with arms or words against the dictatorships, sprang from the realization that the dictators had not all been defeated. One remained—Stalin.

Contrary to popular belief, the wartime Stalin was not widely considered a friend of the United States. The Soviet Union had been an ally against Germany; but American correspondents in Moscow had decided in the early 1930s, observing the ruthless destruction of independent peasants who opposed collective farming and later Stalin's infamous purge trials, that the Soviet leader was a monster equal to Hitler. That judgment did not change during the Second World War. The appellation "Uncle Joe" dripped irony.

Thompson had equated the dictatorships of Hitler and Stalin before the Second World War began. After the war was over she continued to denounce dictatorship in her crusade against communism. The Nazi-Soviet nonaggression pact of 1939 had signalled to most perceptive journalists that it was pointless to make moral distinctions between the two regimes. Thompson undoubtedly agreed with her friend, Max Ascoli, the magazine editor, who wrote her in 1939:

The Soviet Nazi Pact will be the ruin of both. They have thrown away the ideological mask, and show now the ugly face of cynical tyrannical nationalism. Hitler has underestimated human nature. He did not foresee the reaction of the man in the street, not only in London, but everywhere. He (and Stalin) did not realize that there are limits to sentimental allegiance, party discipline, and human idiocy.3

But when the war was over, and the violence had subsided to localized civil and anti-colonial outbursts, then relief was expected—a reward for sacrifice for suffering. But that expectation was thwarted by an ungrateful, dark-minded Stalin, and so betrayal became the spirit of the immediate post-war years. American journalists, continuing their crusade against dictatorship, talked privately and even speculated publicly about the possibility of war against the Soviet

3. Max Ascoli to Dorothy Thompson, 25 August 1939, Dorothy Thompson Papers.
Union. In a long, undated, unpublished column from this period, Thompson expressed a bitterness typical of the time. Because the article is so very nearly a précis of Western resentment against the Soviets, it deserves some attention.

Thompson wrote that the "swiftly growing reaction against Russia" could be explained in terms of the perceived betrayal of "American faith and hope during the war". Nobody had mistaken the Soviet Union for a democracy, she continued. President Roosevelt had said it was "run by a dictatorship as absolute as any other dictatorship in the world". But then, the suppression of liberty is not unusual in the aftermath of revolution. American "faith and hope" had been directed to the possibility that the "self-abnegating [wartime] effort of the Russian people would convince Russia's leaders of their democratic trustworthiness, and lead to the abandonment of the Gestapo terrorism of the NKVD".

"It was also our hope, and faith that the utter fidelity with which both Britain and America supported the Soviet Union throughout the war would end any justified or unjustified Russian distrust." Americans were willing to "forgive and forget" the Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939, which "had actually given the Hitlerites the green light to a world war".

The West experienced moments of doubt, Thompson wrote, in which the outcome of communist belief and behavior was questioned: "Can communist cultism, organized like a medieval secret order, with a priesthood, a police and an inquisition, reform itself into a modern, liberal, democratic movement?" Why, during the war, did communist propagandists throughout the world demand an immediate "second front", an attack on heavily fortified Western Europe by the United States and Great Britain? "Did these obedient claques care nothing for the lives of American boys? Were they listening to any voices but the voice of Stalin?"

"Yet, we said: No", Thompson continued. "We shall prove our confidence, trust and trustworthiness. We shall hold faith that it will not be betrayed. Loyalty, we said, begets loyalty." But as Germany collapsed, the Soviet Union began "reversing every war-time pledge and policy. And not only was the quarter of a century of communist despotism to be fastened again upon the necks of the long suffering, heroically-enduring, eternally-hoping, eternally-serving Russian people—but naked and unashamed it was seeking new people to sub- ject."
“Thus,” she concluded, “we are forced, however reluctantly, again to review developments since the war, and because of these to revise a previous judgment. As the faith and hope were sincere, so is the revised judgment.”

This article probably was written in 1946, and the outlook that produced its judgments did not change appreciably in the ensuing years. A letter to Marc C. de Conti in 1951 expressed her fear of a “German-Slavic world empire” and criticized the United States’ post-war German policy, which she said, “has been greatly colored by Jewish revengism”. The evidence from Eastern Europe, she wrote, “shows the Russians planning for war, and soon”.

To the extent that the article and the letter sound vaguely prescriptive, as though exhorting a change of attitude, they are characteristic of the tendency of conservative American political journalism in the early Cold War period to warn Americans against the possibility of friendship with the Soviet Union. But there is no question that Dorothy Thompson, a student of European affairs since the 1920s, an omnivorous reader of European history, held these views with great conviction.

Her papers in the Syracuse University Library offer ample proof that Dorothy Thompson was speaking her convictions. First, there is the grimness that permeated her judgments. She was not pessimistic by nature, though she might have been. Later in life she married the artist Maxim Kopf, but though the partnership was happy, she never quite recovered from the failure of her marriage to Sinclair Lewis, nor from the loss of her stepson, Lewis’s only son, Wells Lewis, who was killed in the Second World War. Hers was a sturdy character, and those who were weaker did not hesitate to take advantage of her strong shoulders. Friends such as the often-penniless, complaining fellow-journalist Vincent Sheean burdened her with dependency, about which she never complained.

The career of a national political commentator of her stature is demandingly political, requiring speeches, public appearances, and frequent negotiations with syndication services and other agencies,

4. An unused piece by Dorothy Thompson, written for her “On the Record” column, probably in 1946, Dorothy Thompson Papers.
5. Dorothy Thompson to Marc C. de Conti, 14 March 1951, Dorothy Thompson Papers.
as well as correspondence with editors and publishers of some of the hundreds of newspapers who carried her column. She was busy, and beset, but her view of the world was consistently her own, and what pessimism she gave vent to was a philosophical response to what seemed to her to be a decline in conviction and in the moral and political power of the free nations of the West.

Her most profound doubts about the future she confided only to her friends. The concern she had in common with her friend Walter Lippmann, who had been worrying for decades over the "drift" of democratic institutions, was the loss of fundamental belief as the onslaught of modern life cut humanity from its sources of stability and good sense. To Lippmann, however, the issue was a public one—for which he blamed the public. An unmoored humanity he thought useless, offering neither wisdom nor guidance toward a sound public policy. Thompson, who would soon be a mobilizer of public opinion, retained a belief in the ability of people to resist the fanaticism that threatened democracy. Without question, her personal views were at times bleak. In a letter written in 1948 to Vincent Sheean she said, "Personally, Jimmie, I think the whole world is going to go down in chaos, slime, brutality and collapse. In the world in which we live, ruthlessness will triumph, only because there is nothing to oppose it with, except the spirit of a very few. There will be a new dark ages." 6

In 1951 she wrote Lippmann: "The sickness of our civilization is too deep to be cured by any therapy of words. The blind are leading the blind—and none of us has good sight. The contemplation of physical destruction is not, however, what depresses me most. It is the terrible intellectual and moral deterioration that shows itself everywhere." 7

In a diary entry of 24 February 1945, she had written a note on the Yalta meetings of Roosevelt, Stalin, and Churchill, which she had glimpsed in a newsreel, and observed: "The world wears a terrible countenance of brass". 8

Yet this was a woman capable of transcending in public life her

---

6. Dorothy Thompson to Vincent ("Jimmie") Sheean, 28 February 1948, Dorothy Thompson Papers.
8. Diary entry, 24 February 1945, Dorothy Thompson Papers.
unhappiest private doubts about the future. She observed the seemingly overwhelming totalitarianism, but did not resign herself to it. She continued to hope, and her hopefulness nourished her journalism and fortified her for the work she would do as an organizer against the evil she so greatly feared.

The impetus for organizational work appeared in 1941, when she delivered an inspiring speech at a rally of the Anti-Nazi League in New York City. The invitation to speak had stimulated her to think beyond Nazism—which she had defied and reviled in every way that she could—down to the very core of the human problem, the corruption of civilization.

In a letter to her friend, the New York banker Thomas Lamont, she recounted the birth of the impulse that led to her involvement in the founding of an organization called the Ring of Freedom, which was intended to mobilize support for democratic ideals. The Ring of Freedom later was absorbed by an organization with similar ideals called Freedom House, of which Thompson became president.

"I had long believed", she told Lamont, "that being anti-Nazi is simply not enough. Naziism is a disease of our times, with more than purely Germanic roots, and it has grown in the soul of an impotent and corrupt century, which has also had great social and economic problems to solve." Only a “positive philosophy would bring to birth that decent and reasonable world for which peoples everywhere are yearning”.9 This philosophy (made up of “banalities”, as she called them: that is, “the long-neglected facts of life”) was expressed as “ten articles of personal faith”. She read them at the rally, where they inspired enthusiastic support for the Ring of Freedom. The ten points proclaimed the value of tolerance, equality, and social responsibility. “The nation or community has a duty to the world of nations and communities”, stated one. Another read: “The individual life finds full expression and happiness only as it is related to a moral and social purpose”. These “banalities” inspired not only spontaneous adherence among her listeners, but also, to herself, an idea that she played out in the last seven pages of her long letter to Lamont.

The principle that she discovered, which would continue to guide

9. Dorothy Thompson to Thomas Lamont, 1 October 1941, Dorothy Thompson Papers.
Dorothy Thompson having a ‘cuppa’ with local officials, in Jarrow, England, a shipbuilding town notoriously hard hit during the depression of the 1930s. At her left is Ellen Wilkinson, M.P., who led the famous “Jarrow Crusade” to Westminster in 1936.

her public life, was action. In wartime Great Britain, she told Lamont, “I saw suddenly and quite clearly, that regeneration does not come through the preaching of abstract truths, but through action along lines that make these truths corporal. People become by doing, not by thinking—that is to say, masses of people do. The community as a whole can only act its way through.”

War, then, was the opportunity for spiritual mobilization, and a dimly visible utopia, far in the distance, was the spoken goal—evident in the fervor of her statement to her admirer, Lamont: “You will say, ‘It is hard’. Don’t I know it. But we have got to begin doing things that are hard. It is very hard for me. It is foreign to my temperament and even my talents. It will cost me enormous work to collaborate with it [her crusade], and money, too. But we must begin living beyond our normal physical and mental means—and by living beyond them, raise them to the level of necessity.”
On a reporting trip to Europe at the end of the war, she heard about atrocities committed by the Red army, and these reports confirmed her belief that the Soviets were the barbarians who would succeed the Nazis as enemies of the West. A diary entry for 1946 said, “Nothing will stop the Russians except fear”. In 1948 she said in a letter to A. J. Muste: “The essence of communism is violence”.

Impelled by these bitter convictions, Dorothy Thompson became a propagandist. She understood propaganda. In 1935 Thompson had been invited to speak at the annual convention of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. Propaganda was her topic, and she came quickly to a point that she could make eloquently and with authority because it had been on the minds of foreign correspondents of her generation for a decade. She described the potency of terror and propaganda as they were used alternately by totalitarian states for the purpose of forcing acquiescence.

Western journalists, she said, “are trying to represent a theory of journalism, a theory of what journalism stands for, a thesis of journalism, a philosophy of journalism, in countries where this philosophy is fundamentally repudiated. The thing which we are all up against is propaganda. Sometimes I think that this age is going to be called the age of propaganda, an unprecedented rise of propaganda, propaganda as a weapon, propaganda as a technique, propaganda as a fine art, and propaganda as a form of government. I don’t think it can be denied today that in most of the dictatorships, actual rule, actual government is today performed largely by two weapons, terror and the written and spoken word, and the written and spoken word doesn’t necessarily have any relation whatever to the truth.”

How did it happen, a decade after her speech to the editors, that so wary a critic of propaganda, one who so thoroughly understood its blunt purposes as a weapon of dictators, could devote her energies to three organizations that may have retained some vestige of the Ring of Freedom but were, in the main, political instruments and sources of propaganda: The American Committee for the Investigation of

10. An undated diary entry from 1946, from the Dorothy Thompson Papers.
11. Dorothy Thompson to A. J. Muste, 6 April 1948, Dorothy Thompson Papers.
the Katyn Massacre; the World Organization of Mothers of All Nations; and the American Friends of the Middle East? How could an eminent journalist who prided herself on her independence become so broadly involved politically?

The Katyn Committee, with Thompson as vice-chairman, was intended to investigate the Soviet massacre of thousands of officers of the defeated Polish army who had fallen into Soviet hands at Katyn, near Smolensk, in 1940. Among its board members were William Donovan, who had led the Office of Strategic Services, predecessor to the Central Intelligence Agency, and Allen Dulles, who would become CIA director. The Mothers of All Nations was a fuzzily conceived, short-lived effort to mobilize mothers for the pursuit of world peace. The organization did not come to much in the United States (it is not even mentioned by Thompson's biographer). Its political identity never emerged, although it endured for a while in Europe, where eventually East German propagandists saw its potential as a mobilizing device. The American Friends of the Middle East, Thompson's most ambitious political enterprise, supported an even-handed United States foreign policy toward the Arab nations at a time when opinion was swinging toward the support of Israel as a bulwark against Soviet subversion.

Thompson justified this political work by saying that she was very careful to protect her independence as a journalist and keep it separate from other activities. This was an impracticable goal, but she seemed to need to be actively involved. She was a crusader by nature. Nevertheless, as a journalist she was required to express her views to millions of people with considered restraint. American journalists, even columnists, are not rilers; shrillness and excessive passion are the qualities of agitation, not journalism. The public should be calmly informed. So Thompson, who subscribed to this code, had to crusade as a sideline, but the point was that she had to. We usually think of crusaders as single-minded zealots. Thompson could not afford to be single-minded. As her private pessimism was separated from her judicious analysis of events, and as those events foreshadowed the dark movements of history that she feared, she was obliged to maintain a double allegiance—to responsible journalism and to the struggle against gathering darkness, of which the Ring of Freedom was probably the purest expression.

Her political involvement, especially in the Middle East, threat-
ened her journalistic prestige. Thompson was thoroughly worried about Zionism and Israel's influence in the United States and on American politics. It seemed to her that in the postwar period, elected politicians were unwilling to resist these influences. She restrained her views publicly, but undoubtedly listened sympathetically to accusations such as those expressed in a letter from William A. Eddy, for-
mer U. S. Minister to Saudi Arabia and an employee of the Trans-Arabian Pipe Line Company. American politicians “wantonly have thrown away the friendship of the people of the Near East”, Eddy said, and did it “for a mess of Zionist votes”.13

Recalling perhaps how avidly her anti-Nazi oratory had been applauded, and stung by the ungrateful criticism of her pro-Arab views, Thompson wrote to C. S. Freeman of the Holy Land Christian Committee that “systematic intimidation, character assassination, inference of personal scandal, impuning [sic] of motives, organization of boycotts [sic], or threats of boycott, are all among the weapons used by the Zionists”.14 The energy consumed in fuming invective, which she usually confined to her correspondence and conversations, was not the least of the costs of her political involvement.

Thompson continued to travel to the Middle East, a part of the world that fascinated her. In 1958, shortly after Kopf’s fatal heart attack, she retired from journalism. She never completed the autobiography that every journalist hopes to write. She died while visiting her daughter-in-law and grandchildren in Portugal in 1961. She was 67 years old.

She had lived a successful life, and in moments when confidence faltered she could rely on some consolations. The mastery of craft is a consolation, and Thompson was proud of her skill as a journalist. She had a great career, and its earlier years were spent among the finest generation of foreign correspondents ever seen in the American press. She recognized that fact. When Elmer Davis, a journalistic colleague, died in 1958, she wrote a commemorative column in which she recalled that the correspondents of their day had been “notable for their rugged independence of mind, their outspoken expression, their defiance of regulations imposed by government agencies, their imperviousness to propaganda, and sometimes the breadth, even profundity, of their educational background”.15

Of all the journalists of her time, she was the most active and determined crusader, and of those who involved themselves in poli-

13. William A. Eddy to Dorothy Thompson, 23 November 1951, Dorothy Thompson Papers.
14. Dorothy Thompson to C. S. Freeman, 9 April 1951, Dorothy Thompson Papers.
15. “On the Record” column, for publication 25 May 1958, Dorothy Thompson Papers.
tics, she was possibly the only one who remained a regularly published journalist, holding onto her profession and her activism—and her double identity.

Thompson's crusading had been an expression of her need for action, which she had discovered so dramatically during the heroism of the Battle of Britain. After that, journalism itself was not enough, not a sufficient response to the evil of Hitler and Stalin. But journalism sustained her, and she stayed with it. One wonders what directions she might have taken if Stalinism had not immediately succeeded Nazism as occupier—as preoccupier—of so much of her interest.

The storms of the twentieth century splintered her career as they did many others. In the end she was a journalist who had much that was valuable to say about the political conflicts she had witnessed and, in her magazine columns, about the qualities of common life that might survive the conflict.

Her generation of journalists was remarkable for its response to evils of an enormity never before imagined. It is impressive to notice how, as they witnessed one awful crisis after another, they were served well by the orthodox journalistic code—objectivity. They were immeasurably, almost intolerably provoked, but they found their own power in their ability to see through their passions, to exercise the intensity of the deliberately unimpassioned witness. One thinks of Life magazine photographer Margaret Bourke-White, of her efforts to see the victims of concentration camps as images, so that, having set aside her own disgust and horror, she could better pass on what she had witnessed. That was her job. To all these conveyors of information, observation was not a form of inaction, or uninvolvement. It was an unflinching exercise—a way of insisting that humanity know the horrors it had perpetrated. Some might say that observation of that kind was redemptive—an acceptance of the burden of evil.

Some journalists of Thompson's generation found that by practising journalism in the most disturbing circumstances, they had come to a stoical form of observation, one offering refuge in the conviction that they had protected their own integrity and that, for what it could count, they had been honest. Martha Gellhorn, a lifelong journalist and correspondent of that generation, had no doubt after the Second World War that journalism was futile. She wrote, "Apparently people would not learn for themselves, nor from others. If the agony of the Second World War did not teach them, whatever
would? Surely the postwar world is a mockery of hope and an insult to all those who died so that we should survive." Journalism was not a way of informing people so that they could be better, and make a better world. It was, Gellhorn said, "a means; and I now think that the act of keeping the record straight is valuable in itself. Serious, careful, honest journalism is essential, not because it is a guiding light but because it is a form of honorable behaviour." 16

Dorothy Thompson might have been satisfied with "honorable behavior" in the practice of her craft. But she recognized the enormous moral scope of the challenge presented by the evil of totalitarianism and the irresolute nature of the democratic response. She worried over it, and it carried her beyond journalism.

Politics is the encompassing reality of journalism. But the ambitions of Hitler and Stalin seemed to Thompson to transcend politics. They practised a "metapolitics" against which conventional responses were useless. They were, to Thompson, forces of evil. They compelled her to act outside journalism.

Thompson spanned two generations of journalists—those she admired, her companions from the 1930s, most of whose careers ended with the war's end; and the generation of Cold War journalists who came out of the war to face the deceits of Stalin. The Cold War generation tended quickly to decide on the evil nature of Stalin's ambitions and to respond by aligning themselves with the views of the United States government. One question for them is whether their political response to Stalin's betrayal of the peace in fact betrayed the independence of journalism, by using it to abet government policy. Should journalism have joined the Cold War as an interested party and advocate, or tried strenuously to keep its distance?

Thompson's career did not resolve that dilemma, but its cloven character suggests how severely the perception of overwhelming evil tested one of the century's most conscientious observers.

Dear Kit, Dear Skinny:  
The Letters of Erskine Caldwell and Margaret Bourke-White

BY WILLIAM L. HOWARD

Complementing the substantial Margaret Bourke-White Papers at the George Arents Research Library at Syracuse University is a smaller collection of Erskine Caldwell material from the years when he and Bourke-White were lovers and, subsequently, during 1939–42, husband and wife. The collection includes letters, financial records, notes for the books they did together, book contracts, photographs of Bourke-White, Caldwell, and their Darien, Connecticut home, and newspaper clippings about The Road to Smolensk, the American Folkways series, Say, Is This the U.S.A.?, Trouble in July, and the play "Tobacco Road". There are some short-story typescripts, including "My Old Man", as well as a copy of the impassioned pamphlet "In Defense of Myself" that Caldwell printed and distributed after the city of Portland, Maine censored his first novel and threatened to throw his first wife, Helen, into jail for selling it in their bookshop.

The correspondence is particularly interesting. Two letters from 1940 attest to Caldwell's stature as a writer at that time. In one, Caldwell's secretary is thanking Ernest Hemingway for an autographed copy of For Whom the Bell Tolls. In the other, Alfred Knopf thanks Caldwell for "your line about Langston Hughes' book [The Big Sea]". There are also letters from Bennett Cerf; Maurice Coutdrea; Duell, Sloan and Pearce Publishers; the League of American Writers; and two artistic friends of Caldwell, Richard Johns and Alfred Morang. The bulk of the correspondence in the collection, however, was exchanged between Caldwell and Bourke-White beginning in 1936 and, except for two brief notes from 1959, ending in 1942. There are some 300 or so letters and telegrams, the majority of them exchanged in 1939 and 1940, during the time that Margaret Bourke-White was in Europe on assignment for Life magazine. They provide
indispensable documentation of the artists’ personal lives in the years 1936 through 1942.

By 1936, Caldwell had already completed what many would argue were his finest works: *Tobacco Road*, *God's Little Acre*, *Journeyman*, and most of his short stories. The famous stage adaptation of *Tobacco Road* had premiered on Broadway, 4 December 1933, and made him a celebrity. Its success was both a major reason for the publicity he attracted and a major cause of his distraction from writing. Over the seven years of its run, he spent considerable time—time which might well have been spent on fiction writing—defending and substantiating the story with facts. He protested censorship in cities where the play was banned, published a treatise on tenant farming in 1935, and in 1938 taught a course at the New School for Social Research.

He was irked by those who refused to acknowledge Southern poverty, and in 1935 he decided to return South, this time armed not only with pen and paper, but also with camera. To validate his fiction with factual documentation, he agreed to do a series of articles on the conditions of sharecroppers for the *New York Post*. His father, Ira Sylvester Caldwell, a Reformed Presbyterian minister long familiar with the plight of the Southern poor, accompanied him. Caldwell took his own photographs for the series. Aware that they were "decidedly the work of an amateur" and thinking that he would like to devote an entire book to the sharecropper's plight, he determined to enlist the help of a professional photographer on his next trip South.¹

By 1936 Margaret Bourke-White was a highly successful photographer. After the failure of her first marriage (1924–28) to Everett Chapman, a fellow student at the University of Michigan, she embarked on a career as free-lance photographer in Cleveland, determined to prove herself. She began by taking pictures for architectural firms, then pioneered the field of industrial photography. In 1929 a book of her photographs for a steel company caught the eye of Henry Luce of *Time* magazine, who invited her to New York to interview for a position with his new *Fortune* magazine. Driven by desire to succeed, in less than four years she had progressed from selling pictures to Cleveland architects for fifty cents apiece to a half-time job at *Fortune* for $1000 a month and her own studio in New York City.

Margaret Bourke-White and Erskine Caldwell, probably in 1937.

For the public, Caldwell and Bourke-White wrote retrospective descriptions of each other as they were about this time. Margaret was “a spirited young woman with an engaging personality”, Caldwell wrote in *With All My Might* (p. 145). Of him, Bourke-White wrote in *Portrait of Myself*: “I could hardly believe this large shy man with the enormous wrestler’s shoulders and quiet coloring could be the fiery Mr. Caldwell” (p. 114).

She was also able to expand her intellectual horizons through travel. In the early 1930s she had been sent by *Fortune* to Europe, where she photographed Russian industry, as well as Stalin’s mother and birthplace. In the summer of 1934, her political consciousness was aroused when she was assigned to cover the American dustbowl. Moved by the plight of the drought-stricken farmers and probably also influenced by the depression and the rise of Fascism in Europe, she began actively supporting leftist causes.²

In 1936 Bourke-White made an important resolution about her career. Turning down a job paying $1000 per picture, she vowed not to accept any more advertising work. Rather than photographing shiny automobiles “stuffed with vapid smiles”, she wanted to do more work like the dustbowl assignment. She wanted to do an in-depth study, a book, about “everyday” Americans. And it was not enough just to photograph them. She wanted someone to interpret what she photographed in written words, someone she could learn from. She sought to collaborate with a writer who was “really in earnest about understanding America”.

In their interests and abilities, the two artists seemed perfectly matched. After they were introduced early in 1936, it did not take long for them to begin planning for the summer tour South that would eventually produce You Have Seen Their Faces. The Syracuse collection contains the first letters exchanged between them.

In March 1936, soon after this meeting, Bourke-White wrote Caldwell that she was “happier about the book I am to do with you than anything I have had a chance to work on for the last two years. I have felt keenly for some time that I was turning my camera too often to advertising subjects and too little in the direction of something that might have some social significance.” She went on exuberantly: “If I had a chance to choose from every living writer in America I would choose you first as the person I would like to do such a book with. And to have you drop out of a clear sky—just when I have decided that I want to take pictures that are closer to life—seems almost too good to be true.”

After this auspicious start, however, the road became rocky. When Bourke-White directed her attention towards a project, she brought a remarkable intellectual vitality. But she had many varied interests, which she was used to handling with self-assurance and charm. Caldwell was far more single-minded, even obsessive about his goals. Once he had his mind set on a project, he was compulsive about finishing it. Moreover, deadlines were important to him, and he felt irked by

4. Bourke-White to Erskine Caldwell, 9 March 1936, Margaret Bourke-White Papers, Syracuse University Library. All other references to the Bourke-White/Caldwell correspondence (cited by date within the text) are from the Margaret Bourke-White Papers.
delays, no matter how graciously they were requested. Unable to finish all of her business in New York in time to drive South with Caldwell and his assistant Ruth Carnall in the summer of 1936, Bourke-White asked for an extension. Caldwell was not pleased but accommodated her. He suggested that he drive to Georgia, visit his parents in Wrens, and that Bourke-White fly into Augusta, where he and Carnall would meet her. A few days later when Bourke-White wired asking for yet another day’s postponement, Caldwell became furious, convinced that she was slighting him and the project. He cancelled the trip indefinitely.\(^5\)

Unwilling to let the project die, Bourke-White responded by flying to Augusta anyway. From there, she sent a letter by messenger to nearby Wrens asking Caldwell to reconsider. She appealed to his reasonableness, to his sense of the social importance of the project, and to his sympathy for those who work for a living: “It seemed to me that this work that you and I had planned is so important that I couldn’t bear to see it hopelessly lost”. She had needed to get her affairs in order, she wrote, because “I have to earn my living and it is these jobs (which are now finished) that make it possible for me to carry the overhead while doing a really creative and socially important job like the book with you. . . . If I had an independent income it would be different. . . .” She concluded by repeating her “deep desire to use my photography in ways that are more socially useful”. It was a masterful letter, and it worked. A few hours later Caldwell appeared at the hotel, and they were soon on their way across the South.

For information about the trip itself, one must study not only the materials in the Syracuse collection but also Caldwell’s letters (located at Dartmouth College Library) to his first wife, Helen; Vicki Goldberg’s biography of Bourke-White; Harvey Klevar’s unpublished biography of Caldwell; and Bourke-White’s and Caldwell’s autobiographies.\(^6\) Documented in these sources are the contest of wills be-


\(^6\) Goldberg, Margaret Bourke-White; Klevar, “Erskine Caldwell, Solitary Puritan”; Bourke-White, Portrait of Myself; Caldwell, Call It Experience and With All My Might.
between the two artists, the conflicts between Bourke-White and Ruth Carnall, Caldwell’s decision to return home early, Bourke-White’s successful attempt to charm him into continuing, Carnall’s sudden departure, and, finally, Caldwell’s falling in love with Bourke-White.

The Syracuse collection has much to offer about Caldwell’s subsequent reactions to the Southern trip. A married man with a wife and three children, he was under a great deal of emotional stress. Several undated letters and telegrams show him obsessed with love but haunted by the possibility of losing security. In one undated letter, he informs Bourke-White that his wife knows of the affair, and he asks for an answer about their future together: “I miss living. I’ve found that I do not do any of that without you any more. I need you to live for and with. Is there any hope?” In a second letter, from his home in Maine, Caldwell chivalrously pledges his loyalty to his mistress. He has not “even touched” his wife since he has been home. “I feel that I belong 100% to you.” Another undated letter, probably from a New York hotel, demonstrates his confusion and his desperate desire for Bourke-White to act as a stabilizing force. Having just gone through “hell” after meeting with his wife and afraid that Bourke-White has “dropped” him, he thinks he is “cracking up”. “Help me”, he writes. “Can’t you hurry home and take me away to live with [you] until we know we love each other and that nothing can ever separate our hearts?”

All through the fall and winter of 1936–37, Caldwell was tortured by uncertainty over the extent of Bourke-White’s commitment. He had a deep fear of being unable to replace the love and security that his wife would most certainly withhold. After Helen had discovered one of his love letters to Margaret and ordered him to leave their Maine home, he wrote to Bourke-White in an undated letter, “I don’t blame her any. But I hate not having anything. I hope you will give it to me. You are the only person in the world who can.” In February, pressured by the destabilizing situation, he wrote: “Please let me know when you get this if I can count on your sticking to me no matter what happens”. (2-8-37) A week later he wrote, “What we have means everything in the world to me if anything should go wrong Ill [sic] never recover”. (2-15-37) It was a burden she was apparently not always willing to carry. He complained that she seemed “always so anxious to change the subject, that I never am able to tell you how and why I love you. As if you cared, I guess.” He argued
that he was biologically driven, as was the Lester family of "Tobacco Road". "What else is there to live for, if a person has an animal-like instinct to love someone as I do you?" (No date)

Unfortunately, few of Bourke-White's replies from this period are represented in the collection, and one wonders whether they were simply lost over time or whether she destroyed them. Was she ashamed of her role in luring him away from his wife and children? Were they erotic letters which embarrassed her? One would assume that she replied, but there are no answers in the collection. It is, of course, possible that, having had one unsuccessful marriage, Bourke-White did not respond to Caldwell's impassioned letters because she was fearful of becoming too involved. In her autobiography she states that from the beginning their relationship had been "strewn with danger signals". One of those danger signals must have been his consuming need for her and his wish to merge their individual personalities into one. He wrote, "I think of you as a part of us; never of you alone". (No date) Although this may have been flattering at the time, ultimately his jealousy of that portion of her career that did not include him contributed heavily to their eventual divorce. He could not think of her "alone", even though Bourke-White insisted on reserving a good portion of herself for her work only.

This is not to say that Bourke-White did not love him. Contrary to the cool self-portrait she paints in her autobiography, she was not distant when expressing her affections. Although the lack of her early letters makes it difficult to gauge her attitude accurately, one telegram sent in the summer of 1937, when she was covering Lord Tweedsmuir's trip to northern Canada, does give some indication that she needed him too. Not having heard from him, she wired, "You must not—must not—sweetheart—leave me without hearing from you like this again". Her autobiography suggests that his subsequent cables to "Honeychile, Arctic Region" asking her to hurry home and marry him hindered and embarrassed her, for they greeted her at practically every stop and were a source of humor for radio operators all over Northern Canada. This particular telegram, however, along with several of the missives she wrote after their marriage, points to a stronger longing for him than she later admits. Her contention that she married him because "finally a time comes when

it is just too troublesome to remain unmarried”8 seems more of a pose than an accurate reflection of her feelings at the time. It can safely be assumed that she had a genuine need that marriage helped satisfy.

Unlike Caldwell, however, Bourke-White kept her need in perspective. In an undated letter written aboard the Canadian ship during the same Tweedsmuir assignment, she expresses her love in one half of the letter, then talks about her adventures in the other half: the captain’s stopping his ship so that she could take pictures of her butterflies hatching; the mission schools along the way; the Eskimos’ fascination with her flashbulbs. Caldwell’s early letters to her, on the contrary, are almost solely about his consuming love for her and their relationship.

Helen Caldwell, convinced finally that her husband’s involvement with Bourke-White was more than just a casual affair, filed for divorce early in 1938. In March, Bourke-White, who had joined Life in the fall of 1936 shortly after her and Caldwell’s trip South, was sent to Spain and Czechoslovakia, to report on troubled Europe. Caldwell went along. They spent five months abroad, most of it in Czechoslovakia working on what would become their second collaborative book, *North of the Danube.*9

In the fall of 1938, after their return to the United States, they bought Horseplay Hill, the Darien home they named together. After they began living there, the tone of Caldwell’s letters changed radically from those written in 1936 and 1937 when he was in the throes of a divorce and an uncertain love. From a man torn by the demons of love, insecurity, and guilt, he became calm and affectionate even though Bourke-White continued to be absent from him on various assignments. Alone in Darien with her praying mantises, he good-humoredly telegraphed in October, “All fourteen of us miss you. . . . All our love, Skinny Johnny Suzy Mantise.” (10-5-38)

Caldwell and Bourke-White married on 27 February 1939. In an undated letter addressed to “Sweet Leilani”, presumably written after or in anticipation of their Hawaii honeymoon in March, Caldwell writes blissfully, “You are my dream of paradise, and if there is none, so much the better, because you are my paradise”. At this point, her

frequent trips and his lack of a say in them scarcely dims his contentment: “You are such a funny girl that when you left you did not say whether you would be gone a day, a week, or a year”. Apparently, because of her new commitment to him, being left behind did not fill him with the despair that he had felt when they were lovers.

Yet even in the joyous Leilani letter one finds attempts to manipulate Bourke-White’s independence away from her. It must have been disturbing to her, for example, when he wrote, “What am I to do, take charge of you, or let you go your own way? If you thought you could trust me with your life, I think it would be a very good thing for us if you would let me take charge of you. But if you are not sure you wish to trust me, then it would be better to keep on as you have.” Though expressed affectionately during a time of contentment, the choice he gave her—trust me and give up your freedom or mistrust me and retain it—demonstrates undercurrents of the anxiety he felt about her independence.

The bulk of the Bourke-White/Caldwell correspondence at Syra-
cuse was written during the six-month period from October 1939 to March 1940, when Bourke-White covered the outbreak of World War II in Europe for Life. During this time, Caldwell stayed behind in Darien. The letters from this separation are particularly rich because they were written on an average of every other day and because there are as many letters from Bourke-White as from Caldwell.

From Bourke-White’s first letters aboard the S. S. Washington, it is clear that the relationship is primarily a happy one, resting contentedly on their mutual admiration and love. On 16 October 1939 she wrote: “I have the sweetest memory of you, holding up your hands to catch those flowers. You looked so young and boyish and tall and eager and adorable. I love you so much.” The next day she wrote a more balanced letter, devoting part to expressions of love and part to the adventures she was having. She writes of the hurricane ahead, the French, English, and Canadian officers aboard returning to Europe to join in the fight against Hitler, the possibility of being stopped by a submarine and searched. “I have the camera loaded and ready of course. If it happens I hope the light is good.” (10-17-39) Less obsessed than in his early letters, Caldwell also writes about subjects other than his love for her: the garden, the kittens, the praying mantises. (10-17-39)

During this time, both express a regard for the other’s career. For example, Bourke-White writes on 18 October that she is learning French by reading Maurice Coindreau’s introduction to one of Caldwell’s works: “But the sweetest part about it is for a wife to be studying French by reading such darling things about her husband” (10-18-39). Learning that Caldwell’s books were being sold in Europe, she wrote, “Am glad that Norway is getting the benefit of Semon Dye’s religion, and Tobacco Road running through Italy should help a lot of Italians very much”. (11-5-39) Likewise, Caldwell writes of his eagerness to see her European work, proclaiming their artistic solidarity: “I’m all agog waiting to hear the first story of the new series—a story that will filter across the Atlantic, so marvelous that it will confound all our critics and enemies. Hurry and start it in this direction!” (10-26-39)

Besides lavishing affection on her husband, Bourke-White’s letters from Europe often create for him the exciting aura of history in the making. In a 25 October letter, for example, she describes London blackouts, which she had photographed over several sleepless nights: “London in a blackout is beyond belief. Not a light visable [sic]. Taxis
Caldwell reading galleys in their Darien home. The alphabet wallpaper was a gift from Bourke-White.

go with faint blue lights—street lights—red and green—are masked to show only a slit like a cross. All windows are heavily curtained in black so lights in hotels and apt’s may be lighted inside.” (10-25-39)
The next day, she mentions going to the House of Commons to hear Neville Chamberlain reply to Ribbentrop. Chamberlain had “a squeaky little voice”, and the Speaker “sits on a throne and wears a wig and
shoes with silver buckles". (10-26-39) A few weeks later she took Haile Selassie's, Churchill's, and the Archbishop of Canterbury's portraits. Of Selassie she remarked, "Poor thing, he's in a hotel room that a travelling drummer might use". (12-2-39)

The fact that they had been touring Eastern Europe together the previous year allows their correspondence a dimension—a kind of professional intimacy—possible only because she was writing to both husband and colleague. She describes London, for example, as a "dreary" wartime country, "not like Spain as we knew it". Likewise, from the Roumanian countryside she writes a sketchy description which she knows Caldwell will appreciate: "Very primitive, like parts of Centr. Europe we knew". Complaining of nuisances that hinder her work, she evokes their shared experiences: "You know the kind of thing I mean. Ev. one afraid of tiny bit of authority—stopped ev. [minute?] while papers examined—by the time everything is straight-ened up light is gone." (12-29-39)

Caldwell too describes career matters, although sparingly. In a 31 October letter, he mentions editing for his new publisher (Duell, Sloan and Pearce) the American Folkways Series, a project towards which Viking, his previous publisher, had been cool. He calls Journeyman his favorite novel and notes that it was translated into Danish. He also describes the attempt of Sam Byrd, one of the actors in the Broadway production of "Tobacco Road", to salvage a production of "Journeyman" by raising $50,000. (10-31-39) Caldwell himself, believing that the play could become another "Tobacco Road", contributed his savings account to the doomed production, losing it all.¹⁰ In one of the rare instances in which Bourke-White offered her husband advice about his career (Caldwell was more inclined to "take charge" of hers), she requested, "Do please leave Sam Byrd alone. His choices may be in the right direction, but hes [sic] just not good enuf." (2-19-40)

When Caldwell left his first wife Helen, he lost his best editor. Some critics have even suggested that his divorce effectively ended his chance to continue producing first-rate fiction on the order of Tobacco Road and God's Little Acre. We have already seen evidence to suggest that he needed Bourke-White to take over Helen's role as provider of love and comfort. There is also evidence that he hoped

¹⁰. Caldwell, Call It Experience, 175.
Bourke-White would take over Helen’s role as editor. Rather fond of his reputation for being a quick and inspired writer, he told the *New Orleans Tribune* that Bourke-White picked up manuscript pages from the floor after he typed them, checked the spelling, and sent them off to the publisher without his giving a final review (11-14-39; clipping included in 11-16-39 letter to Bourke-White). Presumably, he was describing their work on one or both of their collaborations, *You Have Seen Their Faces* and *North of the Danube*.

At any rate, in November 1939 Caldwell wrote Bourke-White in London to request that she read the galleys of *Trouble in July* and suggest changes. It was his first novel since 1935, and he describes it to her as “Your book! The first novel I’ve done under your spell.” (11-21-39) Two weeks later he complains that she has not offered any comments. “It would be a much better novel with your advice. . . . Naturally I consider you my best friend and severest critic, and I had looked forward to your help.” (12-4-39) Although there is an undated supportive telegram from her (“Everything but trouble from *Trouble in July* for my dearest”), nothing in the collection indicates that she helped in any specific way with the editing. She may have felt that he was justified in asking for her editorial help on their collaborations, but perhaps she drew the line on work he did himself.

Despite the preponderately blissful tone of most of the letters from 1939-40, they are darkened occasionally by some of the elements that had haunted the relationship from the beginning and that eventually ended it. There was, first of all, Caldwell’s moodiness. From the time of the Southern trip and again on their trip to Czechoslovakia in 1938, Bourke-White had worried over his “unpredictable, frozen moods” and his “unfathomable silences”. When they were together in public, he embarrassed her several times by clamming up and creating awkward silences. Bourke-White felt that his behavior had even interfered with their work, preventing them from getting close to the Czechs and hurting the quality of *North of the Danube*.11

As a consequence, she had decided upon a psychological improvement plan for him, about which she periodically inquired in her letters. He was to make regular visits to a psychiatrist and practise modifying his behavior by visiting friends of hers. “Keep in practice, so when I come back I’ll find a very sociable husband”, she wrote from

London, 25 October 1939. This agenda for improving his sociability was clearly of the utmost importance to her:

You must do these important things about those sides of yourself you don't know about. You must, must must!

I love you so much. But I love the good sides of my husband. (I must love the other sides too, or I could not have put up with them so long.) But the image of my husband in my mind is my big adorable sweetheart whose life I share, and who shares mine.

Please, sweet, see how earnest I am about this, because getting these things fixed, and realizing that they have to be fixed, will make all the difference in the kind of a future life we want to have, with Patricia, and all those things. (11-11-39)

At times Bourke-White's agenda for his psychological and social improvement must have irked Caldwell. Years after his relationship with Bourke-White, he recalls that he had felt counseling sessions were simply a fad and that he had not been serious about them. In an October 1939 letter written from Darien, he seems to be reciprocating with some psychologizing about her. He had heard from a perfect stranger about an interview she had made before her departure to Europe. In that interview she said that she had forbidden Caldwell to accompany her because she did not want to be bothered by him. He writes, “I wish you felt differently so that our private life would be something sacred and personal. It's awfully difficult to have to live in fear of things like that breaking upon you unexpectedly. I know you really don’t feel that way, that it is another self that feels it has to say those things, and I wish you would try to set the world straight about us before it gains the wrong impression. I know you love me, Kit—let the world know it, too.” (10-26-39)

Although later she denied making any statement at all (11-6-39), it was not the first time an account of her obduracy towards marriage with him had reached the gossip columns. Upon their return from Czechoslovakia in August 1938 before their marriage, badgering New

York reporters had measured the distance between their ship cabins and questioned her about an impending marriage. Irritated, she responded, “I’m not going to marry him, no matter how many photographers and reporters want me to”. Bourke-White valued her independence, and sometimes Caldwell felt hurt that she would not show her affection publicly. He apparently thought that, if she felt his unpleasant behavior was psychotic, he had a right to interpret hers that way as well.

When Bourke-White mentions “Patricia, and all those things”, she is referring to their plans to have a girl child. The unborn Patricia, to whom You Have Seen Their Faces was dedicated, became both the embodiment of their love and a symbol over which they argued their causes with each other. Although Bourke-White seems to have wanted a child, she had at least one reservation—Caldwell’s moods—and she used the child as an inducement for him to obtain counseling. Both Bourke-White’s and Caldwell’s biographers raise the possibility that Bourke-White was actually pregnant with Caldwell’s child possibly in 1940 or in 1942 and either miscarried or, realizing that he was not serious about counseling, obtained an abortion so as to avoid making herself dependent on him. Indeed, Caldwell’s letters to her often make plain that he was chiefly interested in her presence at home. He knew that a child would root her there. However, there is no mention in either Bourke-White’s or Caldwell’s letters of an actual pregnancy, miscarriage, or abortion.

Although Caldwell seems to have handled Bourke-White’s long 1939–40 absence in Europe well at first, the six months of separation eventually became tiresome. Caldwell was not above using subterfuge to induce her return to the States. Enclosing a clipping of a woman photographer, Marion Post, who had done some photos of the South, Caldwell wrote on 2 December 1939 that he hated to see Bourke-White lose her status as a photographic authority on the South. He felt that she should return and work on books like those they had done before together—or perhaps a book on insects (her hobby)—because her fame would probably rest on publications like these rather than on transitory war journalism: “. . . books . . . are not thrown away like the morning paper”.


37
Furthermore, he argued in the same letter, it was important to both of them and to their relationship as collaborative artists that she do "this creative kind of work. It hurts me to see others doing the things you by right should do. I want my wife to be the one to produce these things of permanency." He argued that she had "that God-given element of scientific inquiry. . . . Not to use it is a sacrilege." He added rather pontifically, "The world is going to be here a long, long time, but a person has only a few short years in which to contribute his talent to it". As a final appeal, he stated that she should devote herself to these kinds of projects "for Patricia's sake—she will expect it of you". (12-2-39)

Ultimately, one gets the impression from this letter that Caldwell was less interested in Bourke-White's or Patricia's welfare or in the high ideals of aesthetics than in solving the problem of his loneliness. His need to settle this problem far outweighed any other consideration. Putting together scientific books or collaborative books with him or raising their child would bring Bourke-White home. This letter of December 1939, ending with its blunt command "Hurry!", seems a transparent attempt to regain Bourke-White's presence in any way possible. Until he could have her at his side, he would be in a state of unproductive unrest and unhappiness. It was as he had written two weeks earlier, "I just have to share life with you, otherwise I'm just a transient". (11-16-39)

Other tactics he used to induce her to return home from this long European tour ranged from periodic announcements of various surprises (one of them worth $2000) awaiting her return, to his negotiating for promising assignments in America for her. He writes of his publisher's interest in having them collaborate again on a book about America, though he may very well have put the suggestion into the publisher's mind. (11-3-39)

Eventually, Bourke-White herself grew tired of Europe and her work for Life and decided to quit the magazine to become part of PM, an experimental New York daily newspaper that used many photographs. She wrote in February 1940, "I am bitterly dissatisfied with how much good work never reaches the light of day with Life. So much wasted. Even that London at night series. The trouble is they're too rich and can afford to be wasteful of someone whos [sic] supposed to be their ace, but the socalled ace has only so many years to live and doesn't want to see pix taken in any one of them buried forever." (2-5-40)
While Caldwell house-sat in Darien, Bourke-White was on a six-month assignment in Europe for Life magazine. In this photograph she is with a group of Turkish men who were trying to get a truck out of the mud.

For their personal life, the most important consequence of her quitting Life was that she could cut short her assignment in Europe and return home. It is not clear whether she was finally succumbing to Caldwell's urgings and her own desire to return to him or whether her decision was strictly a professional one. Caldwell did monitor the negotiations with PM through their lawyer Julius Weiss, and he was undoubtedly pleased that her new job would bring her home. Although the pressure he had already put on her to return may have contributed to her decision, there is also clear evidence that she
wanted to come home and was tired of the assignment. Her letters convey genuine pleasure as she anticipates both their next collaboration together and a more domestic life: “I'm full of thoughts about our book [Say, Is This the U.S.A.?]. . . . I want to help you with many more books.” (2-23-40) “I have so many ideas about how to be a good wife to you. I want to make you very happy and do good things for you always.” (2-1-40) Was her eagerness that of an artistic co-equal or that of a contrite wife anxious to soothe his frustration with her for abandoning him so long? It is difficult to determine to what extent Caldwell demanded this response and to what extent she willingly offered it.

It creates something of a distortion to isolate disturbing elements of their correspondence in an effort to determine the causes of their eventual breakup. Given the frustrations of separation, it is remarkable how good-humored and loving the letters through 1940 are. Although they do contain intimations of trouble, far more typical of them is playfulness and exhilaration, epitomized by Bourke-White's note to him probably written towards the end of her European tour: “. . . the most important discovery I have made in Italy is that I love you in it. I also love you in England France & Switzerland, and I shall go on loving you in Bessarabia, Rumania, Jugoslavia, also Syria, if I get there, and certainly in Bulgaria. But when I get back to Connecticut, then is the time that I'll love you and squeeze you and kiss you till you cry out for a rest.” (No date)

After she came back to Connecticut, Bourke-White worked for PM for four months, then returned to Life, whose first assignment was to report on the state of America. In November 1940 she and Caldwell set out on a tour of the United States. Although Life used none of the photography she sent in, Caldwell and she capitalized on the trip by gathering material for the documentary Say, Is This the U.S.A.? Their Christmas card from that year pictured them on top of a boxcar, he with typewriter and she with camera.

In March 1941, Life sent her to Russia, and Caldwell accompanied her. They were two of the few Western journalists on hand for the German invasion. Caldwell used some of her pictures in Russia at War, but they did not actually collaborate on the book. She preferred to do her own book, which may very well have been a source of irritation to him. Whether this decision was symptomatic of a falling out or not, Bourke-White noted a fundamental difference between them on the Russian trip. She could not understand how,
with history happening all around them, he could sit in his Moscow hotel room writing about his Georgia childhood (he was working on *Georgia Boy*).\(^{15}\) She complains in her autobiography that he “barri-caded” himself from new experiences, and that that contributed to his decline as a writer.\(^{16}\) In fact, *Georgia Boy* was one of his last high-quality pieces of fiction and was successful partly because he rigorously screened out present events and devoted himself to reconstructing the images of his Southern past. What to her seemed stagnation was his creative lifeblood.

They returned to the United States in October 1941. Just over a year later, they were divorced. Many of the reasons for the failure of their marriage had been inherent in the relationship from the beginning. Goldberg argues that they were engaged in a “struggle for dominance” throughout their time together.\(^{17}\) Caldwell was attracted to her because she was independent, and yet he divorced her because he could not make her dependent. A more concrete cause of the separation was a home in Arizona which they had found when working on *Say, Is This the U.S.A.?* and into which, before the war broke out, they had planned to settle. Despite the war, Caldwell still had a desire to settle in it and raise a family. Bourke-White did not. He secured a four-figure-a-week salary in Hollywood for each of them so that they could be in the proximity of the new house, but she refused what she called “another set of golden chains”.\(^{18}\) Eventually, she returned to Europe to cover the war.

The Syracuse collection contains little correspondence between them during the period of their break-up, and all of it is from Caldwell’s side. His notes to her are both plaintive and impatient. In July 1942 he telegraphed her on the East Coast, where she was involved with speaking engagements and her work with *Life*: “Whats use hanging around there? Why dont you come out three four days and make life amount to something. Five thousand month job waiting for you but cant hold it w/o your setting time. Wish you would be definite about many things. Among them no provision for little Kit. That hurts more than you will ever know.” (7-20-42) The Arizona house was

\(^{15}\) Goldberg, *Margaret Bourke-White*, 239.

\(^{16}\) Bourke-White, *Portrait of Myself*, 196.

\(^{17}\) Goldberg, *Margaret Bourke-White*, 251.

\(^{18}\) Bourke-White, *Portrait of Myself*, 197.
Dear Skinny:

I cannot let ’59 roll to a close without letting you know how much it meant to me to hear from you when the story of my malady came out. One rewarding aspect of my otherwise boring ailment was the unexpected way it tightened human bonds in many directions.

I have been hearing from friends, and people who have meant something in one’s life.

The experience went very deep with me. Somehow, in human ways, I find it difficult to put into words the experience went very deep with me, and I would not shear (dismiss) it out of my life even if I had the power to do so.

Today happens to be th.

and I am still making

I suppose I am happiest from finding I could still keep the helm of my own ship, source of inner strength.

In the course of all the therapy, I’ve some surprising accomplishments, back shoulder rolls and walking on all fours.

Do you have coon cats? I have wonderful ones just now—they look much like Fluffy except that in place of her triangular white spots, their ears are square as dice and are incredibly gallant and brave & insist on accompanying me on my long walks. Even at night they do not panic in the face of oncoming cars but stand quietly behind me, touching my legs so I will know they are there.

After twenty years, Caldwell congratulated Bourke-White on a transitory recovery from Parkinson’s disease. Her response, apparently never sent, shows not only the debilitating effect of the disease, but also her irrepressible and enthusiastic spirit.
apparently not the only set of golden chains by which Caldwell hoped to keep her nearby. Bourke-White must have realized that a “little Kit”, like housekeeping in Arizona, would have prevented her from covering the biggest story of the century: World War II.

By the time Caldwell sent this telegram, she had already applied to return to Europe as a war correspondent. October 1942 finds him again writing as house-sitter from Darien, but this time with a weariness not present in his letters from 1939 and 1940: “I seem to do better books when you are here, so I guess if you want me to do a good one, you should come home”. (10-9-42) The tone is less persuasive than tired.

Ironically, the divorce was handled long distance just as the marriage often was. From Arizona, Caldwell telegraphed her at the American Embassy in London, 10 November 1942, to announce: “Have reached most difficult decision of lifetime. Decided that partnership must dissolve immediately since present and future contain no promise of ultimate manifest. No single factor or combination could rectify untenable situation. Believe me when I say I am truly sorry and unconsolable. Please notify Weiss steps you wish taken.” Given his disappointment over her lack of interest in “a little Kit” just four months before, the phrase “ultimate manifest” may very well refer to the child Bourke-White chose not to bear. Whether or not she had been pregnant (as Klevar and Goldberg suggest she was) and however that possible pregnancy may have ended, the lack of children, or more precisely, the lack of an inclination in Bourke-White to settle into a maternal role, apparently played an important part in the divorce.

Bourke-White’s answer raised the suspicion of an affair: “Explain reasons more fully and please tell me honestly if anyone else involved”. Caldwell replied, “I have waited four years for something better than this and the present and future have become dismal apparitions. Such is loneliness.” Bourke-White felt that his response was evasive. Her last communication with him until some twenty years later was: “Such is loneliness and such is poetry but such is not answer to direct question. Therefore can draw only one conclusion and sorry you could not tell me openly.” Her letter to Julius Weiss, however, does not raise the matter of infidelity at all. The issues put there are Caldwell’s moods and Bourke-White’s feeling of relief at not having to worry about them any longer.
Caldwell had met someone else. He had learned from his break-up with Helen how lonely being in unmarried limbo could be, and one suspects that he would not have given up Bourke-White without a replacement in mind. Indeed, in October he had met a twenty-year-old senior at the University of Arizona, June Johnson. They married on 22 December 1942, a month after Caldwell informed Margaret of his wish to divorce. At the time, ironically, Margaret was floating in the Mediterranean Sea, her ship having been torpedoed by a German U-boat. She was rescued on 23 December when Caldwell was on his honeymoon.

The break-up was abrupt, so abrupt that Caldwell left behind in the Darien house many of the papers that Bourke-White later deposited at Syracuse. But despite the inevitable ill will, there is a moving postscript to the relationship. In June 1959, Caldwell sent Bourke-White respectful congratulations for having successfully survived a dangerous new operation for Parkinson’s disease. He congratulated her on her “fortitude and recovery”, then went on to say that he had followed the news of her “travail from time to time, and I am glad it is now all in the past”. (6-30-59) Her typed response is illustrative of the physical devastation of the disease and gives proof of her indomitable spirit. Her letter, which so effortlessly resumes their relationship with its references to their cat Fluffy of twenty years before and its “Dear Skinny” greeting, is full of the Bourke-White zest for living to which Caldwell had once found himself attracted. On the letter in her cramped script is written “For EC” and below it “Not sent”. It is not clear whether the typing caused her not to send the letter, whether she simply forgot to revise it, or whether she found it psychologically more difficult to resume their correspondence than she had anticipated. At any rate, the letter succeeds in recapturing the same eager, joyous desire to share living with another sensitive soul.
Ted Key, Creator of "Hazel"

BY GEORGE L. BEISWINGER

Despite the immense popularity of cartoon art, creators of the genre are seldom as honored as are, say, other artists, or writers of screen plays and short stories. Yet the skills of cartoonists are diverse and wide-ranging. It is up to them to invent not only the scenario, but also to develop the characters, provide dialogue, handle the settings and scenery—all in such a way that the impact on the viewer will be immediate and real. And that is not all, for the cartoonist is often in the position of having to invent freshly on a rigid, sometimes daily, schedule.

Thanks to the efforts of a number of recently established cartoon museums and several nationally recognized academic repositories, it seems that cartoonists will begin at last to have their work studied appreciatively and in a serious manner. One such repository is the George Arents Research Library at Syracuse University. There, one of the most valued cartoon collections was contributed by Ted Key, the creator of "Hazel", a cartoon panel about a free-spirited, free-wheeling, indomitable domestic who resides in, and often presides over, the fictional household of the Baxter family. "Hazel" is the oldest syndicated panel in the nation still being produced by its originator on a daily basis. This forty-five-year-old feature—also the basis for a long-running, prime-time television show (still in syndication)—is currently distributed by King Features Syndicate and appears six times weekly in some one hundred newspapers.

1. Among these are the Cartoon Museum, Orlando, Fla.; the Museum of Cartoon Art, Rye Brook, N.Y.; and the Cartoon Art Museum, San Francisco, Calif. Cartoon art is also collected by the Smithsonian Institution and the George Arents Research Library at Syracuse University.

2. The Ted Key Collection has been arranged in five sections. The first four, amounting to six linear feet, are: early correspondence, miscellaneous cartoons, writings (including book manuscripts), and biographical data. The fifth and possibly the most interesting section contains seventeen linear feet of cartoons from the Saturday Evening Post era.

Syracuse University
Library Associates Courier
Volume XXIII, Number 2 (Fall 1988) 45
"Hazel" was created in 1943 and thereafter appeared randomly for two years in the pages of the old Curtis-published Saturday Evening Post. Then, beginning in 1945 and continuing for twenty-four years, it was featured weekly in the center of the next-to-last page of the magazine, where it was considered so important that it was listed in the table of contents. With the demise of the Post in 1969, Key joined the King Features Syndicate.

During his career Ted Key has drawn many other cartoons; he is, in fact, one of the most-published cartoon artists in the United States. Also an author, he has produced a dozen Hazel books, as well as several non-Hazel ones, and written a number of successful movie scripts.

There are many kinds of cartoons, just as there are many kinds of theater. For example, there is the "joke a day" genre, which might include strips like "Beetle Bailey"; and action adventure strips, such as the immensely popular "Steve Canyon", created by the late Milton Caniff. Then, there are those where knowledge of the personal-
ity, habits, and lifestyle of the central character (or characters) is essential to a full understanding and appreciation of the actions being presented, simply because what they are colors everything that they do. "Hazel" falls into the last category. Hazel's qualities, which are by now legendary, have endeared her to generations of readers.

Many "Hazel" followers love her because she possesses a basic sense of honesty; they agree with her dislike of sham and pretense, and her disdain of these characteristics in others. With a word, a glance or gesture, Hazel cuts through pompous facades like a hot knife through butter. On the positive side she is eager to assist; but her socially-immune eye tends to fix on matters of disconcertingly basic importance. Seeing her employer's bridge foursome annoyed by a fly on the ceiling, she swats it. Why not? More than that, she has been known to turn the interest of Baxter guests to the more engaging game of poker.

Readers are attracted to Hazel because she expresses the child in everyone. Finding a four-leaf clover catapults her into ecstasy; young
Baxter fort-and-tree-house pursuits, backyard football games, the appearance of the Good Humor man are equally rousing. She has been found on top of a jungle gym or involved in a snowball fight when important guests arrive. At the doctor's, with one of her young charges, she too seeks reward from the lollipop bucket.

There are times when all of us would like to see brought down to size someone who flaunts authority. Hazel does this for us, to our great satisfaction. She is master of the perfect rejoinder. Her dry, pithy comments let everyone know just what she thinks of them, but she always stops short of the sarcasm that wounds, the kind employed by Florence, the maid in the popular television sit-com, "The Jeffersons". Hazel is frequently irreverent, but not disrespectful.

Hazel goes where others fear to tread. As a member of a jury, she demands to shocked reaction that the prosecutor speak louder. She speaks out on issues discussed within her presence. Her principles are her right; they are strong ones, and she will articulate them regardless of company, convenience, or propriety.
Finally, Hazel is everyone’s mother. Along with the hand-on-hip attitude of exasperation comes an embracing capacity for love, gentleness, empathy, and compassion—symbolically suggested by the line of her copious bosom. She is the protector of children and animals. She responds to the call of distress in timely manner and applies a gentle touch, for wounded spirits are as important as scraped knees. Hazel believes in the sanctity of children’s dreams. It is their right to grow up in a wholesome, decent household where good food is on the table and ‘old-fashioned’ moral standards obtain. When Mr. Baxter’s language reflects too explicitly his frustration at a flat tire, Hazel can be counted on to get the neighborhood children out of hearing range.

A few years ago, an insurance company approached Ted Key and proposed a special “Hazel Policy”, which would provide financial protection for minors in the event of a parent’s death. While the concept seemed all right, somehow Key couldn’t picture his character in an actuarial role, and the idea was never realized.

“Louder! More expression! ‘HARK!’” © 1947 Ted Key. All world rights reserved.
The panel’s principal characters, besides Hazel, are her previously mentioned employers, Mr. and Mrs. George Baxter, their son, Harold, and an adopted daughter, Katie. Rounding out the cast are a somewhat corpulent feline called Two Ton, another named Mostly (mostly Siamese), a slobbering, over-affectionate, fat canine named Smiley, and an unhousebroken newcomer mutt, Schnoozel.

Continuity is provided by Hazel’s responses to everyday happenings in the Baxter household. As Ted Key says, “Sometimes only a few words are necessary to convey a somewhat complex facet of human nature”. Thus, in one of the “Hazel” panels, her employer, Mr. Baxter, directs her with a gesture to take a piece of furniture to the attic. The caption says simply (Hazel talking): “Put it in the attic, he says! And do what with the National Geographics?” This sharp, short, exasperated question speaks worlds about Baxter background, habits, and inclinations.

The most remarkable characteristic of the cartoon “Hazel” is its quality of being both timely and timeless. Since the panel is so rooted in the fundamental matters that every generation must deal with
anew, a panel from 1947, 1957, or 1967 is often as telling and as amusing today as it was when it first appeared.

Key lives and works in what many writers and artists would consider an ideal environment for fostering creativity—an old stone house at the edge of historic Valley Forge National Park near Philadelphia. “It’s nice,” he feels, “but such bucolic surroundings can detract. Creativity comes from forcing yourself to sit down at a regular time each day and stare at a blank sheet of paper until the ideas start coming, no matter where you are. I never clip and file the ideas of other cartoonists. I try to be original. I spend at least one day each week just thinking of ideas and doing ‘roughs’. I then select six of the ‘roughs’ for finishing for the daily panel—working about four months ahead.”

Key graduated in 1933 from the University of California at Berkeley, where he was the editorial cartoonist and art editor of the Daily Californian and associate editor of the campus humor magazine, The Pelican. He lost his first job after graduation at the end of one week when his employer, Disney Studios, decided that his style was too bold for animation. Key then decided to write a screen play. He tells the story: “At the time, cartoonist Gene Ahearn was drawing a panel which featured a rotund, opinionated, somewhat bombastic character called Major Hoople. It occurred to me that Hoople would make a wonderful vehicle for a movie starring W. C. Fields. Fields was in box-office decline at the time and had been paired with a baby, called Baby Leroy, for his screen roles. I approached Ahearn with the idea and he gave me the go-ahead. I completed the script and Paramount Studios made a liberal offer for the property. However, the deal collapsed when my agent demanded that Paramount double the offer.”

Broke, Key decided to seek adventure on the high seas by signing up as a deckhand on a ship bound for China. But more disappointment loomed. Just prior to departure, the shipping company’s required physical examination revealed that he had a double hernia. “Not only was I out of work, I was also faced with a major operation”, Key says. “But I had always believed in the sweet uses of adversity. I came up with the idea of sketching my own operation. I thought it would be an excellent gimmick to attract the media and, perhaps, a prospective employer. The surgeons gave me a local anesthetic and, by means of the mirrors over the operating table, I recorded the whole procedure with pen and pad. Back in my room,
I notified the major newspapers and the Associated Press. I got excellent coverage, but no job offers.

"I decided it was time to try my luck in New York. What could I lose? With a hundred dollars borrowed from my sister, I boarded a Greyhound bus and headed east. After checking in at the YMCA, I began drawing ‘roughs’ and making the rounds of the big magazines. If I didn’t sell, I didn’t know what I was going to do. Perhaps it was beginner’s luck, but I sold cartoons to three magazines during the first week. But to help assure that I would receive a guaranteed minimum for my work, I joined the fledgling Cartoonists Guild of America. Almost immediately, I found myself in a picket line in front of the office of a recalcitrant publisher, along with some of the most distinguished cartoonists of the day. We were promptly arrested and trundled off to jail, where we were charged with disorderly conduct. A search revealed that we were carrying forty-five drawing pencils, which the police seized and characterized as ‘dangerous weapons’.

"Deduct one and one half per cent from whose wages?" © 1951 Ted Key.
All world rights reserved.
“I assume you’d like to live out a normal life.” © 1988 Ted Key. All world rights reserved.

“I'll never forget our picket signs. Each cartoonist had illustrated our demands with a drawing. On mine was a Simon Legree-type character who was turning his poor, unmarried daughter and her baby out into a howling blizzard. Underneath in bold letters was the word, UNFAIR.

“After being booked, we were placed with an array of thieves and prostitutes in a holding cell, where we remained all day. The big surprise came during the night-court hearing when the clerk announced: ‘The State of New York v. Ted Key and 17 others’. I was totally unknown; the others were already name artists. I was the greenhorn and the others had made me the fall guy. But the charges were quickly dropped by a sympathetic judge. The publisher, as well as a number of other major buyers of cartoon art, agreed to the Guild’s demands. We were only asking for fifteen dollars per cartoon. Prior to that time, we were only being paid five.”
At a subsequent Guild benefit, Key met Anne Wilkinson, a cartoonists' agent and sister of famed cartoonist Fritz Wilkinson, who had been a fellow demonstrator in the ill-fated picket line. Ted and Anne were later married. It was a long and successful union, to which three sons were born. Their oldest son, Steve, is a partner in a large financial services organization, son Dave works in advertising, and youngest son Peter is a feature writer for the Atlantic City Sunday Press. Anne died in 1984. Ted remarried in late 1987. His second wife, Bonnie, is the widow of an old friend from his youth.

Key is as enthusiastic a writer as he is an artist. His motion picture credits include Million Dollar Duck, produced by Walt Disney Productions and starring Dean Jones and Sandy Duncan; Gus, also produced by Disney and starring Ed Asner, Tom Bosley, Don Knotts, and Tim Conway; and the Disney-produced The Cat from Outer Space with Sandy Duncan, Ken Barry, Harry Morgan, and Roddy McDowall. While achieving a significant measure of success as a writer with the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency in New York prior to World War II, Key continued to sell cartoons to major publications. Although the concept for a panel featuring a household domestic came in a flash of insight ("I was awakened in the middle of the night with this idea for a somewhat incompetent maid"), evolution of the character took some time. The resulting Hazel is anything but incompetent.

Key continued to produce "Hazel" for the Post after he entered the U. S. Army Signal Corps in 1943. "I was stationed at Camp Crowder, in southwest Missouri", he says. "I would perform my army duties all week, then on Sunday I would hole up in a hotel room in the nearby town of Joplin and produce five 'roughs', as well as the finished art for the next issue."

In late 1943, shortly after the Saturday Evening Post had lost a popular panel, "Little Lulu", to a corporate advertising campaign, the magazine demanded that all of its regular cartoonists sign exclusive contracts, giving the magazine complete rights to their works and prohibiting product endorsements by the cartoon characters. Although reluctant to do so, Key signed and thus found himself bound to a long-term, highly restrictive agreement.

Key's contract did give him book and movie (though not television) rights, but restricted him from becoming involved in any type of product endorsement. In 1946 Mary Pickford wanted to produce
a "Hazel" movie, but a financial agreement could not be reached. Actress Thelma Ritter wanted to play Hazel in a television series, of which Marilyn Monroe would have been the executive producer, but the Post would not permit it.

Much later, when the Post began having financial troubles, it reversed its position and permitted, on a profit-sharing basis, the ad-
aptation of Key's character for a prime-time television series sponsored at first by the Ford Motor Company and, later, by other major corporations. Hazel, starring Broadway actress Shirley Booth in the title role, ran for more than five years during the 1960s; the television series based on that play appeared on NBC for four years, then moved to CBS.

Shortly after his discharge from the army, Key was offered the opportunity to rejoin J. Walter Thompson in New York as a writer. Instead, he opted to remain a cartoonist and to work at home, where he could watch his children grow up. "That's the most marvelous thing in the world to be able to do," says Key. "How many men have that? Practically none." Many artists feel that they cannot work effectively at home. Wasn't it especially difficult when the children were small? "Not at all," says Key. "I love children. When my kids came up to my studio, I would just put them on my lap and keep on drawing. Sometimes, their antics would give me ideas." For more than a decade, Key also produced a two-page feature cartoon called "Diz and Liz" for Jack and Jill.

After nearly a half-century of cartooning and writing, Key feels that he is doing his best work now. He is often asked why he doesn't do a "Hazel" panel or strip for Sunday papers. "Hazel has been very good to me," says Key, "but I don't want to become wholly involved with one feature. I love to write, too, and draw other cartoons. I like to write books, movies, stories, almost anything. At present, I am working on a musical comedy about Hazel. If I did a Sunday panel or strip, I wouldn't have time for other things. Life is stimulating and fun and there are so many things that I like to do, so many areas I want yet to explore. That's why I don't want to identify solely with Hazel."

Identify or not, this agile, ever-curious, and always optimistic creative artist shares many of the upbeat characteristics of his most famous character.
A chronicle is essentially a “book of time”, a narration of historical events. Although a chronicle usually focuses on a particular city or province or dynasty, many as far back as the early Middle Ages are universal in scope in their attempt to account for the origins and future of the earth and of man. The local narrative is thus embedded in a context of world history.

Chroniclers such as those of Eusebius of Caesarea (263–339?) and Orosius (385–420) were known in Christian antiquity, but it seems—inasmuch as one nineteenth-century bibliographer mentions nearly two thousand such manuscripts or parts thereof still extant—that in the Middle Ages they actually became somewhat popular. Many of these were rhymed, such as that of Rudolf von Ems, which details Old Testament history.

Today, chronicles from the Middle Ages are most easily accessible through published reprints such as the “monumental” thirty-two folio-size volumes of the Monumenta Germaniae Historica, or Karl Hegel’s Die Chroniken der Deutschen Städte. Yet literally thousands still exist in manuscript only, and await the efforts of ambitious researchers. Apart from the work of bibliographers, the actual historical scholarship on chronicles from the Middle Ages or the Renaissance is meager, a fact bemoaned by the German historian Leopold von Ranke as early as 1824—and very little has changed since then.

5. One such bibliographical enumeration is the earlier work of Marquard Freher
Frank L. Borchardt in *German Antiquity in Renaissance Myth* maintains that this neglect is in large part due to the modern outlook and habit of thought. We have a penchant for precision and are at sea when compelled to deal with the "truth" in terms of cultural symbols and legends. "The rising historical science of the nineteenth century made these sources available but was itself the root of many historiographic problems. One of the most unfortunate and relentless trends in medieval and Renaissance historiography has been, until most recently, the application of nineteenth- and twentieth-century standards of historical accuracy, attempted objectivity, and independence of tradition to works and authors for whom these standards were virtually meaningless." 6

Ironically, this modern approach has been powerfully shaped by the critical stand of Ranke and his followers, who maintained that facts should be solidly established through trustworthy sources, and that if they could not be so established, they lacked value. So axiomatic has this attitude become that for the most part the modern historiographer assumes there to be no other possibility. But since the authors and compilers of chronologies in Renaissance Germany were ante-Ranke, their intellectual labors are better appreciated against the background of their ideological and moral beliefs and should not be measured against later standards of critical history. In fact, study reveals that the early Renaissance chroniclers were still heavily dependent for their principal sources of knowledge on the manuscript chronicles of the Middle Ages.

**HISTORICAL WRITING IN THE MIDDLE AGES**

History, as we know it today, had no place amongst the flourishing seven liberal arts of the medieval educational curriculum. 7 To a large

---


extent the lore of the past was preserved in school-text exercises for use in the study and practice of rhetoric. Similarly, events in the Bible were normally accepted literally by the general public and were used by the scholastics to establish the "spiritual" interpretation of the text itself. So Saint Jerome in one of his letters says: "The truth of history is fundamental to the spiritual understanding [of the sacred text]."

The ancient histories of Tacitus, Caesar, and Livy were looked upon in the Middle Ages as a sort of unused part of memory. Their apparent objectivity was admired, but not held up as a goal to be pursued for its own sake. The Bible had forced on the medieval consciousness its own framework of time and creation, conceived teleologically in Judaeo-Christian terms. No longer was human temporal experience imagined as being cyclical and futile, but instead, as progressing according to God's purpose. As the pages of time turned, so human existence and all worldly material things approached dissolution.

Thus, the focus of what historical thinking there was in the Middle Ages is circumscribed by the creation and the end of all things, as popularly imagined in the apocalyptic imagery of both the Jewish Holy Writings and the Christian New Testament. This perspective centered then on the present, and past events were relevant only insofar as they contributed to the understanding of the present.

Within this wider framework of the creation and the end of the world, historical thinking in the Middle Ages and early Renaissance was dominated by the notion of the sex aetates, or the six ages of man. Generally, this periodization of history is attributed to Augustine. In several of his works but especially in the City of God he conceives the epochs of human history as analogous to the six days of creation as described in Genesis. According to this allegorization, mankind has been living since the birth of Christ in the sixth and penultimate age. The final period will be that of the seventh day, which will terminate history. At that time mankind will be reunited with God. This division of time into periods formed the historical consciousness of those writing chronicles in the Middle Ages, and

8. Letter number 129.
eventually also became a basis for what is aptly described as the myth of the Holy Roman Empire.\textsuperscript{10}

As an alternate to the six ages, some chroniclers follow the plan of the four historical empires described by the prophet Daniel: the Babylonian, Persian, Greek, and Roman—the last of which was contemporaneous and would endure until the end of time. However, this last empire, the Roman, was radically changed by its transformation into what has been called, since the time of Frederick Barbarossa, the Holy Roman Empire. It was assumed by nearly all the chroniclers that if and when this empire should end, the world itself would be on the brink of destruction, and human history at its temporal end.

Whichever framework was followed, both the medieval and early Renaissance chroniclers saw the Holy Roman Empire as the divinely intended successor to the classical Roman empire and as a force that would endure until the dissolution of the material world. It is no wonder then that many of the early chronicles of the Middle Ages were dynastic in interest, or that they placed their own local history in this overarching context. Schematic thinking of this sort is apparent in the Renaissance chronicles to be found in the Syracuse University Library.

### EARLIER RENAISSANCE EXAMPLES

With the advent of the printer's art in the middle of the fifteenth century it was natural that some of the first imprints should also be chronicles. These were usually compiled from manuscripts at hand, normally with additions bringing the narration down to the time of the compiler. However, they demonstrated a shifted perspective, the knowledge of a wider world being opened up and charted by the great navigators. Addressing a wider audience through the medium of the printed text, they typically employed the vernacular, Latin being by then more the exception than the rule.

The best known of such universal histories in English is the *Polychronicon*, printed in 1492 at Westminster by William Caxton, a man of noted business acumen and a devotee of medieval themes. This book is the compilation of several medieval chronicles by the monk

\textsuperscript{10} Cf. Borchardt, op. cit., passim.
Roger of the Monastery of St. Werberg in Chester, who flourished about 1300. Some years later, Ralph (or Ranulf) Higden, a monk of the same monastery, amplified Roger's work and gave it the title *Polychronicon*.\textsuperscript{11} Caxton used the work in its English translation by Trevisa, which dates from about 1387. As editor, Caxton was obliged to update the English of Trevisa, and as usual he wrote an introduction. His final touch was one that became characteristic of many editors as they prepared the older manuscript chronicles for the new wonder of the printing press—he added to Roger's work a chapter, "Liber Ultimus", which extended the medieval history down to his own day.

The George Arents Research Library is privileged to hold among its incunabula two of the best examples of early printed chronicles. The first of these is the famous Nuremberg Chronicle, or Liber Cronica, of Hartmann Schedel in the Latin edition of 1493. Schedel's work was also published in the same year in a German edition: *Buch der Cronicken und gedechnis wurdigern geschichten von anbegyn der werlt bis auf diese unsere zeit*. As the German title indicates, the work is much less an account of Nuremberg than a history of the world. Schedel was a physician and humanist of late-fifteenth-century Nuremberg, who counted among his acquaintances other humanists of his time. His association with the press of Anton Koberger at Nuremberg was to produce a chronicle remarkable not only for its readableness and attractiveness, but also for its considerable success as a business venture.\textsuperscript{12} This prototype of successful chronicle publishing went through several editions, and possibly as many as three thousand copies were printed. To our knowledge it is the only fifteenth-century chronicle that has been photographically reproduced in folio size for twentieth-century reading.\textsuperscript{13}

Schedel's *Liber Cronica* with its several thousand woodcuts is indeed a thing of beauty that has delighted studious readers for five


\textsuperscript{12} Vide Adrian Wilson, *The Making of the Nuremberg Chronicle* (Amsterdam: Nico Israel, 1976).

A woodcut of the City of Cologne, from Johann Koelhoff's chronicle. The cathedral towers were completed finally in the nineteenth century.
hundred years. True to his humanist outlook, Schedel gave place in his history to the learned figures of the past as well as to the deeds of men of power.

The second fifteenth-century chronicle at Syracuse is the *Cronica van der Hilliger Stat vā Coelle*, referred to frequently as the Cologne Chronicle. It was compiled by Johann Koelhoff, an otherwise unknown citizen of Cologne, about his beloved city and was published there in 1499. Koelhoff’s narrative begins with the creation of the world and mentions a few incidents from antiquity as well as certain figures from ancient Greece and Rome, who are imagined as the forebears of Europeans. For the myth of the Holy Roman Empire required that Europe, through the German emperors, be the direct heir of both the classical tradition and the imperium.

For the most part Koelhoff’s work is little more than a compilation of other source materials available to him, and is, until he comes to the history of Cologne itself, without much evidence of intelligent editing or reworking of sources.14 Only in the period from 1446 to about 1499, corresponding to his own lifetime, does the chronicle assume some independence of expression. The author makes no claims of being on a par with his humanist contemporaries. His language is that of the common folk of Cologne, quaint to the modern ear and difficult to read. At times he even favors causes that are inimical to the power of the bishop. The woodcuts in this rare chronicle are notable for the many illustrations of coats of arms, most of which have been meticulously painted by hand.

**CHRONICLES IN LEOPOLD VON RANKE’S LIBRARY**

It is a truism that the sixteenth century was a time of expanding horizons. Favorite themes from antiquity as well as accounts of explorations into unknown regions of the globe provided the European humanist tradition new perspectives for changing and widening accepted views of the world and of man’s place within it. In addition, the recension of ancient and medieval manuscripts, which were being collected avidly, added a certain critical aspect to the editing of sources. By then, selected narratives could be printed and easily multiplied;

response from an enlarged audience called for greater attention to exactitude.

One characteristic result of these stretched horizons was that global geography began to find a place in the writing of history. At that point the genre of chronicle writing, already well established from the Middle Ages, transcended the boundaries of a local focus in universal history to incorporate broader elements of geography. In some instances this fact is reflected in the title, where 'chronicle' is dropped in favor of 'cosmography'. From the middle of the sixteenth century, one can document a flourishing of such works—most notably from Germany, but also from France, the Lowlands, and Spain.

The literal-minded historian of today is apt to look askance at such cosmographies, chronologies, or chronicles. Although they often provide details of events close to the writer's time and the diplomatic and political developments of his region, the twentieth-century reader tends to distrust the sycophantic tone, which in a single narrative can proceed from the very story of creation, through ancient and medieval history, directly into the genealogy and political history of the current magnificent monarch, happily reigning. The etiquette of our age is certainly not that of the sixteenth century. We must conclude, therefore, that the genre of writing that we study here has something of the character of a curiosity. Nevertheless, it provides a step towards a more balanced view of world history, one which, under the influence of Ranke, is now much more concerned with objectivity and with the non-partisan character of sources.

The volumes themselves are fascinating. Several are beautiful examples of Renaissance bookbinding, and nearly all have woodcuts imaginatively depicting people and events from the past. One has watercolors added to impressions made from woodcuts. Others seem to have responded to the need for an easy-to-read picture book of local and world history, and were useful as well, as reference works. The illustrations and maps are, it is true, often dependent on fancy, yet in their own way, they are thought-provoking and delightful to behold. One can easily imagine that such chronicles were the Na-

tional Geographies of the time, in all likelihood treasured as much as the family Bible.

In any case, the five Renaissance chronicles described in the following pages are wonderful examples of the book arts of the period following that of incunabula. Although all show signs of wear from use during the four hundred years of their existence, all five are important witnesses to a significant stage in the history of printing and of the book itself. They document the mind of Renaissance man as he rewrites history in an age of invention and exploration.


This chronicle is dedicated to the “noble, strong, best, perspicacious, pious, wise, worthy and beloved gentlemen mayors” of the several cantons in Switzerland that together form what the author calls a “loblicher Eydgnoschaft”, that is, the “praiseworthy confederation” constituting the Swiss union. This folio volume of 42 centimeters in height is bound with leather on boards and has been elaborately decorated in the “Deutsche Renaissance” style. The ornamentation includes numerous geometric patterns, stamped faces of sovereigns, and a series of religious stampings portraying original sin, the crucifixion, and the resurrection. The small crucifixion bears the earlier date 1534; it must have been made for an earlier imprint. The metal clasps of the volume are lacking.

The dedication reveals a clearly delineated theological purpose:

Among all stories historical books of old tales are for men dear, encouraging, and fruitful for the reading (my dear gentlemen), not necessarily because they represent to us all types of sketches of lands and peoples, but also insofar as they contain many descriptions of good and bad persons, indeed of those performing praiseworthy and unpraiseworthy deeds, whereby we have then many examples of desirable virtues and of despicable vices. For that reason histories are strong reminders and clear examples of the wonderful works, deeds and judgments of almighty God, whereby he at every
season rewards his friends and true worshipers, as also he
punishes and extirpates his enemies and despisers.

The first ten pages of Stumpf's book are double-paged maps of
Europe, Germany, France, and Switzerland. The map of Europe is
particularly interesting in that the view is from the north and towards
the south. England and Ireland are to the lower right, whereas the
Mediterranean is at the top. The plotting of longitude and latitude
is in place on the map of the world, the "Universalis Cosmographeia", but America appears as an island, and Ethiopia is on the
wrong side of Africa. Stumpf's map construction was a matter more
of imagination than of measurement.

Stumpf begins his chronicle with a first chapter on Europe, "one
third of the earth", and then proceeds to the ancient history of the
Germanic peoples. The last chapter dwells on the "praiseworthy sworn
association" of the Swiss nation of his time. This chronicle is espe-
cially noteworthy for its woodcuts of coats of arms, and of battle
scenes that are used several times—at places where the text describes
fighting.

Sebastian Münster. *Cosmographey: das ist, Beschreibung Aller Länder
Herrschaften und füinemesten Stetten des gantzen Erdbodens sampt ihren
Gelegenheiten, Eygenschafften, Religion, Gebräuchen, Geschichten und
Hantierungen, &c.* Basel: Sebastian Henricpetri, 1598.

Sebastian Münster's *Cosmographey* is one of the best known of the
genre. It remained popular for several hundred years and went through
a variety of editions and translations. The Syracuse copy is bound in
pigskin over boards, with reinforced metal corners. The clasps are
lost. The book is folio size with a cover designed in a geometric
"Deutsche Renaissance" style. It is a heavy volume, weighing about
seven pounds. In the preface the author expresses enthusiasm over
his work: "No life on earth [is] better than that of the historian".

16. Edgerton's essay, referenced in the previous footnote, illustrates how important
the Ptolemaic grid became in the Renaissance for the visualizing of space for both
geographers and painters.
Towards the end of the second page he states his purpose:

A compendium and short account of all lands of the earth I have sought to write for the common man, so that he may enjoy thereby the reading, as also to show the scholar the way a person should write German chronology, and indeed worthwhile cosmography, as I have understood and began with this work eighteen years ago, following the very learned man Straboni. . . . To describe the whole world, as is my intention in this book, requires a heart of great fortitude and patience, as well as a toiling and informed spirit, which has read much, seen much, heard and experienced much, which however would not be enough, if a right judgment is not there also, through which a person might be able to distinguish the true from the false, and the certain from the uncertain. Except for the Divine Books there is no reading in the world more full of pleasure or useful for man than the reading of histories, where they, as should be, are written independently of this or that party. For what is history except ready-made examples through which a person can see how this or that affair has eventuated, as human device and Providence most often so uncertainly, indeed blindly, and all things so certainly have from the hand of God, who works everything in everything. Every counsel we may take goes askew, when it is not attuned to the providence of God.

Münster's book, 1469 pages long, is profusely illustrated with literally hundreds of woodcuts. They depict in some detail and accuracy individual cities of the known world, the most distant being Cusco in what is now Peru. Other themes pictured by the woodcuts include animals and insects, cannibals and misshapen men of faraway lands, such as those reputed to live in Asia. The last and fifth part of Münster's work describes Columbus's voyages to "the new world", also known as "America". His book has a map of these newly found regions, and explains that they consist of islands existing somewhere between Spain and Asia.

Münster was a Hebraist of some note as well as a humanist. His interests were universal, and even today his efforts at learning inspire
awe and the attention of bibliographers. As Gerald Strauss has written, Münster’s *Cosmogaphey* was “an encyclopedia in the sixteenth-century sense: universal in scope, touching on nearly all subjects, incorporating, or making use of, all pertinent sources of information as they were or became available, and aiming at completeness. . . . Though the manner in which such knowledge was conveyed to the reader was informal, often anecdotal, the amount of solid learning packed into the text makes perusal a formidable task.”

One senses in Münster’s recension of textual sources that his ideas about the Empire and about Germany are well sustained by a knowledge of world history. His humanist viewpoint required that man should see himself in an accurate context of place and time.


The smallest of these chronicles in Ranke’s library is a slender volume on the history of the city of Mainz. It survives in an unimposing nineteenth-century binding needed, no doubt, to preserve the book itself. As its overly long title indicates, the scope of this work is much less ambitious than that of many of the others. Nevertheless, the work includes a title page and sixty-nine plates that have been hand-painted in watercolors and portray the coats of arms of the various bishops, archbishops, and electors of the city of Mainz. Thus, in its own way, this slender volume represents a considerable and pleasing change in the history of book illustrations from the simplicity of the monochromatic woodcuts.

The book contains a short chapter on the inception of printing at Mainz. Corthoys quotes others who believe that printing started in Strasbourg or in Holland, but ascribes its actual invention to Johann

The title page of *Cosmographey* with a woodcut portrait of Sebastian Münster.
Gutenberg at Mainz and his helpers Johann Faust, Johann Medimbach, and Peter Schöffer.


In Eberhard Happel’s work, which comprises fourteen volumes, we find a newer, more contemporary type of chronicle. The author purports to relate only the most significant happenings or the “historical kernel” of each of the years in question, beginning with 1618 and the Thirty Years’ War.

Happel’s preface bears noticing for stating the purpose of his chronicle:

If no one from our fathers’ times had written, so would we have now not the slightest to say about their deeds and institutions, virtues and vices, happiness and unhappiness, increase and losses, victory and defeats, land and cities, building and destruction, praiseworthy and tyrannical governments, good and evil deeds, life and death, but everything would be alike with their death and passing, yes all memory of their deeds only a dream, or even more often a fable, instead of true history. . . . Therefore, it is in the world a most noteworthy thing that history, insofar as it happens here and there, at every time be described, and hereafter from time to time be preserved in writing and by the printing press, for they are and remain forever living, and give their posterity an enduring and special use, as much a warning for one against vice, as for another an inspiration towards good and worthy deeds.

Later, Happel quotes Philo as saying: “Historiam lectio prodest ad parandam virtutem, & ad curam Reipublicae” (The reading of history profits the cultivation of character, as well as the care of the republic).

This chronicle is bound in vellum together with four other later historical works also from the sixteenth century, and is 19 centimeters high. The bookplate reads “Ex libris Christiani Caroli Ludovici de Savigny”.

In his dedication to the abbot of the monastery of Fulda, Müntzer acknowledges his debt to the “Fulda Chronicle”, but mentions it as “sketchy”. His own efforts will, he hopes, fill it out and provide also a short history of the Abbey of Fulda and its abbots from its beginning to his time.

Müntzer’s work is squarely based on biblical foundations. Recalling the prophecy of Elijah, he states forthrightly that the age of the world is six thousand years, comprising two thousand spent futilely between Adam and Abraham, two thousand under the Jewish law, and two thousand as “the days of Christ”. After that, the world is expected to end.

The style of Müntzer’s work is for the most part simply to range one paragraph after another much like a diary, each entry relating an event he thought worthy of note. So, for example:

In the year one thousand and three Vuilligesius, the son of a waggoner, became bishop of Mainz, and had everywhere painted in his chambers a wheel, thereby to be ever mindful of his origin and not to exalt himself too high because of his office. For which reason since his time every bishop of Mainz carries a wheel in his coat of arms.

To Leopold von Ranke, who admired objectivity and whose proclaimed motto was “wie es eigentlich gewesen” (as it really was), the value of the cosmographies might well be questionable. As we have seen, Ranke collected a number of these volumes for his own library. However, he was reserved in his appreciation of them, preferring to draw on diplomatic and official documents for his own writing, an approach that, ironically, in recent years has been criticized for concentrating too much on the great heads of state. Nevertheless, these
early books of knowledge held a fascination for him. In discussing the extent of their worth, Ranke wrote: "The rest of the chronicles, both printed and unprinted, from every country and from every city, stemming from both recent as well as from olden times, are so numerous that I shan't even touch upon them. If in the earliest of times they are full of fables, those from the sixteenth century, which are numerically the greatest, are more believable; yes, some of them are attractive, even beautiful."20

The Punctator’s World: A Discursion

BY GWEN G. ROBINSON

"The Punctator’s World: A Discursion" is a study, in several parts, of the origins of punctuation and its development to the present day. Part One, herewith, follows the subject from its murky beginnings into the broad daylight of classical usage.

The modern reader is more apt than not to yawn at the mention of punctuation. But the subject has had its admirers. Robert Monteith compared it to the “pulleys of a Ship”, without which there would be confusion and disorder. Ben Jonson praised it for being as unifying to the sentence “as the blood is thorow the body”. Samuel Rousseau recommended it to “lamentably ignorant and careless” youths as “so absolutely necessary to the right understanding of any literary composition, that it is a matter of astonishment so little attention has been paid to it in our seminaries of learning”. In the judgment of Joseph Robertson punctuation has contributed “to the perspicuity, and consequently to the beauty, of every composition”. It is a “system of adminicula”, wrote John Earle, that is useful to guard unwary readers “against confusion and collapse”, its province of activity being “the higher region of Grammar” and hence the very “structure and articulation of thought”.

“Dear James”, wrote William Cobbett (in 1819) to acquaint his son with the serious nature of “the point and marks” in writing. “The sense, or meaning, of the words is very much dependent upon


Syracuse University Library Associates Courier Volume XXIII, Number 2 (Fall 1988)
the points which are used along with them.” To illustrate this proposition, he added the following tale:

A Committee of the House of Lords made a report to the House, respecting certain political clubs. A secretary of one of those clubs presented a petition to the House, in which he declared positively, and offered to prove at the bar, that a part of the report was totally false. At first their Lordships blustered: their high blood seemed to boil: but at last, the Chairman of the Committee apologized for the report by saying, that there ought to have been a full point where there was only a comma! and that it was this, which made that false, which would otherwise have been, and which was intended to be, true!2

These testimonies give voice to the distinguished service of punctuation, which, as we see, has been well valued in the past. Though it is no longer so popularly discussed a topic, editorial reverence for the precision that it purports to bring to the text has by no means evaporated in these ending years of the twentieth century.

“There is a theory”, say the Fowlers (1906) with an air of disapproval, “that scientific or philosophic matter should be punctuated very fully and exactly”. 3 Such a concern for the reader’s safety in intellectual terrain marks an attitude that lingers today. One notes with a degree of amusement, however—so moot are the lineaments of the common point—that British courts of law are even today en-

2. William Cobbett, A Grammar of the English Language (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1984), 58–59. A few decades later G. P. Marsh, in his Lectures on the English Language, 4th ed. (New York: Scribner, 1863), 415, took up this issue of punctuation in legal instruments. “The principles of punctuation are subtle”, he warned, “and an exact logical training is requisite” for the precise application of the points. “Naturally, then, mistakes . . . are frequent, so much so, in fact, that in the construction of private contracts, and even of statutes, judicial tribunals do not much regard punctuation; and some eminent jurists have thought that legislative enactments and public documents should be without it.”

couraged to disregard legislational punctuation in their interpretation of the law.

So then, what is punctuation that it should draw forth this barrage of opinion? What history underlies its presence on the page? To initiate our inquiry, let us say that punctuation is a group of devices used primarily to shape written language into comprehensible units. That done, it seeks to refine: to clarify meaning and add vitality. Our discussion of the punctator's art, described thus broadly, will include matters of word separation, headings, and chapter divisions, as well as the placement of pausal points (or puncts: periods, commas, colons, semicolons), the dash (also a pausal sign), quotation marks, italics, and parentheses. Samples of discordant views will be examined and their perpetrators accounted for. Within the extensive bibliographies that relate to this subject, one finds the names of eminent philosophers, logicians, psychologists, theologians, printers, writers, teachers, grammarians. How can one best guide the receiving mind through text? This question has inspired argument for many centuries and, delightfully (since no one needs to die for it), continues to do so.

There are today two attitudes towards the governing of words on the page, and both have their origins in the deep structure of the human mind. The euphuistic (or elocutionary) approach addresses the problem of rendering speech into text in a way that most enhances its aural retrieval. It reached its maturity in monastic times and survived in moderate vigor through Shakespeare's era. It is today still effective for dramatic emphasis. Though its presence in serious explication is less frequent in modern writing, one discerns it at play in speeches, sermons, lectures, poetry, or conversation—wherever meaning is shaped for the ear.

The counterpart to the euphuistic method of punctuating is the logical (or syntactical) one. In its purview lies the elucidation of sentence structure. Being the more intellectual, or inward, of the two styles, it focuses on the subtle distinctions of hierarchical importance, on grammatical groupings, and appeals to the brain more through the eye than through the ear. In English literature the logical style flourished energetically in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries.

Thus the two systems, though growing side by side, have flowered
in different seasons. Writing today favors the logical style, which predominates in books, newspapers, and magazines. But now that the common statement has become less windy, and centuries of literary tradition have fortified the reader's syntactical expectations, pausal marks internal to the sentence have become less necessary.

FROM ORALITY TO LITERACY: THE FIRST TEXTUAL DIVISIONS

The Word of John the Evangelist was an oral word, for the early communicating mind had only the medium of speech at its disposal. "Language is primarily speech. Its grammatical code was formed in the course of centuries by innumerable generations of illiterate speakers, and even in the most elevated literary style we are obliged to conform to what has become, in this way, the general practice." Oral systems go back to prehistory. The age of script, measurable as a single small unit in the lifetime of the human species, evolved from and remains symbiotically dependent upon that still-not-understood capability of man to communicate with his breath and his mouth an infinite variety of ideas. Until the invention of writing, the communication of thought was almost entirely through speech. A normal, unimpaired man dealt with it through his ears. That immutable physiological fact set the mold of his social life. "The common conventions of language as encoded in [the] brain are acoustic, not visual", says Professor Eric A. Havelock; this would seem to be generally the case, with the relatively rare exception of the congenitally deaf.

Alphabets, which are themselves inert to meaning, transmit speech into visibility phoneme by phoneme. A letter symbolizes for the eye the sound we hear in our heads, as our brains formulate words and set them onto their syntactical track. When in the eighth century B.C. the Greeks devised a pure, acoustically transparent, complete-

with-vowels alphabet to replace the less flexible ideograms and syllabaries of neighboring civilizations, an enormous new tool came into being. Suddenly, every meaningful particle of sound could be represented without ambiguity; whatever could be said was imitable in writing. The body of human knowledge, hitherto embedded in song and poetry, broke loose from its acoustical matrix and moved towards visual space, where it would increasingly find itself analyzed, questioned, reassorted, abstracted.

But initially, the release was magic; for the common man it was as ego-inspiriting as a bright morning. Evidence of his expanding self-assertiveness has come down to us (not very modestly), scratched onto potsherds—baked clay being nearly unpulverizable: I myself made this! I, X of Y, wrote this!

With practice came volubility. Statements of more ambitious hexameter lengths found their way into paens and prayers, onto pots and tombs, and aroused, in theory at least, intimations of punctuation. Two millennia would be needed to teach it the behavior of a proper concept. But grow it would. As time passed, intonation, emphasis, tempo, volume, facial expressions, and gestures—all so vital to the success of the spoken word—came to be more and more precisely conjured up by the punctuating instruments that lay beyond the proper dominion of alphabet letters.

To see the problem as it might have appeared at the inception of writing, imagine the following statement in its spoken form.

7. In Origins of Western Literacy (pp. 22–38), Havelock gives a convincing analysis of the difference between the Greek alphabet and earlier Linear B, Semitic/Aramaic, and Phoenician syllabaries. He discusses as well his theory that oral poetry, by virtue of its needing to be remembered, is rigidified by clichés and metrical necessities to a degree that cannot reflect the variety and novelty of human experience.

In his Preface to Plato (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 1963), Havelock carried this notion to its fuller extent. It was, he thought, this unthinking, repetitive, hypnotic feature of oral literature for which Plato had expunged poetry from his Republic. In the fourth century B.C. Plato stood at the line of clash between the hand-me-down body of knowledge embellished by the oral arts and the catapulting release of the intellect provided by literacy.

8. Today, thanks to the efforts of linguistic scholars, the international phonetic alphabet can indicate vowel and consonant differentiations, pitch, stresses, and intonation with very nearly exact precision.
My mother said your father stole my pig and ran away.

With no experience in linear progression or orientation of letters, the early scribe, would have dealt with it like an autistic kindergartner.

But suppose the message was intended to convey:—

“‘My mother’, said your father, ‘stole my pig and ran away’.”

Or:—

“My mother said, ‘Your father stole my pig and ran away’.”

Despite the exact repetition of the words, we still do not know what might, under conceivable circumstances, have been crucial to our subsequent behavior: Who stole whose pig?

The deficiencies of the written message must have been apparent from the start. But, as letter-making grew easier, evidenced by the uniformity of letter formation and the straightening line, scribal attention quite rightly turned to syllables, the true coin of speech; for speech-sounds have minimal respect for the individual word. They incline, instead, to song, where syllables flow seamlessly—a marriage of rhythm with meaning. For example:

\[\text{Fairlove you faint with wandering in the wood.}\]

As scribes grew more facile with their craft, so full-blown statements poured into lettering. These more complex lines continued to be squeezed together in the inherited manner without word differentiation, and a habit set in that not even the availability of tractable writing surfaces could lay to rest. Although raised dots or even

9. J. Rendel Harris, “Stichometry I”, American Journal of Philology 4 (1883): 150. Also interesting is the fact that elementary-school dictations tend to bring to the surface basic confusions between syllables (the units most meaningful to the ear) and words (the units most meaningful to the eye).
spaces between words can be seen on extant Greek and Roman inscriptions and papyri as early as the seventh century B.C., they were not consistently or even commonly used until the sixth and seventh centuries A.D.\textsuperscript{10}—so adaptable is the human mind to hardship and so slow to accept improvement. By the tenth century A.D., division of words—first big from big, then big from little, finally little from little—was a fairly regularized feature of all Latin texts. In the Greek, vacillation continued, even as late as the fifteenth century.\textsuperscript{11} Writing, as we know it now, developed out of the apparently reluctant recognition that words, however tightly knit in the flow of communication, represent separate concepts and retain them in recombination.\textsuperscript{12}

\textsuperscript{10.} Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th ed., s.v. “palaeography”.
\textsuperscript{11.} Writers today use simple space between words. But an equally interesting alternative is the trick used by several word processing programs to save space in document storage. The last letter in each word is identified by the addition of 128 to its ASCII code number, which is effectively like: jimwantsthrebeer.
\textsuperscript{12.} In Japanese text there is still no word separation and the reader is expected to scan the line, differentiating as he goes along. He is helped by particles (indicating the subject, the object, the indirect object, or that a question is being asked), and by the convention that the subject-predicate-verb order will obtain. The \ (= comma) is used to demark a word group (and also used after the introduction of the subject), and the \ (= period) for signal of conclusion. Clues to word integrity lie in the visual unity of each of the kanji (which represent whole words) but not in the string of katakana and hiragana syllables. The eye, as it passes along through the continuous sequence of characters, can indeed become confused as to where the word boundaries lie. In grammar lessons, Japanese school children are occasionally drilled in the practice of word division.


T. J. Brown in his article “Punctuation” in the 15th edition of the New Encyclopaedia Britannica notes that early Arabic manuscripts had no punctuation, since the structure of the language “ensured that the main and subordinate clauses were readily distinguishable without it”. Early written Chinese also was structurally clear without punctuation; but in the nineteenth century hollow circles came to be used to mark off the ends of phrases, and in 1912 the European comma, full point, question- and exclamation-marks also became common. The Japanese apparently did not find the construction of texts in Chinese so simple from the eighth century on and attempted to clarify for themselves the meaning and grammatical constructions by use of a complicated punctuational system of kueriten and kunten. In their own language the Japanese adopted the Western notion of comma and full stop during the Edo period and later added the dash and quotation marks.
This fragment of an official order, 250 B.C., illustrates a lack of word separation (from the Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th ed., s.v. "palaeography").

\[\text{—eis toto\'hov kai t\'h—} \\
\text{—t\'e\'p\'a kai e\'ik\'o\'st\'h\'s—} \\
\text{—th\'e\'s to\'is b\'h\'\'s\'a\'r\'o\'i\'s e\'p—} \\
\text{—t\'e\'p\'a kai e\'ik\'o\'st\'h\'s—} \\
\text{—o\'n\'i\'k\'o\'v kai to\'us e\'r\'h\'m\'o—} \\
\text{—s\'f\'r\'a\'g\'i\'s\'a\'m\'e\'n\'o\'v a\'p\'o\'s—}\]

In view of this long-term disregard for the reader’s comfort,\(^{13}\) it is surprising to discover that topic divisions were being regularly marked

13. That writing, for a millennium, should continue to demand so much of the reader is astonishing. In the fourth century B.C. Aristotle was already discussing the brain’s penchant for the assimilatable minutiae over vast reality. Why then was writing so slow to incorporate into its mimicry of speech the system of pauses? Undoubtedly, the source of trouble lay in the professional camaraderie of scriveners and in a natural human resistance to change. Perhaps also there was an element of the empathetic You-know-what-I-mean syndrome, a prevalent feature of talk amongst the inarticulate. In any case undifferentiated words, undifferentiated phrases, clauses, sentences survived by habit and were fostered both by medieval orality and by the authoritative example of the medieval Christian Church.
off by Greek scribes as early as the fourth century B.C. A short horizontal stroke, called the paragraphos, was inserted between written lines to indicate a change of subject. Although Aristotle (384–322 B.C.) discussed phrasing and the periodos (in the sense of cognitive closure), the paragraphos was the only actual punctuation mark in use during his time. Thus, the reader was essentially flying blind—with no perspective on his future, no semaphoric headings, folios, indices, or contents page to guide his expectations. Though rhetorical pauses in the flow of language were deemed by Aristotle to be important to the sense, no way of indicating them textually was yet in operation.

Gradually, as writing gained the confidence of versatile intellects, it probed into unorthodox areas and forced the content of the human mind and the psychology of thought to change. Though not as immediate or sensitive a medium as speech, writing had the special gift of surmounting both time and distance. Through its offices, complex statements and transitory, unique flights of the imagination could be set down with a prospect of permanence and ready retrieval, should the memory falter. What was written could be consulted, checked at different locations on future days, and thought about in abstract and in historical, comparative ways. "Abstractly sequential, classificatory, explanatory examination of phenomena or of stated truths is impossible without writing and reading. Human beings in primary oral cultures, those untouched by writing in any form, learn a great deal and possess and practice great wisdom, but they do not 'study'." What the memory could not retain would now endure in writing, embedded in a vocabulary that was hundreds of times larger as well as retentive of historical nuance. The laboring mind, freed from the bondage of the mnemonic expression previously relied upon to hold together cultural memory—its clichés, formulaic repetitions,

17. Ibid. On this point Ong states: “The grapholect known as standard English has accessible for use a recorded vocabulary of at least a million and a half words, of which not only the present meanings but also hundreds of thousands of past meanings are known. A simply oral dialect will commonly have resources of only a few thousand words, and its users will have virtually no knowledge of the real semantic history of any of these words.”

81
metrical phrasing, and epic delineations of character—was enabled to communicate out-of-the-way ideas. Before the Greek alphabet there was no real science, or philosophy, or variegated, responsive, fully vocabularized literature; nor did there exist so completely a literate civilization. The changes wrought by the alphabet went deep, for it turned the human mind to ambitions of immortality, to the logical outcome of action and thought, and most vitally, to individual initiative, to the ego. In favoring young discoverers and activating written record keeping, the literate culture downgraded the position of the wise old folk upon whose memories tribal lore had heretofore relied.

Learning to alphabetize language was so simple that children could do it, and did. Even Athenian girls were taught their letters to the degree that they might better run the household. In the late fifth and fourth centuries B.C., literacy, as measured in terms of numbers of readers and the availability of books, was apparently widespread among Greeks. There is copious evidence of this in extant graffiti, in contemporaneous mention of bookshops, libraries, schools, the reading of ledgers, and the sending of letters as if they were in no way unusual items. Strabo reports that Aristotle himself had built up a large and diverse collection of books at the Lyceum, similar to that at Plato’s Academy. Euripides was reputed to have acquired for

18. In addition should be mentioned the tremendous impact of this new mental stimulus on art and architecture, where space and balance came into prominent new treatment. With the dilation of the visual sense, natural appearances were perceived afresh and delineated, as, for example, in the broken stance and realistic facial expressions of fifth-century statuary. Time, too, was viewed differently. The world-view of simultaneity, fostered by oral-aural attitudes and by the che-sara-sara mythología, concatenated into a chronological progression that could be used to explain the present in terms of the past or to manipulate the future by actions in the present. The alphabet, by developing the eye at the expense of the ear, is in these respects fundamental to present-day perspective in art, in history, and in narrative. For more on these subjects, see John Boardman’s chapter “Greek Art and Architecture” in The Oxford History of the Classical World (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1986), 288–89; and Marshall McLuhan’s The Gutenberg Galaxy (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), 22, 30, 54, 56–57.


his own pleasure and personal use a library of considerable size. The novelty of a literate public was so astonishing that before long it was providing meat for jokes. Not surprisingly, the works of Aristophanes (ca. 448–ca. 388 B.C.) contain numerous references to books and reading. For an example, here is a chorus from *The Frogs*. It is singing exuberantly about the audience it faces (and David Barrett assures us that we may reasonably imagine an audience of 40,000):

They've all got textbooks now—
However high your brow,
They won't be shaken.

No talking down to these:
That's all outdated!
For native wit alone
They're highly rated;
But now they've learnt to read
It's real tough stuff they need;
They don't want chicken-feed—
They're educated!

(from David Barrett’s 1964 translation of Aristophanes’ *The Frogs* for Penguin Books)

During all this busy excitement, punctuation lay dormant. Nothing was done to cut the extrusion of visual wordage into manageable pieces. Those under Grecian influence who had been schooled in reading and writing during the literary freedom of the Classical and Hellenic periods were lucky indeed. Those who lived during the political disruptions that followed were not, culturally, so fortunate; for books and learning thrive best in an established, well-assured society. As public literacy declined, so reading and writing took on an aura of privilege. The average reader was left behind, to hack his own unsignposted way through swales of idiosyncratic, glutinous alphabet letters. It is certainly conceivable that unbroken, undifferentiated text contributed to the medieval subsidence into archaism, when literature became again the specialist craft of scribes and scholars, and no longer the pleasure of ordinary people.

EARLY EUPHUISTIC POINTING

As papyrus superseded clay, linen, bark, and tanned hide, it became time for the now swiftly generated written line to be pared into more digestible morsels than the paragraph. The literary muse was beginning to produce prolifically—to an extent that the conservative Socrates found regrettable. As he explained to Phaedrus, the written word was nothing but a lifeless image of the spoken word. It had no vitality, demanded no reply, and if used extensively, would come to supplant memory, as indeed it has.

In oral societies communication draws its lifeblood from participation—from the action of debate, riposte, affirmation, and rebuttal. Around the living sound of voice, rhetoric had set up rules of play that would in time shape text as well, so that the human intellect, which can be compared to a purblind worm burrowing through compost, might continue through the new medium to find the most rewarding route to comprehension. Socrates was unaware of, or at least expressed no concern about, the walled-in effect of memorized knowledge. A thinker like Socrates—or rather, Plato—living in the boundary centuries between orality and literacy, had much to consider in suiting his ideas to the written word. With the likelihood that his audience would equally enjoy and be benefitted by either the traditional oral style or the interiorized style that book reading encouraged, his quandary was perhaps not a devastating one. But in time it would grow very real. For often enough the constringencies required for the ear's delight—a graceful antithesis, a sound metre, parallel phrasing—will conflict with the optimal elucidation of logical structural relationships. How can one best implant a thought in someone else's head? Through the sensuous, sociable, extrovert ear?


23. It is amazing to read of the African talking drums, which successfully reproduce the sounds of speech to convey them over long distances. Drumbeats imitate the rhythms of commonplace word clusters and fixed expressions of standard themes; for nothing novel or elaborate can be communicated in this way. Two pitches render the intonation of this surrogate language, and simultaneous strikes of each mark the punctuational pause in the otherwise unabsorbable flow of sound. For a detailed description see Walter J. Ong, Interfaces of the Word (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1977), 92–120.
or the implacable eye? Indeed, it can be war. This basic line-up—so remindful of Manichean dark and light, of body against soul, intuition against intellect, id against ego—has generated what might be called a punctatorial dilemma.

Our first real glimpse at the 'shadier' type of communication, that is, the rhythmic, audible type that offers delights of an unintellectual nature, comes from what is known of the writing and rhetorical teachings of the sophist Gorgias of Leontini (ca. 485–ca. 380 B.C.), who sought as far as possible to strike the grand note. One is reminded in reading about him of an ambitious tenor, straining his audience's patience with an elegant but tedious opera seria. Regarded as the creator of 'artifical Greek prose' (a kind of extravagant prose-poetry that tended to obscure meaning), Gorgias urged lavish ornamentation, a florid diction, and phrase pairings that, in effect, jingled like verse. Luscious words and rhythms, he claimed, gave energy to success in persuasion. That was his goal; not a perspicuous communication. In thanks for all these gifts, the Greek language adopted a new word, "gorgiaze", and used it derogatorily. But in broad terms, it was against his immunity to serious knowledge, against his manipulating of sense for the gratification of the senses that Plato and, more vehemently, Aristotle railed. The Gorgianic drive for rhythm and symmetry was relentless and without regard for the needs of lucidity. In contemplating it one is reminded of things as basic as heart beats or the dimidiation of limbs, eyes, nostrils, brains. More sophisticated components of this same family of perspectives are present in the performing arts, the arts that deal with the fluency of time and with the ear: prosody, rhetoric, music, dance. In these lie the inchoate origins of euphuistic pointing.

It is prose that bears the brunt of punctuational scrutiny, for it is there that the conveying of explicit information calls for action. In imitation of poetic 'perfection', classical rhetoric had imposed a formality of division and apportionment upon the structure of oratory,

with the fortunate result that the audience was led willingly over familiar contours of expectation. A listener, joining late, would know where the speaker was in his formulation of ideas—the *exordium*, the *narratio*, the *conclusio*—just as the reader today can find his way through title pages, tables of contents, prefaces, and chapter headings of books that he has never before seen. Within the arrangement of its basic patterns, rhetoric centered essentially on the artistic strategies of the communicator as he strove to put across his point with maximum impact. Firmly in place as an oral discipline, rhetoric moved with authority into the domain of writing, where its goal was to give prose the dignity and affecting power of poetry, as well as an elegance of its own. It dealt with word usage, ornaments, bearing, delivery, but for our purposes, most importantly, with rhythms and internal division of materials to better press home a message. The practice of rhetoric flourished, almost as a popular entertainment, in the disputatious Athenian democracy, where its most revered champions were Isocrates (the pupil of Gorgias) and Demosthenes, and saw light again as an elite art form in the senatorial oratory of the Roman Republic. Any Roman aspiring to social, literary, or political success needed to study rhetoric seriously. Cicero (106–43 B.C.), very much a master (though he did not himself rigorously practise the dictates of his craft), wrote about it extensively in his *De Oratore*, *Brutus*, and *Orator*. His published theories, fortified by accounts of his illustrious career, survived both contemporary and subsequent competition to cast their influence over literary expression for centuries, indeed even up to the decline of classical study in modern times. For


26. In the heyday of rhetoric, Isocrates was looked upon as an oratorical paragon and the father of Greek oratory. Isocrates promulgated the theory that oratory should be as artistic as poetry and provide the same degree of pleasure. In seeking that end, he nevertheless kept in mind the total effect, and though his huge, rhythmic periodic sentences frequently consumed a whole page, he stayed in control. In Isocrates’ terms rhetoric was not simply a utilitarian technique for charming or persuading, but a practical extension of wisdom. He associated it with philosophy, thereby possibly softening Plato’s attitude towards it, as expressed in the “Phaedrus”. The example of Isocrates decided the form of rhetorical prose for the Greek world, for Cicero, and for the modern world as well. For more on Isocrates, see the introduction to the Loeb Classical Library edition of *Isocrates*, trans. George Norlin and LaRue Van Hook; also see Clarke, *Rhetoric at Rome*, 2–3.
that reason he seems an appropriate candidate (to follow Gorgias) for illustrating a second euphuistic florescence.

By Cicero’s era, alphabetic literature had been in existence for some six hundred years. Although there was not the democratized literacy that had prevailed particularly in Athens and generally in the Hellenistic Greek world, by the middle of the first century B.C. Roman booksellers and copyists were carrying on an active trade, and books were circulating freely within a limited class of Roman society. There were literary societies and extensive, well-stocked private collections. Caesar talked of setting up a public library. A documented academic interest in literature and language, as well as evidence of Alexandrian-derived textual criticism, attest to an established atmosphere of intellectual aspiration. With the help of his publisher friend Atticus, Cicero worked hard to develop a personal library of meticulously produced books and to improve as well the quality of his own publications.27

As we see, the traditions of reading and writing were well in place. The paragraph was old hat. The clause, or what the Greeks called colon (L. membrum), was recognized generally as being a segment of a larger entity and was defined in terms of syllables or metres. The colon itself divided into phrases called by the Greeks commata (L. incisa). The full “periodic” sentence was conceived as being an elaborately organized concatenation of related ideas made up of cola, themselves in turn made up of commata, and ending with a sense of completeness: a grouping and rounding out of words. And this in Greek was called the periodos (L. circuitus).

To give the merest flavor of Cicero’s extensive views on rhetoric as they relate to punctuation, the following review is presented with quotations taken from the Loeb Classical Library editions of De Oratore (translated by H. Rackham), Brutus (translated by G. L. Hendrickson), and Orator (translated by H. M. Hubbell). In this last treatise, written in 46 B.C., Cicero is defending his own exuberant verbosity against the so-called ‘modern’ Atticists (who derived their aspirations from the Hellenistic stoics, and advocated a plain, logical style without ornament). Following Aristotle and Isocrates, Cicero recommended rhythmical cadences to bring out the structure of sen-

27. Reynolds and Wilson, Scribes and Scholars, 18–22.
tence parts. The syntactician will note the concern for clarity and sense; but, as Cicero lays such heavy emphasis on the ear (to prolong the attention span of an apparently very restless audience), it seems appropriate that his ideas be included in this section on the origins of euphuistic punctuation.

---

CICERO ON RHYTHM IN PROSE STRUCTURES

Eloquence is a potent force which embraces all things in a graceful and flowing style. With its mastery one can both instruct and give pleasure. The old Greek masters, Isocrates most particularly, held the view that prose should contain rhythms just as does poetry. They thought that in speeches

the close of the period ought to come not when we are tired out but where we may take breath, and to be marked not by the punctuation of copying clerks but by the arrangement of the words and of the thought . . . designed to give pleasure to the ear. (De Oratore, p. 137)

To engage an attentive ear, the poets, who were in those days also musicians, thought it proper to transfer from poetry to rhetoric, insofar as was compatible with the severe character of oratory, the modulation of the voice and the arrangement of words in periods. For it is the mark of an ignorant speaker to pour out

disorderly stuff as fast as he can with no arrangement, and end a sentence not from artistic considerations but when his breath gives out, whereas the orator links words and meaning together in such a manner as to unfold his thought in a rhythm that is at once bound and free. (De Oratore, p. 139)

Speech must be ordered, just as the sun and the moon and the seasons are ordered, to perform their actions in a rhythmic way.

The periodic structure has its origins in the physical limitation of breathing, so that our ears are gratified only by what can be easily endured by the human lungs. [In other words, interestingly—indeed, very interestingly—human speech and comprehension are the products of a unified organism, and not of minds, or bodies, or wills acting in part.]
It is true that by some natural instinct the expression of a thought may fall into a periodic form and conclusion, and when it is thus gathered up in fitting words it ends often with a rhythmic cadence. The reason is that the ear itself judges what is complete, what is deficient, and the breath by natural compulsion fixes a limit to the length of the phrase. If the breath labours, not to say fails utterly, the effect is painful. (Brutus, p. 41)

Art in prose writing demands subtlety and variation in the use of rhythms. Aristotle recommends to orators that they speak in heroic metres—a legitimate thing to do provided one does not fall into downright verse or something resembling verse. Further, Aristotle approves of either of the paean metres:—\( \text{\textcircled{\textbf{\text{-}}}} \) (stop doing it) for the beginning of a period, or \( \text{\textcircled{\textbf{\text{-}}}} \text{\textcircled{\textbf{\text{-}}}} \) (clatter of hooves) for the end. Prose, being less fettered than poetry, must apply its own self-control so that it neither falls into poetry nor gushes without pause. All utterance contains an element of rhythm, which can quite properly be reckoned as a merit in prose. A continuing series of words will be much more pleasing if it is divided up into cola and commata, the commata becoming shorter near the end, in indication of the coming final break. [This recommendation of short phrasal breaks towards the end of the \textit{periodos} reappears in the writings of later grammarians (cf. the \textit{subdistinctio} of Donatus in the fourth century A.D., which will be discussed in Part Two).]

Only let your habitual practice in writing and speaking be to make the thoughts end up with the words, and the combination of the words themselves spring from good long free metres, specially the dactylic or the first paean or the cretic \( (-\text{-}\text{-}) \), though with a close of various forms and clearly marked, for similarity is particularly noticed at the close; and if the first and last feet of the sentences are regulated on this principle, the metrical shapes of the parts in between can pass unnoticed, only provided that the actual period is not shorter than the ear expected or longer than the strength and the breath can last out.

However, the close of the sentences in my opinion requires even more careful attention than the earlier parts, because it is here that perfection of finish is chiefly tested. For with verse equal attention is given to the beginning and middle and end of a line, and a slip at any point weakens its force, but in a speech few people notice the first part of the sentences and nearly everybody the last part;
so as the ends of the sentences show up and are noticed, they must be varied, in order not to be turned down by the critical faculty or by a feeling of surfeit in the ear. (*De Oratore*, p. 153)

Words when connected together embellish a style if they produce a certain symmetry. (*Orator*, p. 365)

[The] shrewd orator must avoid . . . clauses of equal length, with similar endings, or identical cadences. (*Orator*, p. 369)

The arrangement of words in the sentence has three ends in view: (1) that final syllables may fit the following initial syllables as neatly as possible, and that the words may have the most agreeable sounds; (2) that the very form and symmetry of the words may produce their own rounded period; (3) that the period may have an appropriate rhythmical cadence. (*Orator*, p. 423)

Just as in the realm of poetry verse was discovered by the test of the ear and the observation of thoughtful men, so in prose it was observed, much later to be sure, but by the same promptings of nature, that there are definite periods and rhythmical cadences. (*Orator*, p. 457)

The *circuitus* ["periodic" sentence] is carried along by the rhythm in a vigorous movement until it comes to the end and stops. (*Orator*, p. 463)

Prose should be tempered by an admixture of rhythm, . . . of which the paean should be the principle measure. (*Orator*, p. 471)

But there should also be iambs in passages of a plain, simple conversational type, and dactyls (along with paeans) for the more elevated style. In short, there should be a judicious mingling and blending. Without these rhythms to provide an emotional element, the words and ideas lose their strength. The beginning of the period should reach towards the end in a natural and smooth way, without sudden movement, so that the ear may await the end with pleasure, as the orderly line of "words is brought to a close now with one, now with another rhythmical figure". (*Orator*, p. 475)

Symmetry is another consideration that comes to us through the poets. But the prose writer is not held and should not be held to the rigidity of equally balanced *cola* and *commata*, as Gorgias believed. Variation of the period and the rhythmical *clausulae* (a much-used word referring to the ultimate and penultimate feet) should be sought with an air of naturalness, and Cicero suggests a number of candidates beyond the paean preferred by Aristotle. [So serious a matter was the *clausula* considered to be, that Carbo Gracchus enjoyed much
admiration in orating circles for his mastery of this tricky conceit. Indeed, on one occasion he is said to have brought down the house with a final, apparently ravishing double trochee.\textsuperscript{28}

It is the \textit{commata} and \textit{cola} that make up the long periods. But these are often used alone for a punchy effect ("like little daggers") in passages of demonstration or refutation. Interestingly, the four examples of \textit{commata} given by Cicero are all conceptually complete modern sentences—\textit{Domus tibi deerat? at habebas. Pecunia superabat? at egebas}. (Did you lack a house? Yet you had one. Was there money left? Yet you were in want.)—and do not deal with the problems caused by an opening ‘when’, ‘because’, or ‘so that’. In rhetorical practice, a full comprehensive period of good length comprises approximately four cola, each of which consists of approximately 12 to 17 syllables, that is, a full hexameter line. But the ear wants variety, and that is why rhythms and symmetry should be used to bind together in unobtrusive ways, to give form to what might otherwise be shapeless.

\begin{center}
\begin{minipage}{0.9\textwidth}
\end{minipage}
\end{center}

The usefulness of rhetoric in holding attention, persuading, or inciting to action, the beauty and excitement that it imparted to speech and hence to long-lived prose, made it a much desired attainment. Cicero’s concern with it was very much in keeping with the times.

Fourth- and fifth-century sophistic doctrine had placed rhetoric at the center of the educational scheme,\textsuperscript{29} for its practical application to the winning of argument was not to be driven offstage by Platonic blatherings about truth, virtue, and knowledge. In the ensuing periods of political oppression, when governments did not encourage or even allow public deliberation on issues, rhetoric and oratory changed their character—came off the street, so to speak—and the

\textsuperscript{28} Clarke, \textit{Rhetoric at Rome}, 49. Perhaps an even more spectacular example of the \textit{clausula}'s grip on the literary mind is to be seen in St. Augustine’s disappointment 500 years later, when he discovered that an example of the \textit{clausula} was not to be found in the Scriptures. Ibid., 153.

\textsuperscript{29} New Encyclopaedia Britannica, 15th ed., s.v. “rhetoric”. Looking forward, one might note at this point that the great classical rhetoricians were still holding their own in the published output of early European printers. Later, the eighteenth century would witness an ‘elocutionary movement’. Even today, British schoolchildren compete for prizes in elocution.
audience was no longer a full partner in the highly charged, give-and-take simultaneity of a rhetorical event. Taken up by the schools as a discipline, rhetoric was analyzed minutely and rules set up for the governance of every shade and aspect of it—as if bright young minds had nothing else in the world to think of.

This tendency towards rigidification deepened with time. Declamation, which Cicero had practised (both in Greek and in Latin) well into old age, became the highlight of a social occasion—like charades, one imagines, or a gathering around the piano—a good chance to show off. As a result the topics to be declaimed upon became increasingly theatrical. Realistic subjects that had earlier been presented for serious practice in the legal arts gave way to whatever would amaze, however unlikely: lurid murders, disinheritance problems involving wicked stepmothers and dramatic cases of mistaken identity, maiden heiresses captured by pirates, and so on and so on. The rhetorician was by now a performer. His extravaganzas had very little relevance to the forum or the senate house. In the first two centuries A.D.—the so-called “Second Sophistic Age”, when philosophers were urging a return to more simple, classical rhetorical principles—a number of books and essays about rhetoric and famous rhetoricians (for they were admired like pop-stars) were put forth; and among these, two very worthy ones must be mentioned here, for they both have a bearing on our topic and were diligently studied throughout the Middle Ages. 'Longinus' (probably of the first century A.D.) wrote On Sublimity, a treatise considered to be the most sensitive piece of literary criticism surviving from antiquity. Using favorite passages from Homer, Plato, and Demosthenes, he analyzed the sources of ecstatic effects in search of the creative essence of great thoughts and overpowering emotion. One can imagine the impact of such a book on an aspiring young author. To be noted especially at this point is the section on composition, wherein, following Cicero in Orator, he remodelled famous lines to illustrate how unattractive a misjudged rhythm can be.

Equally important was Quintilian's Institutio Oratoria (in twelve books), written ca. A.D. 93-94, after the author's long career of

practising law and teaching rhetoric in Rome. Its announced intent, like that of Cicero's Orator upon which it draws admiringly, is to define the qualities of a good orator. To do that it both surveys critically the education of all the well-known orators in terms of their success and offers paradigms for the ideal rhetorical education. This work, which was genial, wise, expansive in coverage, and moral in tone, remained the quintessential authority on prose expression for many centuries.

In the ninth book of the Institutio, Quintilian impinges upon our topic of division of text, stalking it occasionally from a logical crouch, but most of the time in terms of beguiling harmonies and rhythms so that we are obliged, by the terms of our contract, to deposit him on the euphuistic heap along with Gorgias and Cicero. Quintilian described the comma as the expression of a thought lacking rhythmical completeness, though most writers regarded it merely as a portion of the colon. A colon, however, becomes "the expression of a thought which is rhythmically complete, but . . . meaningless if detached from the whole body of the sentence". The periodos could be simple, i.e., a single thought, or a composite of thoughts conveyed in commata and cola, its length to be fueled by a single breath. Putting on his logical cap, Quintilian adds: "It is further essential that it should complete the thought which it expresses . . . be clear and intelligible and . . . not too long to be carried in the memory". As for how to signal the completion of the sense, Quintilian recommended a verb wherever possible, as it is in the verbs that the real strength of language resides. But this goal must give way (here, the euphuistic cap) to the demands of rhythm. Hyperbaton is a useful device where the selected word is recalcitrant to metre; however, (again, the logical cap) we should never abandon what is apt to our theme for the sake of smoothness. Once the verb has been successfully chosen, the periodos may round off to a close with an artistic arrangement of thumps, indicating that the group of thoughts

34. Ibid., 577–78.
35. Ibid., 521.
36. Ibid., 589.
has reached its natural limit and that a breather is being provided before recommencement of play.\textsuperscript{37} Additionally,

\[\ldots\] not only must \textit{commata} and \textit{cola} begin and end becomingly, but even in parts which are absolutely continuous without a breathing space, there must be such almost imperceptible pauses. Who, for example, can doubt that there is but one thought in the following passage and that it should be pronounced without a halt for breath? \textit{Animadverti, iudices, omnem accusatoris orationem in duas divisam esse partes} [I have noted, judges, that the entire speech for the prosecution is divided into two parts]. Still the groups formed by the first two words, the next three, and then again by the next two and three, have each their own special rhythms and cause a slight check in our breathing: at least such is the opinion of specialists in rhythm.\textsuperscript{38}

Today one is astonished by the intellectual agility and presence of mind demanded of ancient orators. Still, training should always aim high. What a man cannot manage on the podium, he presumably can mend on the page.

Quintilian in Book X takes up Cicero's advocacy of the pen being the best modeler and teacher of eloquence. He sees writing as related to profound thought, the meditation and calm required for its success as a coolant to the ardor of extempore speech. He disparages empty loquacity and words "born on the lips". The practice of writing regularly in silence and seclusion, he says, will develop a resource of wisdom and well-informed expression on which to draw in the stress of speaking. "And I know not whether both exercises, when we perform them with care and assiduity, are not reciprocally beneficial, as it appears that by writing we speak with greater accuracy, and by speaking we write with greater ease."\textsuperscript{39}

The point to be noted here is that rhetorically organized speech

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{37} Quintilian, \textit{Institutio}, 541.
\item \textsuperscript{38} Ibid., 545.
\item \textsuperscript{39} Quintilian, \textit{Institutes of Oratory; or, Education of an Orator}, 2 vols., trans. J. S. Watson (London: George Bell, 1876), 2:284–307. The symbiosis of writing and speech will be taken up in detail in later parts of "The Punctator's World".
\end{itemize}
was compelling text to conform with the principles of spoken art. As we see, rhetoric, which originally oriented itself to the ear, had slipped into the visual domain. Cato had been the first Roman to publish his speeches. The example of those who followed firmed up the tradition of rhetoric on the page. By Hadrian's time (A.D. 76–138) rhetoricians were being honored in the highest quarters and Pliny was advising the rewriting of one's speeches so that style and appropriate arrangement of materials might be assured for the pleasure of future generations. The Apologia of Apuleius, his defense against having used magic to secure a widow's affections, shows "forensic oratory turning into pure literature". In Apuleius's Metamorphoses, in popular essays, informal dialogues, diatribes, or essays, in written orations, or letters—in any voice-produced prose where the author was present as a guide and friend—the imprint of rhetoric was apparent and was arousing the euphuistic punctatorial conscience.

By the fourth century A.D., Greek and Roman scribes had long been computing their output by numbers of verses (for poetry) and numbers of lines, or stichoi (for prose). Indeed, stichometry, a Greek phenomenon, appears to have been developed before Callimachus in the third century B.C. and was probably indeed coeval with literature itself. A stichos was essentially equivalent to the average hexameter line (that is, about sixteen syllables long, like the first line of the Iliad). But it varied in count, descending as low as twelve for iambic lines. A syllabic measurement of this sort was very useful, for with it the words themselves could be laid on the page, so many per line, as best fitted requirements of purse or aesthetics; and neither the scribe, who received his pay by the stichos, nor the purchaser, who bought by quantity of written matter, would feel cheated.

By analogy with the length of the lines for which it was most commonly used, the stichos took on the attributes of the hexameter, whose boundaries offered space for statement not very different from

42. Harris, "Stichometry I", 135.
43. Ibid., 139.
44. J. Rendel Harris tells us (op. cit., pp. 156–57) that well into the Middle Ages, especially at Bologna and in other university towns in Northern Italy, scribes were paid by the pecia, which measured off sixteen columns, each of sixty-two lines with thirty-two letters to the line.

95
the modern sentence. The stichos thereby fell into a rather wobbly relationship with meaning, since decisions were required as to where the line should be lopped and another begun. Such decisions could be based on an exact syllable count or on an instinctual feel for a completed thought somewhere in the area of the eleventh or sixteenth syllable. Confusingly related to this need to break up continuing text was the development of a punctuational technique called ‘colometry’, devised by Aristophanes of Byzantium to lay out the lyrical passages of Greek tragedies according to the required and known metres, so that they were no longer packed together as if they were prose. This technique was thereafter adopted in a general way to aid anyone reading aloud in public. ‘Colometry’ means the measuring out of cola, a word (in the singular) by this time grown to mean a mix of syllable count and a completed (but not necessarily autonomous) thought—a clause, if you will, a limb, member, or part. Thus, in very general terms, colometry broke up cola into short, eye-catching lines, so that recitations of poetry, oratory, or church lessons might follow speech rhythms and so make easy sense to the listeners. Colometric layout on the page leavened the word mass, and in its most lavish examples produced an extravagant ratio of space to letter-cluster.

Colometry thrived throughout the first millennium. Initially devised for poetry, it moved into the prose camp to become for a time strictly adherent to syllable counting: for the clauses (cola)—8 to 18 syllables, and for the phrases (commata)—8 syllables or less. But as spoken meanings are conveyed more easily from conceptually complete clauses and phrases, thoughtful scribes took care over where their divisions were placed. Thus, in their renderings, it came to be that the succession of full space-stichoi (for payment) would be numbered in the margins and the broken colometric lines divided where cohesive word groups (sense-stichoi) seemed to dictate. Jerome’s Vulgate Bible gave a great boost to the colometric sense line. In his Preface to “Isaiah” he enjoined others to use it as well: sed quod in

46. Reynolds and Wilson, Scribes and Scholars, 14.
47. Ibid.
Demosthene et Tullio solet fieri, ut per cola scribantur et commata—in advocacy that general prose, too, be presented in the manner that the rhetorical works of Demosthenes and Cicero were by then accustomed to being written, that is, in imitation of the poets: ‘by clauses and phrases’ (per cola et commata). T. J. Brown, in his article “Punctuation” in the 15th edition of the New Encyclopaedia Britannica, describes the colometric divisions marked off by letters projecting
into the margins as phrases to be treated in fact as minute paragraphs, before which the reader might take a new breath. As for run-of-the-mill scribes, they perhaps found syllable counting too tedious an activity or the concept of sense clause, or even phrase, too vague. “As might be expected, one arrangement of the text of the Bible in rhythmical sentences or lines of sense would not be consistently followed by all editors and scribes.”49 The diversity in length of colometric ‘sentences’ drawn up from the same textual material gives evidence both of scribal apathy and of the infirm nature of a perceived word group.

The following per cola et commata lines, which open the Gospel according to St. John, come from a sixth-century Book of Gospels written in Italian uncial and perhaps sent by Pope Gregory the Great to St. Augustine at Canterbury.50

```
INPRINCIPIOERA T
UERBUM
ETUERBUMERAT
APUDDDEUMETDEUS
ERATUERBUM
HOCERATINPRIN
CIPIOAPUDEUM
OMNIAPERIPSUM
FACTASUNT
ETSINEIPSOFACTUM
ESTNIHIL
QUODFACTUMEST
INIPSOITIAERAT
ETUITAERATLUXHO
MINUM
ETLUXINTENEHRI

ETTENEBRAEEM
NONCOMPREHEN
DERUNT.
FUITHOMOMISSUS
ADEOCUINOMEN
ERATIOHANNES
HICUENITINTESTI
MONIUMUTTES
TIMONIUMPERHI
BERTDELUMINE
UTOMNESCRED
RENTPERILLUM
NONERATILLELUX
SEDUTTESTIMO
NIUMPERHIB
RETDELUMINE
```

49. Thompson, Greek and Latin Paleography, 70.
50. Peter Clemoes, “Liturical Influence on Punctuation in Late Old English and Early Middle English Manuscripts”, Occasional Papers No. 1, Cambridge University Department of Anglo-Saxon (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1952); reprinted in the Old English Newsletter series Subsidia 4 (1980): 10. The manuscript (C.C.C.C. 286) is in the Corpus Christi College Library.
The same passage taken from the facsimile edition of the Lindisfarne Gospels (ca. A.D. 700) shows tentative word separation and reads as follows (author's underlines):51

INPRIN
CIPIO
ERATUERBUM
ETUERBUMERAT
APUDEUMETDEUS
ERATUERBUMHOCERAT
INPRINCIPIOAPUDEUM
OMNIA PERIPSUM FACTA
SUNT ETSINEIPSO
FACTUM EST NIHIL
QUOD FACTUM ESTINIPSO
UITAERAT ETUITAERAT
LUX HOMINUM ETLUX
INTENEBRIS LUCET
ETTENBRAEAM NON
COM PRAEHENDERUNT
FUIT HOMO MISSUS ADEO
CUINOMENERAT
IOHANNES
HIC UENIT INTESTAMONIUM
UTTESTAMONIUM PER HI
BERET DELUMINE
UTOMNES CREDERENT
PER ILLUM
NONERAT ILLE LUX
SED UTTESTAMONIUM PER
HIBERET DELUMINE

And again, comparing only the underlined words, from the Echternach Gospels (early eighth century): 52

Hoc erat inprinci
pio apuddeum
omnia peripsum
facta sunt
etsine ipso factum
est nihil
quod factum est
inipso vita erat

52. Codex Lindisfarncis, 2: pl. 7. Also, Walter W. Skeat provides some interesting samples of how unemphatic the concept of a phrase-break used to be. Two reproduced congenerous manuscripts (undated) have varying numbers of pausal line dots, though they compare exactly in verse layout and in the notable capitalizing of the Fuit homo missus a deo phrase. See Walter W. Skeat, The Gospel According to St. John, in Anglo-Saxon and Northumbrian Versions (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1878), 12.
Bibles rendered in this way invited the reader into an easy stride. Knowing his text well, he could slide his finger down the columns and feel that he was progressing nobly. The modern eye, on the other hand, is daunted by the steep chute of words and the strange word splits (prin/cipio; ho/minum; comprehen/derunt, etc.). Perplexingly, even in cases where the paragraphos was inserted to mark off subject divisions (for example, in portions of the Codex Amiatinus, which was transcribed in Northumbria, A.D. 716), words often remained unseparated, and what is considered standard phrasing today was violated with impunity. From the sheer grandeur of a so-called per cola et commata manuscript, however, one might deduce that the material was sufficiently familiar to have been easily rattled off.

Meanwhile, during the seventh century, as costly parchment began to supplant papyrus—which political strife had made more difficult to obtain—modest copies of the Bible were appearing. In the eighth century and increasingly thereafter, the dense, space-economizing minuscule lettering, used heretofore for official communication and document writing, came to be used for church materials. It was more suited to the smaller page than was the majestic uncial. Thus, in the more homely volumes lines lengthened from margin to margin, and the suppleness of natural speech came to be reflected by insertions of pausal marks. From the placement of these evolved the modern euphuistic, or elocutionary, style of pointing.

**EARLY LOGICAL POINTING**

The origins of logical pointing lie with Aristotle. Being further along the road to the modern conception of literacy and less sceptical of the written word than was Plato, he dealt comfortably with functions of recording and categorizing, and applied the patterns of thought that reading encourages to philosophizing and psychologizing about rhetoric. He was critical of the Isocratic tilt, which in his opinion, gave too much leeway to the play of emotions, for only


101
when supported by logic and proof, did rhetoric make an honorable tool in the quest for truth. In this, Aristotle is exaltedly Greek. The great Hellenic speeches of Pericles and Demosthenes addressed man’s reasoning powers by the strength of their arguments, not by the charm of their appeal. It was a Roman feature of oratory (most notably, Cicero’s) to whip the passions over the threshold of reason in order to seize the jury’s heart; the justness of the cause was a secondary matter.

To Aristotle, as might be expected, meaning was paramount. In his “Art” of Rhetoric (written ca. 330 B.C.) he urged a meticulous and sparing use of connecting particles, specificity of word meaning, correspondence of genders and of numbers, and a care that what is written as well as what is spoken be well bonded and flow easily. He was against the ancient “continuous style” of putting words together. That method, he claimed, was unpleasant because it was endless. Instead, he advocated the “periodic style”, in which the topic was fed out in readily grasped quantities. Material handled in this way can be “easy to learn, because it can be easily retained in the memory”. The periodos, a word reasonably translated by ‘rest, having completed a full lap’, should respond to a finality of sense, rather than to a deflated lung or the metrical conceits of Gorgias. Here, it should be understood that an ancient or medieval periodos did not necessarily coincide with syntactic completeness. In addition, Aristotle discussed the colon, describing it as having a unity of sense as well as being easy to repeat in a breath. By addressing structural matters Aristotle was not recommending a disregard for the beauty or rhythm of phrasing, but rather an aesthetic preference for a lucid communication . . . what Jespersen would call a successful impression.

Although in Aristotle’s time sentences and clauses were recognized elements of speech and writing, they were not dealt with textually, until Aristophanes of Byzantium (ca. 200 B.C.) specified the values of stops and used them in the scholarly editing of manuscripts. There is no existing evidence from manuscripts before Aristophanes of By-

57. Freese, Aristotle’s Rhetoric, xxii.
58. Clarke, Rhetoric at Rome, 47.
60. Ibid., 387–89.
zantium’s time that there was any consistent punctuation symbol in use by everyday working scribes. Indeed, for centuries yet to come, this far-flung and disorderly profession seemed not to notice Aristophanes’ inventory of puncts. There are examples from the first century B.C. of scribes employing the full stop, but as a group they used it like babies—randomly, with unpredictable values, and with a startling lack of empathy with the reader.

Aristophanes of Byzantium was a scholar of apparently outstanding scope. He surpassed in quality of output his famous teachers, Callimachus (poet, and author of the Pinakes, a sort of universal bibliography with biographies of authors) and Zenodotus (the first head of the Alexandrian Library and early emendator of Homeric texts), to become himself in ca. 194 B.C. the head of the Alexandrian Library. Beyond his invention of a rational colometry (mentioned above), which he used textually to authenticate lines by metrical comparison, Aristophanes enhanced the contemporary recension techniques by developing new and systematizing the old critical and lectional signs. In addition, he put out the best-to-that-date editions of Homer, Hesiod, Anacreon, and most lastingly, Pindar. To his credit lie the improved assorting of grammatical elements and a workable array of accent marks to preserve pronunciation. But his most interesting achievement, for our purposes, was a system for distinguishing the various sections of discourse described in rhetorical theory. It was as follows:

1) A point after the middle of the last letter (thus: E-) indicated the end of a short section (or a comma)
2) A point after the bottom of the last letter (thus: E.) indicated the end of a longer section (or a colon)
3) A point after the top of the last letter (thus: E') indicated the end of the longest section (or a periodos)

Amongst majuscules Aristophanes’ three-point breakthrough offered a supple discrimination, which was lost in lines of minuscule script

63. That we owe this invention to Aristophanes is not firmly accepted by all scholars. For example, Rudolf Pfeiffer, in his History of Classical Scholarship (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 179, conjectures that this pointing system might well belong to the time of Hadrian, three centuries later, and that Aristophanes himself might have used only two points.
where the vertical positions of the dots could not be readily discerned. As it turned out, the system was seldom actually used, though it survived in degenerated versions, which will be discussed later.

Aristophanes wrote on grammatical and lexicographical topics in addition to a great many other subjects. He was a scholar-editor, a grammarian par métier. He attained a new level of critical specialization, and thereby marked the decisive emergence of a professional approach to learning. In a very real sense he was the father of generations of editors to come.

His own pupil Aristarchus, when, in turn, he succeeded to the post of Librarian, carried on the legacy of textual scholarship. His major grammatical victories lay in the area of syntax and analogy, as well as further refinement of the pointing art. Thus, the Alexandrian Library, for more than half a century—from Aristophanes’ tenure as head to the expulsion of Aristarchus with others of the intelligentsia in 145 B.C.—fostered standards of scholarship heretofore unknown. The impetus from this scholarly example continued for centuries both in Alexandria and in other parts of the world, though in weakened form—for the human element in the transmission of knowledge was, as always, both unstable and unreliable. Even in Ptolemaic Alexandria the copywork had been faulty. Because of the laboriousness of the scribal task, original editions tended to be unique, with the result that knowledge survived through synopses, commentaries, and spoken tradition. According to P. M. Fraser: "There can be no doubt that texts such as the 'city-texts' and the early recension of Zenodotus were already [less than a century later] inaccessible to Aristarchus".

Nevertheless, while this succession of scholars labored over the disposition of words and over the clarity and accuracy of texts, the logical divisions of the textual line became more and more a noticeable consideration. During the subsequent basically oral-aural millennium, individual grammarians responded to the lure of logic. With visual sensibilities expanded through a growing dependence on alphabetic writing, they touched again and again upon the structural breaks in the written line.

64. New Encyclopaedia Britannica, 15th ed., s.v. "punctuation".
65. Fraser, Ptolemaic Alexandria, 462–63.
66. Ibid., 476.
RECENT GIFTS TO THE SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

In late June of this year the George Arents Research Library received a gift of ten Roosevelt letters, of which seven were written by Franklin D. Roosevelt himself, two by his private secretary, and one by Eleanor Roosevelt. Chancellor Emeritus William Pearson Tolley and Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Spector joined in bringing this group of related documents to Syracuse.

The letters are addressed to Miss Thelma Burnett (later Mrs. John J. Curley), a physiotherapy technician specializing in poliomyelitis victims. During 1926 and 1927 Miss Burnett worked at the Georgia Warm Springs Foundation (Centre for the Study and After-Treatment of Poliomyelitis) and knew Franklin Roosevelt, himself a polio victim and president of the institution's trustees. About this time Miss Burnett married John J. Curley, an electrical engineer, and moved to Syracuse, New York.

Roosevelt’s letters, which are short but warm, respond to Mrs. Curley's worries over the fact that her husband did not have a job. Also, they tell of the latest improvements at Warm Springs. “They have nearly seventy patients and we have begun the erection of the big new winter swimming pool with a complete glass roof over it and the two new sun parlors.” In a letter of 27 October 1928, Roosevelt states: “I am going back there immediately after the election, no matter what the results”.

By 1944 Mrs. Curley had become Lieutenant Curley, stationed in the British Isles, and Roosevelt was in the White House. Thank-you notes for small gifts from England, written by Roosevelt’s private secretary, attest to the Lieutenant’s continuing correspondence and devotion.

The single letter from Eleanor Roosevelt is on Democratic National Committee stationery, dated 18 October 1928. Mrs. Roosevelt
is pleased that Mrs. Curley is supporting the President and hopes that "you will go to hear my husband when he speaks in Syracuse, and you may find yourself more interested in Smith than you now are in Hoover".

Although there are not many of these letters, they give an important glimpse of Franklin Roosevelt at several stations of his career: at home in Hyde Park, New York; as vice-president of the Fidelity and Deposit Company of Maryland (New York City) and partner in the law firm of Roosevelt and O'Connor (New York City); in the Executive Mansion in Albany; and, finally, in the White House.

Carolyn A. Davis
Manuscripts Librarian

Notable additions to the Library's Rudyard Kipling Collection were made during the past year by William P. Tolley. The collection of books by Kipling was strengthened by the acquisition of a set of page proofs for the English edition of *The Muse among the Motors* (1904). These proofs exist in only two known copies and the work was never actually published in this form in England. One copy of only twenty of this same title that were printed in the United States for copyright purposes in 1904 complements this gift. The American copyright edition of *Pan in Vermont*, printed from type prepared for its magazine appearance in *Country Life in America*, December 1902, and surviving in only ten copies, was also among the latest gifts to the Library from Chancellor Tolley.

The Kipling Collection at Syracuse University includes a number of galley and page proofs of different works corrected by the author. An important addition to this part of the Collection are the corrected proofs for the second edition of *Letters to the Family* (Toronto, 1910), an account of Kipling's visit to Canada, with his autograph corrections and alterations on more than fifty pages. Accompanying this set of proofs is a unique publisher's proof of the book with a trial binding and preface but with blank leaves in place of the main body of the text. Kipling has added his corrections to the cover, title page, and prefatory leaves and, commenting on the drab paper wrappers, writes: "This is rather a dreary colour. Can't you give us something a little more cheerful. RK." When the book was published it was bound in pale blue wrappers, presumably to Kipling's satisfaction.
Rudyard Kipling, as drawn by Steven Spurrier.
Finally, through the generosity of Dr. Tolley, the Library has received a group of four letters (1903–1904) from Henry James to his nephew, William James II, and an interesting caricature of Kipling by the English artist Steven Spurrier (1878–1961), reduced and reproduced here. The Spurrier pen-and-ink drawing shows Kipling in Indian costume brandishing a quill pen dripping phrases from “The Absent-minded Beggar”. Though no further identification was needed, the artist has added in the background the titles of Kipling’s best-known stories. Spurrier’s caricature was published in Bystander, no. 35, August 1904.

The Henry James letters offer interesting insights on his life in London and include mention of a “pilgrimage . . . in Kipling’s motor” to Batemans, Kipling’s Sussex home. James writes: “. . . the beauty of the twenty-mile spin was surpassed only by the beauty of the delicious old house, an absolutely intact old treasure of Charles I’s time, as remarkable for its position and preservation as for its intrinsic interest. It’s an oddly discordant setting for its owner’s furious modernism and journalism—or rather but would be if his excellent appreciation and affection for it, and his and his wife’s very intelligent way of living in it, didn’t pleasantly bridge the hiatus.”

Mark F. Weimer
Rare Book Librarian

LIBRARY ASSOCIATES SPRING PROGRAM

The Syracuse University Library Associates program for the 1989 spring semester is as follows:

February 2, 1989           Stanton L. Catlin
Thursday, 4 p.m.           Professor Emeritus of Fine Arts, Syracuse University
1916 Room                   THE COMMISSIONING OF THE DIEGO
Bird Library                RIVERA MURALS AT CUERNAVACA

March 2, 1989               Walter Hamady
Thursday, 4 p.m.           Printer and Publisher, The Perishable Press,
1916 Room                   Mt. Horeb, Wisconsin
Bird Library                NEW POETRY AND THE PRIVATE PRESS
co-sponsored by The Bibliographical Society of America and the Library Associates
April 4–5, 1989  A Celebration of the Music of Ernst Bacon
Director of the School of Music, 1945–1947
Composer-in-Residence, 1947–1964
Professor Emeritus, 1964–
Concerts, lecture, and exhibition
cosponsored by The Society for New Music and
the Library Associates

April 4, 1989  THE MUSIC OF ERNST BACON AT
Tuesday, 8 p.m.
Crouse College
Auditorium

CROUSE COLLEGE

April 5, 1989  CIVIC MORNING MUSICALS: THE MUSIC
Wednesday, 12:30 p.m.
Hosmer Auditorium
Everson Museum

OF ERNST BACON

April 5, 1989  CONVERSATIONS WITH ERNST BACON
Wednesday, 4 p.m.
1916 Room
Bird Library
The Artist in Society: Harmony and/or Dissonance
Ernst Bacon, Composer
Dorothy Riester, Sculptor
Thomas Mortland, Philosopher

April 28, 1989  Spring Luncheon and Annual Meeting
Friday, 12 noon
Drumlinns
800 Nottingham Road
Speaker: Michael H. Hoeflich
Dean, Syracuse University College of Law
THE IMAGE OF LAW IN VICTORIAN LITERATURE
THE SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY ASSOCIATES, founded in 1953, is a society whose efforts are devoted to the enrichment of the Syracuse University Library and especially the rare book and manuscript collections. The Associates' interests lie in strengthening these collections through the acquisition of unusual books, manuscripts, and other research materials which are rare and often of such value that the Library would not otherwise be able to acquire them.

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

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

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Antje B. Lemke, Chairman
Stanton L. Catlin
Arenpa S. Mesrobian
Walter E. Sutton
Mark F. Weimer
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY ASSOCIATES

OFFICERS

Antje B. Lemke, President
David H. Stam, Executive Director
Mark F. Weimer, Secretary

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Through 1989
Paul J. Archambault
Stanton L. Catlin
Jerome R. Gerber
Elizabeth M. Henes
Richard Horowitz

Joseph H. King
Joseph M. Levine
Judith C. Mower
Robert Phillips
David F. Tatham
Paul Willette

Through 1990
Daniel W. Casey
William C. Fleming
Barbara Goldsmith
Clare Kivelson
Betty L. Levy

Albert Ornstein
Frank P. Piskor
David L. Poushter
Chester Soling
Dina Vincow
Sidney Wechter

Through 1991
Sarah K. Auchincloss
Henry S. Bannister
Antje B. Lemke
Arpena S. Mesrobian

Vernon F. Snow
Eileen Snyder
Walter E. Sutton
Dorothy Wertheimer

Honorary Trustees
Mary H. Marshall
William P. Tolley

Ex Officio
Melvin A. Eggers, Chancellor
Michael O. Sawyer, Vice-Chancellor
Gershon Vincow, Vice-Chancellor
Metod M. Milač, Associate University Librarian