

The Mercer Cluster

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"Keep the Home Fires . . ."

With this issue we close our career as Editor of the Cluster, and, as all retiring editors do, we take this opportunity to bid farewell, thank all those unsung heroes who have worked with us, and wish the new editor luck. His will be no bed of roses, but he will have opportunity for learning much that otherwise might go unlearned.

A great deal of water has gone under the bridge since we came to Mercer three years ago, as a naive sophomore. That was the fall of 1940, and America still had over a year of peace to look forward to. The chief worry of graduating seniors was what they would do for a living, and the chief worry of undergraduates was, traditionally, how they could have as much "fun" as possible and still stay in school. Life was moving in a smooth quiet way, and very few events disturbed its course.

When the next year began there was evidence that a change was in the making. No visible evidence yet, but we could sense that things were not the same. Even after War was declared people still cut classes and still tried to have fun, but the spirit was different. As the year came to a close and the graduates went into the Army, this spirit became more obvious, and by the beginning of our senior year was fairly general. School was viewed either as a refuge from the War, or as a place where one had to stay until he could become a member of the Armed Services. This latter feeling was the more widespread, and during the year has almost run the other out.

Mercer University itself has thus far undergone few changes, but within the next six months the picture will be very different. The student body will be composed of a different group with different needs and desires, and the University will have to supply these things. Fundamentally, however, the change will be slight if any at all, and after the War, when the country has again assumed a quiet frame of mind, Mercer will be pretty much the same.

Those men and women who are graduating with us have a world of strife and change to live in. It is up to them to win the War, and that will not be as simple as many of us think. After that, they must reconstruct the world so that the next war will be delayed as long as possible. To do this, they must recognize the fact that a revolution is in progress, and rather than try to stop it must make sure that its results are beneficial to all the world.

Because a revolution is in progress, and it will have effects that are more far-reaching and deep-seated than we think. These effects will show up mainly in the social scheme of things and in America's attitude toward the rest of the world, but it will be noticeable in the everyday life of every person.

To those who remain here we want to say that it is your responsibility to see that the Mercer tradition does not die during this interim. There are changes that should be made, such as reorganizing the political system, but as a whole the tradition is a good one. We have learned a lot about a lot of things while here, and everyone has the same chance. Use it, and preserve it.

With this last thought we close, for the last time. We, along with many of the people you know, are going to fight the War. We will be gone a long time, and we will no doubt have many unpleasant experiences which will not do us any good. We do not regret these things because we know that our cause is the best one. All we ask is that you who remain at home keep doing your parts, and do not forget us. We like it here, so hold on to it for us.

BILLY KRENSON, A.B., Pvt.

AND IN THIS CORNER . . .

By Ben Griffith

HOCUS FOCUS

It is always interesting to see the way the Mercer Family reacts to something which swims into its ken from the great unknown world not bordered by Adams, Coleman, College, and Edgewood Streets. Seen during this week were:

Benign Papa Dowell, enthralled by Hyper-dynamic Mrs. Eubank's lecture on Marital Relations. It was an interesting lecture, punctuated twice by the speaker's catching her heel in the hem of her skirt. "This rarely happens," she said, "Especially to you boys."

Dignified Dr. Jones, stoically watching a focus speaker write FOUR religious words to each letter of the alphabet. Said phenomenon was performed for the benefit of the good Doctor's class in Romantic Lit.

Practical joker Brennan Purkall, who impersonated an OPA officer at the Pig, was released from the dungeon just in time for Religious Focus week.

Sam Crossley, his chubby little fingers in every pie, handling the whole week very nicely.

The poorly fed faculty getting good square meals at the Girl's Dorm.

SERIOUS POESY DEPARTMENT

Here are a few thoughts that have been cluttering up my mind for some time. They were practically inexpressible in prose, so please bear with me on the following poetry(?).

At evening we went into the chapel
 The service flag was there with ninety stars—
 Ninety blue stars on a field of white.
 (Four of the stars should be gold, now.)
 That morning an impressive service had been held,
 Honoring the ninety stars on a field of white,
 Honoring the ninety bright faces and shocks of careless hair,
 Honoring the ninety groups of sense organs who had laughed
 and loved on the campus,
 Honoring the ninety little boys who had won and lost games,
 And those who shrieked encouragement and took little drinks of
 cheap liquor on the sidelines.
 Ninety blue stars who several months ago sat on their rumps
 in a fraternity suite and talked of women.
 As I looked at the flag in the twilight
 I could see bloody marks on a field of white,
 Bloody red marks playing around blue stars.
 (Four of these and more should be gold, now.)
 The ninety blue stars, I thought, ninety blue stars
 Snatched from their adolescent orbits—
 And in a few months the fiber was twisted into a man.
 Twisted into a man who can kill.
 In a few months, war had clipped away the fiber's loose ends.
 The fiber is now a man. A perfect machine of death.
 War has done this in a few months.
 But we will avenge you blue stars! By the Almighty
 We swear to twist your sickly sons
 Into machines of good—machines of peace!

The Mercer Spotlight

Focused by Sam Crossley

The Pan-Hellenic dances last week-end were loads of fun, and much to the amazement of everyone, the Emory Aces were wonderful! The gals here looked glamorous with all their frocks and frills peaked to perfection. The happiest little couple of all times was Clair and Fred, who were pinned right after the Saturday night dance. I kind of expect Clair knew what was going to happen because she whispered a little remark in my ear as to what to expect. Anyway, congrats, chillun.

I also want to congratulate Mildred Avery for changing her K.A. sweetheart pin for the real thing. It's surprising that Johnnie, with his boyish way, should be the one to make Mildred settle down.

At the ADPi tea last Sunday everyone had a rip-roaring time. The food was good; the fun excellent; and the gals were gorgeous. I really think this tea was given for kind of a fashion show because all the ADPi's had on new-looking dresses. Prexy York met all the guests and cooed and awed over them. However, she periodically dashed to the window to see if Dodd was waiting. After all, York really enjoys this boy's company. As usual Pat Guy was wolfing all the boys, and also was eating as furiously as ever.

Again Echols Mayo amazes the campus with another wave of females running after him. Some Wesleyan gal thinks he's too, too divine, and also I hear Elsie kind of likes him, too.

However, "Bagpipe" (ask the ATO's about that name) Brannon, likes her a heck of a lot, and this greatly complicates things.

Clance sent Hayes a beautiful mantilla for a Valentine gift, and since then they have been clicking on 12 cylinders. However, E. B. steps in again last Sunday night and . . . (censored).

Orchids to Mrs. Eubank, who is my idea of a wonderful Christian leader. If I only had half of her keen sense and humor I'd sweep this campus by storm. Although one certain boy said he didn't need her advice, I happen to know better. So, why don't you have a talk with her, McArthur? She's wonderful for "confused people." Anyway, we have been delighted to have you, Mrs. Eubank, and our "welcome mat is always out for you."

To many boys, this will be the last time they'll read a Cluster in college. I hope none of you hate me because of this column. It's all been in fun and for a better campus spirit. Good luck always, fellows, and God bless you!

Presto Glances

By Bill Preston

(Editor's note: The opinions expressed in this column do not necessarily express the opinions of the editor, nor do they represent the editorial policy of the Cluster.)

FINALE This is the last column. Four years at Mercer are gone.

But 1939 wasn't so long ago.

Freshman days were different.

The U. S. was shipping scrap iron to Japan, and anyone with an automobile could buy five gallons of gas for a buck.

A draft was a phenomenon occurring when one opened a window.

The only people in uniform were cops and bell boys.

The word inductee applied only to those students written up in the Cluster who joined some esoteric campus organization.

An army was something accompanying the word "Salvation."

A coke was an open bribe presented to a freshman by a frat man.

The graduates of '39 were looking forward to that job with a good salary, and the Japs were a bunch of people who were yellow, had slant eyes, and lived across the Pacific.

A Nazi was something we heard about in Political Science.

Yes, in '39 a group of students threatened to toss a professor out of the window when he said we would be at war in two years.

The word ration meant nothing—Webster merely included it in a dictionary.

A reserve applied to a pint or quart of jubilation some fun loving Mercerian carted to a dance with him.

The scene has changed—1943.

Senior days are different.

The U. S. is still shipping scrap iron to Japan, however, but it's in the form of bombs and bullets, and no one—even if he had an automobile—can buy five gallons of gas.

A draft is something college students were deferred from, temporarily, but deferral is no longer in existence.

Nearly everyone is in uniform, and if you walk down Cherry street in civilian clothes, soldiers call you a strange name, "4-F."

The word inductee applies to those going to Fort McPherson to be inducted—duly.

An army is an essential, of which there will be 12,500,000 members.

A coke is something you ask for in the cop and there ain't any of.

Football is a forgotten Mercer activity—and there are no tires to take you there if it was still in existence.

The graduates of '43 are looking forward to the service with hopes of a commission, and the Japs are a bunch of people who are yellow, have slant eyes, live across the Pacific, and whom we are going to fight.

The Nazis are something despicable (habitat, Europe), and they are giving some of the '39 graduates hell in north Africa today.

Yes, in '43 a group of students threatened to toss a professor out of the window when he said we would be at peace in two years.

The word ration means less gas, tires, coffee, sugar, and soon it will mean any civilian goods which the U. S. ain't got plenty of.

A reserve today applies to a branch of the service nearly all males tried to get in, to continue their education, but which is to be called to active duty soon.

So this is my swan song. Along with Editor Krenson, who is probably waxing sentimental in writing his last editorial for his beloved Cluster, I am entering the armed service with confidence in the students of Mercer, hoping that you will strive to preserve the Mercer tradition as we have known it.

Four years at Mercer University have been the happiest I have ever known. I shudder at the thought of a drastic change in the spirit of the Mercer students; their thoughts; ideals, ambitions and beliefs.

Bill 'Presto' Preston, A.B., Pvt.