

SOCIETY

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THE

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OF



# MIDWESTERN LITERATURE

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Society for the Study of  
Midwestern Literature

NEWSLETTER

Volume VIII

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Jack Conroy Honored by  
State Library Association

At the annual Awards Dinner of the Missouri Library Association, held at the Ramada Inn in Columbia Wednesday evening, Sept. 28, 1977, the Literary Award was presented to Jack Conroy of Moberly. The citation accompanying the award reads: "Author ... Editor ... Compiler ... Anthologist ... Miner ... Boxcar Rider ... Proletarian ... Poet. Jack Conroy came from out of the Missouri heartland... a mining camp near Moberly. He knew something of Missouri; both of its horrors and of its beauty. He remembered what he had learned and he wrote about it. Too many of us are ready to forget the past. When you reach the age of 50 or so and the Depression is only a memory, Jack Conroy's writings will stand on your library shelves as a reminder of what once happened.

"For preserving the life of Moberly, the mining town: ... For describing the lives of the disinherited people ... For causing a past which most of us might forget, to come alive -- and stay alive. For these reasons and more, the Missouri Library Association with pride offers to Jack Conroy its 1977 Literary Award."

The citation refers mainly to Conroy's first novel, The Disinherited, about a young man's experiences in the Great Depression of the 30s.

First published in 1933, it was reissued in 1963 as an American Century paperback and is now in its 10th paperback printing, being used widely in college literature classes.

The locale of about the first third of the novel is Monkey Nest coal camp, which once flourished about a mile west of Moberly but of which no trace now remains.

The camp also figures in the several chapters of Conroy's forthcoming autobiography that have appeared in various

periodicals. Conroy reviews books for the Kansas City Star and the Chicago Daily News.

His "Musings of the Sage of Moberly" column is a regular feature in The Foolkiller, a satirical magazine published by the Folk University of Kansas City.

--Reprinted from Moberly Monitor-Index & Evening Democrat, Sun., Oct. 2, 1977.

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Raymond D. Gastil, Cultural Regions of the United States Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975, Pp. xi, 366

During the last twenty years, the general decline in the use of a regional approach in cultural studies is marked by two conspicuous exceptions: the cultural geographers and frontier historians have continued this approach. One of the more effective practitioners in combining geography and history into an analysis of comparative frontiers is D. W. Meinig. Literary regionalism has almost disappeared. The most recent assessment is the posthumously collected essays by Randall Stewart which were published in 1968 as Regionalism and Beyond. In some respects Gastil's book may indicate a renewed interest in the regional approach.

The most serious defect in Gastil's work is his inability to define the concept of "regionalism." Relying heavily upon an impressionistic rendering of thirteen regional profiles, Gastil concludes that regional borders can be established from an analysis of "settlement, and emergent ideals [which led to lines of differentiation in dialect, religious affiliation, voting behavior and other traits." (p.92) Although he presents maps to introduce the thirteen regions of America, there is still the nagging question of how do you define a region? Gastil's unvoiced assumption is that the region is larger than a state and congruent with measurable socio-cultural phenomenon. Related to this is



his assumption that measurable variations reflect shared values within a region. It would seem from his own presentation of material that a strong case could be developed for a greater number of limited regions - limited in time and space. Gastil argues for effective settlement as the first step in regional definition. The difficulty with his argument is the lack of any proof that effective settlements influenced cultural traits. Leaving aside the insurmountable problems of portraying effective settlements and settlers, one specific example will illustrate the confusion. The South is one region that seems to be presented in a very convincing manner in the fourth chapter of the book. In terms of Gastil's idea of a region, he earlier asserted that Missouri and Arkansas were first effectively settled "by people sharing many of the same Southern traditions." (p. 39) Monsieur Chouteau would have been very surprised that his Gallic charm was really an incipient Southernness apparent in the late eighteenth century. Gastil ignores the historical settlement of contemporary Missouri by the French along the rivers. The case of Arkansas is more revealing. The first white settlers came from the American Fur Company and were French, along with a majority of New Englanders who established the first effective settlement in north central Arkansas in the 1820s, around Davidsonville.

Gastil's definition of regional borders is weakened by his treatment of metropolitan centers. New York City is the second region profiled because of its dialectical distinction, Jewish culture, and media control (pp. 159-160). The question remains of why the designation "sub-district" for Nashville and the category of "nonconforming area" for Chicago, Kansas City and St. Louis (pp. 193, 221-2)? What is the relationship between a major urban center and the surrounding area? The argument for limited regional definition in terms of space would help to clarify Gastil's ambiguous treatment of metropolitan areas.

A final illustration suggests the basic weakness of Gastil's book. A recurring problem for analysis of regional characteristics is the state of Ohio. Gastil touches briefly on this when he refers to

the varieties of Midwesterns which have been portrayed by novelists. (p. 218) Instead of any sustained analysis of settlement patterns, examination of how these settlers may have determined particular regions limited in time and space or informed distinctions between voting areas within the state and the differences between various Ohio cities, Gastil is content to portray Cincinnati as a "relatively sophisticated city of Southern and German as well as Midwest background." (p. 218) The need for a restrained treatment of the regional approach to cultural studies is yet unmet.

William H. Roba

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Ruth Finnegan, Oral Poetry: Its Nature, Significance and Social Context. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977.

Ruth Finnegan's late 1977 publication, Oral Poetry, is a valuable addition to contemporary studies of "oral" literary forms. This book may prove useful to Midwestern literary scholars studying forms as diverse as Indian legends, frontier ballads, "literary" simulations of vernacular speech, contemporary "folk-songs," and chanted protests. The range of this work is further broadened by the author's premise that poetry and prose, oral and written forms, flow together rather than existing in isolation.

Finnegan tests world literature for anticipated universals of oral technique, presentation, and transmission. She consistently uncovers exceptions which render absolute definitional clarity and exclusivity impossible. Thus, much of the book develops a series of frustrating negatives. Had the author limited her scope to a single language, culture, literary tradition, or genre, the results would certainly have been more positive and immediately usable.

Yet the refusal to limit focus to a single geographic area or period of time produces some notable benefits. In presenting the range of oral forms extant in world literature, she simultaneously explains and tests all major theories concerning the oral poem, the poet, the society, and the inter-relation among



these. Moreover, Finnegan examines the strengths, weaknesses, and underlying assumptions of each approach to oral poetry.

Ultimately, Oral Poetry forces the reader to develop his own synthesis, picking and choosing from among the many elements presented. Yet if the reader is left with all the decisions, Ruth Finnegan offers a basis for making the choices knowledgeable ones.

Phil Greasley  
University of Kentucky  
Center at Fort Knox

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Robert Lowell, Brahmin Rebel

Like his more famous ancestor James Russell Lowell, Robert Lowell (1917-1977) will go down in literary history as a man who never quite achieved the greatness he seemed predestined for. One might go farther: biographers will describe the relation between the two Lowells as one not only of similarity but also of cause and effect. Robert Lowell all his life felt himself chained to the leaden weight of family tradition. This tradition obligated him to go to Harvard, to be a poet, to be a successful and proper upper class Bostonian, speaking, if not only to Cabots, surely not often to those of us who dine seldom on the bean and never on the cod.

Much of the energy of his personal life as well as of his artistry went into combatting the way things are, the existing government and social structure which seemed to him to be only the Lowell family writ large. His primary reason for leaving Harvard to attend Kenyon College in barbarous Ohio was to place himself in the tutelage of John Crowe Ransom, but the move suggested rebellion, as did his temporary conversion to Catholicism in his early adulthood.

He volunteered for the Navy early in World War II, perhaps choosing that service because the father of whom he would later write so much had been a career naval officer. But he was rejected, and, some time later, came to feel that the Allied strategic bombing campaign

was morally wrong. When the draft, less dainty in its appetites than the Navy, called him, he refused induction and sought conscientious objector status. The court turned down his plea, sentencing him to a year and a day in jail. He served five months, of course he later used the experience in his verse.

As a poet he eventually earned fame on college campuses sufficient for him to be placed, along with Norman Mailer, at the head of the Viet Nam protest march on Washington, D.C. The two authors presumably were supposed to give the march intellectual cachet and indicate approval by at least one portion of the over-30's.

Though a few of his best poems will survive--and not many poets can expect that much--Lowell did not produce the major work which such teachers as Richard Eberhart ("You're lucky if you get one first-rate student in a lifetime; Lowell was mine," Eberhart told me) and Ransom expected of him. The sometimes interesting, often malicious and tiresome prose and verse considerations of family members that attracted reviewers in his last years will quickly become matter only for the biographer.

Perhaps the worst of fate's several thrusts was that this would-be rebel against the Brahmins, this talent touted in the 1950s to succeed Eliot as grand panjandrum of literature, became instead only the darling of the annotators and explicators, a writer respected but not imitated (and, one suspects, not even read) by many of the younger poets whose noses he had been expected to ring.

Lowell apparently wanted the role of leadership predicted for him by the critics. But he wanted also to break away from the social-literary-family establishment which the critics, after all, represented. He never came to a clear decision. Perhaps none of us can, but we demand that the artist at least be able to take the stance "as if."

Those who read poetry for enjoyment, rather than as subject matter to be taught or studied, will observe that Lowell's work in the 1940s and 1950s was his best. The poems of that period are well wrought, an iron hammered to pre-



cision and forceful grace. It is, however, work that, like some of that of the seventeenth century poets and of the giants of the twentieth century modern era, drives the reader to reference books and other people's explications--the work of a poet's poet, as they say, though the more apt term would be academic's poet.

This labelling is only to classify, not to disparage. There are considerable pleasures in such poetry for the reader willing to trudge over to the library to check the reference books and the critical journals. It would be beyond reason to expect the general reader, or the usual non-academic poet, to go to such labors. I dwell upon the obvious only because it is indicative of Lowell's indecision: he thought of himself as battling the established, yet despite the individualism of his voice he seems today the last of the modernists rather than the first of the post-modern.

He ridiculed, admired, bemoaned, analyzed, and admonished his family and the false solidities he thought it stood for, yet he never overcame it and, indeed, was in his quarrel with it more the lover than the revolutionist. The inability to find his stance shows up in his poems. At times it damages them, a point that may be illustrated by comparing two poems expressing the need for redemption.

The early poem "Christmas Eve Under Hooker's Statue" is a flawed contrast between innocence, represented by "the child" (Lowell himself when young, and perhaps also the Christ child though nothing in the poem directly suggests this), and evil, the world as it is, represented by the statue of General Joseph "Fighting Joe" Hooker on Boston Common.

Hooker, the Union leader defeated at Chancellorsville, stands for the god of war and also is the "father" who stuffs the child's Christmas stocking with stones, gives the innocent mould for bread, and shatters in his gauntlets the "horn of Plenty."

The style is, as nearly always, great: only Lowell could give those abrupt turns in metaphor and thought, those hardened

phrasings, those despairingly right rhythms that when they work hold aside all sentimentality, all falseness. But, as in all but Lowell's best performances, the imagery and metaphor creak and clank a bit, they are as brilliant, and as intrusive, as red neon on a sweep of moonlit lawn.

The second sentence of the poem ("Twenty years ago / I hung my stocking on the tree, and hell's / Serpent entwined the apple in the toe / To sting the child with knowledge") is exact, deft, and convincing. But in the third sentence the syntax tells us that it is the heels of Hooker's statue which "know." The opening of the second stanza appears meant to say that the clouds of war make a rebirth of Christ impossible, but it says instead that the clouds "shelter" Christmas, giving the reverse of the intended idea. The last line of the poem, expressing hope for a reappearance of Christ, evades the problem the poem has set up. It is a move of despair on the part of a speaker in whom the division between self as innocent and self as victim is not comprehended and therefore remains merely pathetic.

Lowell's most often anthologized poem--by that measure, perhaps the one commonly thought to be his best--is "Skunk Hour," from a 1956 book. The hope again is for some word of understanding. But the speaker here does not evade his problem, even though at the moment of peak emotion his "mind's not right." He succeeds in finding a suggestion of possibility by looking closely at an element of the world that troubles him.

The sensibility again is late modern rather than post-modernist. The speaker notes that fall has come, leading to continued endings rather than to discoveries. Unable to find love of his own, he parks near a lover's lane, hoping, perhaps, to sense some rewarding shred of emotion there. Of course he gets from his expedition nothing more satisfying than snatches of banal song from a car radio. The feeling of loss is intense. He can hear "my ill-spirit sob in each blood cell / as if my hand were at its throat." Hell is himself, no consoling spirit is to be found.



But man is not all there is to nature. Sight of passing skunks leads first to recollection of the way these animals sometimes march up the village's main street--like Marianne Moore subjects, they go in natural beauty and purposefulness. In his own backyard, the speaker then remembers, he has seen a mother skunk carry on her business of nourishing her babies, indifferent to man as Robinson Jeffers' hawks and headlands, she "will not" be scared away. The skunk is exactly the right figure for contemplation, representing both nature's will to live and prevail, and the possibility of mephitic bane if mishandled as man, presumably, has mishandled his own existence. The poem is a first-rate appreciation of the problem falsified in the earlier work.

Lowell did not achieve the break with the past that he often sought, nor the fulfillment as a poet he apparently felt such a break would make possible. But he did present profound meditation on the condition of midcentury man. The best of the Lowells, he is among the better poet of our century. If somehow the general reader can be brought back to poetry, one of his rewards will be discovery of Lowell's best.

Bernard F. Engel  
Michigan State University

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#### OAK PARK FESTIVAL SALUTES HEMINGWAY July 22-30

"Hemingway's Oak Park". . . a place in time and fiction. . . will be shown and told on special literature tours during the Oak Park Festival July 22-30. The Festival, in the western suburb of Chicago, will feature literature, architecture, antiques and the arts.

On July 26 and 27, two day literature tours will feature Hemingway's haunts, including his birthplace and later homes, his grammar school, and the Oak Park/River Forest High School where the fledgling writer was on the staffs of the yearbook and the school paper.

Michael Murphy, author of the new book "Hemingsteen," friend and lifelong

scholar of the famous author, will participate in lectures and discussions along with Hemingway authorities, boyhood friends, relatives, and his high school journalism teacher.

Ernest Hemingway was born in Oak Park on July 21, 1899. The tour will delve in-depth on the early Hemingway years when his attitudes on life were being shaped. These were the days when the scrappy young man learned to box, explore the surrounding nature preserves and develop a close relationship with his four sisters and brother. Although Victorian Oak Park was straight-laced, Hemingway's physician father and musician mother provided a home where young Ernest learned a love for sports, adventure, and a "fraid of nothin'" approach to life. His attitudes, shaped while in Oak Park, were reflected in his later works.

This extensive tour will use actual sites, oral history and in-person interpretation by people who knew Hemingway during those formative years. There will also be exhibitions of Hemingway memorabilia and first editions.

In addition, the literature tour will also include authors who made up Oak Park's literary colony during the early 1900's. Edgar Rice Burroughs, who lived in Oak Park while writing his Mars and Tarzan stories, will have his three homes on the tour.

Oak Park is also the area where Carl Sandburg, Ben Hecht, Charles MacArthur and Vincent Starrett were part of a loose-knit literary center. The site of the old Oak Leaves newspaper, where most of these writers hung their hats at the same time Ernest Hemingway was picking up newspapers for his delivery route, was a major meeting place of literary talent and will be shown on the literary tour.

Kenneth Fearing, Mignon Eberhart, Bruce Barton, John S. Carter and Richard Bach, are among the numerous important literary figures who are sons and daughters of Oak Park. Exhibits of first editions, oral histories, and many other exhibits now in the planning stage, will highlight the tour of this outstanding cultural and creative center.



Four different "packages" are being offered:

A Frank Lloyd Wright Weekend, July 22-23; The Architecture Plus Art Tour, July 24-25; The Architecture Plus Literature Tour, July 26-27; and the Deluxe Architectural Weekend, July 28, 29 and 30.

All tours will include Unity Temple, which was declared a National Historic Landmark in 1969, and Wright's own home and studio. Frank Lloyd Wright, one of the greatest architects of all time and the innovator of the Prairie School Style, designed this home for his bride in 1889 and later added the adjoining studio after leaving the employment of Adler and Sullivan to strike out on his own. Many other homes in Oak park designed by Wright will be included on the tour.

The Oak Park Festival will also feature performances of Shakespeare's Othello, to be given in the park, performed by a professional theater company now in its fourth season and widely acclaimed by Chicagoland critics.

Oak park, which won the All American City Award in 1976, is a unique community that has kept its village flavor while savoring urban tastes. A flower-filled Village Mall, with shops around a park, showcases the shopping district.

Tour packages include admissions, Shakespeare performances plus dinner, shuttle bus, visits to art galleries, exhibits and lectures, and some films.

For a free brochure, with complete details and reservation forms, please write: The Oak Park Festival, 655 Lake Street, Oak Park, IL., 60301, or call 312-524-2050.

Housing information will also be sent to all applicants.

Reservations for this unique literary architectural adventure are limited, and will be handled on a first-come basis.

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A New Dimension of the Study of  
Midwestern Culture

Outdoor sculpture in Grand Rapids,

Kalamazoo and Lansing, Mich., will be the focus of a new survey at Michigan State University funded by a special arts projects grant from the Michigan Council for the Arts.

Project researcher is Fay L. Hendry, who holds an M.A. in art history from MSU. Eldon VanLiere, MSU professor of art history and modern art specialist, will supervise.

Designed to promote greater awareness of cultural and social history in Michigan and America in general, an immediate goal of the project is a sculpture guidebook for each city involved and a traveling photographic exhibition in 1979.

The survey grew out of a pilot study of Lansing area outdoor sculpture undertaken in 1977 by Hendry who discovered "significant sculpture in the city but little or no awareness of documentation of it."

Her initial study culminated in a photographic exhibition at the Michigan Historical Museum from June through December 1977.

Data collected during 1978 will be housed in the MSU Archives and Historical Collections and explained in the sculpture guidebooks. Photographs for the traveling exhibition will be taken by nationally-known photographer Balthasar Korab of Troy, Mich.

Funding for the sculpture survey has also been provided by the MSU Development Fund and the Kalamazoo Foundation. The Grand Rapids Museum, Kalamazoo Institute of Arts and the Michigan Historical Museum are also participating in the project.

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To: Midwest Poets, Arts Councils, Creative Writing Directors and Sponsors

The Poetry Society of America has asked me to receive and edit Midwestern news notes for its monthly Bulletin starting in September 1977. These news notes will include the following categories of information:



Book publication  
Readings  
Seminars  
Workshops  
Prize awards  
Prize contests (with deadlines)  
Activity in other arts

If you or your organization release any publicity in these categories I'd appreciate your placing me on your mailing list. My address is:

2935 Russell Boulevard  
St. Louis, MO 63104

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Charles Guenther  
Midwest Regional Vice President

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Late Harvest: Plains and Prairie Poets.  
edited by Robert Killoren.  
Kansas City, MO.: Bk Mk Press, 1977.

The value of this little book for Midwestern cultural studies is significant, for it brings together good selections from the work of nine living prairie poets with an essay on each of the poets by a noted critic. The volume also represents a healthy-minded wish to open the lines of communication between artists and critics.

One of the stated aims of the book is "to examine the relationship between landscape, artist, and art work." With this in mind one is struck by the variety of poetry the prairie seems to be a stimulation for -- from Robert Bly's mysticism to David Etter's straightforward treatment of common experience, from Bruce Cutler's dense allusiveness to Ted Kooser's lucid simplicity. What one learns is that like other great and large things in the world, the prairie is not easily categorized, nor are its effects readily predictable. Sometimes the prairie figures large, as it does in the poetry of John Knoepfle and James Hearst, and we are made aware of it as a forceful shaper of human experience. Other times the prairie is merely a setting or backdrop for the acting out of life's larger or smaller dramas as in some poems by

Dave Etter and William Stafford. But in all, one feels compelled to admit that the experience recounted, the feeling portrayed the poem written would be significantly different if it were done by one living not on the prairie, but by the Pacific or on the bayou or near the Brooklyn Bridge.

The critical essays range widely over a variety of approaches from New Critical to psychological and biographical. What they share in common is the belief that a serious examination of a writer's "sense of place" is a fertile approach to the study of American literature. Each tries in a particular way to place the author in relation to the prairie, usually with the necessity of discussing other poems not printed in this volume. The overall achievement is not only a useful study of some of the Midwest's most interesting poets, but also a practical application of a promising direction for Midwestern studies.

Paul J. Ferlazzo

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#### THE CONSERVATIVE MIND: A Review

What is the main idea that underlies the ultra conservative personality in the United States? One answer that may allay or may provoke anxieties has been suggested in a recent book published by Macel Ezell, Associate Professor of American Thought and Language at Michigan State and a member of the Society. The answer: no central idea at all in the formal, logical sense: only a sentimental gravitation towards symbols (often empty, but not always harmless) of the American past and a fear (sometimes bordering on hysteria) of contemporary trends, particularly communism and big government.

Professor Ezell's book, Unequivocal Americanism (Scarecrow Press), is a study of the right wing fiction of the cold war era with a view to finding its recurrent themes, loyalties and biases. The chief authors examined are Allen Drury, John Dos Passos, Ayn Rand and Taylor Caldwell, although a full half of the project concerns a host of minor authors of less note. There is also an illuminating section on the critical response in such right wing periodicals as the National



Review and American Opinion to "objectionable" (liberal) writers like Norman Mailer and Mary McCarthy.

As one might predict, the right wing novel champions old fashioned virtues like loyalty and honesty. It is opposed to social legislation that might have an equalizing effect on the classes, races and sexes and is politically obsessed with fighting the "modernist, universalist collectivist conspiracy in whatever form it may appear.

The right wing protagonist tends to be a warm friendly man, "satisfied to live in the great land, often in a pastoral setting." But when the issue of the Communist threat to our nation's freedom is involved, he must be unambiguously committed. "The chief villain," as Allen Drury puts it, "the most dangerous man in America, is the Equivocal Man."

Most right wing fiction is therefore not positive in tone. Right wing spokesmen generally look back to the Golden Age of America and lament its passing. "The line of demarcation is generally the election of Franklin Roosevelt in 1932. Prior to that time, American giants supposedly had achieved great things."

The friendliness of the right wing hero does not generally extend to members of other races and classes unless these people cheerfully accept their subordinate status. "House servants are nearly always black or Oriental. Positively treated in right wing novels are gentle, rational, patient blacks who work within the system."

The right wing novel predictably tries to prop up the case for inequalities in the social order. One of Taylor Caldwell's characters (in The Devil's Advocate) notes that "still the superior are born, here and there. Not very many, and in diminishing quantities." Richard M. Weaver, in the National Review, accused Harvey Wish, author of the somewhat liberal-tinged American Historian, of "pleasing for a kind of featureless social order which historically is not ours."

A note of hysteria pervades the discussion

of political issues in this fiction. The world is divided into two camps, Free and Red. They abhor the notion that "communists are just like all other civilized human beings." Peace-oriented institutions like the United Nations are seen as "doing deadly and increasing damage to the cause of freedom everywhere."

Big government is treated with an even greater intensity because it is the enemy within. In Allen Drury's The Remnant, Senator Fessenden opposes "The whole apparatus of benevolent big brother." Even charitable organizations are suspect. In Alpaca Revisited, one of H. L. Hunt's characters reports that "Charities frequently fall into the hands of the enemies of Freedom."

One wonders, of course, what are the dangers to America's freedoms if the country should fall into the hands of the Right-wingers who read and write this fiction. Prof. Ezell is too prudent a scholar to draw a conclusion on that one. But the facts do eloquently speak for themselves. Right wingers seem to be people who, like Melville's "Bartleby the Scrivener," simply "prefer not to." They are emotionally and sentimentally less "for" than "against." They are probably not the kinds of people who in normal times and in competition with more constructive moderates would be trusted with leadership. But it is a scary reminder that should the country reach a real stalemate (like the Weimar Republic before Hitler) there are plenty of highly committed and technically competent right-wingers ready to jump at the chance to try to forcibly resurrect a dream of a bygone America.

Stephen Elliston

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#### Election of Officers

The Society's newly elected officers for 1978-79 are:

President: Nancy H. Pogel, Michigan State University;  
Vice President: Gene H. Dent, Lakeland Community College, Mentor, Ohio,  
Executive Council, expiring 1981: John Flanagan, University of Illinois Emeritus,



## Election of Officer, cont.

and Jane Bakerman, Indiana State University.

## Continuing officers are

Executive Council, expiring 1980: Linda Wagner, Michigan State University, and Alma Payne, Bowling Green State University;

Executive Council, expiring 1979: Nancy Pogel, Michigan State University, and William Miller, Ball State University.

## (Non-elective)

Executive Secretary-Treasurer: David D. Anderson, Michigan State University;  
Secretary: Paul Ferlazzo, Michigan State University;

Bibliographer: Don Pady, Iowa State University;

Indexer: Volunteer needed. Susanna Harmon has requested replacement.

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## Recent Programs in Midwestern Studies

As evidence of the continued growing interest in the cultural dimensions of the Midwest, two programs in April, 1978, explored significant dimensions of the Midwestern cultural heritage, past and present. At a panel on Popular Midwestern Literature as part of the annual national Popular Culture Association, held in Cincinnati on April 19-22, 1978, papers were given by Bernard Engel on "Midwestern Household Poets in the Nineteenth Century," Nancy Pogel on "Constance Rourke's Pioneering Work in the Popular Culture of the Midwest," Eugene Huddleston on "Ray Stannard Baker and Daryl F. Zanuck's Wilson," and David D. Anderson on "William Jennings Bryan and the Rhetoric of a Reluctant Revolutionary."

The Spring meeting of the Ohio-Indiana American Studies Meeting at Miami University on April 21-22 focused on the theme, "The Old Northwest and the New Regionalism." Featured were a reading by Robert Bly and a talk by Walter Havighurst. In eight sessions, members of the Association explored the following:

## Art in the Territory

Moderator: Dan Reeves, Ball State  
"Cincinnati Landscapes: Circa 1840," Anthony F. Jenson, College of Charleston, S.C.

"Growth of Early Art Institutions In Cincinnati," Kenneth R. Trapp, Cincinnati Art Museum

"Uniting the Useful and Beautiful: The Arts in Cincinnati," Barbara Howe, Heidelberg College

## Enterprise in the Heartland

Moderator: Tom Clark, Indiana Univ.

"'Perfidious Whig Rascals': A Businessman Runs for Congress in Fort Wayne, 1847," Mark Neely, Lincoln Library and Museum

"Hugh McCulloch and the Currency Contraction Campaign of 1865-1868: Business Rhetoric and Midwestern Values," Kurt W. Ritter, University of Illinois

"Friedrich Munch, the 'Latin Farmer': A German Pioneer in Missouri," Dennis Mueller, University of Missouri

## Transportation in the Territory

Moderator, Park Goist, Case Western Reserve University

"Dream and Reality in Southern Ohio: Promotion of the Columbus and Hocking Valley Railroad," Ivan M. Tribe, Rio Grande College

"Transportation in Indiana," David B. Graham, Graham Farms, Inc.

"Designing the Western Steam Boat: Latrobe, Fulton, and the Ohio Steam Boat Company," Darwin Stapleton, Case Western Reserve Univ.

## Recent Midwestern Poetry: A Sense of Place?

Moderator: Stanley W. Lindberg, University of Georgia

"Our Sense of Place Since Bly's Silence in the Snowy Fields," Wayne Dodd, Ohio University

"Indignation Born of Love: James Wright's Ohio Poems," William S. Saunders, Wittenberg University

"Cleveland's Native Son: Russell Atkins," Nicholas Ranson, University of Akron

## Education in the Territory

Moderator: Curt Ellison, Miami Univ.

"The Future of the Ohio Heritage," Ken Davison, Heidelberg College

"John Locke: Early Scientific Educator in the Midwest," Jean Carr, Case Western Reserve University



"Successful Experiments in Education:  
Three Midwestern Models," Kate  
Strickland, The Univ of Texas at  
San Antonio

The Nations in the Territory

Moderator: Jim O'Donnell, Marietta  
College

"The Lamb in the Wilderness: Indian  
Responses to the Moravian Missions  
in the Old Northwest," James Ronda,  
Youngstown State University

"Arms and Diplomacy: Joseph Brant in  
the Old Northwest," Jim O'Donnell,  
Marietta College

"A Status Report on the Great Lakes  
Indian Atlas Project," A Representa-  
tive from the Newberry Library

The Midwestern Sense of Place in Fiction

Moderator: David D. Anderson,  
Michigan State University

Realism: The Midwest's Contributions,"  
Robert Cosgrove, Southwest Missouri  
State University

"Eggleston's Indiana," Bud T. Cochran,  
University of Dayton

"A Changing Sense of the Chicago of  
Bellow and Algren," John Raymer,  
Purdue University-Calumet

A Workshop: The City as Artifact

Moderator: Judith Fryer, Miami  
University

Chicago: Tom Schlereth, Notre Dame  
University

Cincinnati: Judith Fryer, Miami Univ.  
Cleveland. Park Goist, Case Western  
Reserve University

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--A Call for Papers--

Sixth Annual Midwest Popular Culture  
Association Conference to be held at  
Michigan State University on  
November 2-4, 1978

Proposals for papers, panels, forums and  
discussion groups in all aspects of  
popular culture are welcome. The con-  
ference will emphasize research, teaching  
and curriculum development, and is open  
to members of all disciplines. Arrange-  
ments for presentations should be com-  
pleted before July 15. Proposals and  
further inquiries should be addressed to:

Larry Landrum, Department of English  
Michigan State University  
East Lansing, MI 48824

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## The Carl Sandburg Centenary

On the 100th anniversary of his birth,  
Carl Sandburg was accorded a month-long  
series of tributes in his hometown of  
Galesburg, Illinois during the month of  
January. The tributes were as various as  
the man and his work. There was a  
commemorative stamp issued in Galesburg  
on his birthday, January 6th. There  
were speeches, testimonials, concerts,  
exhibits, readings, dramatizations, and  
a series of symposia on his roots and  
his many-sided career. The participants,  
as befitted the occasion, were equally  
diverse--scholars, journalists, artists,  
folksingers, politicians, poets, critics,  
publishers, biographers, and historians.

The focus of most of the activity was  
at Knox College, the institution which  
was founded in 1837 by the same colony of  
Yankee abolitionists that founded  
Galesburg. Although Knox was not his  
alma mater, Sandburg had close ties and  
important associations with Knox from  
his earliest days, as his autobiography,  
Always the Young Stranger, makes clear.  
It was there, in 1893, at a ceremony  
commemorating the 55th anniversary of the  
fifth Lincoln-Douglas debate at Knox,  
that Sandburg's initial interest in  
Abraham Lincoln was kindled. The bronze  
plaque that was put up on the walls of  
Old Main containing Lincoln's strong  
statement on the morality of slavery  
became a daily inspiration to him as he  
walked across the campus to and from his  
milk route. In 1927 he received his  
second honorary degree from Knox (his  
first had been from his own college  
across town, Lombard), and when Lombard  
closed its doors in 1930, he and his  
fellow alumni were absorbed by Knox.

The Sandburg Centenary was officially  
opened by January 6, Sandburg's birthday,  
with a well attended ceremony on the Knox  
campus. Featured speakers were newscaster  
Howard K. Smith and Illinois poet  
laureate, Gwendolyn Brooks. Later, there  
were other speeches by Sandburg's pub-  
lisher and by the artist, William A. Smith,  
whose drawing appeared on the commem-  
orative stamp. The following day,  
January 7, the first of four Saturday  
symposia was held in Harbach theater,



named for the songwriter Otto Harbach, a Knox graduate and close friend of Sandburg's. Chaired by Dr. William Anderson, President of Carl Sandburg College, the topic of the symposium was "Sandburg's Roots." Papers were delivered by Hermann R. Muelder, professor emeritus of history at Knox College, on Sandburg's Galesburg; Margaret Sandburg, on her father's Wisconsin years; and Worth Callahan, author of a biography of Sandburg, on the post-college wandering years. In the afternoon session, these speakers were joined by three discussants: Prof. Frederick Olson of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Prof. Alan Swanson of Augustana College, and the Rev. Constance Johnson of Galesburg. A good deal of new information that has not appeared in Sandburg biographies was introduced in the papers and discussion.

An evening concert by Sandburg's youngest daughter, Helga Sandburg Crile, featuring music of the Sandburg family and poems by Mrs. Crile, rounded out the weekend. The following weekend, in addition to the second symposium, the Knox Theatre offered a production of Norman Corwin's The World of Carl Sandburg.

The topic of the second symposium, chaired by Prof. Howard A. Wilson of Knox College, was "Sandburg the Poet," and the speakers were Prof. Louis Rubin Jr., University of North Carolina; Prof. Bernard Duffey, Duke University; and Prof. John Knoepfle, Sangamon State University. Professors Rubin and Knoepfle focused attention on poems and poetic qualities that are not remarked in anthologies and literary histories. Prof. Duffey tried to answer the question of Sandburg's significance and place in the poetry of his age. In the afternoon session, the speakers were joined by Prof. John Hallwas, Western Illinois University, Prof. Samuel Moon, Knox College, and Prof. Kenneth Kinnamon, University of Illinois. A general sense of the meeting seemed to be that Sandburg's reputation rests on a narrower base than it deserves and that his poetry is worthy of a serious reconsideration.

The third Saturday symposium, convened on January 21 and chaired by Prof. Rodney O. Davis of Knox College, was on

"Sandburg as a Lincoln Biographer." The speakers and their topics were Prof. Robert W. Johannsen, University of Illinois, "The Poet as Biographer," Carl Sandburg's Prairie Years, Justin Kaplan, biographer of Mark Twain and Lincoln Stephens, "After Whitman"; Prof. Stephen B. Oates, University of Massachusetts, "Carl Sandburg: Chronicler, Composer and Poet of the Mythical Lincoln"; and Rep. Paul Simon, Democrat--Illinois, author of a book on Lincoln, "Sandburg, Lincoln, and the Legislative Years." The papers of Oates and Kaplan had to be read by proxies, as a snow storm prevented their arrival from Massachusetts. In the afternoon session, these absentees were present for the discussion by way of an amplified telephone hookup, so that they were able to speak and to hear what was said in the discussion. Joining the speakers on the platform for the afternoon session were Dr. Roger Bridges, Illinois State Historical Library, Prof. Victor Hicken, Western Illinois University, and Prof. Michael Perman, University of Illinois-Chicago Circle. The discussion evinced a lively mix of opinion on the merits and deficiencies of Sandburg's six-volume work, as well as provoking a consideration of what contributes a biography.

The fourth and final symposium, held on January 28 and chaired by Prof. Douglas L. Wilson of Knox College, was entitled "Sandburg the Popular Spokesman." The speakers for the morning session were Studs Terkel, author of Hard Times and Working, speaking on Sandburg's poetry of social consciousness, Prof. William J. Adelman, University of Illinois--Chicago Circle, on Sandburg as a spokesman for labor; and Herbert Mitgang, New York Times and editor of Sandburg's Letters, on Sandburg as journalist-activist. As with the previous week, the weather played a role, preventing the attendance of Mr. Mitgang, but his paper was read by proxy and he was able to participate in the afternoon discussion via the amplified telephone. The speakers were joined for the afternoon discussion by John Justin Smith, Chicago Daily News, and Fred Emery, editor of the Galesburg Labor News. (Prof. Paul Ferlazzo, Michigan State University, was scheduled to be a discussant but was unable to be present because of the worst snow-storm



in Michigan's history.) Attention in the symposium was focused primarily on Sandburg's lifelong career and his effectiveness as a spokesman for ordinary people and their problems.

The concluding event of the Sandburg Centenary was a concert on January 23 by Pete Seeger, who sang songs from Sandburg's American Songbag and recalled his personal associations with the man. The audience, like that for the opening ceremony, was large and diverse. Indeed, the striking feature of the audiences for all the Centenary events was their diversity. Far from being dominated by Knox College students and faculty members, the audience consistently represented a discernible cross-section of the community and, by extension, the American public at large, from school children to senior citizens. The Knox College Carl Sandburg Centenary was supported by a grant from the Illinois Humanities Council and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Elsewhere in the Galesburg community, there were programs and exhibits to honor its most famous native son by the Public Library, the Carl Sandburg Birthplace, the Lombard College Alumni, and very notably, Carl Sandburg College, a community college established in 1967, the year of Sandburg's death. On January 6, Carl Sandburg College hosted the ceremony for the commemorative stamp in the morning, held a ceremony of its own in the afternoon, and sponsored a concert in the evening by folksinger Burl Ives.

Douglas L. Wilson  
Associate Prof. of English  
Director of the Library  
Knox College

\* \* \*

## On Re-Discovering Brand Whitlock II

More than ten years ago, after finishing my book on Brand Whitlock (Twayne, 1968), I wrote a brief essay of the kind I enjoy doing for Ohioana Quarterly. It was called "On Re-Discovering Brand Whitlock," and in it I recounted the story of my own discovery of Whitlock's fiction through a battered copy of The Thirteenth District in a pile of two-for-a-quarter books in a second hand shop, of my recognition of a fine talent, and of the beginning of a search that led, perhaps inevitably (the qualification is a habit rather than necessary), to writing a book on Whitlock.

The essay raised a few hackles in Urbana, Ohio, when I called J. Hardin & Son "an honest, skillful interpretation of the American small town" (I was assured in no uncertain terms by an indignant editor that Urbana had never been like "that"), but there was much in the essay that I did not recount, particularly my fruitless search for Whitlock's last unfinished works: biographies of Jefferson and Jackson and a novel set in Urbana as it emerged from the disorder of the Ohio frontier.

Now my failure has been partially rectified, in the summer of 1973 the unfinished manuscript of "The Buckeyes" was discovered in the collection of the Champaign County (Ohio) Historical Society by Paul Miller of Wittenberg Univ., Ohio, and it is now in print in a meticulously edited version by Professor Miller published by the Ohio University Press. Miller's introduction to the edition is particularly informative in the light shed upon Whitlock's inability to finish the novel--an inability to resolve a character conflict in his protagonist, compounded by an encounter with Edith Wharton, in which she demanded of him "Do you know where you are going to get off?" and his own realization that he did not.

But the encounter with Mrs. Wharton was part of a complex problem which Professor Miller partially explores: Whitlock was sick, he was tired, and he was confused by the evolution of the American democratic system: the imposition of prohibition, the rejection of Woodrow



Wilson's League of Nations, the Presidential sequence of Harding Coolidge, and Hoover (whom he had known and despised during the War), and the New Deal's departure from the Democratic tradition. Furthermore, he commented that he was finding biography infinitely more interesting than fiction; perhaps he found in working on the studies of Jefferson and Jackson as he had in writing his biography of Lafayette the opportunity to return again to what he saw as the golden age of democratic activism.

Whatever the reasons, Whitlock's inability or unwillingness to finish 'The Buckeyes' is our loss, and the literature of Ohio, the Midwest, and the American small town is poorer as a result. The two fragments--the 100,000 word version included in Professor Miller's edition and the 12,500 word fragment still in the files of the Champaign County Historical Society--give insight into what would have been the definitive fictional study of the emergence of a town and a political system from its frontier origins.

Significant in the novel as it was in Whitlock's earlier Ohio novels and short stories is the curious blend of idealism and materialism that has marked the evolution of the Midwest from its beginning, an often stormy fusion that has been explored by Booth Tarkington, Sherwood Anderson, Louis Bromfield, and others who have concerned themselves with the evolution of the Midwestern town. Perhaps it was this blend, personified in 'The Buckeyes,' that contributed to the ambiguity of Whitlock's attitude toward American democracy in his last years as well as to his inability to finish the novel.

Like Whitlock's earlier novels, and in keeping with his dedication to the realistic ethic of his friends Henry James and William Dean Howells, 'The Buckeyes' is firmly rooted in reality, the reality of the political conflicts in pre-Civil War Ohio, of the evolutionary passing of the frontier, of the growth of reform activities, especially abolition, and of the establishment of Whitlock's maternal grandfather, Joseph Carter Brand, in Ohio. Consequently, as in almost all of Whitlock's works, the novel

is a reliable, often absorbing recreation of a past reality that had made inevitable what we and our institutions have become.

But Whitlock's social and political history, however graphically presented in the impact of the slavery controversy on political institutions, the emergence of the Ohio Anti-Slavery Society, the Log Cabin and Hard Cider campaign of 1840, and the political barbeques and campaign oratory of backwoods Ohio, is secondary to the fact that Whitlock was, even in his last years, a skilled novelist, and 'The Buckeyes' is the story of three men, the protagonist Carter Blair, based upon Whitlock's grandfather Brand, Ethan Grow, whose counterparts were widespread in nineteenth century Ohio, and the near-legendary historical figure Thomas Corwin, who rose from a wagoner's job in the War of 1812 to the Governorship of Ohio, the United States Senate, and the Secretaryship of the Treasury under Millard Fillmore. In the novel, Blair, an emigrant to Ohio from Kentucky, rises through the law and Whig politics--the politics of Henry Clay and compromise--to prominence, modest wealth, and the Ohio State Senate; he experiences a brief affair with Grow's daughter, and then marries a Virginia girl of good family, and he acquires a fine farm, builds a larger house, and fathers three children. His wagon is hitched securely to Thomas Corwin's charismatic, rising Whig star.

Conversely, Grow throws in with the abolitionists, loses his business in the Panic of 1837, and becomes a single-minded, impoverished crusader who is finally reduced to a senate clerkship secured for him by Blair. His daughter is married to a young scoundrel, who abandons her and her young son, for whom Blair secures a page's job in the Senate, and Blair suddenly recognizes that he is the father's child.

Here the novel ends, with Blair uncertain of his path or his role in the future: the path of fanatic righteousness, exemplified by Grow, that leads to failure, or that of Corwin and the novel's villain, Colonel Nash, that promises a greater success. Perhaps



the reality of Joseph Carter Brand's conversion to abolitionism could no longer apply to the complexity of Blair's character or the price demanded for Blair's conversion to honesty; perhaps the reality of Whitlock's own time as Hoover materialism crashed provided no clue to the emergence of a new American idealism; perhaps the character who had grown under his pen was simply incapable of resolving his dilemma; perhaps Mrs. Wharton's probing question made clear to Whitlock that there was no answer that could be both logical and real.

Whatever the reason, "The Buckeyes" ends with the dilemma of Carter Blair unresolved, his attitude toward the greatest paradox in American democracy unresolved, as it was for most Americans until the bombardment of Fort Sumter fifteen years later, his recognition of his own weakness as well as of his own child both impossible and unavoidable.

But in another sense the ambiguity of the unfinished novel is in many ways reflective of the ambiguity of Whitlock himself, a man at once a practical politician, an idealistic reformer, and a realistic man of letters. This ambiguity remained with Whitlock to the end, as it remains with his biographers, as it will remain as long as those of us who read Whitlock remain to remember him. The re-discovery of "The Buckeyes" contributes much to the ambiguity, but it may also contribute to the ultimate re-discovery of Brand Whitlock that may be achieved.

David D. Anderson

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### Announcements:

Future programs -- MLA, MMLA, PCA, SSML--  
and future issues of MidAmerica,  
Midwestern Miscellany, and the Newsletter--  
need membership participation. Volunteers,  
contributors, and inquirers please write  
Dave Anderson.

Don't forget "The Cultural Heritage of  
the Midwest," on May 18, 19, 20.



Beginning:

## highland haven

a fictional memoir by William Thomas

### I

Many people will remember 1934 a long time, but few better than I do. That year was between the close of one phase of my life and the opening of another, and I recall all the principal events of it and haven't forgotten many of the minor ones. I even remember that I put in most of New Year's day reading The Old Wives' Tale--not because I found it fascinating but because it kept me from thinking about what a fix I was in, back at the farm, with no job and no money, and what I was going to do.

My mother advanced the idea that I ought to go and see the Honorable Mr. Fahey, Representative to Congress, about the possibility of a job in Washington. I didn't think it any use, but she kept bringing the subject up, and I felt guilty about not doing it. So on the second of January I drove into Moorton and went to his headquarters at the Pilgrim Hotel. He was busy; his secretary said the best time for me to come back was at one. I did some errands, at noon got a sandwich and coffee, and at twelve thirty came back to the hotel.

As I sat in the lobby reading The Morning Beacon, Lloyd Barlow came in. I hadn't seen him in several years, and didn't want to see him now. If I'd been sure he didn't recognize me, I wouldn't have spoken to him. But I wasn't sure, so I said "Hello, Lloyd."

"Hello," he answered, looking at me queerly.

"Maybe you don't remember me--Lewis Elliot."

"Oh! Oh, hello, Lew." We shook hands. "Been a long time since I saw you."

Lloyd took off his overcoat and hat, sat down, and asked what I was doing now. That question still irritated me, but when it's put to you repeatedly you have to answer somehow. I didn't explain any more that the depression had caught up with the

universities, and the one where I'd been teaching no longer had a job for me; I only said: "I'm unemployed." I didn't ask Lloyd what he was doing, but he told me--with an emphatic vagueness that might have made me curious if I'd been interested.

"It's the best thing I've ever got hold of in the selling game. If you can sell at all, this is something you can go to town with." He didn't say what it was, and I didn't ask him. Then he asked if I would be interested in a sales job.

I said no, that was something I was worse at than no good at all. He didn't try to persuade me, though it was easy to see he thought I ought to be more responsive. A tall, lean, good-looking, well-dressed man stepped out of the elevator, and Lloyd said he had a luncheon appointment and was glad he'd see me. He walked over to this tall man, who greeted him, rather curtly, and they went together into the dining room. I went up to the mezzanine floor to see the Honorable Mr. Fahey.

Fahey was a fat, genial Irishman with bright blue eyes, and cordial enough. He didn't mince words, or try to evade giving me an answer, though he wouldn't let me talk after my first two sentences. He was sorry, but the people in Washington took the view that he'd had his share of patronage, and there was nothing he could do for me directly, though I might use his name in applying, and he would be glad to give me a letter of support. I said that later I might ask him for such a letter--and while I was saying it he was shifting the subject: had I tried the Moorton newspapers, and so forth?

The next afternoon I went to Grayley to get my hair cut, and having seen Lloyd Barlow made me think of his brother Ben, and, as I'd been going regularly to one of the other barbers, this time I went to Ben. I told him I had seen Lloyd. Ben said Lloyd was doing pretty well, the times considered, selling burial lots.

"Burial lots?" I asked, a little startled. I knew people had to buy the lot on which the grave was dug when a member of their family died, but I hadn't



thought of the selling of them as a business.

"Burial lots," Ben repeated. "In Highland Haven Memorial Park." He explained that as yet they were being sold only for investment, in blocks of twenty or more, at fifty dollars each, and Lloyd had made some big sales. "He's sold several blocks of fifty, and one block of one hundred." In the one-hundred-block sale, he added, Lloyd received commission on five thousand dollars.

I had heard of Highland Haven Memorial Park and the company that was developing it. Once I'd gone past the site two miles north of Moorton. But I'd never really thought about what it was, for my interest in cemeteries was near absolute zero, and my notion, like that of most people when they are young, was that it didn't matter much what was done with a corpse. But now I knew that if sums like five thousand dollars were involved I was interested even in selling--even in selling burial lots. I couldn't help wishing I'd been more responsive to Lloyd's overtures.

"Lloyd offered me a job," I told Ben. That wasn't quite the truth. "But he didn't say what he was selling."

"So you didn't take it?"

"No."

"Don't you think you might try it? Carl's working with Lloyd." Carl Pendray was Ben's and Lloyd's brother-in-law.

"I might. Yes, I might. I wish you'd tell Lloyd I've thought it over and decided I'd like to try it."

Ben said he would probably see Lloyd Saturday and would tell him. I said he might ask Lloyd to telephone me if the offer was still good.

That seemed about as far as I could go after having been so cool to Lloyd's incipient proposal. But I got no message from Lloyd, either the weekend or during the two weeks after. I read eight books and otherwise continued to do nothing, with vigor. But your hair grows whether you have a job or not, and another forenoon I was in Ben's barber chair again. I asked

Ben if he'd seen Lloyd, and he said yes, he'd told Lloyd what I said, but Lloyd replied they had about all the salesmen they could use right now.

I kicked myself again, figuratively, harder than ever. But five days later, on a Saturday, Lloyd Barlow telephoned and said if I wanted to I might meet him at the Highland Haven sales office at nine thirty Monday morning.

## II

The Highland Haven sales office was a two-room suite in a dingy two-story brick building. I went up a narrow, dusty, brown-painted stairway between two store fronts, and opened the door with "Highland Haven Memorial Park" lettered on its opaque glass. It gave upon a large back room, half filled with folding chairs and with a small office table in front of them, at which Lloyd Barlow and Carl Pendray were sitting. In the end wall behind them was a door, leading into a smaller room which had a desk, a bookcase, and some chairs in it, and to the right of that door was a blackboard with several series of consecutive numbers chalked on it and bracketed with various names after them. On the other walls of the big room were thumb-tacked blueprints of plats with regular and irregular outlines, all divided into little rectangles, many of which had been scratched over with a red pencil.

Lloyd and Carl were there alone when I came in, and I shook hands with Carl.

"I'm glad you decided to give this thing a try, Lew," Lloyd said. "If you're really in earnest, I'll do everything I can to help you get started." He had several blueprints, marked like those on the walls, in front of him, and right away began giving me information.

There is a great deal to tell about Highland Haven, and I may not be able to get it into the best order. It was not a "cemetery," it was a "memorial park." The word cemetery was used only to speak scornfully of the old-fashioned burial-ground, with its agglomeration of tombstones and atmosphere of funereal gloom. Highland Haven was really a "park," where no monuments or other lugubrious



symbols of death were permitted but only simple bronze tablet markers, a peaceful and happy resting-place for the dear departed, with provision for perpetual care.

A tasteful and commodious "cathedral home," where the superintendent would live, was to be erected, which would be available for "memorial services." There were to be sunken gardens, and a chimes tower from which on occasion would issue strains of appropriate music.

Highland Haven offered provision for a complete, dignified service in life's darkest hour, the same to rich and poor alike, without discrimination as to race or creed, at low cost. And when hearts are crushed by bereavement, eyes are blinded by tears, and the mind is paralyzed by irreparable loss--is no time to face the ordeal of choosing a loved-one's final resting-place. Be prepared for that inevitable need. Do not wait for the woeful hour to come. Act while the mind is clear and the heart is free to make intelligent choice. Arrange for the purchase of one or more lots in Highland Haven Memorial Park now--today.

It took me several weeks to assimilate everything I had to learn. Up to now sales had been wholly for investment, the buyers of blocks of lots being assured of resale at great profit. Here is the gist of the sales talk, as Lloyd gave it to me: people are always dying and have to be buried; cemeteries eventually fill up, and new ones must be established; ground dedicated to burial is non-taxable, and therefore is the best investment in real, tangible property, than which no better investment is; every burial attracts another, and as each brings a burial-ground nearer its limit of expansion, the space left must increase in value; and the present trend is away from the old-fashioned cemetery toward the modern memorial park.

Lloyd showed me a blueprint of the Park, and several others, on larger scale, of the blocks in which lots were offered for sale. He showed me a specimen deed to a lot, or lots, in Highland Haven, and the printed contract forms, which had several clauses in fine print. They were just then changing the type of contract, he said, so he wouldn't confuse me with the

old, twelve-percent plan, which each month returned twelve percent of the amount invested, for a year. (At the year's end the investor would have got back his principal, and interest to the amount of forty-four percent.) The new two-percent plan paid two percent a month on the principal invested, returning the principal over a period of four years and two months and continuing to operate for a similar period. At the end of eight years and two months the investor would have doubled his money.

Lloyd wouldn't let me interrupt, so it was quite a while before I could ask how it was possible to get people to invest in this kind of property when nobody had money to invest, when almost everybody's money was tied up in closed banks or in investments that had turned sour.

"That's what I'm coming to," he said. The prospects were people who had money in building and loan associations. There were four such companies in Moorton, and you couldn't get a penny of your principal out of any of them. The Moorton B & L continued to make a token payment on its interest obligation, but the others had suspended interest payments. You could take a house or a farm which the Association had got by foreclosure, using B & L stock at par to one half the purchase price. You had to have the other half in cash.

"That's the only way real estate is changing hands," Lloyd explained. "But it's a chance for people to get houses cheaply, if they have some cash. They can buy B & L accounts from a broker at the market price."

There was a regular market for these B & L accounts. The Moorton was quoted at 68-70, Home at 50, People's at 40, and Citizens', in receivership, at 28 cents on the dollar. Anybody willing to take the loss could get real money for his passbook from a broker. Many people were not willing, and a few were ignorant of the possibility. This is where Highland Haven came in. The task was to sell people the idea of making money on burial lots and also the idea of realizing full value from their B & L holdings.

"We don't deliberately run down the



Building and Loans," Lloyd said. Stating the facts about them is enough. And we're doing our bit for Recovery by helping unfreeze these frozen assets. It's time, too, for people to quit griping about the Depression. We've had depressions before and always come out of them, and even if this is the worst one ever we'll come out of it too." Lloyd had a chart called "A Century of Business Progress," showing commodity prices and volume of business since 1830. It ended with a forecast for the next three years, prophesying normal business volume at the end of 1935.

What Lloyd had to tell took more than two hours, and then he said I should come with him to see a prospect in Fairmount. He and Carl and I had lunch together, and started for Fairmount in Lloyd's new Plymouth sedan. Lloyd drove fast, and when we got there it wasn't one o'clock yet, and Lloyd said we would wait a while before going to this man's house. He parked the car on Main Street, and while we sat waiting he told me about what he called the "double set-up" of Highland Haven.

There was, first, the Highland Haven Memorial Park Association, with the Moorton mayor and other prominent men on its Board of Trustees, which owned Highland Haven Memorial Park. Secondly, there was the Highland Haven Memorial Park Development Company, which was building the Park and selling lots in it. Ten percent of the money which came in, Lloyd said, went into an endowment fund to insure perpetual care. Twenty percent was expended in meeting present obligations and twenty percent in physical development and improvement of the grounds; the other fifty percent went to Frederick Bryant Pierce, who paid the salesmen's commissions.

Lloyd hadn't told me how much commission the salesmen got, and I thought maybe he'd tell me now, but he didn't. I thought if I were going to sell burial lots it was something I ought to know, so I interrupted and asked him; but he pretended not to hear me and went on talking about Frederick Bryant Pierce. A Moorton lawyer named Hendrix was associated with Pierce, to provide the legal machinery and local coloration; but Mr. Pierce, Lloyd made clear, was the promoter, the developer, the director, the guiding force of Highland

Haven, to whom all this activity was due.

"You'll meet him tomorrow at sales meeting. Sales meeting is every day at eight thirty. Don't be late."

"I'll be there," I said.

Lloyd drove to the house of the man we'd come to see, a little old brick house on a street of houses which all had that little old dark look. Lloyd said he didn't want all three of us going in, and as this was Carl's prospect Carl would have to go, so I would have to wait in the car.

I saw the man as he opened the door, an old fellow, bald and with a great belly. He let them in, and I sat in the car with the heater going, looking at the sales material Lloyd had there. It was half an hour before they came out, and I could tell by their faces that they hadn't got his signature on a contract, but I said "Did you get him?"

Carl shook his head. "Not this time," said Lloyd. "But I think we will."

Lloyd looked at his watch, and asked Carl if he had anybody else in mind just then. Carl said no, and Lloyd said there was another man in Fairmount we could go to see, and if we found him home I might go in too. We drove to this man's house, which was newer and more pretentious. Lloyd and I went to the door. A woman opened it, and Lloyd asked for Mr. Ackerman, but she said he wasn't home.

"When will he be here?" Lloyd asked.

"It's hard to tell," she answered. "He's gone a good deal." Her tone was pretty cool. Lloyd thanked her, and we went back to the car.

"I'll catch him some night," he said. "I've got him half sold already, but not her. Lew, remember this: you've got to sell the woman too, or she'll queer the deal every time. With a man and wife, you've got to get them together. No use talking to one alone."

There was nothing else we could do that day, Lloyd decided, and Carl said "Why not show Lew the Park?" Lloyd said "All right, we'll go to the Park."



We went back to Moorton and straight through it, out North Central Avenue two miles to the site. The Park wasn't much to see. It wasn't high land, and there was nothing about it that suggested a haven. It fronted west, along the main road. In its southwest corner stood an old stone house, which, Lloyd said, was to be remodeled for the caretaker's use. The main entrance was just to the north of this house, but it was only marked by stakes and scraped for forty feet off the road. The ground was frozen, and we drove in, but from that point there was nowhere to go. Carl said maybe we could see more from the north entrance, and Lloyd turned the car around and drove it out again.

The property was bounded on the north by a gravel road, and a quarter of a mile from the west end was a gate. The gravel road was rough, and the way Lloyd drove over it didn't do his new car any good, but that was his business. We went through the north gateway, and Lloyd said the parallel plow furrows we saw marked the road from there. He also pointed out the site of the projected cathedral home. From here to the place looked as if it had some possibilities, for there were trees along the north side, and east of where we stopped it was higher ground.

"There won't be any burials in the low ground in front," Lloyd explained. That's to be park." He went on to say that the stream that ran through the northwest corner would be dredged and dammed at two points to make a couple of ponds.

It was a pretty dreary-looking spot from any point of view now, with snow lying in the furrows and under the trees. We all got out and relieved ourselves, and knew it was getting colder, and got back into the car. It was three o'clock, and Lloyd said we might as well call it a day and go home.

The next morning I was introduced to Frederick Bryant Pierce, who was the tall, handsome man I had seen joined by Lloyd Barlow that day in the Pilgrim Hotel. He looked at me with an expressionless face while shaking hands, said he was glad to welcome me into the organization, and turned away. I was introduced to several of the other salesmen and the other crew managers (there were three crews besides

Lloyd's, of four to seven men each), and we all sat down on the folding chairs. Sales meeting began.

Pierce had three or four henchmen from Cleveland, and one opened the meeting. His function was to get the men ready to listen to Frederick Bryant Pierce.

Pierce rose with deliberation and stood tall before the silent group. His thin lips left his middle coat button, and his hands met and then parted in an expansive gesture.

"There's long been a need in Moorton for a new, modern, up-to-date memorial park," he said. "Highland Haven is filling a long-felt want. It will offer provision for a complete, dignified service in life's darkest hour. The cost will be the same to rich and poor alike, without discrimination as to race or creed. And when hearts are crushed by bereavement, eyes are blinded by tears, and the mind is paralyzed by irreparable loss--is no time to face the ordeal of choosing a loved-one's final resting-place. All persons now living should be prepared for that inevitable need."

Pierce told about the cathedral home, the sunken gardens, the chimes tower; and how beautiful and fine and restful the Park would be, with maintenance assured by the fund being set aside for perpetual care. He told about burial-park values, and how they were certain to increase with time, and how many wealthy men regularly invested their surplus funds in this safe, tax-free property, protected by law against judgment or seizure. But, he continued, there was no reason why people with smaller sums to invest should not also take advantage of such opportunity. And when opportunity was set before them in the form of deeds to lots in Highland Haven, which they could get in exchange for their Building and Loan passbooks, they could not fail to perceive the unwisdom of leaving their money, which they could not draw out, in the building and Loan. When Pierce was done, and sales meeting was over, the salesmen went out of there believing in what they had to sell.

That is, some of them did. Some were old-timers wise to many kinds of



promotion schemes, and to them this was simply another; they just went out and sold, and Pierce knew whom he was fooling and whom he was not. But others, new to this sort of thing like me, were more naive. Carl Pendray wished he had a thousand dollars to invest so that in ten years he would have a fortune. So did I until I got back enough of my critical faculty to remember that fortune-building investments never look to be such in the beginning, and to discern that no investment could obviously be so good as this was made out to be.

The sales meeting always had an evangelical touch. I tried to be open-minded, and to get some of the fervor, and to believe in Highland Haven if it would help me sell lots. I was ready to do anything legal in order to earn some money. I went regularly every morning, and once a week Pierce or one of his henchmen instructed new men in the technique of salesmanship: attention, interest, judgment, decision, that sort of thing. I was provided with a sales kit--blueprints and a pad of contract forms in a zipper brief case--and went out every morning thinking maybe this day I could make a deal. Lloyd Barlow was right in saying this was something you could go to town with, for the salesman's commission, I learned (after Lloyd concluded I was going to stay at it), was fifteen percent; the crew manager got an additional five percent on every sale.

The biggest trouble I had was finding prospects, and that was something nobody would help you with. You had to do it yourself, by whatever means you could devise. The only way I could think of at the start was to list the people who I knew had Building and Loan deposits or whom I thought likely to have them, and I guessed right many times. A while afterward I learned that the list of depositors in the closed Citizens' was a matter of court record, which anybody could have access to--but all those people had been seen, for every experienced salesman on the staff had a copy of that list when I began.

One man I went to see had a passbook amounting to nearly \$1000.

"Yes," he said, "if you can get anything out of that, I'll deal."

I thought I'd made a nice sale. I was let down pretty badly when I learned this kind of deposit had no value at all. Lloyd had told me about that the first day, but I'd forgotten.

One day I went with Lloyd to see one of his prospects, and Lloyd gave him and his wife the sales talk for nearly three hours. It was eleven when we got there, and before Lloyd got that passbook I was so hungry I didn't care whether there was any deal or not. When he had got it he found it wasn't nearly so big an amount as he had thought.

"All you have to do, Lew, is find a real prospect," he told me. "I'll close the deal for you."

I kept trying, going to sales meeting every morning and going to see people every day. My father let me use gasoline out of the tank it was kept in for the tractor, and when my money was gone my mother gave me lunch money. I kept trying for two months, but wasn't able to make a sale. Many people were wary because of Hendrix, who they thought was a shyster; and Lloyd couldn't close a deal with any of the prospects I took him to--he always said afterward the man wasn't a prospect to begin with--and he thought I didn't amount to much.

I tried to make myself believe I liked what I was doing, but I knew very well I didn't. The truth was I loathed it. I didn't like masquerading with sham jollity before all sorts of people. I'd be tense all day and couldn't relax enough to read or rest at night. Then one evening one of my aunts came, and she remarked that she thought the old lady living next door to her had some B & L.

The next morning I went to see this woman, a widow living alone, and found she had a deposit in the People's, to the amount of \$410. I got it without any trouble at all. People's was then up to 52, so she got four lots and \$13.20. When I took her the deeds and money, she said she believed God had sent me to her in her distress. I didn't speculate on God's part in securing me my commission of \$30; I was simply glad to have the money.

(To Be Continued)