

The Mercer Cluster



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Without sacrificing editorial independence, or their right to make independent judgments, editors and staff members of this newspaper agree to unite with all college newspapers of the nation to support wholeheartedly and by every means at their command, the government of the United States in the war effort, to the end that the college press of the nation may be a united voice for Victory.

Students and the War

During the past year a great deal has been said about upholding student morale, about great decreases in college enrollment, and about a noticeable listlessness among students. All this, of course, is said to be due to the War, and is to a large extent.

But Mercer, so far, has escaped most of these ailments, according to university records. Registration for the winter quarter shows a ten percent increase over the registration for the same quarter of last year. And the Dean's list for the fall quarter is almost twice as large as it has been for several terms. Records also show that the general university scholastic average is only a few one-hundredths of a point lower than it was this time last year.

These facts prove that student morale here has not suffered a noticeable drop, and that (at least until the end of this quarter) the school will not suffer for lack of students. This is very commendable, and we join with the government in hoping that students will see fit to continue their education as long as they possibly can, because education will be just as essential after the war as it was before.

But Mercer is suffering from student listlessness. Interest in outside activities, intra-murals, and social life has taken a dive, and as a result school spirit is on the decline. Of course, the War is responsible for this lackadaisical attitude, and the War makes a good excuse for not doing things. However, there is a place for college activities even during wartime, because the training and the morale building to be obtained from them is important.

College activities and college life should not be allowed to die, and the War should not be used as an excuse for laziness. Students can do their part for the War effort and at the same time keep the old-school spirit alive.

Columbus Roberts

Mr. Columbus Roberts, one of Mercer's greatest benefactors, has proved himself to be a true lover of higher education. He has proved this love by deeds rather than words, and his latest gift to Mercer's endowment fund, \$100,000, makes him the largest single contributor to endowment in the history of the university.

Not a college trained man himself, Mr. Roberts has done much to provide this training for others. His name has been perpetuated on our campus in Columbus Roberts Hall, which building was made possible by his generosity, and in Roberts Chapel. His generous gifts will go far in providing education for hundreds of students.

On behalf of the Mercer student body, both present and future, we would like to express our sincere appreciation.

AND IN THIS CORNER . . .

By Bennie Griffith

THINGS WE LOVE BUT NEVER MENTION

Since we have been informed that the Navy will probably be needing us around March, we have suddenly waxed sentimental. There are some things around this old institution that we dearly love. Pardon us for just getting around to mentioning them.

One is that mellow little gentlemen with a Chaucerian twinkle (unconsciously acquired from teaching English 155) in his eyes, Professor Robinson. He possesses a profound interest in everyone and everything in life, and has common sense enough not to stick his nose into it. An all-encompassing sense of humor, a rich zest for living, and a true understanding and love for literature. Meek, inoffensive, he shall inherit the mirth.

The second greatest woman we know. A mind like a huge, king-size, hyper-tropis amoeba, which seems to move almost aimlessly about, finding knowledge everywhere and engulfing it with herself. Her ken is the universe. Aesthetic, in the true sense. No prostitution of the soul in "seeking to be seen seeking after culture." Tremendous comprehension of the Arts. Rare person who has combined travel and reading with precise ingredients of both. Gillette-like wit. An interesting tinge of cynicism. Sophisticated sense of humor. Likes to laugh, but only through the intellect. Quick, brilliant, Dorothy Parkerish, fascinating. In case you haven't guessed, Dr. Nancy Stewart.

Cool, capable, Jo Barfield—Never giddy, gay or stony said. Helpful, kind, interested, but not prying.

Hard-working, unselfish Mrs. Nickerson. Stoical devotion to duty coupled with an unshakably sweet disposition. Her face reflects her soul, and both are beautiful.

The blind boy—we don't know his name. His bright, sensitive intelligence. His sure, soulful touch on the piano. The way his long artistic fingers quickly retrace themselves when he chuckles and says, "No, the C is flat." We met him at the piano in MEP, where he was playing "Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen." It was his own arrangement, he told us.

DARK GLANCES

We have always been quite conscious of Mr. Preston and his column, even going so far as to read it a couple of times. One of those times was last week when "Presto Glances" took a perhaps too hasty glance at what Dr. Clarence Jordan is trying to do.

From a column full of evasions and abstract generalities, we gleaned that Mr. Preston is not in favor of Dr. Jordan's "Proposals and theories on social and economic adjustments." With typical Walton County conservatism, Mr. Preston glibly cries "Jim Crow" as a man who is giving his life to a cause.

We are in favor of Dr. Jordan's plan. We don't like negroes either, the way they are now. They are broken and beaten animals, caught and grinding beneath a heavy heel, and they are dangerous. We don't want them sitting beside us on the bus, because some of them smell. They do dirty jobs and they live in shacks without bathing facilities and they are too dirty for us to feel comfortable sitting by them. Another reason we would feel uncomfortable sitting by them is that it is us, the whites, with our stinking stinginess with school money and wages, that is keeping them that way. The whole concentration camp setup is our making.

And, by God, they deserve a chance. If one of them can lift himself out of the mire and stand on a professional equal with a man whose skin is a few shades lighter, my hat is off to him. And to the few white men like Dr. Jordan, who have guts enough to help all those negroes who need help in getting out of the mire, our hats are off to you. We think that it is men like Dr. Jordan who are taking the dimly burning little torch of learning into the dark recesses where it is most needed, and we believe he is doing it the right way.

Lem Libel Tells

Lem is at it again, folks! It's taken a month to gather all this dirt together, so here goes. Why did Hendricks send Legs down last Sunday night to wait for Bracken in front of M.E.P. And why did Hendricks get her dates crossed, and have to exit via the rear door of the joint.

Who was that Georgia boy waiting for her in the lobby of M. E. P. that same night?

"Five by five," little Elmore, has announced that she can have dates again. She says her money goes too fast when she has to buy her own milk shakes on Sunday night—that is, unless the sororities sponsor Sunday night suppers at M. E. P. or Crossley comes to the rescue.

Why did "Chubby" and "Bird Dog" date each other so much during the holidays? Could they be pining for Freddie and June at Wesleyan? And speaking of holidays, "Las nochas" Hayes, said she missed E. B. more than anyone on her trip to Ohio. Lem wonders.

Most confused person of the week—Emily Calhoun. She can't decide between Ross or "Hole in the Pants" Bowen. Terrible, isn't it?

Sweetest little possibility of the week—"Wolf" Cheek, and

shy Nell. Lem wonders if Physics lab could have started this.

"Mature" Mayo has for his girl of January, petite Elsie; "Beasty" certainly looks at Pat in a peculiar sort of way.

Doc Israel informs Lem that he had a dream the other night in which he was married to Slate. We wonder if the wires aren't a little crossed, and what Fran had to say? Slate, do you dream of Chase like that?

Happiest soul of the week—Daisy (not of the Bumsteads) who's gleefully awaiting the arrival of her air corps captain this week-end.

Congrats to Lukens and Lea. They finally made it, and Lem now breathes a sigh of relief. Lem says in closing that Bakewell is also very relieved. Her "baby" won a medal a little while ago. Another addition to the Bakewell scrap metal campaign, no doubt.

Presto Glances

By Bill Preston

GREEKS Much has been written lately concerning the future of college and higher education when a state of total war comes to this country. For some time it appeared that the liberal arts college was doomed completely as military circles placed more emphasis on the technical school.



Coincident with the grave situation facing the colleges comes the question: What of professional and social fraternities during the war?

For several months now fraternities have been striving to fortify themselves against a loss in manpower. According to a report from a joint meeting of national fraternity leaders, every national fraternity had made definite plans for the coming struggle for existence shortly after Pearl Harbor, since they foresaw a more widespread draft of college men.

Taking the national scene down to our campus we find that every fraternity at Mercer has lost men, and by the end of the current quarter a serious situation will have developed.

American college fraternities are not experiencing war for the first time. They have passed through every war since 1776 without a complete blackout of existence.

HISTORY The first Greek letter fraternity founded was Phi Beta Kappa, 1776, at the College of William and Mary in Virginia.

Several other fraternities were founded in the years following, but the greatest growth of fraternities came during the latter part of the nineteenth century. The Mexican War was no serious threat to fraternities.

The War Between the States, however, hampered the growth of the Greek letter organizations so severely that some dropped out of the picture entirely. Some fraternities had as many as 62% of their members in the armies of the North and South. Despite such a terrific loss many groups retained a few men in school, and other chapters were revived in the late '60's.

During World War I, American college fraternities added to the honorable records established, and contributed greatly to all branches of service. Many chapters died out completely, but still the organizations flourished after the Armistice.

Even though college Greek letter groups are not experiencing war for the first time, never before has the situation been so grave, for total war appears on the scene today.

Many fraternities are nearing their century marks of existence, and the National Interfraternity Conference, which includes representatives from all groups, has many a problem to face.

FUTURE Fraternities are an integral part of the college in this country. Fraternities point with pride to their continuous existence and are willing to sacrifice any means so that they may see World War II end with a lasting peace.

It remains to be seen whether or not the headquarters of the respective fraternities will declare their chapters inactive if the worst does come. Or will charters be permanently suspended until this school returns to normalcy?

This hope of endurance for fraternities is not carried only by members themselves, but also by various school officials who long ago realized the importance of these groups on the college campus.

No one can predict the future of Mercer fraternities. Only time will tell.

"We who believe in education have a charge to keep and a future to guard. This is, of all times, one in which we must see to it that the light does not go out. We are the eternal optimists and idealists. In spite of discouragement let us continue to have faith in education as our one great hope. Let us discover that kind of form of education which will serve the kind of world which we hope is in the making. That will be our contribution to the world of the-ought-to-be. We cannot strive for less."—President C. A. Dykstra of the University of Wisconsin.