

The Mercer Cluster

Editor-in-Chief Ben Griffith
 Business Manager Ramsey Trimble
 Managing Editor Mary Ann Jackson
 Associate Editor Sam Crossley
 Associate Editor Mike Warr
 News Editor Charis Knapp
 Feature Editor Mary Louise Shipp
 Sports Editor Sanford Mullen
 Society Editor Ann Chapman
 Copy Editor Joe Harrison

News Staff: Harriette Kahrs, L. H. Johnson, Ida Cottingham, Virginia Wynne, Julie Turner, Catherine Elmore, Joe Andrews, O. D. Weaver, Floyd Wade.

Feature Staff: Mary Jane Williams, Mildred Avery.

CLUSTER POLICY

"We are the sum of all the moments of our lives . . ."—Thomas Wolfe

It shall be the policy of the Mercer Cluster to record these moments honestly, focusing upon them without distortion.

Hang Together, Or . . .

Despite the efforts of the civilian and Naval authorities, the Mercer campus this year seems to be split up like a mess hall carrot or a pre-war quart of Schenley's Black Label. There is the impression that two separate colleges are being housed on one campus.

One of the most peculiar elements in the situation is that no one person or group of persons feel themselves particularly responsible for the distant feeling between Navy men and civilian students. In fact, the general objection is not positive, it is only in the negative. The two factions do not seem to be mixing with quite the degree of congeniality that is to be expected of students on smaller college campuses.

The tendency does not seem to be confined to the Mercer V-12 unit alone. An editorialist in the Emory Wheel stated that "Emory continues to look like a college campus and a training station combined."

It seems to be a quirk of the American mind, this tendency of factionism. We believe that if a thousand normal, amiable, small-town people were picked at random from any American town, they could be changed into near enemies through a very simple process.

All that would be necessary to bring on the state of enmity would be to place half the people in a black uniform and the other five hundred in a white uniform. Or the same end could be accomplished by merely marking a red symbol on the forehead of half the group.

Americans are perpetually forming themselves into little groups, and doggedly defending that group and their own personal choice of it. A common case results when a city has two high schools. Rivalry is never more bitter.

It all sums up to the wasteful American way of life. We who have so much, and have come to expect so much from the future, will probably continue to ignore the common interests of, and potential mutual gain of, those around us who have a slightly different mode of dress, religious creed, or color of skin.

Lack Of Clubs

For several years at Mercer, there has been a relaxed attitude in regard to clubs and similar extra-curriculars. There were scores of clubs and professional frats on the campus at one time, ranging all the way from a chess club to a National Writer's Fraternity. In recent years, practically all have disbanded.

Our own opinion about the matter was that there was not enough general enrollment to warrant the number of clubs. Now the situation is changed. One can find a small group of enthusiasts in practically any field.

There is fertile soil for innumerable new clubs, or perhaps revival of the older standbys, like Ciceronian Literary Society, Sigma Upsilon, Alembic Club, and the International Relations Club.

The only way these dreams can become a reality is through the efforts of interested students. But then, it's so much easier to yawn twice, turn over, and manufacture more dreams.

In Other Words

By Mike Warr

CROWDS CROWDED IN CROWDY PLACES—

For the first time in the history of the institution there are more females than males on the campus. That is, civilian students. If there is any truth in the old adage "the more the merrier," Mercer should be a merry school this year. Attempting to house over 700 students on and around the campus is a major problem of the powers that be.

I haven't been able to visit the "bughouse" yet, but I dropped by the Co-op flophouse late one night and heard some fancy snoring. The boys were harmonizing splendidly—4D basses, 4F tenors, and seventeen-year-old sopranos were all carrying their parts nicely. The temptation was strong to holler "fire," but I restrained myself.

MEP suites now accommodate six, I am told. I understand the Navy boys are taking care of the overflow, since there aren't enough civvies to go around.

I always liked people, but I'll take Marlow's Rooming House for my sleep. "It's so peaceful in the country!"

SCANNING THE NEWS—

A Berlin radio announces that "it will not be possible to issue a definite textbook on history for German schools until the war is over." Don't tell me that Montgomery, Clark, Eisenhower, et al have upset Adolf's plans!

At a canteen in Virginia a 'teen-age dancer dislocated a hip while doing the Lindy hop. I always did say wrestling is safer.

Perhaps Professor Smalley could help me out on the following news story: It seems that one J. T. E— of F— was robbed last Saturday night. "The officer said the burglar entered the E— home, removed between \$500 and \$600 from the trousers pockets of Mr. E— and he and his wife slept through the robbery, and made away with jewelry, valued between \$5,000 and \$10,000." In the first place, I congratulate the burglar for beating Mrs. E— to the trousers pockets. But what puzzles me is this: Is "he" the burglar or Mr. E—? Also, whose wife slept—and with whom did she sleep? Read it again. See what I mean?

STREET SCENE—

As I was walking up Cherry street Tuesday afternoon, I saw a strip of paper in a show-window which read, "Buy a Bond—It Can Happen Here." And it did! About that time a fruit and vegetable truck drove up and several fully-armed soldiers piled out into the streets, scattering tin cans around. I don't know what was in the cans—some chemical I suppose—but they all began to smoke. Soon the whole block was in a smoke screen, and people were going around coughing and darting into stores. Guns were popping everywhere.

After the noise and smoke died down, an auction sale of bonds began in front of the Macon Telegraph building. It seems that merchandise was being given with each bond sold to the highest bidder. And most of the articles were rationed! There were some chairs with springs in them. Anybody who has flopped in a Victory chair would cherish a nice plush-bottom chair with springs. It seemed quite proper to stack the cases of beer next to a rubber ice bag. For the hangover, no doubt. Then there were some lounge pajamas for some lucky person who can find time to lounge. Someone said that the bidding was high on the diapers among the papas present. There was a little bag with a zipper on it, but the zipper was the only part of the bag of any special value as far as I could see. And the Nylon hose was all the rave with the fair sex.

Well, I hope they had a good sale. But that smoke didn't help my hay-fever any.

Strictly From Hunger

By Floyd Wade

With the advent of fall weather, my imagination as well as my appetite has been stimulated to a degree which surprises even myself. With apologies to Bob Benchley, I wrote the following on an old discarded laundry ticket while under the influence of pipe smoke.

"The desire to work physics problems and steer a battleship are two of mankind's most basic urges," so states a well-known, housebroken psychologist, Dr. Samuel Dingleberry, who once occupied a hotel room next to Freud. He goes on to say that this is proven by the fact that people DO work physics problems and steer battleships, even in spite of what those people say who are so uninformed as to not know that this IS one of nature's fundamental emotions. "Since bipeds first crawled out of the primeval ooze, way before Roosevelt, they have been, unknowingly, plagued by these two little psychoses," quoth Dr. Sam when interviewed in his modest abode on Saturday last.

Dr. Sam is quite a character, as is his wife, the former Beatrice Tannenbaum, a terpichorean of no mesn ability—retired, of course, since the balloon shortage. The doctor, as his friends laughingly call him, when asked for a brief statement of his philosophy, is credited with the now immortal line, "Don't be too friendly 'til you see the heights of their eyes."

"Physics is one of our most interesting subjects, next to horticulture, and can be used to good advantage in the humdrum tasks of daily existence," he says. "If you want a tennis ball to return to the earth, simply remember before e, except in emergency cases; apply the simple gravitation formula, and there you are. It can be carried too far, however, and must be applied in moderation. A farmer friend of mine was busily engaged in explaining the horsepower of his car to a friend when his team of horses overheard him and were so embarrassed at their own incapacity to do work that they were never quite the same gay, carefree pair of equines again. In fact, one of them won the Kentucky Derby the next year just for spite.

"Steering a battleship can be equally as exciting as working physics problems. It must be done with a certain amount of reserve and restraint, but once the trick is mastered, you may never want to lead a normal life again. Some of the advantages it offers are never having to get out of the bathtub to answer the telephone, never having to hold babies, never having to shop for Christmas presents—in fact, never being confronted with the trials and tribulations associated with the life of a landlubber. If at all possible, everyone should, at some time in his life, work physics problems and steer a battleship, not only to keep life from becoming so boring, but to keep the psychologists from looking like saps."

And In This Corner . . .

By Ben Griffith, A.S., U.S.N.R.

FALL GUY

Far too many poets have dipped their pens in sugar water to write about Spring and the turning of a young man's fancy; and Summer, with the turning of hot, metallic lawn mowers, and the turning of warm, tanned bodies on the beach; so we shall talk of sadly-neglected Autumn.

There are so many things about the Fall that we like. Football. . . . Cool, zippy Saturdays, with the sun feeling warm on your neck when the autumnal winds die momentarily. . . . The colorful lines flowing into stadia. . . . The stands splashed and mottled with color like a huge human camouflage. . . . Yellow chrysanthemums enhancing the woolly cheerfulness of young women. . . . Cheap little tin footballs in gaudy colors. . . . Sustained hysteria as human hulks throw themselves and five afternoons of body-breaking practice at each other. . . . The multifarious crowds—plumbers, alumni, ordinary citizens, drinking straight and yelling with Freshman-like fanaticism for their favorite team. . . . The lusty amber-bottled friendliness of all around you. . . . Over all, clearly visible in the Autumnal blue sky: hot, tired Summer battles the youthful Fall, and always loses, leaving the scars of odd Fall clouds as evidence.

La-de-dah-dedah. 'Tis Autumn. And no football team at Mercer. Just another one of those things Hirohito is going to have to settle for personally.

CONVERSATIONAL FRAGMENT

Two bright young freshwomen were making their morning dash to the Co-op, when one of them, obviously attempting a conversation, asked: "Did you know that the faculty is going to stop necking on the campus?"

The other b.y.f., righteously indignant, returned with: "Well, I suppose they'll be asking the students to stop it next."

THE PAINS OF LABOR

The effects of war with all its Sherman-like hellishness were brought home to us yesterday while looking through the sheaf of letters which all Cluster editors have to contend with.

We were quite amazed when we opened one of the apparently innocent envelopes, a regular nine-inch, business-size job, with the neatly engraved return, "Bureau of Industrial Service, Inc.," and a Madison Avenue address.

Somehow, the raison d'etre of the envelope had been completely neglected. In short, the envelope was as empty as a sailor's wallet.

We have let our mind wander over the incident at length, and it bothers us. . . . The picture of a confused, wartime secretary, "doing her part, y' know," feverishly poking letters into envelopes for simply HOURS at a time, and coming out with one too many.

We wonder if she was the emotional type who had a big nervous cry and went out and joined the WAC's, or if she slyly dropped the little missile in the nearest wastebasket and went out and joined the gang for beers.

Frankly, it has us a little worried. We're awfully anxious to know whatin hell the letter had to say for itself.

LEM LIBEL DIES

This is probably the first Cluster in four score and seven years that has not carried a hackneyed, high-schoolish little column known as "Lemuel Libel Says." It is being left out on the theory that although during the drowsy laxness of peace time, some few high school students may be found on a college campus, it is most unlikely that one could be found during the un-halcyon days of global war.

If there is anyone who wishes to make malicious gossip a little more public than a dorm room discussion, there is always a soap box handy. To the publicity-loving "Culbertson Set," who yearn for their name in type, we can only refer them to the ad rates.