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# WISCONSIN ACADEMY REVIEW

Published Quarterly by the Wisconsin  
Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Letters.



March 1981  
Volume 27, Number 2

## Pass it on

In my neighborhood we have an informal periodical exchange. One day a stack of *New Yorkers* appears on my porch. Eventually, I gather up a stack of *New York Review of Books* or *New York Times Book Reviews* and send off my son to deliver them. And so it goes.

Editors, of course, love to have their magazines passed around, talked about, shared. But the business office tends to take a different view of the matter: Anyone who appreciates a publication has an obligation to support it financially to help keep it in operation. Here at the Academy the editorial and business offices are quite close. So while I still urge all of you to pass around the *Review* once you have read it, I hope that some of those who receive it will want to join the Academy to support its publications and its many other programs. That keeps people in editorial and business offices happy.

—Patricia Powell

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**March 1981**

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On the cover: South Shore, Lake Superior by David Mladenoff

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## Authors and Artists



**Michael O'Brien**

**Michael O'Brien**, a native of Green Bay, received both of his graduate degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He has taught at UW-Stevens Point and, since 1972, at UW Center-Fox Valley (Menasha), where he is associate professor of history.

He has written five articles on Joseph McCarthy, including a series in the last two issues of the *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, which provides a more critical look at his subject. The interviews published in the *Review* allow readers to form their own opinions of this controversial Wisconsin native. Mr. O'Brien's book, *McCarthy and McCarthyism in Wisconsin*, is forthcoming from the University of Missouri Press. He is currently writing a biography of Vince Lombardi, the Green Bay Packer football coach.

**Martin Drapkin** is a staff member of the Department of Governmental Affairs of UW-Extension. He fancies himself to be a creative portrait photographer specializing in women. He dislikes photographing people smiling, as he considers happiness a false emotion.

**Jim McEvoy** is a graphic artist for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. His drawings have also appeared in the last two issues of the *Review*. McEvoy plans a WASAL exhibit for May at the Steenbock Center.

**Hazel F. Briggs** (Hazel Rice) was born in Toronto, but she came to this country as an infant and lived until her mid-teens in New England. In 1925 she married Alfred Briggs; they had two children and eventually moved to Madison. After Alfred died in 1936, Hazel held the family together with a variety of jobs ending with the editorship of a restaurant publication from which she retired in 1965. In 1970 Hazel Briggs married William G. Rice, a longtime friend. She has published *Papa Always met us at the Boat* and *Mary Carter On Behalf of the Aunts* (which was serialized in the March, June, and September 1978 issues of the *Review*) as well as short stories.

**Hazel Briggs**



**Lorraine and Gunnar Johansen, December 1980.**

**James Van Deurzen**, accompanied by photographer **Sally Behr** and Pat Powell, interviewed the Johansens at their Blue Mounds home on a gray day in early December. They were treated to an afternoon of lively conversation and Lorraine Johansen's coffee with thick, fresh cream served with freshly baked cookies. The Johansen hospitality made the afternoon seem more like a visit with old friends than a formal interview.

Van Deurzen's first contact with Johansen came when he was a student in the now legendary "Music in Performance" class. It was performed music, but most importantly, it was usually Gunnar Johansen performing. Like hundreds of fellow students, Van Deurzen attended the standing-room-only class semester after semester to learn from a great musician and teacher.

**Bruce Cronmiller** was born in western Massachusetts in "a horrid little mill town." He made his first journey to France *between* the Third and Fourth Republics. "Figure that one out"—he challenges—"it tells a lot about me." Since 1953 Professor Cronmiller has taught at Lawrence University, where the authors he most likes to read with students are Montaigne, Pascal, and Rabelais.

**Bruce Cronmiller**



## Wisconsin 1954

### *Perpetual Care*

by Hazel F. Briggs

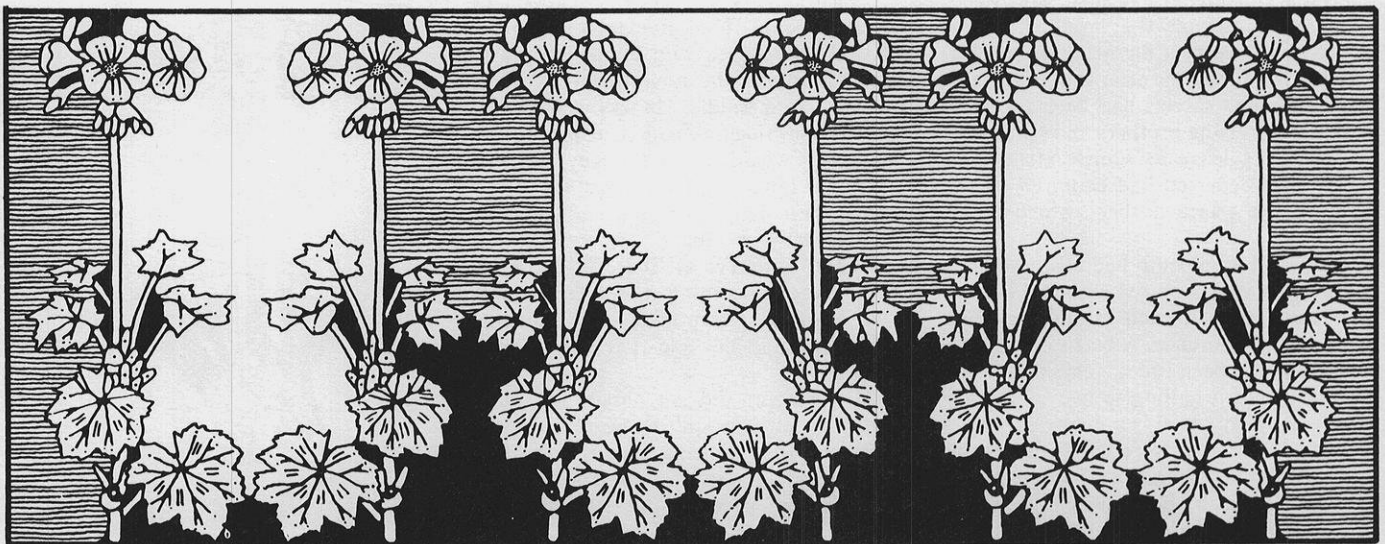
The Slocum plot in Welton (pop. 3827) was unquestionably impressive. Whenever she visited the cemetery, Mrs. Slocum was pleased with its prominent location on a slight mound near the main entrance where several paths and roads converged. Whether chosen purposely or otherwise, it was apparent that visitors to the cemetery had to pass the plot on their way to other destinations.

In the center was a tall, spired monument with the name SLOCUM prominently engraved upon it, under which were the birth and death dates of Amos and Abby Slocum, her parents-in-law, who had founded the family. Grouped around this central stone were a number of identical modest headstones under which lay the sons, their wives, a daughter, her husband, and other progeny of the third and even fourth generation who had been gathered to the Lord.

This concentration of the family always gave Mrs. Slocum a feeling of strength and importance. As the years went by and she was finally the only living member of

the older generation, her sense of closeness to the family plot increased. Each time she visited the cemetery and saw her own headstone already in place with only the date of death missing, Libby Slocum felt comforted in the knowledge that, regardless of earthly calamity, an eternal resting place was ready and waiting for her.

No matter how often she visited the cemetery, she never failed to applaud the foresight which Amos Slocum had shown in buying this beautiful location. She remembered him as a man who liked to have his affairs tied up neatly. In spite of a tremendous zest for life Amos had had a respectful regard for the decorum of death. And so he had bought "perpetual care" for the plot when he acquired it for himself and his family at the turn of the century. At that time Libby Slocum had been a young and very uncertain bride. She had married Albert only for security, and the luxury inherent in "perpetual care" had grown to be a lasting comfort.



As she stood at her husband's grave, however, shortly after his death, perpetual care for the first time did not seem adequate. Perpetual care was a leveling factor for high and low alike regardless of merit or quality, and to Mrs. Slocum such equality now seemed wholly unsatisfactory. Although she had never cared for any of the Slocums, including her husband Albert, Libby had never felt that they were of equal merit, and she resented the total absence of evaluation as exemplified in the identical headstones and perpetual care.

During Amos' lifetime the difference in the ages of the brothers had been a distinguishing factor. Amos had been the head of the family. It was he who had acquired the substantial family fortune. In fact, he had represented the entire Slocum family. But after Amos "passed away" in 1909 at the age of eighty-seven, some competitive interest had developed among his sons, although no feeling of superiority—if any existed—had ever been shown. Each brother, as well as his one daughter, had received an equal share of Amos' worldly goods and during the ensuing years there had been no more than quiet speculation regarding the extent to which each had increased or decreased his substance. Was Thomas, the banker, more prosperous than landowner Edward? Or Albert, the farmer, worth more than Henry, the implement dealer?

Albert and Libby had often discussed these matters and had, in fact, frequently fretted under their inability to arrive at a correct answer. But no answer to these questions was forthcoming during the lifetime of any of the brothers, since each member of the family kept his affairs strictly to himself. Frugal living had always been the Slocum way of life, and this ingrained habit had successfully concealed any change that might have occurred in anyone's financial status. But as death claimed one after the other, carefully guarded secrets had been revealed, and the surviving brothers and sisters had learned, at least to some extent, how much the departed had acquired by the size of the estate he bequeathed to his heirs.

Now Libby Slocum had all these facts at her disposal. She remembered the exact evaluation of each estate, including also that of Florence, Albert's only sister.

There had been times, years ago, when Libby found it galling to live by the axiom—a penny saved is a penny earned—but such emotions were too distant to recall. Libby had long since become a real Slocum. As such, she felt when she visited the cemetery where each brother lay in-

conspicuously under his headstone, that some recognition should be given to individual performance.

Another reason also motivated her. Since Albert's death and her acquisition of his substantial fortune, her affection for him had considerably increased, and she felt an urgent need to show him honor. If he had been the least successful of Amos' sons, it might have been otherwise. As it was, she knew that Albert would rate well in comparison with his brothers. Hence some outward display on her part would be a fitting gesture of gratitude to him for her own present well-being and freedom. In spite of a family reticence which had restrained Albert, at times almost to the point of inaction, she believed he would now appreciate recognition, especially if she employed the family's own scale of values—how much money had each of the brothers left when he died.

But the actual medium to be employed evaded her. Mrs. Slocum did not intend to be ostentatious. Since in Albert's lifetime she had never spent a cent except under his critical supervision, extravagance would be conscienceless. In fact extravagance was hard to learn at seventy-five.

Twice she engaged Charlie Biddle who rented one of her farms to drive her to the cemetery where she could study the problem. On the second visit she approached the subject obliquely.

"It looks kind of monotonous, don't you think?" she asked, waving her black cotton-gloved hand over the identical headstones.

"I dunno," said Biddle. "It looks pretty good. The grass is nice and green." He scratched his head thoughtfully. "It looks real good."

"That's the perpetual care," explained Mrs. Slocum. "The cemetery's got to do that. They've been paid to cut the grass and trim round the stones forever."

"Oh," said Biddle. He was well aware that if the Slocums had paid for something they would get their money's worth.

"What I mean is," continued Mrs. Slocum, "there don't seem to be enough difference between them."

"Their names're all there," answered the farmer, scanning the headstones. "You can't get them mixed up. You can even figure out how old they was, if you want to."

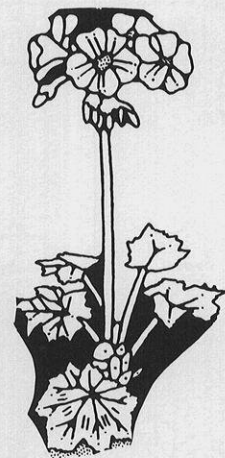
Mrs. Slocum did not pursue the subject. She felt it would not be fitting.

During the following winter, however, she thought about her problem a great deal without success. But when spring came and the countryside began to bud

and flower, a logical solution presented itself—one which she knew would meet with Albert's wholehearted approval because it was simple, cheap, and extremely fair.

From the local florist she bought six flower pots, varying in price from a dollar seventy-five for a very large one, to fifty cents for a relatively small one. She had each pot filled with a red geranium plant, varying also in size according to the size of the flower pot. Over the graves of each of the Slocums (spouses were excluded) she decided to place a pot of flowers, strictly and honestly according to the deceased's importance.

Only Amos would get a dollar-seventy-five-cent pot with a large plant in it. Albert and Edward, equally successful, would each get a dollar-and-quarter pot. Henry who had died well off, but not as wealthy, would get an eighty-five-cent pot, while Thomas and Florence would get fifty-cent pots respectively. Thomas had died bankrupt during the 1933 depression and therefore surely merited only a small pot. Yet this decision bothered Mrs. Slocum a little. She remembered that after Thomas' death, some land which Albert had previously accepted from him in lieu of a ten-thousand-dollar defaulted note, had later yielded a handsome profit. However, facts were facts. Thomas had not had a penny to his name when he died. Mrs. Slocum salved her conscience by putting an extra nice plant into the small container. As for Florence, she had never distinguished herself by marriage or otherwise. A fifty-cent pot went to her merely because she had been a Slocum.



All told, the transaction cost six dollars and ten cents for the flower pots and fifty for plants. She then paid Biddle a dollar to drive her to the cemetery on Memorial Day to help arrange the offerings. After each pot had been placed squarely and conspicuously on its designated grave, Mrs. Slocum was sure that anyone would recognize the relative importance of each member of the family. It was a good job well worth the price.

On July fourth she paid the farmer fifty cents, because there would be no pots to carry, to take her to the cemetery. A first glance revealed that all was not well. Not only were some of the plants in poor shape, but, even worse, the pots had been *moved*. The big one, so carefully stationed over Amos' grave, now stood on the wrong side of the monument. Albert's plant had practically died except for a few feeble leaves as it leaned against Libby's headstone. Edward's rested on an unassigned bit of land. Only Thomas's geranium was blooming beautifully just where it had been put.

"Oh dear," she said in her sharp, thin voice. "Look what they've done."

"Some of them don't look so good," commented Biddle. "It's been too dry."

Mrs. Slocum did not answer. She took off her gloves without a word and started moving the pots around. The farmer watched her tug at the largest pot for a moment. Then he lifted it up and put it back on Amos' grave.

When all were again in place and Mrs. Slocum had watered the plants from a nearby spigot, she opened her purse and gave Biddle a half dollar.

"It wasn't that much work," protested

Biddle. "You don't need to pay."

"Keep it," she answered. "I don't like to be beholden. Besides," she added thoughtfully, "we'll have to arrange about taking the pots in around Labor Day or they'll crack over the winter."

The farmer put the half dollar into his pocket.

"If that's all—" he hesitated—"I have to do down to the south pasture before milking."

"That's all," said Mrs. Slocum.

For the next five years Mrs. Slocum and whoever rented the farm made intermittent pilgrimages to the cemetery, tugging and lugging pots back to their rightful places. She complained occasionally at the cemetery office that they had been moved contrary to her wishes, but complaints yielded no results.

In a small black book in which she kept her accounts, the figures on "Flowers for Cemetery" steadily mounted. When she calculated the total sum spent, it came to well over seventy dollars!

In the middle of August shortly after her eightieth birthday, the Fosters, her next door neighbors and dearest friends, invited Mrs. Slocum to ride with them to the cemetery. They dropped her off at the Slocum plot to return later and pick her up. She saw at once that Amos' dollar-seventy-five-cent pot stood in full bloom on the grave of Walter Cleggett, Florence's insignificant husband.

This final insult brought tears of rage to Mrs. Slocum's eyes. She seated herself slowly on one of the headstones. Never before had responsibility so oppressed her, and for a moment she was tempted to abandon the whole thing. But—the pots had been paid for and, more important, they had become for her a significant symbol.

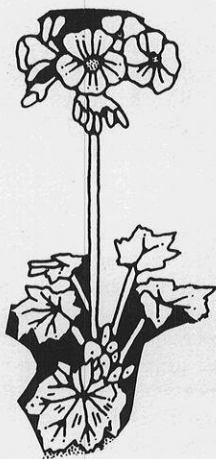
The August sun beat down on her black straw hat and nearly made her sick. The glare on the white stone monument sent shimmering figures weaving before her eyes. She looked at the miscreant flower pot and hated it. But she knew that duty could not be denied.

After a few moments she tucked a strand of white hair tightly behind one ear, laid her purse and gloves beside the headstone where she sat, and got to her feet. She walked over to the flower pot that stood on Walter Cleggett's grave, stooped over, and gave it a slight turn to ease it from the ground. It was not a pot she had lifted before—and it was heavy, very heavy. But she managed to get hold of it and take it into her arms. Once upright, she could hardly see above the foliage and flowers that brushed against her

face with their pungent odor. Staggering under the weight of her burden, she moved towards the monument.

As she crossed the level ground where her own headstone stood, a projecting tree root caught her foot and she fell. The pot crashed to the ground. Mrs. Slocum's head hit sharply against the headstone.

On Memorial Day of the following year the Fosters put a large pot of red geraniums on Mrs. Slocum's grave. **W**





By James Van Deurzen

Photographs by Sally Behr

## Twentieth-Century Renaissance Man

Interview with Gunnar Johansen



“Creativity is the ability to biassociate. It is by force of synthesis that one comes up with new ideas, discoveries, and artistic innovation.” This definition by Gunnar Johansen carries weight precisely because Gunnar Johansen himself is a model of creativity: a pianist of world renown, a composer, a founder of an academy for the study of synergistic scientific research, a teacher, a naturalist, a humanist.

Johansen feels that the more one learns, the more potential one has to make a meaningful synthesis. He is one who all of his life has tried to expand his knowledge to be used in the service of his fellow man.

Although he is seventy-five years old, he still exercises and practices his piano daily, often until ten or eleven in the evening. He feels that there is no limit to his energy: “It has been found”—he says—“that if you are constantly learning it is animating to the life of the cells in your body. But when it becomes a matter of easing back into the old folds and just sitting on top of what you might have accrued, then it is downhill for body and mind. I have practiced all of my life, and I am still climbing.”

**G**unnar and Lorraine Johansen live just north of picturesque Blue Mounds, about thirty miles west of Madison. Their home, perched on a hillside and nestled against an abrupt limestone escarpment, is constructed inside and out of wood and locally quarried limestone. The ground floor has a living area, kitchen, and study; there is a loft above and a recording room and studio below.

They added the study, and later they built, much of it with their own hands, the basement studio to house Gunnar’s instruments, recording equipment, and extensive library of books and tapes. Their home is simple, comfortable, and above all personal. Llama and native holstein hides grace the living-room floor. The one spectacular item is a double-keyboard Moor-Bosendorfer grand piano, the Rolls-Royce of pianos. Between the kitchen and the study is a beautiful hand-carved and foot-worn spiral stone staircase which joins the three levels of the house.



**The Johansens' Blue Mounds home was constructed of wood and locally quarried limestone.**

When the Johansens moved there in 1946, they had neither electricity nor running water; Lorraine began then cooking with wood on her combination wood and gas range, and she still cooks with wood gathered by Gunnar with the aid of his trusty Stihl chain saw. Their water comes from a spring located up the hill behind the house. There are two mammoth fireplaces on either end of the living area, one of them equipped with a hot water heat exchanger to help conserve fuel. The long axis of the living area is dominated by a glass wall that commands a view of a native stand of hardwood, home to a myriad of birds, including a piliated woodpecker.

Gunnar was born into a musical family in Copenhagen in 1906. His father was a violin player whose teacher was Victor Borge's father. Victor Borge is still one of the Johansens' dearest friends (he visited them the day after our interview). Johansen points out proudly that the two families have shared three generations of musical heritage. Unlike most great pianists, Gunnar did not start playing the piano as soon as he could walk. "I did not start playing until I was ten"—he says—"but then it was with a vengeance. I had no interests outside of the piano and careening around on my bicycle. I always got a lot of exercise, but I practiced six hours a day and went to school for six hours a day. I gave my first public performance, a Liszt rhapsody, at the age of twelve." His first teacher was Victor Schiøler with whom he studied as a teenager in Berlin. Other teachers included Edwin Fischer, Egon Petri, Kurt Sachs, Johannes Wolff, and Paul Juon. His early interest in Liszt goes back to his eleventh year when an aunt presented him with a copy of Liszt's rhapsodies. Today he is considered Liszt's greatest interpreter. Johansen studied in Europe until he was twenty-three, when he came to America to visit, with no idea of staying.

He landed in California, and the first thing he did was tour the coast by motorcycle. He took a job as solo pianist for the National Broadcasting Company in San Francisco, a position he held from 1930 to 1935. In 1938 Johansen was playing a series of twelve recitals at the University of Chicago when, about halfway through the scheduled engagement, Dr. Carl Bricken (then chairman of the University of Wisconsin School of Music) asked if he would be interested in joining a university. Johansen replied that he would as long as he could have the freedom to travel for his concerts, and, having been assured of that freedom, Gunnar Johansen joined the Madison faculty in 1938 as a lecturer.

In 1939 both Wisconsin and Cornell offered him the distinguished position of Artist-in-Residence, the first ever to be offered to a musician in America. Feeling he had already committed himself to Wisconsin, he decided to stay. It would be difficult to overestimate the prestige and honor that the title Artist-in-Residence carries. The earliest Artists-in-Residence in America, a program conceived in 1937, were three very well known "Regionalist Painters": Grant Wood in Iowa, Thomas Hart Benton at Kansas, and John Steuart Curry at Madison.

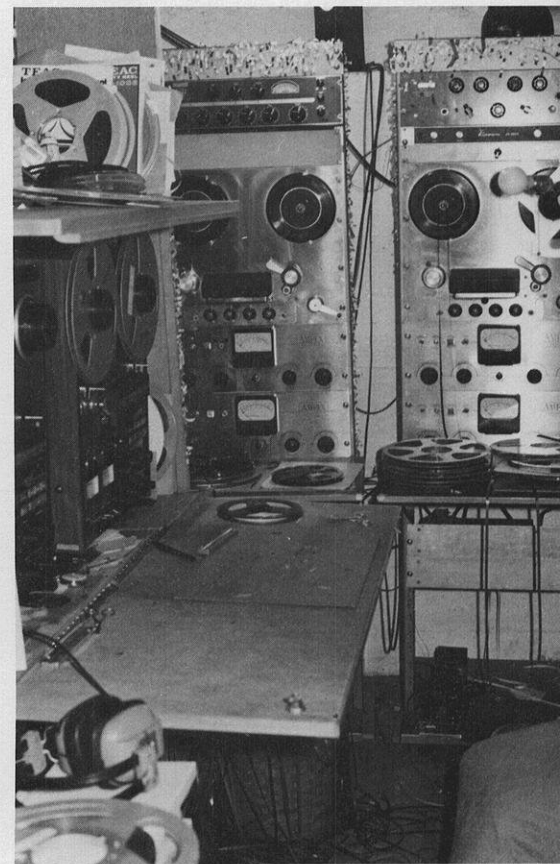
In addition to his teaching duties and occasional concerts in New York and Europe, Johansen embarked upon a most ambitious recording project in 1951—the complete piano works of Bach. He first recorded himself at home in conjunction with an assignment for WHA radio.

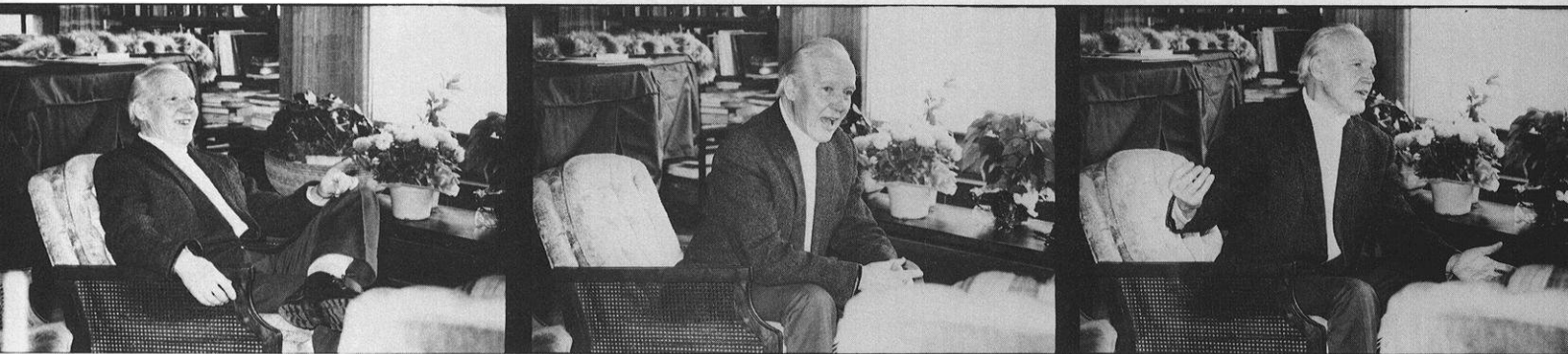
It began during the occasion of the bicentennial of Bach's death in 1950. I had been playing live radio concerts for WHA, a series a year, since 1944. I had already broadcast the complete works of Schubert, Chopin, Beethoven, and now with the bicentennial came the turn to Bach. I had studied Bach intensively since I was about thirteen or fourteen years old. Since I had a direct link to Busoni who was looked upon as the great Bach interpreter at the turn of the century, I felt that studying Bach was natural. The first year of the scheduled three-year broadcasting project I played live, and one day I came to a certain work of Bach, the C-minor Passacaglia and Fugue. It is usually associated with the organ, although it proves originally to have been intended for the harpsichord with pedals. I had my Moor-Bosendorfer double-keyboard piano which is able to make doublings and thereby to swell the sound similar to a harpsichord. [It intensifies the normal tone by simultaneously

striking two sets of eight-foot strings in the upper and the lower octave.] I asked the radio people if I could have a piece of recording equipment to take home so that I could hear the piece on the double-keyboard instrument. WHA gave me a machine, a Magna-Corder it was called. (Tape recording in 1951 was only three or four years old, having recently been brought over from Germany.) The Magna-Corder proved so successful that I never went back to the studio. I could now play in my home, check it, and stay with it until I was satisfied.

This led to record albums Johansen recorded and produced himself on his own label "Artist Direct." His first recording project, the complete works of Bach, was not completed until 1961. Although he had played all of Bach's keyboard works for WHA between 1950 and 1953, he played them all over again for recording.

**The home studio of Artist Direct records is packed with sophisticated equipment.**





**Johansen speaks with equal enthusiasm on Bach and hydrogen.**

When he had finished Bach, it was 1961, the year of Liszt's sesquicentennial. Johansen decided to record all of Liszt's works for the keyboard; it took him fifteen years. He finished Liszt in 1976, the year of his retirement from the university. To say that Professor Johansen is retired is misleading because he has not broken his practicing, recording, and composing stride for the past twenty-five years. As he says, "Retirement has allowed me to devote myself full-time to my work." As of this year all of his Liszt records have been produced. The first thirty-five are on discs, the last fifteen numbers on cassettes. In addition to his forty-five Bach and his fifty-one Liszt recordings, he also recorded the complete piano works of Busoni. In the past twenty-five years Gunnar Johansen has recorded 101 long-playing records, probably more than any other solo instrumentalist in the country.

David Dubal, program director of New York City's WNCU-FM, evaluated his recordings for *High Fidelity Magazine* in 1976:

As . . . host of a daily *Musical Offering* program . . . I started a series on Liszt that was to consist of sixty broadcasts. After the first week, Johansen recordings began appearing, hand-delivered to the station at seven a.m., one at a time. . . I gradually became convinced that this was some of the greatest Liszt playing ever captured on records, and soon my audiences knew it too. . . Johansen stems from the line of Liszt and Busoni, philosophical musicians who believed that to master the language of art one must first nurture the soul. Among Liszt, Busoni, Egon Petri, and Johansen a bond exists, for all these men viewed life and art as a totality. . . Johansen's playing is simply astonishing. He captures every nuance of the

composer. . . [He] is a titanic virtuoso with lightning reflexes. . . Once you have become familiar with Johansen's playing, you will not mistake it for another's.

A week after he finished Liszt, Johansen began to record his own compositions: thirty-one piano sonatas, twelve toccatas, twelve études, and six suites. Having composed both on paper and spontaneously at the piano, he says those are completely different ways to create music. **He finished a major piano concerto in 1973 while on sabbatical in Italy. He will be premiering this concerto in a one-time-only performance at the Madison Civic Center on May 23, 1981, accompanied by the Madison Civic Symphony directed by Roland Johnson.** His concerto takes its opening inspiration from the mating call of the chick-a-dee and ends with the flight of a Lear Jet.

Perhaps none of his musical accomplishments has been as singularly exciting as the performance in 1969 with the Philadelphia Orchestra at Philharmonic Hall in New York City. Boris Sokoloff, the orchestra's manager, called Johansen at the university on a Monday afternoon and asked him to substitute for Peter Serkin. Within two hours from the time of the call Johansen was on the plane and studying the score for the first time. "I knew the violin version"—said Johansen—"but I had never heard the piano one, not even on records." Tuesday morning he practiced "like a fiend" for five hours without interruption, then went over to the Philharmonic Hall for the rehearsal at four. He met Eugene Ormandy for the first time and was presented with three cadenzas—nine pages of them—that were not in the score that he had studied. Johansen had to read them at sight in the rehearsal which lasted less than an hour. Mr. Ormandy, who had accepted Johansen on the advice of Serkin and others, had intended to announce the crisis to the

audience before the performance but changed his mind. At the end of the concert Ormandy left the podium to embrace Johansen, jubilant that he had been able to do the impossible. Less than forty hours had elapsed between the time of the phone call and the end of the concert. Donald Henahan described the scene in detail the next day in the *New York Times*. The critics hailed his performance as a "musical miracle" and "a complete tour de force." *Time* magazine devoted a full page to Gunnar's achievement and named him Music's Man of the Year for 1969.

Johansen owns three grand pianos, a harpsichord, and a clavichord, the last two gifts from Madison's Oscar Mayer. Actually, all of his instruments have been gifts by people who appreciated him and his music. His Moor-Bosendorfer double-keyboard grand was

a present from the lady who started the Paganini Quartet. She gave them the four Stradivarius violins that had belonged to Paganini, thus their name. A woman of immense wealth, she engaged me to play a concert for her and paid me a very good fee for it. But before I left she said, "I have something else I would like to give you in addition. Would you be interested in the two-keyboard instrument?" I knew of these instruments, although there are only a dozen in the world. My first thought was yes, indeed, I will play Bach on it.

About six weeks later the truck arrived in Blue Mounds with the piano. Because the Johansens' long driveway was too muddy for the truck, they were forced to store the instrument in a neighbor's machine shed. How many Bosendorfers have been stored in a machine shed along with the hay bailers and tractors?

Johansen saw his second piano during a concert tour of Europe in the late fifties. Preparing for a Berlin performance, he went to Steinway to select a piano and found an old one, built in Hamburg in 1926, that in his opinion had the richest sound of any piano he had ever played. While in Berlin, he visited with the elderly woman who had boarded him while he was a teen-ager studying there. Naturally, he told her of his excitement over this wonderful instrument. Jewish, she had fled to Africa during the war, but in 1946 she returned to Berlin and was later paid for some of her losses by the government. Having recently received this money, she insisted upon buying this piano for Johansen. Six weeks later she died.

His third piano is also a Steinway, but a very special one. In New York at the Steinway office, he was shown the only Steinway double-keyboard piano ever built. Back in Madison he met his friend Conrad Elvehjem who was able to get a Steenbock grant to buy the piano for him.

Johansen acts as if he had been entrusted with his instruments' safekeeping, duty bound to insure that the next great pianist will have the opportunity to enjoy them as much as he does.

**B**ut the man's interests do not stop with his music and his instruments. He has always felt a deep sense of responsibility towards man's future. His concern, especially in the areas of energy and cancer research led him, in the late sixties, to form the Leonardo Academy. "I began planning for it in 1964. In 1965 I visited Jacob Bronowski at the brand new Sauk Institute at La Jolla to get some advice. The day before Lorraine and I had visited with Will Durant in Los Angeles, and the day after we visited with Linus Pauling in Santa Barbara." Still excited by the memory, he booms, "I had good company and good advice. What I had planned was to get the best minds together in the interest of man's future. The Leonardo Academy came into being when an interest on the West Coast called the Sea Ranch asked if I would be interested in a cultural attempt to explore some of our pressing problems. They hosted the first meetings of the Academy that we had in 1971, 1972, and 1973, devoted to the subject of energy and cancer." Humanists and scientists from throughout the country were invited to attend. Buckminster Fuller was present for all but the last meeting, which was on fusion energy. Edward Teller sired the



**Gunnar Johansen at the keyboard of a Steinway built in 1926 in Hamburg, Germany, which he found in Berlin in the 1950s.**

two sessions on energy in 1972 and 1973. Johansen says that Teller talked about atomic energy at the first meeting and complained that he had been telling the Atomic Energy Commission for the past twenty-five years to study the feasibility of putting atomic reactors underground 200-500 feet, depending upon geological formations. "Teller actually said that they did not fit anyplace on the face of the earth. So he is capable of thinking twofold," muses Johansen.

In the field of cancer research Johansen believes that too long a time often elapses between a promising discovery and its eventual use. "Since we have no remedies, why not try something new? It is one of those things that goes on in government and bureaucracy that is totally inhuman." Johansen's approach to cancer research is typical of his approach to almost everything—holistic. He attempted to set up a cancer research institute with the University of California at Davis in the mid-sixties to study quantum biology, immunology, nutrition, and the environment all under the same roof, but funding never came through for the project. (It is interesting to note that this approach has now gained widespread acceptance. Interferon came out of immunological and genetic studies; food additives are being discovered to have direct links to cancer.)

In 1974 the Leonardo Academy's meeting was devoted to fusion energy. This meeting generated a second meeting that year with the New York Academy of Science which was attended by fifty scientists in the fusion energy field. It was at this meeting that the possibility of using black holes as an energy source of the future was first discussed. Throughout these meetings Johansen's aspirations had been to bring together recent findings in the various scientific fields to aid both dissemination and application. One of the major problems that he sees with studies today is that they often lack both coordination of effort and a system to assemble and distribute results adequately. He explains, "A vast computer network devoted to compiling and disseminating current information could be of immeasurable assistance to those who are seeking solutions to many of today's problems. The unbiased consistency of the computer would provide a more logical and reasoned approach, which could be of value on all fronts, even political."

Recently, Johansen's interests have led him to devote much of his time, outside of recording, to the exploration of the use of hydrogen as a fuel source. He has "become increasingly convinced that hydrogen most readily will get us out of the energy dilemma that we are in right now. Hydrogen can provide a simple and permanent answer." We often hear and read that hydrogen would be nice except that it takes more energy to separate it from the water than it returns. Johansen says,

This is absolute nonsense; it can be done with a windmill for nothing. Hydrogen is made by electrolyzing water and breaking it down into its constituent parts, hydrogen and oxygen, an old and simple process. The hydrogen is gathered and the oxygen is allowed to enter the atmosphere freely. The hydrogen is then used as a fuel, much in the same way that natural gas is burned. The only pollution it produces is a slight amount of nitric oxide, which can be taken care of by the addition of a little water. The rest of the exhaust from the combustion of hydrogen is water vapor. As a fuel hydrogen is self-recycling. Although it sounds too good to be true, there really is not any magic to it.

The Johansens have been tracking down pioneer inventors for a long time. They found a farmer named Lorenzen, who has three Jacobs Windcharger windmills which supply his farm shop



**The only double-keyboard piano Steinway ever built stands in the Johansens' basement studio. On the stand is the score to his concerto which will be premiered at the Madison Civic Center on May 23, 1981.**

and home with electricity along with hydrogen to power farm engines. His latest invention has been to construct an electrolyzing device for his car which fits under the hood and is powered by the car's alternator.

The Johansens are hopeful that the efforts of men such as Lorenzen will soon lead to the technology that will make hydrogen price competitive. They feel angered at the government's lack of support for hydrogen. The last energy bill, he points out, did not mention or allocate funds for hydrogen experimentation.

Gunnar Johansen recently celebrated his seventy-fifth birthday by giving a concert at the Elvehjem Art Center in Madison. But listening to him talk and watching him move, we realize how little age has touched him. Here is a man whose body and mind have not been idle for any of those years. Here is a man of vast intellectual, humanitarian, and musical accomplishments. Never one content to sit back, he continues to push himself to new heights each day. Johansen is unquestionably a twentieth-century Renaissance Man. **W**

## Two poems by Bruce Cronmiller

### The Patriarch Philander

The patriarch, Philander, his second wife, one  
daughter by his first wife and one by his second, one  
of his nephews  
caught

in the photographer's frame, in front of their home  
in East Cornish, New Hampshire, in 1872

You try to get a good look, to search and to scrutinize  
but the focus is not perfectly clear.

They might well be Bedouins, listening to the  
call to prayer,  
seen in front of their dwelling in the fastness  
of the solitude around them  
they too, people  
of the word, the incandescent, but there is no  
color here, the magnificent, but the boards  
are unfinished, the splendid, but there is only  
a gravelly ground, and the wind.

The great deep, the affirmation, has drowned out  
all other sound, its incessant risings and  
fallings have drained color  
and destroyed form and space  
the great deep, the affirmation, is the summary  
of what is.  
Nothing else is.

Such as these have no real feeling for  
anything else.

Perhaps a little beadwork, perhaps some wax flowers  
perhaps a bit of needlework  
—to keep the hands from idleness—  
it does not amount to a whole lot.

They are poor husbandmen because they really  
cannot be bothered  
they are too absent-minded, -bodied and -souled.

The patriarch, Philander, not well in health  
soon to pass on, his attention caught elsewhere,  
does not see us.

**Bladder Campion (*Silene cucubalus*)**

Silene—from Silenus,  
the fat, drunken father  
of Dionysus.

I

Bladder campion is not buckwheat.  
I saw bladder campion all the time  
all over the place  
I just did not know what it was  
it looked to me as if it must be buckwheat  
whatever buckwheat was, buckwheat sounded to me  
the way bladder campion looked.

We were walking in the fields  
I knew so well  
I should have known!  
and you asked me what it was  
and I said, Buckwheat!

your father said nothing  
being a discreet and considerate person  
but I could catch a negative look in his eyes  
he being faithful to the truth  
which he knew full well  
having spent a summer of his youth  
in the fields  
so that he knew what it was not  
although I am not sure  
that he knew what it was  
but your father was not a man to betray  
or to insult another man's son  
even in the smallest matters

my father, well  
I would not have said what I did with him there also  
I knew that to him  
it was *some kind of weed*  
*some kind of wildflower*  
but not *buckwheat*  
—he had been raised on a farm!

in his way which is and is not my way  
he was as impatient of me  
as I am of my own sons  
I who was and still am  
afraid of horses  
I inherited from his love of them  
a deep dislike and distrust of them.

II

At my calling *silene buckwheat*  
Old Silenus would have laughed  
he being a father  
and a son, no doubt, in his own right  
But oh! how Silenus would have laughed!

III

I think of Bernini's *Aeneas bearing Anchises*  
(his father), carrying the household gods,  
leading the little Ascanius his son  
fleeing the fall of Troy his home.

Aeneas, I?  
well, as much as anybody else

*Pius Aeneas* the Latin says  
*Faithful Aeneas*, the English  
Aeneas who-keeps-the-faith  
Aeneas who-is-true-to-his-own.

IV

Bladder campion is not buckwheat, nevertheless. . . .

Another time, the grandfather standing in somewhat  
the same place, said to the father, rather unexpectedly,  
and in what the father is inclined to think was a  
bit of a "scene"  
but what meaningful of moment of life is not?  
is not?—I ask you!

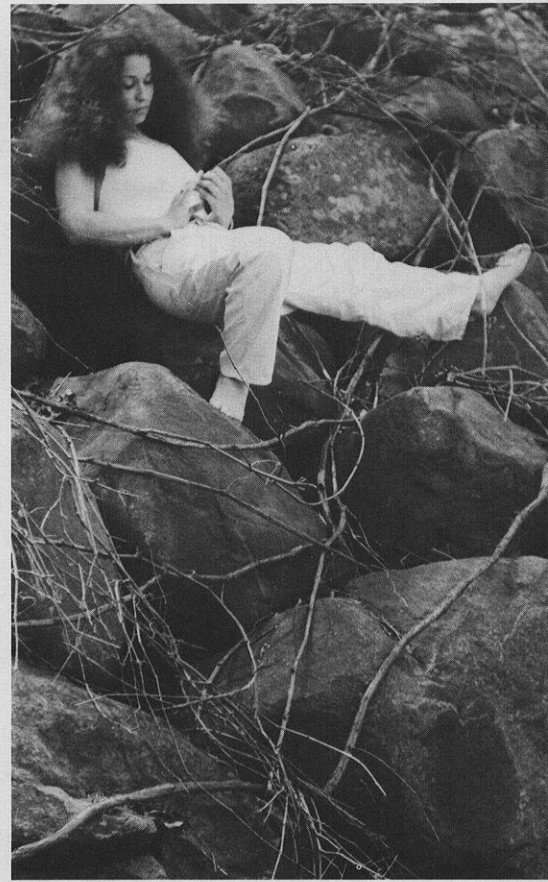
the grandfather said  
Do not give up the land!  
as if the land had been in his family for generations  
as if he was not the first of his family to own it!

It seemed to the father, though  
as he thought about what the old man had said  
that the old man was speaking  
less about that particular piece of land  
and more about the household gods,  
the gods of the hearth.

That piece of land was sold long ago,  
but the father would like to cry out, now,  
"I have kept all with me  
the land and the household gods!  
Those I could never leave;  
it would be impossible for me!"

On the whole,  
despite whatever,  
fathers and sons  
Anchises, Aeneas, Ascanius, Priam  
are faithful to one another  
somehow.







*Photographs by Martin Drapkin*



*Photographs by Martin Drapkin*

*"If you want to find out about Joe McCarthy," Jack Anderson, the columnist and early McCarthy biographer, has recently noted, "you've got to go back to Wisconsin. You've got to find out what made him tick, what made him run, what motivated him. And if you do that, you might be able to come up with a lesson that will have historical importance."*

## **Young Joe McCarthy**

### **The Folks Back Home Remember**

**By Michael O'Brien**

**I**t has now been over thirty years since the rise to power of Joseph R. McCarthy. It was February 9, 1950, at Wheeling, West Virginia, that the Republican senator from Wisconsin charged the Truman Administration with harboring 205 communists in the U.S. State Department. After Wheeling, he made one sensational accusation after another. Owen Lattimore, General George C. Marshall, and Secretary of State Dean Acheson were only a few of the prominent Americans he accused of furthering the communist cause in this country. McCarthy remained at the center stage of American politics until 1954 when the Army-McCarthy hearings and Senate censure undermined his power.

During those five dramatic years his opponents called him a ruthless, irresponsible political opportunist, a demagogue, and a totalitarian. Yet to his supporters he was a defender of Christian morality, a patriot, and a courageous fighter against communist infiltration.

In recent years scholars have described (and mostly criticized) his methods and tactics. They have also analyzed the political forces and the climate of fear which spawned McCarthyism. Yet his early life in Wisconsin remains obscure or is glossed

with generalities. "If you want to find out about Joe McCarthy," Jack Anderson, the columnist and early McCarthy biographer, has recently noted, "you've got to go back to Wisconsin. You've got to find out what made him tick, what made him run, what motivated him. And if you do that, you might be able to come up with a lesson that will have historical importance."

What kind of person was Joe McCarthy, really? Here's how some of his Wisconsin contemporaries remember him.

#### **Life on the Farm**

Joe was the fifth of seven children born to Bridget and Timothy McCarthy. Timothy had built a log cabin and cleared 142 acres in Grand Chute, a farm community north of Appleton, Wisconsin. By the time of Joe's birth on November 14, 1908, family fortunes had improved enough for them to live in an eight-room, white clapboard house. The McCarthys were mostly Irish, Catholic, frugal, and hard-working. At fourteen Joe was graduated from a country grade school. He then struck out on his own as a chicken farmer, a business he worked from 1923 to 1928.

Stephen McCarthy, a retired mill worker and the oldest of the McCarthy boys, is one of the few persons who has recalled Joe's boyhood and life on the McCarthy farm:

Dad never talked about religion too much, but he would load us all up in the wagon and take us to St. Mary's Church in Appleton. In the winter time we'd take the old logging sleigh and in the summer time we had an old surrey with a team of horses. The Catholic religion stressed that you say the rosary. We prayed the rosary at home every evening. We kneeled in the front room. That's when we were real small kids.

The old man gave Joe a little money to start a chicken business. I gave him a few pennies and all the rest of us gave him a few pennies. He built himself a chicken coop which, as I remember, was ninety feet long and thirty-two feet wide. He insulated it, and he got a bunch of chicken stoves. He must have had seven or eight of them. He done most of the work himself. The hardest work was to put the concrete floor in. After he got the thing going, he practically stood right in that hen coop day and night. People tried seeing the chickens, but he couldn't let nobody in because they dragged some kind of disease with them. It really was something to see.

One cold night in 1928, Joe emerged from the warm, moist chicken house, took a chill, and a few days later landed on his back with pneumonia. In desperation, he hired a couple of neighbor boys to care for the chickens until he was back on his feet, but they were inexperienced and either slow or careless and within a few weeks almost his entire flock died, and Joe's five years of work died with them.

### High School and College

After the misfortune with his chicken business, Joe worked as a clerk in an Appleton grocery store until the spring of 1929 when he took over management of a grocery store in Manawa, a town of 700 people located thirty miles northwest of Appleton. His life changed quickly and dramatically thereafter. That fall he gave up the grocery business to enter high school and arranged with the principal to try to complete the four year program in one year.

Leo Herschberger was the principal of Little Wolf High School in Manawa:

He came to see me when he was nineteen years old, which is beyond the age limit for high school, and wanted to come to school. I said: 'Joe, we don't have to take you.' He said: 'I know, but I'm willing to work and do it.'

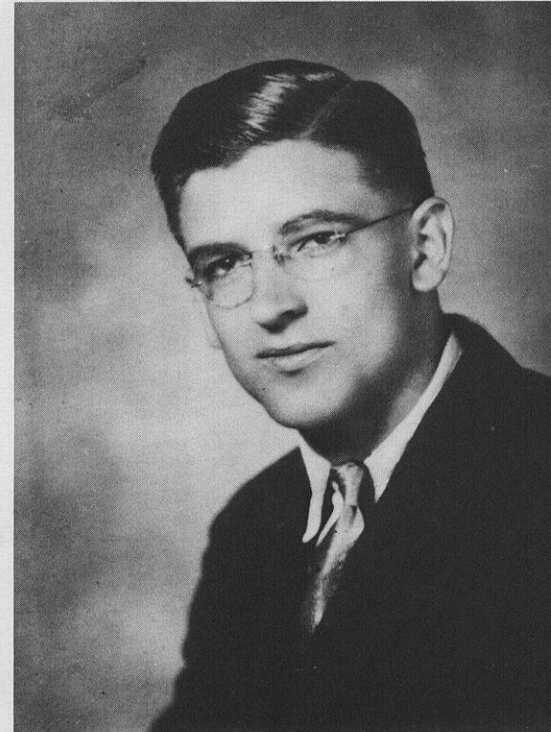
He saw the outlines and everything that we had for a program, and he said, 'That would be just wonderful. I can do it.' We kept telling the teachers: 'Don't baby him. Don't help him more than you have to. Make him earn what he's got.' People say that nobody could ever do all that work in one year. But in one year Joe did more real honest-to-goodness work and study than the average person did in four. He'd get up at five o'clock in the morning, and he'd study until school time. He'd come to school and study all day until five in the afternoon. He worked on his school work on Saturdays, Sunday afternoons, Thanksgiving, Christmas vacation, and Easter vacation.

I worried for fear that he would have a nervous breakdown. So I talked to him. He said: 'Well, I'd like to have exercise between five and six p.m. I would like to have a chance to do some boxing. If you would send in at least four individuals, I will box with them. I won't hurt anybody, but I will give them a good workout.'

Honour Testin, a retired school teacher who still lives in Manawa, graduated with Joe in the class of 1930:

He studied hard. We had a great big assembly room, and I can remember many times going out of the room, and Joe would be the only one left. He didn't really have time to mingle because he worked so hard. But he was a likeable fellow so that if anyone could help him, you were willing to do it. Everything he did he did with that hard work. He would attack something, and he would finish it.

One Sunday afternoon, somebody had a car and four of us went to Symco, four miles from Manawa, where they were giving airplane rides in a farmer's field. You paid for your tickets by the pound. Joe and I went together. All we had across us was a strap. That was it. The pilot said to Joe: 'What do you want? Just a little ride?' And Joe said: 'Give'er the works!' And the pilot said: 'Do you want me to loop the loop?' 'Yup,' said Joe. I never was so scared in my life. We looped the loop. We did everything. I don't think much scared Joe. He was ready to try anything.



Graduation picture from Little Wolf High School, Manawa, Wis., 1930

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**“Joe did more real honest-to-goodness-work and study in one year than the average person did in four.”**

**High school principal**

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George Kelley, a farmer, also was graduated from high school with Joe and played various sports with him:

He did everything in a pell-mell fashion and singleness of purpose. There was very little indirection. In boxing, Joe was a swinger. He couldn't box, but he could hit. He boxed with me quite a bit.

When he'd get overenthused, he would stutter. He would be accurate in his thinking, but his mind would be going faster than he could talk.

I thought he was probably more attentive in the classroom than anyone else. I can't recall him making a snide remark or cracking a joke. Apparently his mind didn't wander.

I recall him at the senior picnic at the Casino at Waupaca. There was a ten or twelve foot diving board there, and some of the kids were swimming and diving. Joe couldn't swim, but he got up on top of that diving board and he was going to go off it anyway with an inner tube on. It was a brutal situation. I often wondered why a person would do something like that. Why would he feel it was necessary to jump off a diving board repeatedly to the extent that he would hurt himself? He was marked black and blue. That was one thing he didn't learn in his physics class.

It looked like Joe was trying to catch up on all the things he had missed or felt he had missed. He wanted to *be*. He wasn't trying to show anybody. If he wanted to box, he wanted to *be* a boxer.

After graduation from high school, Joe enrolled at Marquette University. He spent five years there, two in engineering (1930-1932) and three in law (1932-1935). His principal means of support were jobs at Standard Oil gas stations where he worked forty to sixty hours a week. He won campus fame as the college heavyweight boxing champ, and he coached the boxing team one year.

Charles Curran was one of Joe's closest friends in law school. Both belonged to the Franklin Club, an old campus society which sponsored forensic development among students of average ability. Curran recalls:

Joe had a very alert mind. He was very receptive. He probably could get the fundamentals of whatever he might be studying easier than the average person in our class. I don't mean that he was an outstanding intellect, but he had a perception that enabled him to read something rather hurriedly and retain

the basic rules.

The director of the Franklin Club would select students for the debate team, and then we would go out and debate in public areas in Wisconsin and adjoining states. I don't think that Joe was ever selected for any of these public debates. He was very tenacious, but he didn't have the physical attributes that the director thought were conducive to proper expression—the use of his arms, his head, his stance, and his demeanor generally on the platform. He wasn't polished at that time.

Robert Harland, a Milwaukee attorney, was one of the brighter students in McCarthy's law class and the editor of the *Marquette Law Review*:

I recall him because he was a member of our law study group. He asked if he could study with our group. There were about five of us, and we did better scholastically than the others. We thought that Joe had not spent a great deal of his time in study. When he asked to study with us we were a little taken aback because none of really had had much to do with Joe. He was a very likeable fellow so we said he could study with us provided he didn't interrupt. He said: 'All I want to do is listen.'

He listened, and I often thought he realized that if he sat and heard the discussions and the byplay that he would actually in a very short period of time learn enough that he could retain it until the final and get through school. I think that's what happened.

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### **“Joe was as sincere as a bartender's smile.”**

#### **Law school classmate**

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In the last two years of law school, most of McCarthy's social life centered on the activities of his fraternity, Delta Theta Phi, a national legal fraternity which he joined in 1933.

Hugh F. Gwin was graduated with McCarthy in 1935 and lived with him for two years at the fraternity house:

Joe was a very outgoing person, a super salesman. When he was in law school, he was running a filling station for Standard Oil and at one time apparently sold more tires than any station

in the city. Joe was as sincere as a bartender's smile. He was fundamentally not an honest person. We wouldn't play poker with him, for instance, because he would cheat us. Joe was going with a girl, and they were engaged, and we knew that Joe had no more idea of marrying her than I did. He never did marry her.

Joe had a car. This was the Depression and no one had any money. Joe needed that car to get to work and shouldn't have allowed anyone else to drive it, and he didn't. But I remember taking a girl to the prom. We went by streetcar. Joe and his girl met us there. Joe said: 'How did you come?' I said: 'By the streetcar.' 'Oh,' he said, 'you should have asked me. You could have taken the car.' I knew damn well that he wouldn't have let me use that car for anything, and he knew it. But the girls thought: 'Isn't this guy wonderful? He's offering Hugh the car!'

He was friendly. He had that great Irish smile. He was a natural gladhander. At first everybody thought this guy was great. If you lived with him for two years, you'd know that much of it he was not sincere about.

#### **Lawyer, Politician, and Judge**

In June, 1935, six hours after he had been sworn in as a member of the Wisconsin bar, Joe opened a law office in Waupaca, a town of 5,000 located about thirty miles west of Appleton and only a few miles from Manawa. He practiced law there for eight months.

William Remmel was a Waupaca dentist who had played poker with Joe in Manawa:

Apparently I was the only one Joe knew in Waupaca. It was in the summer, probably right after he was admitted to the bar, that Joe made his appearance in my office and told me that he was going to practice law in Waupaca. He said he didn't have any place to stay. He didn't say: 'Can I come up?' He said: 'I'm sure you have an extra bed where I can sleep, or I'll sleep on the floor.' To get down to it, of course, Joe didn't have any money. All the while he was in Waupaca he stayed at our home.

Later, on a Saturday afternoon, I was up in my office and it was snowing. Joe came up and said: 'Here's the title to my car.' He had an old Chevrolet. 'I owe you fifty dollars. You give me fifty dollars more and here's the title to my car.' I said: 'Joe, what are you

going to do?' He said: 'There isn't much money in the law business so I'm going out to play cards tonight.' There was a place called Ben Johnson's which had a number of very good card players. I told Joe: 'It's your business, but you're not playing with fellows you played with down at Marquette.' Joe was a good card player. He said: 'If I can hold my own until midnight or one o'clock, I think I'll be alright. I won't drink very much.' Joe was no drinker in those days.

Well, we were just going to church on Sunday morning and Joe came in. He had a roll of bills that would have knocked you dead in those days. One of the comments he made was to my wife Esther: 'Esther, you know I never had the time or thought of paying you any room rent.' So Joe got the calendar out and said: 'I've been here so many weeks. Do you think this is enough?' Esther said: 'Sure, Joe.' He paid her back room rent, and he paid her weeks in advance, and he gave me my hundred dollars back. I gave him his title back. His last comment was: 'I'm not going to be able to make church this morning, but here's five dollars. Feed the kitty.'

Edward Hart was a lawyer in Waupaca:

He was about the worst ambulance chaser that ever hit this country. He'd take the case right out of your pocket. Joe had no scruples. If there was something he wanted, he'd take it.

Early in 1936, McCarthy attracted the attention of Michael Eberlein, an outstanding trial lawyer in northeastern Wisconsin. Eberlein had a law firm in Shawano, another small town about forty miles north of Appleton, and he invited Joe to join him. Joe accepted and practiced law in Shawano for four years.

May Voy was the secretary at the law firm of Eberlein and McCarthy:

Mr. Eberlein was over in the Waupaca Court on a trial and met Joe. He came back and said he met a young fellow there who was a very sharp young lawyer. 'I'd like to get someone in the office, and he's one of the first young men I've seen that seems to have the ability and the willingness to want to get ahead.'

Joe tried to cultivate a memory that would remember everyone. He always carried this little notebook with him, and as he met someone and found out something about that person, he'd jot it down so that he could remember that particular person. If he met him again,

he'd probably say: 'How's your son, Tim?' Of course this would make a big impression on the fellow who probably only met Joe once. He never used this [notebook] when he talked to the person again; he just sort of catalogued it. Joe had a very brilliant mind.

In the 1936 election Joe plunged deeply into Democratic party politics in Shawano County. Democrats traditionally fared poorly in Shawano, but Joe campaigned vigorously for Franklin Roosevelt, held various party posts, and ran a spirited though unsuccessful race for district attorney.

Grover Meisner was the Democratic party leader in Shawano County and the candidate for the state assembly in 1936. He and Joe campaigned together throughout the fall:

We always had party committee meetings, and we had talks in various communities. And, of course, there was always beer afterwards. 'Come on over to the bar and have a drink,' Joe would say, and about the time we had to pay for it, Joe had a call to nature. He was a great sponger. Hell, he had more free meals in my home here than any of the others.

I can see how he won elections because Joe was a very magnetic fellow. He could make you believe black birds were white. He was a foxy Irishman. He wrote a speech in the 1936 campaign, and he said to me: 'I want you to look it over, Grover, because you're an old-timer.' So I read it over very thoroughly, and I turned to Joe and said: 'Joe, do you believe in this?' 'Hell, no,' he said, 'I don't believe in all that but if you want to get anywhere in politics, you got to please the public with what they want to hear and not what you believe.' I never had much confidence in him. He wasn't sincere. He preached one thing and believed another.

In 1939 McCarthy ran for circuit judge, a nonpartisan office, held by elderly Judge Edgar Werner. He enlisted an army of volunteers, campaigned vigorously, misrepresented Werner's age, and won the election.

Dottie Anderson was Joe's personal secretary and only paid employee during the campaign:

He would be on the road about eight a.m. He would visit every town and every farmer. As he left the places, he

**Judge McCarthy of Wisconsin's Tenth Circuit Court in his office in the Outagamie County Courthouse in May of 1946**



Courtesy Appleton Post-Crescent

would dictate on a dictaphone the names of the people to whom he had spoken. He would bring that cylinder in in the evening, and the next day I wrote, by hand, all the cards to these people thanking them for giving him the opportunity to meet them. They were always very personal. He felt that it was important to not send the same type of card. I'm sure it was the greatest campaign that ever hit the three counties.

He was very outgoing, very friendly. He could call people by their names, and, of course, everyone loved to hear their own name.

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**“He had a great capacity to love and care for people.”**

**Secretary**

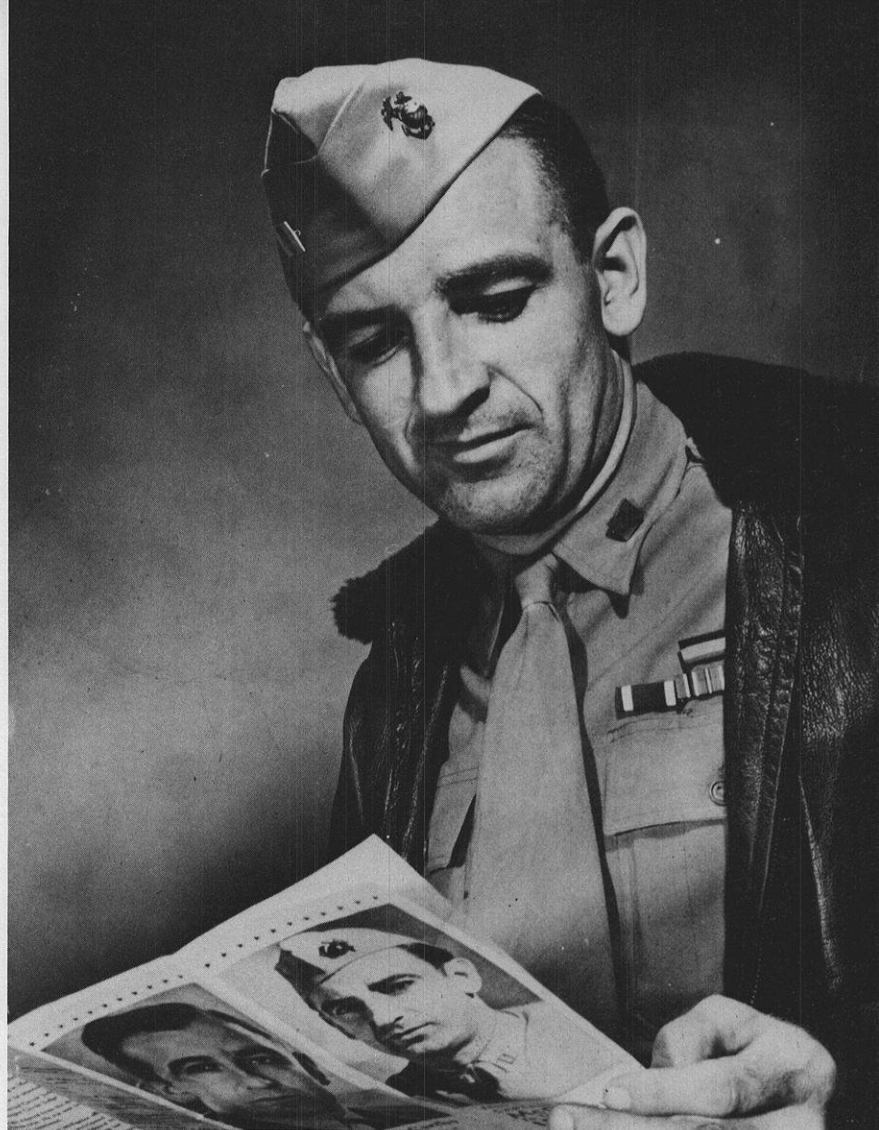
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Regardless of what people say, he had a great capacity to love and care for people. Money meant nothing to him. If he had it, he'd give it to charity. I can recall a young boy coming up to the office. Joe had done some work for his mother. The boy came up and said that his grandmother was very ill in Antigo and that his mother did not have train fare to go see her. Joe reached in his pocket, and he gave him everything that he had. He said: 'You and your mother get on that train and you go.' Then Joe said to me: 'Well, Dottie, we're broke again.'

Herman Koehler, an attorney in Shawano, observed McCarthy both as a lawyer in Shawano and as a judge in Appleton:

In jury trials Joe would try very hard to make a favorable impression upon the jury. For example, we had one trial that went fourteen days here at Shawano, and Joe was on that case with Eberlein. It was a warm summer day, but in spite of that the lawyers all would keep their coats on. Well, the men on the jury had their coats off, and after he started his argument to the jury, Joe said: 'Excuse me please. I'll take my coat off, too.' That was his way of relating to them and really being one of the boys. That was Joe's method. He wanted to be one of the boys.

He was not what you would call a brilliant research scholar in the law. He did not go into legal cases deeply. Eberlein had to do that. That's why so many felt that when he became circuit judge that he might be a little bit slip-



Milwaukee Journal photo, courtesy State Historical Society of Wisconsin

**In 1944, while a captain in the marines, McCarthy managed a month's leave to run in the GOP primary. Here shown in Milwaukee en route from the Pacific to Appleton**

shod on the law. However, when he did become circuit judge, on all matters of controversy, he would ask for a brief at the close of a case. He would study those briefs thoroughly. Also, he frequently requested a trial brief, which means a brief that's presented to the judge before the trial begins, where the facts are summarized and where the legal propositions are stated. He would study that. I don't know of any case that I was interested in where he went wrong on the law. He would follow the law.

Andrew Parnell was an Appleton attorney who appeared often in McCarthy's courtroom:

By just meeting him you became acquainted with him rather easily. He was a free talker, a great man to meet people. He had quite a personality.

Joe was never a deep judge. He was not intellectually oriented in the law. He went through law school in a hurry and didn't have much background or trial experience. But he was able by reason of his makeup and personality to operate a court.

When he came down to Appleton as a judge, he picked up a calendar which was loaded. He tried forty cases in forty days. He worked us unmercifully hard. He used to start a case at seven a.m. and work straight through the day so that he'd finish that day, no matter what time it was. I remember arguing a case we finished at ten-thirty at night. I noticed a juror yawn in the back row of the jury box and this just took all the fire out of me. I just sat down and took a rest. Joe was a guy who just wanted to establish himself as a man who could do things fast.



# CAPT. JOSEPH R. McCARTHY

## FOR U. S. SENATOR

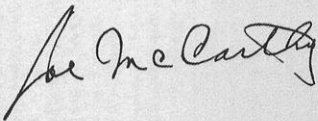
### *Republican*

**There are two questions which deeply concern all of us—**

- 1—Shall I have a good job after the war is won?
- 2—Am I going to live in a world torn by war every generation?

**My principal concern in the Senate will be to work for—**

- 1—Job security at decent wages for every man and woman.
- 2—Lasting peace throughout the world.



Authorized and paid for by the Committee to Elect Capt. Joseph R. McCarthy of the U. S. Marines to the U. S. Senate, Margaret F. Hagene, Secretary, 110 E. Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee 2, Wis.



*The Spirit of Our Fighting Men*

### ELECT Capt. Joseph R. McCarthy OF THE U. S. MARINES to The U. S. Senate

For the Term 1945 to 1951—  
When the Post-War World Will Be Made

Courtesy State Historical Society of Wisconsin

Some people he just didn't like. One time some lawyers from Milwaukee came up, and he didn't like the way they looked. Oh, he was rough on them. Under the guise of judicial administration, he could just devastate a lawyer: the way he would address the jury, the way he would look at the jury. He'd ask questions to a witness that would pretty much predominate throughout and give the jury the impression that this was right and this was not right.

**"He preached one thing and believed another."**

### **Local political leader**

Urban Van Susteren, also an attorney, was Joe's closest friend in Appleton:

I always considered the law to be appropriately more formalistic and more rigid. Joe, on the other hand, would never let some technical construction of a statute stand in the way of justice. Joe was phenomenally quick in deciding a case. Joe was not a pious type of

man. He was very informal in the courtroom. All the jurors loved him.

### **Republican Senate Aspirant**

In June, 1942, Joe took a leave of absence from his judicial duties to enlist in the Marine Corps. He rose to the rank of captain and served in the Pacific. In the summer of 1944 he fangled a month's leave to come home and run, as a Republican, in the Wisconsin GOP primary. He lost, but his second place finish, and the glamorous Marine Corps record he and friendly newspapers had manufactured, made him a political upstart. He resigned from the marines in 1945, returned to his Appleton judicial duties, and began campaigning for the 1946 Republican Senate nomination.

Mary Ellen Ducklow saw McCarthy at social gatherings in Appleton in 1945-1946. She was also a reporter for the *Appleton Post-Crescent*, whose managing editor was an important McCarthy supporter:

McCarthy was very social, very overt, very outgoing. He loved to be where there were a lot of people, and in a large group he was certainly dominant.

You were never unaware of his presence. He had the kind of manner that made you assume, even if you couldn't see him, that he was at least eight feet tall.

On New Year's Eve, shortly after the war was over, there was a great crowd of people at the old Normandy Supper Club in Appleton. Joe was very attractive to women. He table-hopped and kissed all the girls while all the husbands ground their teeth.

He was also very much a man's man. He had a large circle of cronies in and around the area. I was in a position to observe his relationship with the men in the newsroom of the *Appleton Post-Crescent*. It was a close, friendly, man-to-man, back-slapping, 'knock-em-dead-when-you-get-to-Washington-Joe' sort of thing.

He knew absolutely everybody. I think one of the secrets of this charm—that people forget about—was that he would stop to talk with the receptionist or the casual citizen, who happened to be in with a news story about her daughter's engagement, in a very warm and what appeared to be a very genuine way. I think one of the secrets was this focus of attention on people so that you had the feeling that he really did give a damn.

Former Congressman Alvin O'Konski represented a northern Wisconsin district when he first met McCarthy in 1945:

I got to know Joe McCarthy when he was on furlough from the armed services. He was in Washington to have lunch with the Republican members of the Wisconsin congressional delegation. He talked about entering the political scene, and there was a question at that time of what office he would run for—governor or the state legislature first. His response to these suggestions was that he was too old. He felt he ought to go for the big turkey.

He probably set the example of personal contact in campaigning when he ran for circuit judge. I know the story was carried nationwide at that time. He was a hard-hitting campaigner—somebody who could get to the people and shake hands.

At that time he didn't seem to have any support among our group, so he came to Washington soliciting our support. The question of finances came up. 'I won't need as many finances as your ordinary candidate would need,' he said, 'because of the nature of my campaigning. I'll do a lot of leg work that the average candidate won't do.'

Urban Van Susteren again was McCarthy's campaign manager for the 1946 campaign. He helped distribute 700,000 copies of a brochure entitled, "The Newspapers Say" which covered McCarthy's Marine Corps record, Horatio Alger qualities, judicial career, and capacity for hard work:

There were about sixteen pages, and on each page there was just one picture and a few words which were from editorials and news stories from throughout the state. That was the skill or technique of McCarthy. Show them a

picture, and they'll never read; make it in big print and give them ten words.

We decided that the booklet was the effective thing. Joe would say that the reason why a man votes for one person rather than another is usually very trivial—not analytical—usually emotional. For example, 'I don't like Irishmen,' or 'I do like Irishmen,' or 'I like a man who looks rugged.' It was not issues at all. There were no issues in that campaign except a few flimsy ones.

In 1946, McCarthy captured the support of the conservative Republican party organization in Wisconsin. In the August, 1946, Republican primary he upset incumbent Senator Robert LaFollette, Jr. and coasted to an easy victory in the general election. He served in the senate for eleven years until he died of a liver disease on May 2, 1957. **W**

Senator McCarthy works the crowds at Platteville in the early fifties

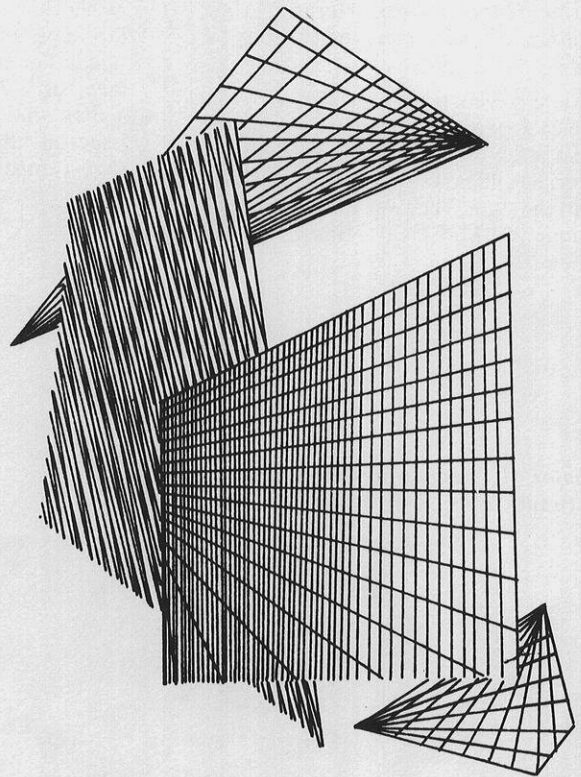
Photo by John Newhouse



Courtesy State Historical Society of Wisconsin

## THE THIN EDGE

by Barbara Vroman



Tanta Tia's hall smelled of cats. Bianca wondered by what magic the strays always found her aunt. She juggled the large cake tin, the present, and the thirteen-cup coffee maker to ring the doorbell. She could hear her aunt's steps, shuffling and slow. She had not been well for a long time.

"Myyyyyy—" said Tanta Tia as she opened the door, stretching her arms out in welcome along with the word. "*Baba*, how fine you come."

Bianca felt something in her warm at the endearment contained in that childish nickname. She unloaded the things on Tanta's small white table and gathered her aunt into her arms. Each year Tanta seemed to bundle down a little more until she had become a rather square, compact package. She smelled harshly clean, like scouring powder.

"Myyy," Tanta Tia said as she saw the cake. "Such a cake! For me? *Such* a beautiful cake. But how we eat such a cake—you and me?" She giggled.

After the dark hall Tanta's kitchen

seemed blindingly white and clean. Above the narrow white gas stove, Tanta had pasted six tiles with blue Holland windmills on them. The cheap linoleum gleamed. In a corner cupboard glass twinkled. The sight of the cabinet warmed Bianca in the same way as the nickname "*Baba*." The cabinet was part of her life. Once it had been on the large farm where Tanta and her husband, Paule, had lived, and later it had stood in the house on Kerry street, and now it was here.

"*Baba*, how nice you come," Tanta Tia said again. "So many people be so kind to remember me. Come—I show you my cards."

In the living room each chair was a cretonne garden. There were ruffled, plastic curtains and pictures of children and grandchildren and nieces and nephews and grandnieces and grandnephews. Today there were also the birthday cards displayed on the coffee table, each one set on end and opened for inspection.

"This one is from Willie—see how beautiful!" Tanta began the litany of the

cards but was interrupted by the doorbell. "Now who *that* be?" she said, her strong, black eyebrows rising in surprise.

"I'll get it," *Baba* said.

She opened the door to a breathless Mrs. Zonic, toting a bag of paper plates and a bowl of Jello. She was a kind-faced woman with freckles on her round little nose and fat red arms.

"I'm so sorry I'm late," she gasped, "but I had to come clear across town on the bus, *Baba*."

"You are not late," *Baba* said, "you are the first."

"Ohhh," said Tanta from the doorway, "my good friend Mrs. Zonic. How nice you come! Say, I have *some* birthday, huh? See this such beautiful cake, *Baba* brought to me—and now *you* . . ."

Then the doorbell rang again and, to Tanta's increasing disbelief and joy, kept ringing until chairs had to be brought in from the kitchen.

There was tall, grey-haired Mrs. Smiley from the church, dimpled Mrs. Powers from the apartment two doors down,

and four of Tanta's lifelong friends summoned from far corners of the city and nearby countryside. Mrs. Whimpleton, who was Tanta's "eggglady" and Mrs. Darton, who had lived next door to her during the Kerry Street years.

"Did you know that Harland Samson died yesterday," Mrs. Darton said. She had a firm face, dyed black hair, and a tomato-colored pantsuit.

"I am sorry to hear," Tanta said.

"Mrs. Michaels hasn't been good either," Mrs. Darton went on. "She's been in the hospital for sixteen months now. . . ."

"I want to take some pictures of you and your cake, Tanta," Baba interrupted, wanting to change the subject. But while she arranged and flashed Mrs. Darton persisted.

"Mrs. Sythme and Mrs. Buerning are gone too, you know. And Mr. Patricks isn't expected to make it through the summer. . . ."

Baba felt a trickle of irritation. How could Mrs. Darton be so insensitive? On Tanta's eighty-seventh birthday to begin this morbid listing of what had happened to all the people in Tanta's age group that she and Mrs. Darton had known mutually seemed indelicate to Bianca.

"My Tia, you look so lovely for eighty-seven and get around so well!" said kind-hearted Mrs. Zonic.

"God is good to me," Tanta Tia said.

Baba thought of all the sadness and cruelties that had been dealt to Tanta Tia during her long life. Mingled emotions of anger, admiration, sorrow, and love stirred in her.

"You are too modest Tanta," she said. "Much is owed to your own faith, to your own wonderful spirit."

"Yes, how true," said Mrs. Smiley. "You know last winter when she was having all that trouble with her leg she never once lost her courage."

"Mrs. Michaels has that same trouble," Mrs. Darton said. "She's the one who's been in the hospital for sixteen months. Keeps coming back on her. . . ."

The trickle of irritation was becoming a stream of anger in Bianca now. *Damn*, what had motivated her to ask Mrs. Darton in the first place? To keep from throttling the woman, she hurried into the kitchen and busied herself making the coffee and cutting the cake. But Mrs. Darton's voice, large and firm like her face, followed her into the kitchen.

"Mrs. Sooner's in a nursing home. Doesn't even know her own daughter. . . ."

"Come, I'm going to let you serve yourselves," Bianca called, trying to keep her voice amiable, trying to keep the gratings

of anger from her tone. "You first Tanta, our guest of honor."

Tanta came first as ordered, her face beaming and serene. Perhaps, thought Baba, she does not even hear Mrs. Darton half the time. There is so much she doesn't hear these days. She wrapped the thought around her heart like a cloth of peace, determined to be disturbed by Mrs. Darton no more. But the minute the ladies were all resettled with plates of cake and Jello balanced on their knees, Mrs. Darton took up her unwelcome theme again.

"Such a shame for Betsy Michaels. She was always such a lively little thing when she was young. Remember how she liked to dance?"

Baba's teeth gritted against her fork. Up until this moment, for all her irritation, she had not suspected Mrs. Darton of any malice. After all, it was natural for old friends to compare notes on contemporaries. But now something glinted in Mrs. Darton's eyes that chilled Bianca.

*She's enjoying it, she thought, because she is still well and strong. It makes her feel superior.*

Baba was almost afraid to look at her grandaunt. Did Tanta too feel a certain relish, a certain, maybe even, justified triumph, at surviving when others had given up the struggle? Baba forced herself to turn her eyes on Tanta Tia. Her aunt was chasing a crumb about her plate with her fork; her expression was innocent. No sly sense of triumph lurked in her eyes, nor did the expression of sweetness seem disturbed at Mrs. Darton's macabre unwindings. To Baba it was a beautiful face. The skin was dark, almost the color of cigar paper, a perfect foil for the sparse silvery hair drawn neatly back into a bun. The festoons and wrinkles of ages were woven about her eyes and mouth and cheeks into a delicate laciness.

"My such a good birthday—such a surprise." Tanta said, when the afternoon had waned to a close and it was time to kiss each guest goodbye.

Baba began brushing up the crumbs and washing the coffeepot. Tanta turned to her with a little frown as the door closed on the last of the visitors.

"Baba, you are angry about something?"

Bianca felt ashamed. Had she shown her irritation so clearly? She had tried not to let her own annoyance mar the festivities.

"I was angry at Mrs. Darton," she admitted.

Tanta shuffled her way back into the living room to one of the cretonne chairs. "When I was a leddle girl my papa take

me to see a big circus," she said. "There was ladies and gentlemen in sparkling clothes who walked on a wire—oh, so high—way above our heads. Myyy. It was something to see."

Bianca swished at the cups in annoyance. Now that she had admitted to Tanta Tia that she was angry at Mrs. Darton she wanted her aunt to comment, not to brush her anger aside.

"I said to my papa, 'Ohhh, how can anyone be so brave as these ladies and gentleman to walk so high on such a thin wire?' And my papa said, 'Tia, it is not so great a thing. They start first to walk the wire upon the ground. Each day they raise the wires a leddle higher. So they become accustomed to it and to them it becomes as nothing.'"

Baba hung up the dish towel and came into the room where her aunt sat.

"Mrs. Darton," she said, "is morbid."

"When I was twelve years old," said Tanta Tia, "my father would send me to the house of his friend on top of the canyon. I did not like to go. I was afraid because the path was so narrow, only wide enough for the width of two feet, and then over the side so steep. I was afraid to look down from the *so thin edge*. The chasm was so deep and I feared I would become dizzy and fall."

Tanta Tia's mind had always been so sharp, but it seemed that even she was falling into the pattern of the old—her mind wandering aimlessly back to childhood experiences. Baba felt a swift twinge of sorrow.

"But my papa's friend had broke his hip, and he needed food and bread and cheese and someone had to go, so still in spite of my fear I must go. Then after a while I was not afraid anymore. I could almost run along the ledge, I had gone so many times. And I could look down. And ohhh, myyy, how beautiful it was down there—the river all silver, and the trees. . . ."

"Tanta Tia, my dear—I must go. It's getting late," Baba apologized. She leaned to kiss her aunt's cheek, webbed and soft and cleanser-smelling like no other cheek in the world. "I love you."

"I know, Baba, and I love you," Tanta Tia said. "Such a birthday you give me. Such happiness."

Baba felt consoled. What did Mrs. Darton matter after all? Her aunt had been pleased; that was all that counted.

She was halfway home before she suddenly stopped on the Washington Street bridge, the rain mizzling her face, and cars slushing spots onto her coat. The realization flooded through her that Tanta Tia's mind had not been wandering at all.

# WINDFALLS



## The Eyes Have It

By Arthur Hove

The woman had some pointed advice on how to survive in the big city.

"Avoid eye contact."

In addition to walking fast and making it appear you know where you're going and what you're doing, the safest way to navigate the mean streets of any of our large cities is to make sure your glance does not become transfixed by another person's eyes. Focus your gaze on the sidewalk in front of you, the displays in store windows, or on objects at least one story above street level. That way you are less likely to notice the hopheads, panhandlers, muggers, thrill-seeking teenagers, pimps, prostitutes, and con artists who ply their respective trades on the streets of any major American metropolis.

Avoiding eye contact indicates you are minding your own business—something which minimizes the chance for confrontation. If you don't look someone in the eye they will be uncertain about what actually is on your mind. They will have difficulty sensing the spasm of panic rising in your throat as you weigh the advantages of flight or fight should you be accosted. If you don't see it, and it doesn't see you, it isn't a threat.

Even in less menacing situations of daily commerce there is a general tendency to avoid eye contact. Clerks at checkout counters in stores seldom look you in the eye. They prefer to gaze at a spot somewhere slightly above your navel, over your shoulder, or at the midpoint of their cash register keyboard. People serving food are similarly oriented. Only the insolent waiters or waitresses seem to relish the opportunity to force you into a contest of icy stares.

Even among friends there is a tendency to avoid prolonged eye contact during a conversation. The common practice is to look into the other person's eyes when you are listening, but to glance away when you are talking. Perhaps these actions are in keeping with the practice in Oriental societies where it is considered bad form to engage another's eyes for anything more than a fleeting moment.

The current social norm is a departure from an earlier time when people who didn't or couldn't look you in the eye were automatically presumed to be dissemblers. Many of us were brought up to believe that the only way to find out the truth about a person was to look them straight in the eye. Skeptical parents made offspring suspected of being errant look them in the eye as they were explaining their whereabouts during the course of an evening. A requirement, no doubt, fostered by Matthew Roydon's observation that "I trow that countenance cannot lie/Whose thoughts are legible in the eye." John Galsworthy put it more bluntly—"One's eyes are what one is."

This concept that one's eyes are a window to the inner self has produced some interesting idiomatic constructions. We are perpetually wary of the shifty-eyed person. The starry-eyed person can be an annoyance for those whose concentration is on more worldly matters. The optimist is invariably bright-eyed, while the over-indulger wakes up bleary-eyed with agony the morning after. When we are astonished, we are wide-eyed with wonder. Those who wear glasses to help them see are vulnerable to being referred to as "four eyes." A difficult task becomes comparable to passing something through

the eye of a needle. In spite of the Grand Guignol association, hooks are fitted into eyes. Shoe laces are also strung through them.

The scope of our vision is often tied to the range of our imagination. Great thinkers are farseeing. Those with narrow intellectual horizons are considered shortsighted (Matthew Henry's reminder that there are "None so blind as those that will not see"). Those with a sixth sense seem to have eyes in the backs of their heads.

And then there is what Shelley characterized as "the pleasure of believing what we see." Some unfortunate people among us are denied such pleasure because they are sightless. These people often develop their remaining senses to a point which extends the range of their perceptions far beyond many of those blessed with the full and unhindered faculty of sight. Modern medicine has even given hope to some who are sightless. Corneal transplants, taken from an eye bank, or surgery for cataracts or to correct glaucoma, have restored vision to those who otherwise would be irrevocably blind. Seeing-Eye dogs have given new freedom and confidence to blind people beyond the help of medical science.

"O" is the favorite letter for cataloging those who have a professional interest in the eye. There is the optometrist or optician who can take measurements and fit you for glasses. If you have a more serious problem, you want to see an ophthalmologist—a physician of the eye. Any of these professionals will respond if you have need of an oculist. Perhaps there is some correlation here. An O with a dot in the middle resembles an eye and looks

like the symbol used by the Optimist Club.

Since the development of the science of optics, we have become aware that the human eye is a fairly limited instrument. There are worlds far beyond those we can see with the naked eye—whether they be made apparent through signals received on a radio telescope or magnified under the enlarging scrutiny of an electron microscope.

Previous to the last century, we primarily relied on the eye of the artist to show us new and individual perspectives. Over the past century and a half—since it was discovered that silver granules suspended in emulsion would react to light—we have had the photograph and the photographer to capture images that often escape us in the daily flow of events. The camera can be a relentless, unblinking eye. As Susan Sontag has observed in *On Photography*, "In teaching us a new visual code, photographs alter and enlarge our notion of what is worth looking at and what we have a right to observe. . . . The most grandiose result of the photographic enterprise is to give us the sense that we can hold the whole world in our heads—as an anthology of images."

Humans invariably create the world in the act of perceiving it. "What you see is what you get," or "Seeing is believing" are common expressions of the phenomenon. Current testimony can be taken from the fact that it is common for television stations to advertise their evening summary of the day's events as "eyewitness news."

Our primary instrument of belief then is the eye, an organ which receives light and transforms it into electrical impulses which form a picture on the brain. We need other senses, or even the vision of other people to corroborate what we are seeing, but as Herodotus has noted, "A man trusts his ears less than his eyes."

Still, there is skepticism. "I couldn't believe my eyes," is a common expression of bewilderment. So is "My eyes must be deceiving me," or "There's more to this than meets the eye." Such outbursts are common when prestidigitators, whose hands are faster than the eye, astonish us with their skill at creating illusions.

Obviously, humans are not the only creatures with eyes. The most dangerous of the lot is the mythical basilisk, a beast who had the power of "looking anyone dead on whom it fixed its eyes." Other animals have less threatening, but nonetheless curious eyes in various shapes and sizes. And they often have what looks to us like an unusual placement—at the end of stalklike protrusions, on the side of the

head, and sometimes under folds of skin, feathers, or horny material. Even plants such as potatoes, coconuts, and flowers have eyes.

Not all eyes see the same thing we do. Some animals get their visual impressions of the world in monochrome. Others with compound eyes receive a multitude of images all at once.

So compelling are the eyes in our imagination that they have driven the language of metaphor for centuries. Eyes have been compared with everything from limpid pools to twinkling stars. Songwriters would be left with fewer rhetorical arrows in their lyrical quivers if they had to do without eyes. We would, as a result, be bereft of such memorable snatches of musical poetry as "Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord"; "Your eyes are the eyes of a woman in love"; "I only have eyes for you"; "Your green eyes with their soft lights"; "Black is the color of my true love's eyes"; "Ma, he's makin' eyes at me"; and "The eyes of Texas are upon you."

Shakespeare is a virtual optometrist's delight. His imagery abounds in the use of eyes, including these familiar examples: "Those are the pearls that were his eyes"; "Let every eye negotiate for itself"; "Get honour in one eye and death i' the other"; "Care keeps his watch in every old man's eye"; "Beauty is bought by judgment of the eye"; "There's language in her eye"; "Lend the eye a terrible aspect"; and "How bitter a thing it is to look into happiness through another man's eyes."

Sampling figures of speech which have entered our language, we find that eyes have a seemingly limitless elasticity and resiliency. They can be cast down or lifted up. They can be narrowed or widened, crossed, flashed about the room, rolled up into one's head, turned inward, or sometimes cried out. Eyes also have an amazing range of expression: asking, jaundiced, quiet, mortal, wistful, mild and magnificent, serene, wild, wet, unforgiving, tender, and sore.

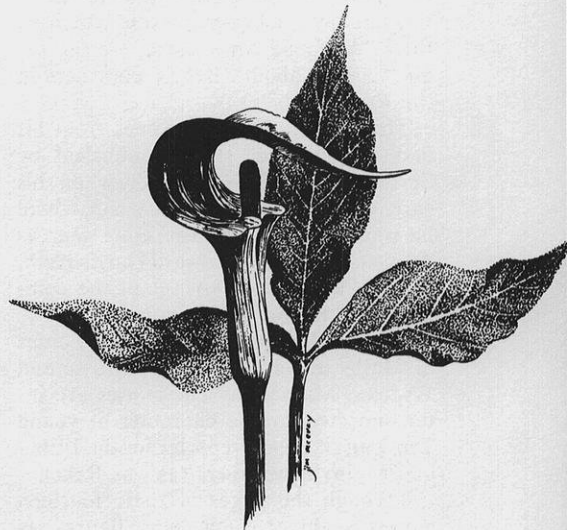
When we eye something, we look it over, size it up. Such examination often opens our eyes to facts or revelations previously unapparent. Someone can have an eagle eye for spotting one thing or another. Or they may have a particularly good eye which can indicate everything from a discriminating taste to a tendency to evaluate things carefully before making a decision.

Those of us with a political bent are often in the public eye. In such cases, we may become immersed in trouble and tur-

moil up to our eyes and long for the calm that is found in the eye of a hurricane. As we attempt to justify our actions on such occasions, someone usually scoffs at our rationalization and exclaims, "My eye," in derision.

Those with military backgrounds will remember the countless times they were ordered to direct their eyes left, right, or front. And remember William Prescott's instructions at Bunker Hill: "Don't fire until you see the whites of their eyes." Conflict on such occasions can be eyeball to eyeball.

Such dramatic confrontations need not be inevitable—even on our city streets. Nevertheless, our lives are periodically caught up in large and small crises that require eye contact that has both a moral and physical dimension. During these anxious moments when we find ourselves looking over our shoulders, trying to anticipate where the challenge will come from, it is useful to recall H. G. Wells' observation that "In the country of the blind the one-eyed man is king." **W**



# All Good Americans Jerome Bahr's Arcadia

By Richard Boudreau

**D**uring Bahr's career he has published eight books of fiction: one novel, two novellas, eight sketches, and seventy short stories. Some of these first appeared in such magazines as *The New Yorker*, *Mademoiselle*, *Woman's Day*, *Story Magazine*, *Story Parade*, and *Literary America*. Maxwell Perkins of Scribner's was his earliest editor. Ernest Hemingway wrote a preface to his first book of short stories. Germaine Bree and Carlos Baker have been lifelong friends and advisors.

Yet Jerome Bahr, now living (with his third wife) in Santa Fe, remains largely unknown to the American reading public, even here in his home state of Wisconsin. Of course a writer's reputation rests on a haphazard accumulation of many elements, but one of the most important is to be talked about by critics and readers. Guided by his suggestion that his material falls into a five-part cycle which he titles "All Good Americans," we can begin "talking about" Bahr's work here in the *Review*.

The title of the cycle comes from his first collection of stories published by Scribner's in 1937. They draw on his early years in Arcadia, Wisconsin, where he was born in 1909, the same year as August Derleth and Edward Harris Heth. Most of the stories are set in the community of Hillon, a fictionalized Arcadia. And, according to Bahr, the nearby cities of Malby and Lisbia are La Crosse and Winona, Minnesota. The stories are interconnected by the character of young Ted Karlan, sports reporter for the Lisbia and Malby newspapers (as was Bahr).

Through the pages of these fourteen stories scamper such local figures as Boozebelly, "the town's oldest living drunk"; "Official Joe" Cassidy, the church janitor, who was fond of saying "that makes it official now"; Adolph Herman, named by Boozebelly "The Wooden Fox"

because he stood unmoving by the cash box in his grocery store all day, slyly eyeing his clerks; and Sam Baumzimmer who wanted an American child more than he wanted a statue erected to himself.

Preserved in the collection is a microcosm of small-town America from the boom to the bust, the late 1920s to the early 1930s. And it runs the gamut of the rural experience: from housewives nipping gin at midday to working men sloshing down hootch under the town's bridge at midnight; from the rivalries of local politics to the intervillage free-for-all at baseball games; from animosities between Polanders, Germans, and Norwegians to their exploitation by the "Higher Estimation," the society folk of Hillon; from explosive love affairs and family squabbles to the incessant gossip of all ages, sexes, and nationalities.

These are well-written vignettes of provincial life, a series of bleak tragedies, rollicking comedies, and meldings of both which make clear that Bahr's Hillon is certainly not Arcadian, but that it is American. "Their solid, youthful worth, their irony, their humor, their peasant lustiness and the Pieter Brueghel quality of the country and the people that Mr. Bahr has made, need no comment," said Hemingway in the only preface he ever wrote for a book of American fiction.

**T**hat same "quality of the country and the people" pervades the second volume of the "All Good Americans" cycle, the 1964 collection, *Wisconsin Tales*, but here the linking character's name has been changed to Mark Karlan. These stories are characterized by a similar mix of the optimistic and the pessimistic (with a stronger tilt toward "peasant lustiness"), and Bahr again comes down on the side of the former, insisting that life is finally to be lived, not rejected or

moaned over. The book was published by Trempealeau Press, organized by Bahr and friends to bring out his stories in book form and named for the river which cuts through his hometown.

After high school, Bahr left Arcadia, worked for several newspapers, married and divorced his first wife, attended the University of Minnesota, and in 1933 headed East, intent on becoming a writer. He soon met and married his second wife, and for the next eight years New York City served as home base. In 1942 he enlisted in the Army Air Force and ended up in the Far East. From his experiences in the metropolis and during the war came the third volume of the cycle, *The Linen Suit and Other Stories*, which appeared in 1957.

These nineteen tales, like those set in Wisconsin, are mixtures of humor and tragedy, of irreverence and irony, though now in a cosmopolitan setting, in which nationality counts for less (except for urban Jews and Irish), gossip attaches to close friends—or enemies—instead of entire communities, and individuality counts for more. The early stories reflect the problems of the Depression: unemployment, disillusionment with democracy and religion, questioning of the American Dream, and love affairs with communism and others' mates. The later stories take the reader into World War II.

Mark Karlan appears in three of them. In the first, penniless, jobless, and newly divorced, he meets and falls in love with Barbara Carr, a young woman from Ohio whom the Depression has forced into the city to live with her sister and brother-in-law. We are uncertain about the outcome of their affair until in a later story, "Out of Chicago," we find them man and wife, touring the Midwest selling magazine subscriptions in order to get by. And Karlan is one of the officers in the wartime story, "The Irrepressible Sergeant."

Volume four of the cycle is *Holes in the Wall* published in 1970. The "Wall" is the Berlin Wall put in place during Bahr's stint (1958-64) as civilian press officer for the army there. Subtitled "A Novel of the Cold War," its focal point is a State Department agent, Frank Shelting, who appeared in two of the Wisconsin tales, but he is hardly seen here at all. Instead the book seems to be a group of related stories interlocked with short sketches, the whole about intrigue and espionage in the divided city. Both Germaine Bree and Carlos Baker gave it glowing reviews.

In this elaborate East-West chess game of living pawns and real losses there is less room for humor, but if we put aside the loose connectives, we have a series of that rarest of literary species, the spy short story. "At the Sector Border" is a prime example of the genre. Rapid-fire, stingy in the telling, packed with action, it involves a West German national acting as a pretty decoy to lure an East German agent across the mid-street line from East to West. It manages to suggest not only the danger for the girl but the hunted, harried life of the espionage agent, whatever side he or she chooses.

In the final volume of the cycle, *The Perishing Republic*, published in 1971, the balance of humor and tragedy of the earlier stories is again struck. The first section, "The Fort," centers on Fort Trowbridge in Maryland and the third, "The Capital," on Washington, D.C. Nearly all the stories delve into the workings of that ponderous monstrosity, the bureaucracy, whose spirit is "to proliferate, not to abolish itself," with barbs aimed at the favoritism, the petty fears and jealousies, the worry over responsibility and blame, the need for upward movement just to survive, and the anxieties caused by that Sword of Damocles, the personal file—a perishing republic indeed.

But the stories of the middle section, "The Countryside," give balance to the others. They have been reworked from portions of *The Platinum Tower*, published in 1939, Bahr's last book under Maxwell Perkins. The action takes place on the chicken farm of Old Tom Baldwin and his wife, Esther, in a rural area midway between Baltimore and Washington. With them live their niece, Susan, and her husband, Anton Halder. Anton seems to assume the authorial voice as he flails at the petty hypocrisies of our lives, criticizes the rags-to-riches dream which is "coming to an end all over America," and bewails the demands of the technological

(and bureaucratic) environment which leaves no time for contemplation.

"The Great Debate" expresses a major theme of the entire cycle, first enunciated by Boozebelly in the initial volume, the success of the "Melting Pot." Here it is Vogel, an immigrant who "lived passionately by the theory that to be a good American one must psychologically destroy all the threads that tied one to the land of his forebears," who defends Americanism. He recalled that when the townspeople of Hillon, Wisconsin, where he first lived after coming to this country tried to attach some handle to him, the drug store owner, a Jew, suggested, "Maybe he's just a good American." And so are we all, Bahr seems to be saying; so are we all "Good Americans."

There is, obviously, a great deal of Bahr in Ted or Mark Karlan, and this is most evident in three stories, published in *Five Novellas* in 1977. The first, "Young People," is placed by its author as the closing story to *Wisconsin Tales*. It's the history of Karlan's marriage to a girl of a well-to-do Minneapolis family, their early marital problems intensified by differences in their upbringings and by the privations of the Depression. Unemployed but searching for work, Mark, with his wife, lives for a time with her parents in the city, then with his in Hillon. But after constant bickering and several flare-ups, they separate, eventually divorcing.

Another Karlan story in the book, "Pay the Debt," Bahr places as the concluding tale of *The Linen Suit*. The story takes readers beyond the war years of the final pages of that volume into the uneasy peace of the late 1940s. It delineates the strains on Mark Karlan's marriage to Barbara, the lack of direction in his work with the army in Washington, the consuming, passionate extramarital affair, the tragic automobile accident, and the belated attempt to reach a stasis of some kind.

A third story, "The Interrogation," which Bahr adds to *The Perishing Republic*, finds Mark Karlan in trouble with his director for having taken up with a young girl in Washington, later moving her to a New York apartment. Karlan is a major, nearly ready for promotion and eventual retirement, and a mark against him now will damage him severely. He goes to ask the girl for a statement of denial, realizes he cannot lower himself to play the game, and decides to continue his pursuit of the natural, not the artificial, in life.

But the key story touching on the titular theme of the cycle is the novella, "The Lonely Scoundrel," published with three short stories in 1974 as a supplement to *The Perishing Republic*. Closely related to the earlier *Holes in the Wall*, it tells the story of Frank Shelting's kidnapping and long imprisonment in East Germany, the focus of the Berlin book, at times using flashbacks to that era, but taking place two years after Shelting's release in the relative security of New Mexico, Hillon, Wisconsin (Karlan is a close friend), and Washington, D.C.

It raises a number of questions about the value and values of espionage work, but it raises just as many questions about the value and values of life, the meaning of history, of social and political involvement, of freedom, of security, of patriotism—"the last refuge of a scoundrel." Ironically it had been Shelting's memories of growing up in Hillon that had bolstered his resistance to the brainwashing by his communist captors. To their question of what he meant by a "good" American, he had replied, "Any American who puts the interests of his country ahead of his political or racial heritage."

"I have tried to catch the spirit of the newly emerging America," Bahr says of his "All Good Americans" cycle. "Each story is complete in itself; each volume, in turn, has its own unity of scene and theme, interlocking with other volumes to form an organic totality. Other general themes embrace the movement of people from the soil to the city; the waning influence of religion; the modern malaise in the wake of wars; and the increasing alienation of the individual."

All well and good. But the early books, unfortunately, are now out of print, the first virtually impossible to obtain. They deserve republication, most appropriately by a regional press that values that honest, albeit fictional, capturing of small-town America of a half century ago. All of the more recent books are still available from Trempealeau Press, 800 Hillcrest Drive, Santa Fe, NM, and outstanding among them are *Five Novellas* and *The Lonely Scoundrel*, both vintage Bahr. A reading of any of these books is time spent wisely—and entertainingly—for a Pieter Brueghel of whatever country or in whatever medium is worth talking about.

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## BOOK MARKS/WISCONSIN

**FOOL HEN** by William L. Robinsen; The University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, Wis., 1980. 221 pp. \$18.50.

By Daniel O. Trainer

As the introduction states, "This is the first book devoted fully to the spruce grouse or 'fool hen,' a resident of the coniferous forests of the northern part of the North American continent." The target audience of this book is both the amateur and the professional ornithologist. To reach two diverse audiences with a single publication is difficult, but the author has done an excellent job of fulfilling his dual goal.

The fool hen derived its name from an apparent lack of concern for humans. Hunters report approaching birds and killing them with sticks; the author captured birds for banding by pulling them out of a tree using a noose on the end of a wooden pole or fishing rod. As "foolish" as this bird appears to be regarding humans, its beauty and fascinating behavior make it an interesting and exciting resident of the coniferous forests of the North American continent, including Wisconsin. Although the spruce grouse (*Canachites canadensis*), is not in danger of extinction, in the southern parts of its range where human activities often conflict with the best interest of the bird, it may well need our help. This book provides needed information about the spruce grouse which will assist in its future management and maintenance.

The author, William L. Robinsen, is a professor of biology at Northern Michigan University. He has studied and researched the spruce grouse since 1964 on the Yellow Dog Plains in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. This twenty-five square-mile ecological island consisting

primarily of jack pine constitutes the natural habitat for the spruce grouse. *Fool Hen* is a mixture of Robinsen's comprehensive research and observations, his philosophy of wildlife and wild lands, as well as a thorough review of the literature.

The text is concerned with all facets of the spruce grouse and includes discussions about the different races of spruce grouse, territorial behavior, sexual habits and rituals, population characteristics, paternal instincts, predators, growth patterns, plumages, and even its physiology and diseases.

The habitat requirements of the bird are reviewed and seasonal variations discussed in great detail. Of the grouse of North America the spruce grouse is second only to the ruffed grouse in the extent of its geographic range and is one of the four grouse species found in Wisconsin.

To illustrate the diversity and writing skill of the author, he presents a scholarly chapter on population ecology followed by hunting anecdotes, both of which contribute to our knowledge of this bird and make the text interesting and useful to the professional game manager, ecologist, forester, and ornithologist as well as bird watchers and hunters.

An appendix describes, for the reader, where and how to see spruce grouse in Upper Michigan. It carefully lists known locations of birds and tells one how to search out and enjoy these birds. In case of failure the reader is instructed to call the author, and he will help you find your "fool hen."

Eleven pages of references are cited at the end of the book. This provides the professional with an up-to-date and complete listing of literature on this bird. The book is illustrated with excellent color

and black-and-white photographs as well as drawings by Deann DeLaRonde Wilde.

This is an interesting and informative book which is and will continue to be the bible of the spruce grouse.

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*Daniel O. Trainer is vice chancellor for academic affairs at UW-Stevens Point.*

**THE PRAIRIE GARDEN: 70 NATIVE PLANTS YOU CAN GROW IN TOWN OR COUNTRY** by J. Robert Smith with Beatrice S. Smith; The University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, Wis., 1980. 219 pp. Cloth \$22.50. Paper \$9.95.

By Olive S. Thomson

A wealth of personal information and experience regarding horticultural practices for seventy native prairie species is permanently recorded and now available in J. Robert and Beatrice Smith's recent book *The Prairie Garden*. The Smiths are pioneers in the horticultural uses of native plants. Despite the abundant books about traditional gardens and gardening, very few printed resources have been available on the relatively new trends involving not only the use of native plants for small gardens but for larger landscaping and restoration projects. Many persons can now benefit from the Smiths' patient trial-and-error experiments since they first began growing native plants on their 154 acre farm in Marquette County, Wisconsin in 1959.

Their experiences have been limited to the propagation of prairie species on sandy soil, which accounts for some of their enthusiasm; so many prairie species are favored by sandy soil and flourish in that habitat. Mr. Smith's professional life

as an administrator for Wildlife, Forestry, and Recreation in the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provided an excellent background for the hobby which has developed into the commercial nursery which he and Mrs. Smith now operate in Westfield, Wisconsin.

*The Prairie Garden* has been prepared in an attractive format with a section of color plates supplementing the line drawings adjacent to the full page of information regarding each species covered. The color plates make this book especially appealing to the nonprofessionals who might want identification aids as much as horticultural, botanical, and ecological information. Valuable introductory chapters on planning prairie gardens, collecting and processing of seed, germination techniques, and planting and maintaining permanent sites precede the main body of the book. Details of root systems, charts of habitats, flower colors, and flowering times follow.

No book can possibly please all or give all the answers. *The Prairie Garden* also has its limitations. The artist who made the line drawings obviously has talent but should have been guided in some simple techniques of illustrating flower detail. A number of very common prairie species are not within the Smiths' experiences yet will be sorely missed. Inasmuch as the Latin names have been used, I would have liked to see the arrangement by families rather than alphabetically, but that is a personal preference.

Despite the generally accepted fact that prairie plants with their tremendous root systems cannot easily be transplanted thus making seed propagation best, I am impressed with the number of species included in this book for which the Smiths recommend root cuttings or plant division for propagation rather than the use of seeds.

Such recommendations are the kind of personal experiences which will be so valuable to the rapidly increasing number of prairie-garden enthusiasts. If in the near future some of our suburban landscapes and private gardens show evidence of fresh concepts, if other forms of natural life such as birds and butterflies are favored by the resulting new suburban habitats, and if municipalities are less challenged by the problems raised by persons who have a firm preference for clipped, watered, and heavily fertilized lawns, then J. Robert and Beatrice Smith can be at least partially credited.

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Olive S. Thomson revised the recent edition of *Spring Flora of Wisconsin*.

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**PLAIN CHANT FOR A TREE** by Edna Meudt; illustrated; Wake-Brook House, 960 N.W. 53rd St., Fort Lauderdale, FLA 33309, 1980. 135 pp. \$7.95.

**By Hayward Allen**

*The end of poetry is to produce excitement in co-existence. . . .*

*Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility; the emotion is contemplated till, by a species of re-action, the tranquility gradually disappears, and an emotion, kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind.*

—W. Wordsworth  
*Preface to the Lyrical Ballads*

Edna Meudt's newest volume of poetry, *Plain Chant for a Tree*, is, among other cornucopian offerings, a continuation of the Kristin saga. This is the story of a young daughter of the hills of the Wyoming Valley near Taliesin; it tells of her growth, her emotions, and her acute perceptions of the swirling life around her.

I've been collecting chapters of Kristin's life the way a parent picks up a child's room. My potpourri began when I first read, some years ago, "A Summer Day that Changed the World" to a group of Wayland Academy students on safari at Valley Studio. The poem was part of *No One Sings Face Down*, in which I found a half-dozen others which revealed the mind's eye of a young Valley girl-cum-woman, a.k.a. Edna Meudt, now of Dodgeville.

Since then, I've isolated other poems from *In No Strange Land* and *The Ineluctable Sea*. Meudt's tranquil recollections carry with them the deep-seated emotions which were felt by a fiercely impassioned farmer's daughter. But not until *Plain Chant* have I had the opportunity to begin to assemble what might be a portrait of this remarkable woman. *Plain Chant* contains an entire section titled "Kristin."

Other storytelling poets are her schoolmates now: E.A. Robinson, Robert Frost, Edgar Lee Masters, Robinson Jeffers. Yet they have peopled their narrative worlds with strangers. Kristin (once before a Jenny in an earlier, more satisfying version of "A Summer Day") is clearly Edna, carried on a long line like a balloon into the sky of her long ago memories.

"Shaving Mug" tells how Kristin, aged seven, stunned her father with the news that she had killed some sunning rattlesnakes for bounties to buy a lovely mug

for his birthday. And an enchanting "Epilog for Two Eleanores" reveals how Kristin's doll Eleanore is given away to its namesake cousin. "They'll break her in one month," Kristin says. But her mother insists the eight-year-old girl needs the doll. Forty years later, at a funeral dinner, Eleanore tells Kristin that she still has the doll, "She is my treasure!"

Now the connections of passing years bring Kristin to visit friends who are old, dying, or dead. Memories bubble up in a timeless cauldron, and the poet's magic extracts them to show within their lovely opacity a gift of recreation, the accurate rebuilding of lost days and nights.

There are many poems in *Plain Chant* which do not tell stories or recapture *les temps perdu*. There is a definite reluctance on my part to comment upon the rest. These poems—abstractions, experiments—are Meudt's gift to those readers who might prefer these genres to narratives.

That Edna Meudt can produce a continuing abundance of poems, growing since the early forties, makes her a special natural resource of Wisconsin. Her persistence also bespeaks an allegiance to all that is poetic in her life. There is no more personal literary gift than poetry. Nothing so bares the spirit, the soul, the fears and hopes of an artist than a poem.

**HAUNTED WISCONSIN** by Beth Scott and Michael Norman; illustrated; Stanton & Lee, Madison, 1980. 240 pp. \$9.95.

**By Hayward Allen**

*. . . they sometimes / Come down the stairs at night and stand perplexed / Behind the door and headboard of the bed, / Brushing their chalky skull with chalky fingers, / With sounds like the dry rattling of a shutter. . . .*

The Witch of Coos  
—Robert Frost

Beth Scott and Michael Norman did the same as Frost's narrator. The two writers listened while others did the talking about ghosts, spirits, and spectres who had visited their and others' lives. Together the talkers and the listeners accumulated sixty tall tales that comprise *Haunted Wisconsin*.

"Oh ye of little faith," the Frost's old-believers call out to me, a second-class sceptic for whom physics is supernatural. It was with some relief, then, when I read Scott and Norman's preface, in which they state, "We have tried to present the stories in a nonjudgmental way, leaving it up to . . . the reader to draw (his) own conclusions."

Scott and Norman traveled throughout the state, talking to folks who had, personally or through relatives, macabre stories to tell. The authors also dipped into newspaper and other accounts of the times. Of the sixty they have chosen to exploit, the vast majority fall into the realm of history, indicating that hauntings and ghost sightings once held a higher news value, perhaps. It is also possible that the hurly-burly of the past few decades has removed sources, resources, and perceptions of blithe spirits.

Whether long or short, fully fleshed out or skeletal, the stories are amazing for the variety of spectral phenomena recalled or encountered through the years. Most appear to have been benign apparitions. A good many involved visitations with young children. Sounds of footsteps, fists banging on walls, and water being poured are ghostly evidence.

The majority of the narratives emanate from adults, many of whom seem like reasonable, average taxpayers. The nonchalance, the apparent calm in the face of aberrations, which these individuals possess is, in great measure, the charm of *Haunted Wisconsin*. Take "The Strange Case of Henry James Brophy," which makes Amityville's exotic house seem tame. Eleven-year-old Henry, in 1909, attracted such a maelstrom to his grandparents' house in Mt. Horeb and then to his uncle's home in Springdale that experts from around the country came to visit, to pronounce little Henry "destined to become one of the world's greatest spiritualists." Nobody seemed the least bit flustered or flabbergasted by all the attention and mess involved.

While Milwaukee and Oshkosh have their fair share of incorporeal bodies, Ridgeway takes the astral prize. "The ghost would appear as dogs, horses, pigs, sheep, and several different human forms, including a headless horseman," the authors relate. This multifarious poltergeist held sway between Blue Mounds and Mineral Point for many years, frightening travelers, farmers, and townsfolk alike. Thought to be the *umbra* of several victims of violence, the Ridgeway phantasm even involved the legendary wrestler, Strangler Lewis. Even now, it is suggested, the rambling wraith haunts an abandoned farmhouse on the Petra property, just past the old Ridgeway cemetery south of town.

Perhaps the most plaintive tale is the contemporary one of "Marie, the Caretaker Ghost," which involves two Milwaukee men who bought and began to restore an old house in 1977 and the tenant who rented an apartment in the man-

sion. Two experienced contact and conversation with a woman named Marie, while the third had his own startling discoveries. The three mature, articulate, and educated men seem to exhibit less tension than if they had been visited by a long lost relative.

I admire the efforts of Scott and Norman. The gathering of information of such malevolent potential was an invitation to personal dilemmas. As with the eccentric *Wisconsin Deathtrip*, there are some avenues to history which transport us beyond our own significant dimensions.

While the stories themselves are uneven in style—some are extensive while others sparse, many have been subjected to creative recounting and several are most economically told—it is hard to put the book down. I would have appreciated a more extensive list of sources than the selected bibliography at the end. If I had not been specifically looking for photographs of haunted houses, I might not have finally figured out the cryptic fading of the chapter-separating pictures. Even then, the graphic metaphor is understated.

*Haunted Wisconsin* is a lightweight collection, but for those who are old-believers, it's definitely a pudding filled with proofs. For the rest of us, who are also waiting for the UFO to land in our backyards, who also hesitate a moment before opening the attic door and take an extra breath while passing the deserted house on the corner, Scott and Norman's entertaining volume will pass more than a few winter nights.

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*Hayward Allen is a Madison area cultural commentator.*

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**THE LITERARY CAREER OF CHARLES W. CHESNUTT** by William L. Andrews; Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge, 1980. 292 pp. \$20.

**By Carolyn Wedin Sylvander**

Charles Waddell Chesnutt, 1858-1932, America's "first Negro novelist of importance," and its "first Afro-American writer to use the white-controlled mass media in the service of serious fiction on behalf of the black community," provides for William L. Andrews of the English Department of UW-Madison an excellent vehicle for studying the conflicts of race in America as they have impact on literature and publishing. Andrews skillfully and interestingly accomplishes the two-fold purpose stated in his preface: "to provide a unified, systematic, and tho-

roughgoing examination and evaluation of the literary corpus" of Chesnutt, and "to trace and assess Chesnutt's role in the evolution of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century ethnic, regional, and social problem literature in the United States."

Chesnutt was born in Cleveland, Ohio, but grew up in the unreconstructed South of Fayetteville, North Carolina, the town which becomes the "Patesville" of his autobiographical *The House Behind the Cedars* (1900) and of some of his stories. His family heritage Andrews calls "literally a mixed blessing." Chesnutt was one-eighth Negro and able to pass for white, experiencing as a result prejudice from the white and black community alike. In a journal entry of 1881, quoted by Andrews, Chesnutt wrote, "I am neither fish, flesh, nor fowl—neither 'nigger,' white, nor 'buckrah.' Too stuck-up for the colored folks, and, of course, not recognized by the whites."

Chesnutt's inherited racial and social circumstances led him to intellectual escape routes—teaching in North Carolina and an eventual move to Cleveland, Ohio, where he passed the bar exam and set up a court reporting business which sustained him and his family financially when publishing failed to do so. Early circumstances also led to the concerns expressed in his fiction. In 1928, after some literary success between 1887 and 1904, and after a long hiatus of "tinker[ing] with the materials of his art," as Andrews writes, Chesnutt was awarded the Spingarn Medal by the NAACP for his pioneering literary work. Accepting the award, he said: "My physical makeup was such that I knew the psychology of people of mixed blood insofar as it differed from that of other people, and most of my writings ran along the colored line."

Of those writings, Andrews finds the early dialect stories (collected in *The Conjure Woman* in 1899) and the late "Baxter's Procrustes" (*Atlantic*, 1904, Chesnutt's "one sustained and unmixed success in fiction" of his climactic years as a writer) the best in balancing the concerns of entertaining and teaching, the demands of essentially white audiences and exclusively white publishers, the tensions of aesthetic control and moral lesson. In between these successful shorter works, the novels upon which Chesnutt pinned his hopes for literary fame and fortune, *The House Behind the Cedars*, 1900, *The Marrow of Tradition*, 1901, and *The Colonel's Dream*, 1905, received increasingly more discouraging public and critical reaction. In a final evaluation

of Chesnutt's literary accomplishments against great odds, however, Andrews concludes that moral success was his—that which “ultimately mattered most to him anyway.”

For the specialized reader, Andrews' book provides thorough evaluation of unpublished Chesnutt materials—manuscripts, journals, correspondence—from the Fisk University Library and Western Reserve Historical Society. For the more general reader, *The Literary Career of Charles W. Chesnutt* may be most interesting as a close documentation of the struggles of a man of morality and intelligence with the difficult circumstances of the color line in post-Civil War America and as an excellent outline of the literary and publishing situations in America at the turn of the century, particularly as race relations and the South were concerned.

Andrews' book is part of the series of Southern Literary Studies under the editorship of Louis D. Rubin, Jr.; other recent works in the series study Flannery O'Connor, Eudora Welty, Ellen Glasgow, and Kate Chopin.

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*Carolyn Wedin Sylvander, professor of English at the UW-Whitewater, recently published books on Jessie Fauset and James Baldwin.*

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**THE RED SNOW** by James Greiner; Doubleday, New York, 1980. 260 pp. \$10.95.

**By James W. Rieder and Shirley G. Mudrick**

For more than forty million years, the wolf has been evolving on this continent.

A predator animal that has survived forty million years against the forces of nature, other animals, and man must be worthy of chronicling. Thus James Greiner in his second book, *The Red Snow*, gives us fact and fiction that shares the dramatic, exciting, often violent lifestyle of the grey wolf.

Among those who assisted him was a former Milwaukeean, biologist Robert Stephenson, now biologist for wolf studies with the Alaskan Department of Fish and Game, and zoologist Dr. R. Dale Guthrie of the University of Alaska, Fairbanks. Their contributions on wolf predation in Alaska and the paleontological background of wolf and hominoid in that area of North America supply the reader with historical background.

*The Red Snow* follows the St. George Creek wolf pack through a year of survival battles in the Alaskan wilds. In these battles man is represented by a trapper who wants the wolves' pelts as well as revenge for their survival-necessitated

killings.

The trapper, John Tatum, has the only name allowed characters in the book. The wolves are identified only by color, size, age: the big black; the small grey bitch; the buff pup. Yet, the author makes the reader know them and care.

Although the author has wielded his typewriter as an artist's palette, his geographic and environmental word-pictures sometimes weigh heavy, especially when they do not advance the story.

The book, however, gives the reader an historical perspective of the ecological requirement of predator/prey balance. Also, although the author claims he's on neither side of the man/wolf controversy, he leaves the reader with a subtle but distinct feeling he's on the wolf's side.

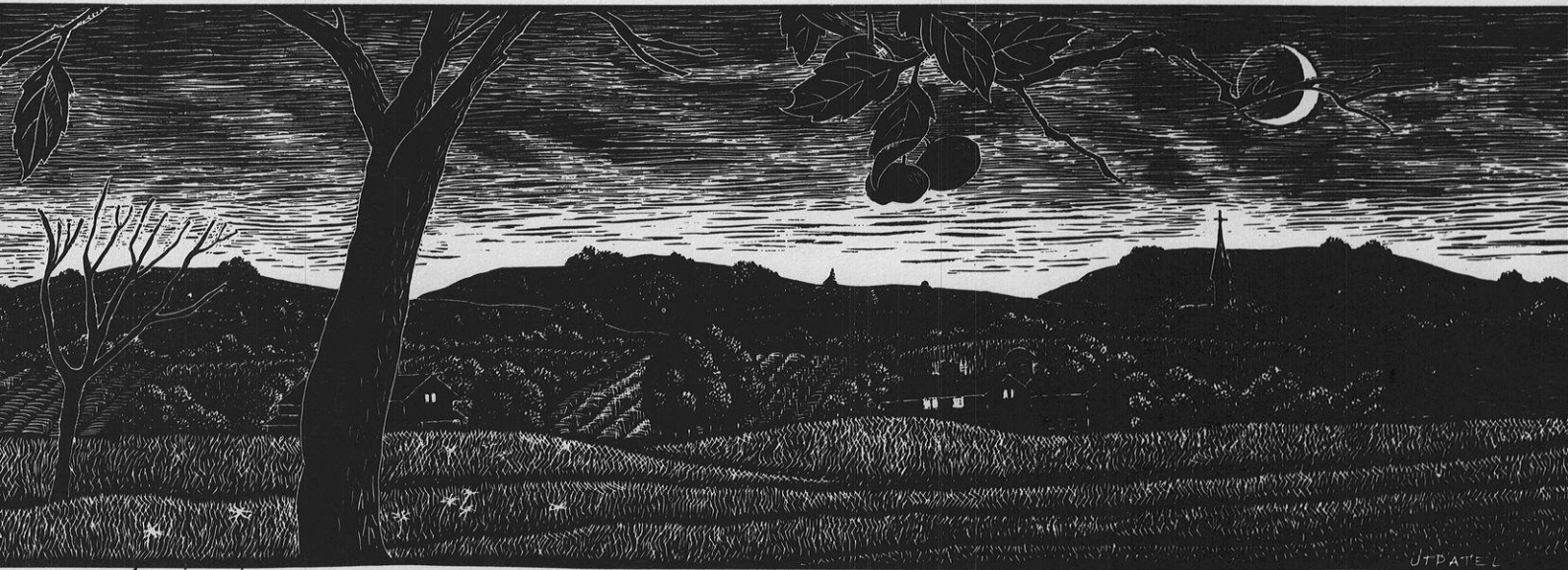
This is a book to be read by all who would like to be reassured—in Greiner's words—that “the wolf is not only alive but well in the vast wilderness in Alaska.”

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*James W. Rieder is founder and director of the Timber Wolf Preservation Society which has headquarters in Greendale, Wisconsin. Shirley G. Mudrick is a freelance writer and former feature writer for South Milwaukee Community Newspapers.*

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Frank Utpatel print owned by the Academy



*country landscape*

UTPATEL  
*Frank Utpatel*

**IN A DARK TIME** by Lawrence Watson; Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1980. 240 pp. \$8.95.

**CLOSEOUT** by Donald Conger; Leisure Books, New York, 1980. 224 pp. \$1.75.

By **Richard Boudreau**

At first glance these two novels seem to have little in common: the one is hard bound by an enduring publisher, the other, paperback by a leisure-market publisher; the one is a study of fear in a small community, the other a mystery/suspense story; the one is written by a man just beginning a career in university teaching, the other by a man just retired from academia.

Yet the books share several elements. Both involve multiple killings within an atmosphere of growing fear. Both have strictly limited settings of time and place. Both involve a narrator-protagonist, imperfect though searching for the right, and a love story that remains unresolved, though hopeful, at the end of the violence.

And both, unfortunately, suffer from marring technical failings.

Lawrence Watson, an English professor at UW-Stevens Point, chose to use a journal begun by his narrator, Peter Leesh, to tell of the effects of fear and suspicion engendered by the murder of three high-school girls in a small Minnesota town. And just there is its difficulty. If Peter were a scintillating personality or an eccentric one, the reader might put up with the epistolary straight-jacket. Since he is neither, his self-conscious fumbblings and mumbblings—he is a high school English teacher given to literary name-dropping—leave the reader unengaged, if not bored.

Even then all might be tolerated (readers, after all, are a patient bunch) if some convincing happenstances, transformations, or conclusions surfaced along the way. But they do not. Though Peter claims to have gone through a traumatic transformation toward the end of the novel, we are left with little to judge it by, except his words. He is rather like (if I may drop a literary name or two myself) poor old Coverdale of Hawthorne's *Blithedale Romance*, tentative, uninteresting in himself, and ultimately uninvolving.

Watson, let it be said, does not deviate from his original intention; he tells not of the murders but of their effect and of the effect the killer's being at large has on Peter, his sometime bed-partner, Alexandra, and on others of his friends and colleagues, and on the community at large. There are episodes in the journal

that are interesting and well told, particularly the near-final scene in the storage rooms beneath the school, Peter's "dark time." If only Watson had chosen a different method of telling his tale, perhaps the probing into the well-springs of fear and suspicion might have taken on meaning and immediacy.

Donald Conger is the pseudonym of Donald Emerson, former chairman of the UW-Milwaukee English Department and one time vice-president of letters of the Academy. Under his own name he published two young adult novels, *Span Across a River* and *Court Decision*, back in the sixties. Under the Conger cognomen he is planning further episodes with the main characters of this novel, Mark Hagar, a hard-boiled egg with a soft shell, and his female companion in ravelings and unravelings, Anne Worden.

From the first page *Closeout's* staccato rhythms and skeleton descriptions suggest the style of Spillane or perhaps Fleming, but whether this is the Wisconsin variety of Mike Hammer or James Bond is open to question. Neither the detective nor the spy story has done well in our northern soil, and whatever the garden variety of Conger's planting, it is still not doing well, in spite of its action-packed plot: Hagar, the hero, innocently involved in murders, kidnappings, and drugs merely because of his loyalty to his partner in a public relations firm.

But its telling is its technical failing: its tendons do not attach, its cartilage is faulty; its ganglions remain isolated. It is maddeningly terse, and the reader needs a gloss. It might help to know whether the narrator is twenty-five or fifty. It might help to learn about the characters beyond the one or two details the narrator mentions. With five more words of information per page (even two) the reader might be able to puzzle the pieces together, and the mystery would remain in the story, not in its telling.

Like the Watson novel, this one might have succeeded. Though ultimately obfuscated, there is a plot. There are characters, the main ones most complete, of course. There is an interesting setting: mid-Wisconsin in autumn, a ride on the state-run ferry, a field of action including a genteel, aging hotel on a beautiful lake, a weekend of lovely weather. And there is room for the imagination, a late convention of the Fellowship of Poets, for example, so pregnant with possibilities it was a disappointment not to see more made of it.

Though both of these quite different novels are disappointments, their authors have demonstrated they can write. I for

one hope to see more from their type-writers.

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*Richard Boudreau is a professor of English at UW-La Crosse.*

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**LOOK UP MILWAUKEE—EAST-SIDE/WESTSIDE ALL AROUND DOWNTOWN** by Joseph J. Korom, Jr.; photography by Gary W. Cottrell; Franklin Publishers, 9055 J North 51st St., Milwaukee, Wis., 1979. 152 pp. Soft cover \$12.95.

By **Hannah W. Swart**

Mr. Korom's architectural study of Milwaukee is confined to the boundaries of the yet to be completed Freeway Loop. The street patterns, buildings, and open spaces are a record of the tastes and interests of Milwaukee's people and institutions. No part of the city has more wealth of important information than this urban center—an approximate 700-acre area dating back to the origins of the city.

Juneau Town, Kilbourn Town, and Walker's Point, the three eighteenth-century pioneer settlements that predate Milwaukee, reflect their competitive relationships by the bridges angling over the Milwaukee River and the contrasting street patterns on either side.

Although there have been several architectural studies of Milwaukee in the past decade to encourage the preservation of its building heritage and to direct the redevelopment planning, Mr. Korom's approach is refreshing and the photography is superb. His primary concern is the building's exterior rather than its interior. It leaves to the reader the exciting discoveries of the building's interior after curiosity has been aroused.

Downtown Milwaukee is a special place, being the cultural, financial, commercial, and entertainment capital of the state. It was the home of settlers and immigrants who built cabins, barns, trading posts, churches, piers, and when time permitted, luxuries such as wooden sidewalks. Today, downtown offers city and county government buildings, corporate office towers, hotels and apartment buildings, colleges, scores of fine restaurants, theatres, stores, houses, cultural facilities, tanneries, breweries, and a chocolate factory which adds to the olfactory enhancement. Downtown Milwaukee, encompassing roughly 130 city blocks, includes businesses that employ 50,000 daily, 8,000 inhabitants, and a river that is spanned by eight bridges. It is truly a remarkable "neighborhood."

There are sixty-two buildings identified and described on a map with a picture and short history of each for the East side and forty-four buildings likewise are described for the West side.

Victorian, Classical Revival, Romanesque, Neo-Renaissance or Art Deco—each building reflects an individual atmosphere.

For those whose palate is more accustomed to bland suburban roadside architecture, perhaps your diet needs more flavor. Explore the cuisine downtown has to offer; it is a virtual epicurean delight in styles. Downtown Milwaukee is indeed a potpourri of sights, scents, and sounds.

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*Hannah Swart is curator of Hoard Historical Museum and an established author.*

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**SQUIDS SOUP**, stories by Michael Mooney; Story Press, Chicago, 1980. 156 pp. \$3.95.

**By Sara Rath**

Michael Mooney lives in Milwaukee and writes tightly constructed, odd little stories about people with names like Mr. Draghicchio and Joey Pentanglia, who attempt to survive in a world of corruption, loneliness, and betrayal. Mooney's stories often refer to a specific Wisconsin locale, which makes them seem more contemporary and genuine than folktales, and yet at times there is a moralistic message to these stories that makes them seem less than realistic.

When he was putting together this collection, Mooney said that these stories focused on the relationship between men and women, "and from the point of the man, on how the woman gets identified with the world in general, its recalcitrance, its indifference, its otherness. This can be very troubling, very poignant, but also very funny."

In reading Mooney's stories I had no problem recognizing the troubling and the poignant, but the funny was something else.

Take the first story in the collection, "The Strange Heart." An ill little girl finds that rubbing a library book between her legs makes her "feel good." Troubling. The child speaks in an adult voice and persistently demands to be told she is the most beautiful girl in the world. The grandmother worries because library books might be unclean, "you don't know who's handled them."

I found real poignance in "Chicory," where a girl named Renny works in her

father's construction firm. At first she carries with her the dreaminess of her adolescence, but slowly she realizes, "That world out there rested on this. That grace and ease floated like a flower on the surface of this, drew its sustenance here, and here was smelly and dirty and hard."

There is poignance in "The Popcorn Stand," when the woman from the city's Bureau of Relocation comes to the lakefront to explain to the Serbs, whose special place it is to gather, that the popcorn stand has to be demolished.

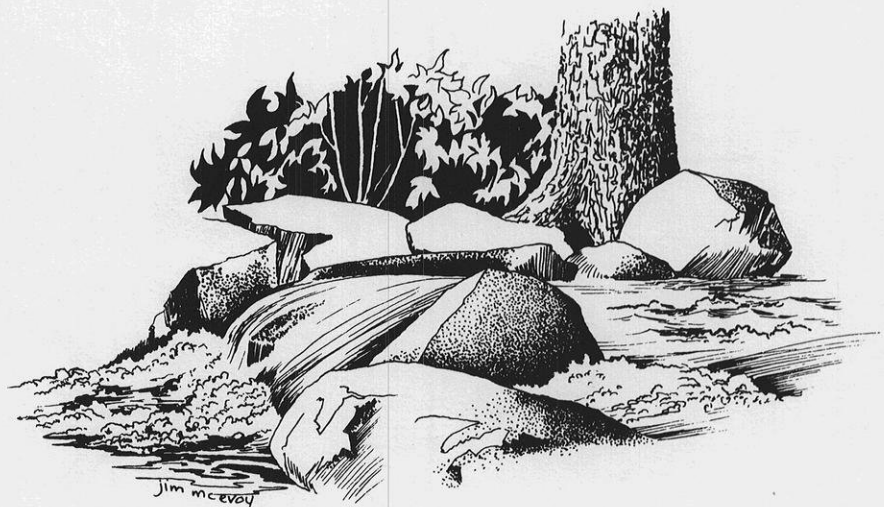
However, my favorite of this collection of thirteen stories is "Snow," which centers around a trip back to Milwaukee from a Chicago museum in a heavy snowstorm. Mooney creates a terrible anxiety in the fury of the storm, and here, I think, his feelings about the relationships of men and women is most clear: "Don't you wish they had a museum," Flora says, "where you could see the things we like to imagine . . . the things we do, the things we think, the things we like to dream. It's all about how easy it is to die. It's all about stepping into the river and learning to swim. I mean, you can't hold back. You have to give yourself up to it. But give up too much, and you drown. It's not just dying; it's the indifference—how alone we all are. But knowing you're alone, feeling cut off and sorry for yourself, makes it impossible for anything else."

This is what Michael Mooney's stories are all about.

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*Sara Rath is a Madison poet and freelance writer.*

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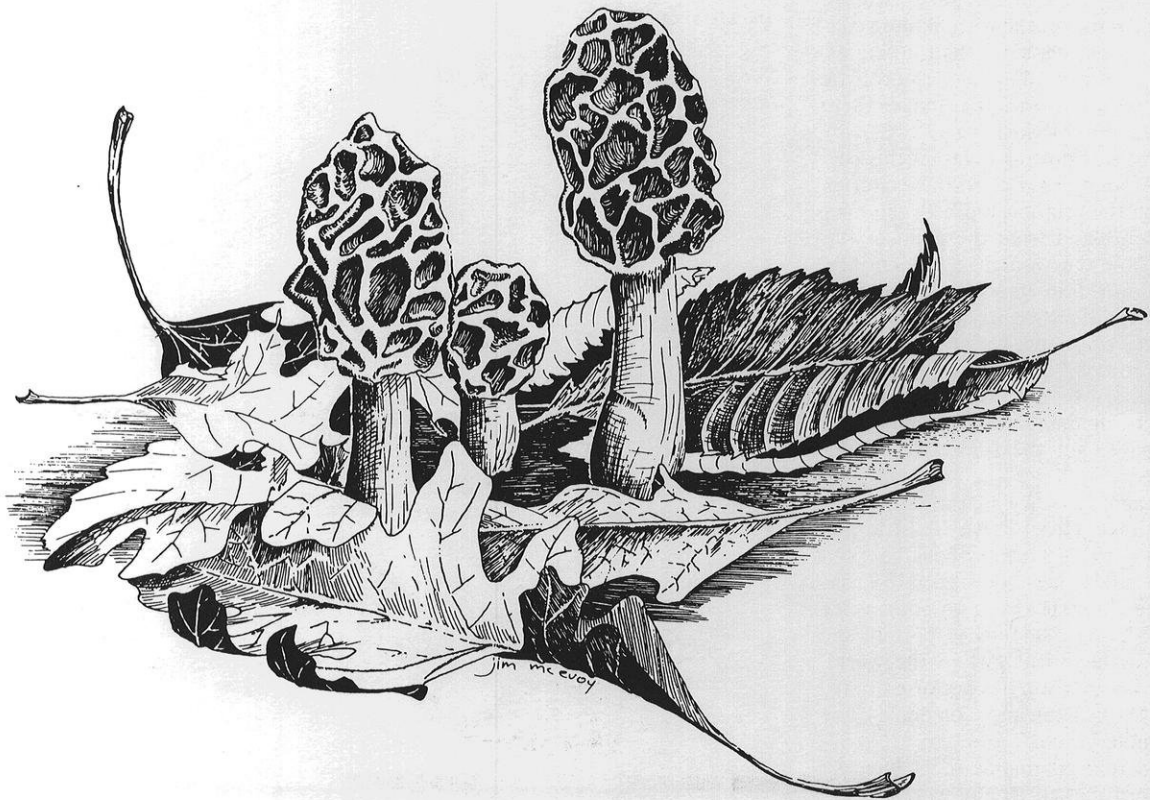


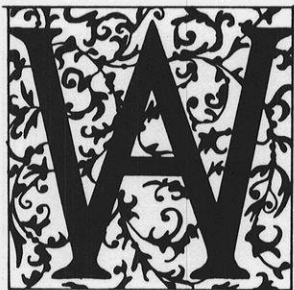
**Barbara Vroman**

continued from page 2

**Barbara Fitz Vroman**, along with Peggy Hansen Dopp, is coauthor of *Tomorrow is a River*, which was given the Leslie Cross award by the Council for Wisconsin Writers for the best novel by a Wisconsin author for the year 1977. She is a former news editor and columnist for the *Waushara Argus*, and her articles and fiction have appeared in numerous national publications. She lives with her husband, Dale, and three children, Kim, Marc, and Ryan in rural Hancock. Presently Ms. Vroman is marketing her second novel, *Sons of Thunder*, and working on a third novel.

**David Mladenoff**, a former graduate student in landscape architecture at UW-Madison, now lives in Olympia, Washington. The cover photograph is from his portfolio, *Scenes and Impressions of the Lake Superior Country*.





## Inside the Academy

### In Memoriam

#### Ralph Noyes Buckstaff

Ralph N. Buckstaff died on November 12, 1980, at the age of ninety-three. A businessman, his primary avocation was scientific research: astronomy, meteorology, and entomology. Over the years, Buckstaff collected 278 meteorites and more than 4,000 insects, which he gave to the Oshkosh Public Museum. He kept the official daily weather records for Oshkosh for fifty-six years and, for this, received special honors from the U.S. Department of Commerce. He built a private astronomical observatory in Oshkosh, which recently was placed on the National Register of Historic Sites. In 1965 he deeded this property to the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, and they eventually named their new planetarium in his honor.

Ralph Buckstaff joined W.A.S.A.L. in 1922. In 1954 he was elected president and became a patron member. He served on the council many years and was an honorary life member almost two decades. When president of W.A.S.A.L. he contributed two important scientific articles to the *Review*.

Ralph Noyes Buckstaff was the epitome of a scientific citizen and worked to communicate his interests to students of all ages—giving generously of his time and talents.

His wife, Annie Laurie, has been a member of the Academy for thirty years.

—Walter Scott

#### Edwin Broun Fred

Former University of Wisconsin President E.B. Fred died January 16, 1981, in Madison at the age of ninety-three. A memorial service was held in the E.B. Fred Bacteriology Hall, named in his honor two years ago, on the UW-Madison campus. Academy members who spoke at the memorial were Ira Baldwin, Mark Ingraham, William Sarles, and Edwin Young.

E.B. Fred came to the UW in 1913 as an assistant professor of bacteriology. In 1918 he was made a professor; in 1934 he was named dean of the graduate school. When he was appointed dean of the College of Agriculture, he took up residence at 10 Babcock Drive on the Madison campus. He was the twelfth UW president, from 1945 to 1958, during which time the university's enrollment tripled and the faculty doubled in size. As president he was noted as a champion of good teaching and a defender of the principles of free inquiry.

In the 1930s Fred was elected to the National Academy of Sciences and made a member of the American Philosophical Association.

Fred joined W.A.S.A.L. in 1921 and became an honorary member in 1961. At the 1974 annual meeting he was honored by the Academy for his outstanding contribution to the life, culture, and welfare of Wisconsin.

—William Sarles



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