

The Mercer Cluster

Established in 1920

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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 them without distortion.

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School Spirit

The human body consists of a frame of bone embedded in a mass of heterogeneous flesh—this, perhaps, is the simplest definition possible. But by taking a skeleton and clothing it in the right kind of tissues, one cannot create a human. Something else—that indefinable spark of life—is needed. So it is with a university. Theoretically, a university is made of a frame of instructors surrounded by a student body, but an institution of learning composed only of the two—faculty and students—just does not function efficiently. Something is needed.

Through many years of experience, that "something else" has come to be known by the expressive—though perhaps somewhat hackneyed phrase—"School spirit."

Educators have found that, for a university to be a live wire, there must be a common bond of fellowship between members of the faculty, between the faculty and the students, and between the students. The professor who places himself on a pedestal and looks down on his students is as much abhorred as the student who, refusing to respond to the natural cry of fraternity, holds himself aloof from associations with his fellows.

We would like to see such an abundance of school spirit on our campus that even occasional visitors could be affected by its scintillations and that we, for whom the University now is home—could admit of no stronger filial bonds of love that those that can exist between our faculty and our students.

Red Cross

The Mercer student body has a splendid opportunity to do something for a worthwhile project this Christmas. The Macon Red Cross through the Mercer Chapter is urging that everyone pack boxes for convalescent soldiers at Cochran Field. Many plan to give through their organizations. Women are going to give individually. Let's all cooperate in whatever way we can in this project. There are still many boys who won't be home for Christmas this year.

Honor System, Why Not?

Discussions have been spreading on the campus as to the probability and advisability of the adoption of the honor system at Mercer. Many students react by asking—"Why have the honor system?"

The advantages of the honor system may be summed as follows: The honor system is self government. The students make their own rules and assume the responsibility for carrying them out. The honor council is duly-elected by the student body. The honor system helps incoming students to keenly feel the responsibility of making decisions. It makes for collective security. It is unfair for half the students to play the game fair and the other half to get by any way they can.

Do we want honors in our grades or honors in the way we get them?

A NIGHT AT THE DESK

Dear Bill,
I really must tell you about my night at the desk in Porter Hall. My turn came on Saturday night, which as you can imagine, is the busiest night in the week for everybody, but most specifically for the desk girl.

My particular Saturday night ran true to form. Promptly at 6:30, I gathered my books together, meandered out to the desk and leisurely sat down to greet the after-dinner crowd as they came from the dining hall. After a few minutes I opened my Spanish book and read two entire sentences before the phone rang. I dashed around the corner and grabbed the phone in the middle of the second ring.

"Porter Hall," I murmured around my chewing gum as I reached down to pull up a sock with my free hand.

"What'd y' say?" a masculine voice drawled.

"This is Mary Erin Porter Hall," I said it more clearly because I had dropped my gum when I tried to pull up my sock.

"May I speak to Sue Jones, please."

"Just a moment," I charged up the stairway with alacrity, but alas! Alacrity not being of the same degree of sprightliness as ye scribe departed at the end of the first flight, and I trudged on alone. Knocking at the door of Sue's room, I yelled: "Phone for you, Sue." Well, I didn't have to knock a second time because by then, I was sitting on the floor, too groggy to move. An apparition in blue chenille, curl papers, and cold cream, bowled me over and ran down the hall screeching.

Assuming the blue apparition to be Sue, I picked myself up and followed (at a safe distance).

Reaching the desk, I was greeted by 3 sailors, 2 privates and 1 civilian. I wrote down the names of their dates, and went after them, taking care to step into a closet before they began the rush to the main deck (see what influence the navy had). Thus it was, Bill, until 8:30. Two more hours left before I could leave. With a sigh, I opened my Spanish book and read the same two sentences before the phone rang again. Wrong number. Thus discouraged from studying any more before 10:30, I began thinking about the two years I've been at Mercer and the many, many times I've kept the desk. Time was when people thought I was a fixture. The boys had seen me so often that if I happened to be in the hall, they would ask me to call their dates, even though the desk girl was on duty.

Those were the days. Sometimes I would vary the approach in answering the telephone. However, one night I was cured of answering the telephone other than in the orthodox manner. I picked up the receiver and murmured, "Buckingham Palace, Queen Mary speaking." The long distance operator said crisply, "Americus, Georgia, is calling Miss Beverly Kinney." See what I mean?

Some people get away with such replies as, "Hart's Mortuary, Ain't you dead yet?" or something like, "Dawson's Bakery, which cookie did you want to speak to?"

Occasionally a boy waiting for his date would take it upon himself to answer the phone. I usually had to go along to explain things though. One V-5 (Gee, this was a long time ago, wasn't it?) would say "Kelly's Stables, which horse did you want?" Then there was one character who always said, "Tony's Pool Room, Slugs speakin'."

Well, Bill, it is 10:29 now, so I'm going to study my Spanish. I've already read two sentences.

Tiredly yours,
Minnie Mercer.

Letter To The Editor

Dear Sir:

There has been some talk about an "honor system" here at Mercer. It may be a rumor or it may have been given some serious thought, but whatever the case may be, in the end it will be the students who will decide how to put their "honor" into use.

Some of us are just plain scared of our own honor. We always think of reporting our best friend, or the idea of always bringing "on my honor" into the picture when the "honor system" is mentioned. We sometimes say if a person has honor he will use it regardless of what kind of system he is under, but maybe that same person has just a little bit of honor that has no doubt been pushed into the back of his mind in high schools, or even by the parents. When he gets to college, he does not know how to use it, or else does not see anyone else using theirs, so he forgets what honor is. If you never try fudge, how do you know how it tastes? I have been told that Mercer has never had the "honor system." (If this is wrong, please accept my apologies.) Having lived under the "honor system" for two years, frankly, I miss it. I just cannot get used to the fact that a teacher must stand over students while they are taking a test to keep them from cheating, or any other instant where the student must be "watched" so to speak. The "honor system" to me means a respect for myself plus a trust in me by my fellow men.

Mercer University is an institution founded on a religious basis, one of the purposes of this institution is to develop leadership among the students. Another purpose is to train each individual for his place in the world. Why would Mercer not be the ideal place to have an "honor system?"

—R. W.

Ciceronian Holds First Fall Debate

The Ciceronian Literary Society sponsored a debate last Tuesday night, using "Resolved—that Congress should pass a law compelling all able-bodied men between the ages of 18 and 24 to have one year of military training during peacetime," as the subject of debate.

Main points brought out by the affirmative were: 1. discipline earned, 2. preparedness, 3. health values earned.

Those brought out by the negative were: 1. conscription as an economic burden, 2. it is undemocratic and un-American, and 3. destroys initiative and self-reliance.

Representing the affirmative were Frances Skinner and Paul McCardel. Debating for the negative were Celeste Manack and Glenn Pelham.

The debate was decided in favor of the negative argument.

Miss Byrd Gives Review Thursday

Miss Corine Byrd will review Stephen Vincent Benet's, "John Brown's Body," in the special reading room of the library on Thursday afternoon, November 15, at 4:30 o'clock. Mr. Stone suggested that this book will be of special interest as a follow-up of Dean Knight's discussion of Leonard Ehrlich's, "God's Angry Man," which treated the same subject.

The review will be followed by a general discussion and refreshments.

The Chi Omega Sorority is sponsoring this review. All faculty members and students are invited.

Rufus Snyder Speaks To The Faculty Club

The regular monthly meeting of the Faculty Club was held Thursday evening, November 8.

Dr. Rufus Snyder of the physics department spoke on the scientific aspects of the Atomic bomb.

The meeting was held in the Faculty Trustee Room.

WHAT THE MINISTERS SAY

This Is Our Era

By Garnie Brand

There is something very suggestive in the words: In the year of our Lord, 1945. The Christian Era has been a long one, and it is easy for us to forget that time and eras have been spread across thousands of years in which other peoples, faiths, and philosophies have made many and varied contributions to the life of their day and lent their influence to the future. It is relatively easy for us to find many fallacies in the literature, customs, and morals which have come to us as a heritage from our progenitors.

The ideal procedure for us is to let all that has come to us out of the past become our incentive to make the most of the opportunity which we have of writing a chapter in the larger story. We are one of the many civilizations that have wrought in the work of time, and we need to work fervently now in the light of the fact that our product will, in the end, be exhibited with the products of all civilizations.

We are struck with force by the sobering fact that this is our era. It is not an experience against which we can easily turn because of the fact that we must later face the results of it. This is the Christian Era, and we are Christians. We are directly identified with the progress of this span of time. We must be as responsible for the events of our era as others have been responsible for the events of their eras.

Primary essentials in our day, then, are a common purpose and a common effort. The capacity of each to sympathize and appreciate must be great enough to embrace the interests of all. The love and spirit of Christ must be in all of us in such measure as to circumscribe and control the use of every possession and blessing which might otherwise imperil our civilization. The task is neither yours alone nor mine alone. THIS IS OUR ERA.