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LETTERS OF MARGERY BAILEY

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Cover: Margery Bailey (center) as Volumnia in the 1953 Ashland production of Coriolanus. Clara Margaret Daniels played Valeria, and Patricia Saunders, with the needlepoint, was Virgilia. The photograph is used courtesy of the Oregon Shakespearean Festival, Ashland, Oregon.
SPECIAL SECTION
—Photograph courtesy of Myna Brunton Hughes of San Francisco

MARGERY BAILEY—From an original sketch by Andrews Harris, a student of Dr. Bailey's in the mid-20s.
Letters of Margery Bailey
Introduction

As Socrates to Athens, she to us:
A gadfly: loving, unambiguous.
—James Sandoe

She brands as her bad habits . . . the irrepressible urge to break the two Scriptural injunctions—"Suffer fools gladly" and "Let the women keep silent in all subjection."
—Stanford Chaparral (1937)

Rare are the scholars and teachers who leave a legacy of ideas and influence sufficiently powerful to stimulate discussion, to stir the imagination, and to heat the passions more than 25 years after their deaths. Even rarer is the teacher who becomes a legend in her own time: such a one was Dr. Margery Bailey, a professor of English at Stanford University from 1915 to 1956. Her writing, particularly her letters, merely an extension of that extraordinary mind, has been described as witty, devastating, clever, venomous, perceptive, and brilliant; and it is. These characteristics are soon evident to even the cursory reader.

Although Dr. Bailey’s interests were catholic, drama formed a core of particular interest and effort, including the two classes for which she received widespread recognition: Introduction to Shakespeare and Restoration Comedy. Much of her life was devoted to the cause of drama—discovering new plays and playwrights, literally creating theatre audiences, strongly affecting the direction of the Oregon Shakespearean Festival in Ashland, Oregon, and always—despite these extracurricular demands on time and energy—teaching classes that for many students became the most memorable of their sojourn at Stanford.

Comments from some of her former students attest to the lasting impact she made on them.

Let me begin by suggesting that great teachers are demanding people who care deeply about something which defies explanation.
To illustrate my point I call up the shades of my teacher of
Shakespeare at Stanford—the legendary Miss Margery Bailey. You could always tell her students from the glazed look in their eyes, the hint of a furtive, appreciative smile, and the frantic way they responded to the question, “What are you doing this quarter?” “I’m taking Bailey.” There was no word about the Bard or other classes, or even about the football team. There was only that enigmatic look of euphoria because one knew the experience would be an extraordinarily different, highly exciting, and eternally memorable one. No one will ever forget Miss Bailey.3

Professor Archibald Hill writes:

From Margery Bailey I got help and encouragement in close reading and analysis of literary works—something I have been trying to practice ever since. And since in addition Margery Bailey was warm hearted and humorous, her influence was stronger and more lasting for me, than the influence of her seniors in scholarship.4

In his autobiography As I Remember, Adam, Angus Bowmer, founder and director of the Oregon Shakespearean Festival, while in London with his wife, writes:

... Our greatest discovery was the National Portrait Gallery [in London]. We spent hours there studying the contemporary portraits of Medieval and Renaissance people... It was, however, many years later at Stanford University that Dr. Margery Bailey taught me to see in these portraits, in the stance, the facial expression, the eyes, a reflection of the ordered world about which Shakespeare wrote.5

The editor of this collection was also a student of Dr. Bailey’s in the early 1950s. We remained close friends until her death in 1963. Like my peers beginning doctoral work, I was concerned about classes when I first arrived at Stanford. We cornered old-timers in the Briggs Reading Room and continuously inquired about the best teachers or the classes considered necessary to pass the comprehensive examinations. A constant soon became evident: “Take Bailey.” “One can’t count on passing, but she’s worth it.” “Take her.” At last, during the spring quarter of 1951, I signed up for one of Dr. Bailey’s most famous courses: Restoration Comedy. At this time, most critics considered Restoration comedies witty, but licentious and without depth. Dr. Bailey, on the other hand, found them, though naughty, to be sure, quite profound. She maintained that a clear and definite morality was evident in these plays although the sub-
ject matter was on the surface seemingly immoral or at least morally questionable.

On the day of the first class meeting, we sat, eager, even anxious. The bell rang, the door opened, and Dr. Bailey swept in. "Swept in" is accurate. We knew at once that we were in a presence. Of course, we expected one—indeed, demanded one—and she was not to disappoint us. Dr. Bailey was a large woman—not overly tall and nearly 200 pounds in weight. Her bearing was absolutely regal and her size merely reaffirmed her larger-than-life impression as she entered the classroom. Seated at the desk, she firmly placed a small, round traveling clock in front of her and began. Some would say that the performance began, for truly, each lecture was a performance.

Dr. Bailey was passionately devoted to teaching and the drama, and she was perhaps at her best when she was teaching a class in the drama. Her speech was rapid and, as she spoke, she would punctuate her sentences with gestures. Her small hands, with short, even pudgy fingers, were nevertheless delicate and graceful in use and were in constant motion. Her voice was a musical instrument with an incredible range from deep contralto to high tenor. Equally effective as the voice were the pauses: calculated, dramatic, and perfectly timed. As she discussed plays, she would create instantly and fully the characters which we were studying. She would frequently read scenes from the text, and the rapport between teacher and students, between actress and audience, would be complete and perfect.

Opposite the classroom in the basement of the old History Corner was her office, 200Z. To the right, as one entered, was a large desk. At the left side of the desk was a floor lamp focused on a typewriter on its stand. It was obviously a place for serious work. The walls were lined with her book collections. In the center of the room was a great monk's table surrounded by chairs. Here seminars were held. Here one might—and a privilege it was—be offered a cup of coffee and an English biscuit—brought in on a tray from the bindery. The bindery had been a hallway which, when enclosed and with exit doors added, became the storeroom and workroom for Dr. Bailey's many projects. For many years, in these two rooms, she stenciled, mimeographed, collated, and frequently hand bound a series of yearly volumes. Here it was, even in retirement, that she spent most of her 12-hour days. There was help, of course. The Board members of the Dramatists' Alliance and the student assistants all gave time and effort. But it was Dr. Bailey's drive and commitment to these projects that kept them being published each year. When she retired in 1956, she received from the English department the traditional engraved silver bowl. From her students and friends she received a new typewriter and an electric mimeograph machine. Nothing could have pleased her more. Retirement clearly meant the freedom to continue working.

As the reader of her letters soon discovers, Dr. Bailey was plagued
always by a shortage of funds. The shortage was real but it never prevented her from collecting books, going to plays, or contributing to the Stanford boating crew, which she felt was never properly supported by the University.

Indeed, it was her passion for collecting rare books that kept her near penury, and her splendid collection contained many first editions of the plays of the Restoration period. As she became more and more involved with the Oregon Shakespearean Festival in Ashland, she began collecting 16th and 17th century books useful to the study of Shakespeare, books which she later carried to Ashland. Once when she traveled to the east coast for a Modern Language Association meeting, she found it necessary to cash an insurance policy to obtain travel funds. Often Dr. Bailey had to pay printing bills from her own funds, and often it was a hardship to do so. The letters are full of references to seemingly trivial sums of money; but throughout her life, she had to struggle to balance a limited, fixed income with expenditures on books, study projects, plays, and maintaining a home.

She purchased a pleasant house on Webster Street in Palo Alto in the late 30s and promptly named it Friar’s Pocket. The source for the name remains unknown. She cherished the large back yard and garden. She took breakfast on the sun porch facing the garden. Her meals when taken alone were always served properly: at the table with full silver and china. A stand was placed at the right of the plate for current reading matter. It was important to her that meals be eaten in a civilized setting. For many years it was traditional for intimates to gather at her home on Twelfth Night and for evenings to end with her reading from Charles Dickens or perhaps Mark Twain. Dr. Bailey never smoked nor owned a television set. In both instances, she was fearful she would become addicted. Nor did she ever learn to drive, relying instead on friends, taxis, or local buses for transportation. On campus, she was a familiar sight, seated on the bench under the great oak opposite the old History Corner waiting for the bus to Palo Alto.

For nearly ten years, Dr. Bailey and I, as co-directors, worked together in a loosely structured theatre program we called Theatre Bond. Working out of her office, we kept in contact with every theatre group in the Bay Area, mailing out to members a comprehensive listing of performances to be given within a six-month period. At least twice a year, we sponsored a theatre-going party which besides attendance at a performance would include dinner and a speaker, often the director of the play, or someone knowledgeable about the playwright or the genre of the play. The purpose was to build theatre audiences by introducing them to new groups or exciting old ones and making theatre-going a pleasant, worthwhile experience. I took an extended leave from San Jose State University in 1960 to work abroad, and since Dr. Bailey could find no one interested in continuing the work on a regular, long-term basis, Theatre
Bond's activities discontinued in January 1962. Most of the personal letters I received from Dr. Bailey were from 1960–1962 when I was living in Rome. Like many of her friends and colleagues I saved her letters—and, yet, I am not a letter saver.

There is little known of the history of the Bailey family. The family background given below is based on the few references found in the letters and on information provided by Angele Bailey of Walnut Creek, first cousin to Dr. Bailey on her father's side. John Howard Bailey, Dr. Bailey's father, came from Wisconsin to Santa Cruz in the early 1870s. There were three children: the eldest, a son, Guy Howard; an older sister, Annabelle; and Margery, born May 21, 1891. It is not known when the family moved to San Francisco, where the father worked for Western Union. Dr. Bailey mentions in one letter the family's living near Polk Street in a "workingman's flat" Angele Bailey reports that the brother somehow met his death in Arizona in 1914. Annabelle, the older sister, became a librarian in Redwood City, California, at about the same time Dr. Bailey began teaching at Stanford University.

In 1910, Dr. Bailey entered Stanford University as a freshman, graduating in 1914, Phi Beta Kappa, and taking her Master's degree two years later. Her thesis was on the "Date of Shakespeare's Sonnets," a graduate paper of sufficient merit to be included as an appendix to the variorum edition of the sonnets edited by Raymond Alden in 1916. Such was her ability that Stanford hired her in 1915 as an assistant instructor, promoting her to instructor in 1918. During these years she continued to take graduate courses at Stanford. In 1920, she entered Yale on a scholarship, completing her doctorate on a fellowship the second year. Her dissertation was an annotated edition of Boswell's essays in the London magazine The Hypochondriak. She then returned to Stanford to resume her teaching career. In 1928, Stanford University Press published her doctoral work in a two-volume, boxed set. The essays were reprinted in 1951 in an English edition published by Kimber of London, using Dr. Bailey's introduction and notes.

Despite her earlier successes, Dr. Bailey's promotions in the English department came slowly. She was made assistant professor in 1926 and associate professor in 1937. There was then a period of 16 years before she received a promotion to full professor, just four years before her retirement; and even this late recognition by her own department may have surprised her a little, for she had been convinced that she would retire as an associate professor.

The most frequently given reason for her lack of promotion was that she had not met the requirements for scholarly publication. She was convinced, however, as were many of her colleagues and friends, that the slowness with which she was promoted was because she was a woman, and especially—as she herself admitted—a difficult woman.

Dr. Bailey felt that the bias carried over to committee work as well. Her
own explanation for being limited to serving on department committees (rather than on university committees as well) is the following:

Females are rarely if ever allowed to function on general university committees . . . not even [the] supernal politicians . . . ; I once had enough votes to be placed on the final lists for committee on graduate study, and the lads all turned out with unprecedented devotion to cast their votes for a reliable (i.e., equable and agreeing) male colleague. 6

Dr. Bailey never allowed these disappointments to lessen her activities in behalf of the university. In one letter, she states that she considered herself to be an actress by instinct, a writer by desire, and a teacher of necessity: she was superb as all three. From her first major performance on campus as Lona Hessel in Ibsen's Pillars of Society in 1916, she continued to play major roles not only in university productions but with the Palo Alto Community Theatre, the Hillbarn Theatre, and the Ashland Festival. Her last performance was as Volumnia in Shakespeare's Coriolanus at Ashland in 1953.

She was in great demand as an individual performer and gave many evenings of pleasure reading from the novels of Charles Dickens or singing English ballads. She dearly loved the ballads and the folklore on which many were based. Indeed, she considered her finest writing three volumes of original children's stories, many resembling folktales and many containing ballads with original melodies. 7 Of all her stories, she considered the story of Roland her best. 8 The story is based on a statue in the city of Bremen, Germany, which she visited during her only trip abroad in 1928–1929. On her return she wrote a journal of her travels with Melissa (actually Mrs. Isabel Owens) which she entitled The Amateur Traveler. Although she distributed mimeographed copies of the journal to some of her friends, she did not believe the writing worthy of formal publication.

During the summer of 1935, the same year that the Shakespearean Festival began in Ashland, Oregon, Dr. Bailey offered at Stanford a course in Stage Classics Production, culminating in a production of Othello with William Thornton directing and acting in the title role. So successful was this effort that plans began immediately for a second course the following year offering Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra and Bernard Shaw's Caesar and Cleopatra. These productions were to be directed by two young Stanford graduates—Robert Brauns the Shakespeare and James Sandoe the Shaw. There was something very special about those two summer festivals. The young people who came to take part in the productions, to take the courses, or to participate in the variety of special programs, exhibits, readings, and concerts developed professional and personal bonds of friendship that remain today. Besides Brauns and Sandoe, there was
Myna Hughes, who directed three concert readings during the week-long festivals, and Tom Sellers, who had major roles in both stage productions.

These programs were also the beginning of an important concept that continued throughout Dr. Bailey's life: her belief that Shakespeare's plays (indeed all plays) can be and should be illuminated by the music, journals, paintings, letters—indeed by every artifact available—from the historical period of the playwright.

In 1936, the directors of the summer program announced a prize of $100 for the best original poetic drama submitted to them. Along with the cash prize (named in honor of Maxwell Anderson, at one time a graduate student in Stanford's English Department) came a dramatic group reading by the staff of the course. In following years those who were associated with the 1935-36 course formed a Board of Governors and incorporated into the Dramatists's Alliance.

Dramatists's Alliance provided the new playwright with what no other national or local organization had: (1) sponsorship of an annual competition in various dramatic forms (full-length, one-acts, verse dramas); (2) productions or concert readings of the best works submitted; and (3) for a small fee, written comments from two different critics (one academic and one theatrical, when possible). The prizes always remained modest. What was unique were the Assemblies given annually—in Dr. Bailey's phrase "an annual critical meeting"—covering a review of the year's competition with critical panels to discuss the winning plays, culminating with a production or reading of the prize plays. For a new playwright, perhaps nothing would be more exciting or useful than to have his or her play critically examined and produced by a competent company. In addition, all playwrights had the opportunity of requesting a written critique by competent readers. Charges for these critiques were kept conspicuously low to encourage writers to request them (from a $2 charge in the early days to only $14 by 1960). Among the professional theatre people who served as judges over the years were Maxwell Anderson, Brooks Atkinson, Beulah Bondi, Lynn Fontanne, Aline McMahon, Paul Muni, Vincent Price, Sir C. Aubrey Smith, and Donald Woods. Among the contributors to the competition were such eminently successful writers as John Gould Fletcher, Walter Kerr, Edgar Lee Masters, Alfred Kreymborg, N. Richard Nash, Howard Richardson, Robert Penn Warren, and Betty Smith.

In 1961, Dr. Bailey decided that she could no longer continue as Proctor for the Alliance and since there was no one who would or could replace her, the Dramatists's Alliance simply ceased to be. Dorothy Nichols, long-time drama and music critic for the Palo Alto Times, stated in an interview that "in its time, the Dramatists's Alliance made a unique and very important contribution to the development of American theatre." But with the demise of Dramatists's Alliance, Dr. Bailey had even more
time to devote to her work with the Oregon Shakespearean Festival, an interest which began in 1940 when she met Angus Bowmer, founder and producing director of the Festival.

In his autobiography Bowmer describes the meeting thus:

... I wrote two one acts and submitted them to a contest conducted by Dramatists's Alliance at Stanford University. I was surprised and delighted to receive word that one of them, a farce called Rogue Rest, had been chosen as one of the ten best and was to be produced during the annual Dramatists's Alliance Conference about the middle of August. I therefore decided to fly down to see my play.... It was thus that I met Dr. Margery Bailey, who was to have such an important impact on the Festival.

My first impression of her, however, was by mail, [which] was typical of the scholarly rambunctiousness with which all of us were to become so very familiar. She sent to me the two critiques which were written by officials of the contest. They were scathing in their denunciation of my play. But along with these documents she sent her own critique in which she denounced their lack of perception and praised the play in language which would have convinced a much less prejudiced person than I. I have known only one other person who could use the English language with the precision of a surgeon's scalpel. That person was one of her former students, James Sandoe. (pp. 141-142)

This professional and personal association continued until Dr. Bailey's death in 1963. First, she was invited to become the "Academic Advisor" to the Festival. In 1953, she became the "Director of the Educational Division of the Oregon Shakespearean Festival" and finally, in 1956, the Director of Education of the Institute of Renaissance Studies, the latter established by Dr. Bailey through the cooperation of the Stanford English department and Southern Oregon College. As Bowmer wrote, "The almost Herculean and completely selfless task of creating and maintaining the multifaced aspects of the Institute could have been done only by a Margery Bailey." (p. 194)

The year 1956 also signaled her retirement from Stanford. She retained her old Stanford office, and it remained one of the most comfortable and probably most used offices on the Stanford campus. She was always somewhat apprehensive (although I'm not sure anything including the idea of "fear" is appropriate to Dr. Bailey) that the "Administration" would someday reclaim her office, but she laughingly maintained that she had made an agreement with President Wallace Sterling of the university to keep her office in exchange for her extensive and valuable
library of 16th, 17th and 18th century first editions; otherwise, she threatened, the library would be left to Yale.

In fact, over the years, she regularly took with her to Ashland boxes of books, maps, and pictures from her own collection in order to begin a collection of Renaissance materials which would, in relatively short time, be worthy of a major private or university collection. Housed first in the Ashland Public Library and then in the new Southern Oregon College Library, the Margery Bailey Renaissance Collection now contains more than 6,000 volumes, including the second and fourth Shakespeare Folios.

Dr. Bailey made her last formal, public appearance at Stanford on January 24, 1963, speaking on the traditional Tuesday Evening Series in Memorial Auditorium. To a capacity audience of students, friends and well-wishers from both campus and community, she gave her "Testament to Teaching." The standing ovation that followed was some measure of the respect and love in the minds and hearts of those fortunate enough to have known her.

Dr. Bailey died of a paralytic stroke on June 19, 1963, at the age of 72, just a few days before her planned trip to Ashland. Susan Hanson's letter to James Sandoe summarizes well the feelings of shock, dismay, and grief which many shared at the news of this unexpected death:

...I realized for the first time that the Stanford students of the thirties must have felt they sat before a living God. It came to me as a thunderbolt and I was jealous for a moment to have missed it. But I did know her and hear her speak and act, and my imagination gave me enough mental impact to carry her memory for a lifetime. ... I miss her, she shot a fine shoot.

In 1977 Stanford University announced the establishment of a chair endowed by North Baker, a former student and a member of the Board of Dramatists's Alliance: The Margery Bailey Professorship in English. The first holder of the chair was Professor John Loftis of the English department. The second holder, from 1981–1986, was Professor Eleanor Prosser, former student of Dr. Bailey's and of the Drama department. The third holder, Professor Charles Lyons, is also a former student of Dr. Bailey's and chair of the Drama department.

In 1988 the University announced the construction of the Liliore Green Rains Houses to provide housing and other facilities for 776 single graduate students. The buildings have been arranged into courts, each of which contains a community lounge. Each court and lounge has been named for a distinguished faculty member, past and present. Among these is the Bailey Court and the Bailey Lounge honoring Dr. Bailey.

During her lifetime, Dr. Bailey wrote hundreds of letters, along with
numerous essays, reviews, and critiques. There is no attempt here to present a definitive collection of Dr. Bailey’s writing, but there is an effort to present the best, the most interesting, the most representative of her personal and professional letters.

Sentences and even full paragraphs have been deleted, particularly when full of names of or gossipy commentary about persons whom the reader is not likely to know or when the material is quite personal. In certain instances, only initials are used of names used in full in the original text. On rarer occasions, names have been changed to avoid embarrassment to persons now living or to the families of those now dead.

Throughout I have attempted to retain the integrity of the papers without the impediments of footnotes and references and other intrusions, in order to present to the reader a smooth text to read while leaving intact the inimitable style, flavor, and intent of the writer.

At all times the goal has been to make available to the reader the extraordinary writing of this extraordinary woman—to suggest something of her dynamic, even regal personality and her great dignity. Her vast energies were devoted to an amazing variety of activities and interests. Dr. Bailey possessed a brilliant, perceptive, ever-active mind juxtaposed with deeply held convictions, strongly defended opinions, and occasionally conflicting passions. At the same time, as is so often evident in these letters, Dr. Bailey could be the gentlest of souls, the most compassionate of friends.

Phillip Persky
Guest Editor

Notes

1 My first debts are to Angele Bailey, executor and heir to Dr. Bailey’s estate, who made all of Dr. Bailey’s correspondence and writings available to me; and to the following of her correspondents whose letters make up the great proportion of the letters published here: Angus Bowmer, Robert Brauns, Myna Brunton Hughes, William Patton, James Sandoe, and Grace Margaret Webster.

Two persons, over a period of several years, provided special help in editing, proofreading, and transcribing lectures from tapes, and my debt to them is great: Judith Hilliard and the late Dorothy Wright.

I am grateful to San Jose State University for first providing a research grant to cover typing of the initial manuscript and for providing a sabbatical leave during the spring semester, 1980, to continue work on the letters.
A great many people responded to my request for letters, biographical data, general information, and anecdotes concerning Dr. Bailey. I am far more grateful to them than this simple alphabetical listing suggests: Dorothy Adams, Peter C. Allen, Kay Atwood, Chester Barker, Charles Burdick, Sewall S. Brown, Jr., Barbara Campbell, Jean Campbell, Robertson Collins, Mrs. George Crane, Dolora Cunningham, Stanford Chaparral, Suzanne Fowler, Archibald Hill, Herbert A. Klein, John Lawrence, Joseph Maltby, Charles E. Miller, Dorothy Nichols, Roxanne-Louise Nilan, Arlene Okerlund, Peter and Marion Owens, Harold Otness, Wes Peverieri, Eleanor Prosser, Marion K. Richards, Barbara Riper, Thomas Seller, George Sensabaugh, Mrs. Robert Sims, Wilford Stone, Grace Margaret and Katherine Webster, Virgil Whitaker, Mary Lou White, Janet Lewis Winters, and Robert Woodward.

Last, but by no means least, I am much indebted to Debbie Conant for her sharp eye, great care, and professional skills.

2 "In Memoriam," Oregon Shakespearean Festival Program (1963), p. 36.
3 In a public lecture "The Last Necktie" given on October 25, 1977, by Charles Burdick, Chairman, History Department, San Jose State University.
6 Letter to a friend.
7 The three books were Seven Peas in the Pod (1919), The Little Man with One Shoe (1921) and Whistle for Good Fortune (1921). All three were illustrated by Alice Bolam Preston and published by Little, Brown, and Co.
This first letter, written to a student and friend in sore need, is one of the most complete statements of Dr. Bailey's personal credo. The young man had changed his major from English Literature to Drama and was planning to submit to the Drama department an original play which represented less than his best effort.

Monday, July 1st
8:20 p.m. 1945
My dear young Friend,

Please be patient. This is another of the unpleasant ones, I think. The thing to consider is that I ought to be doing six other things, and that I am not writing this for fun; if it were not that I think a good deal of you, and more of your future, I shouldn't bother to write it. That gives it no value, but it does show you why I hope you will try to see what I mean as objectively as possible. . . .

Probably you think that I have been either jocular or fond when I have said several times, "How you have grown up in the last few months." Neither one. It is wonderfully heartwarming to think what a human being can do with himself if he sets his mind on it. . . . No more boyish fixed ideas, mistaken for standards; no more yarns of various sorts to make yourself interesting; no more obscuring your family from one motive or another; an increased willingness to take what comes as it comes; a refusal to be crushed at every disappointment—in short, a vastly more solid steadiness in a good many ways.

But I don't know how far this is exercise in control only; or how far these things have shown you what a basic difficulty [you have]. For every so often something slips, and I go through a nauseated chill thinking that all this change has not happened at all: everything goes overboard because you want something at the moment, and refuse to think of what stands in the way—with the result of seeming capriciously irresponsible; you will toss aside matters of moment to which you owe steady attention because someone you like wants to talk or walk or read you something—with the result that you give the impression of caring more for emotional responses than for abstract obligation—and in the long run even the
dearest is going to think of you, "The next person who claims his interest will replace his consideration for me—and in fact was it consideration, or just the entertainment of the moment?" You no longer think backward and excuse your demands on existence because you were unhappy as a child, but you still make demands on life that it cannot grant to any human being; you make demands on yourself, in a life of wishes and hurried projects, that you yourself cannot fulfill—and as a result suffer constantly, and far too much, from a feeling of restless distaste with immediate surroundings and people and ideas.

It is natural that with the sudden grip you have assumed on so much of yourself, that the grip should seem a little grim; it has to be so at first. But there is no reason why you should make the hardly won discipline go down to defeat because you still want too much, and think in extremes, and hate whatever gets in the way of satisfying these impossible objectives. Nobody likes discipline—it is not in human nature to like curbs and restraints—but you are in a fair way to make yourself hate the improvement you have so wonderfully accomplished; and if it goes to defeat, how you will wallow in hatred of yourself! Quite unfairly.

This scramble between violent wishes and violent restraints is the most ghastly thing a creature can wear himself down with; it cannot in itself be productive because it is both negative and absorbing, to the exclusion of all sound effort otherwise; it prevents forthright, mellow creation because it defeats the balanced confidence which is the only basis for construction of anything, from a house of cards to a career or a poem. The main outcome of it is a constant flurry, so that anything turned out at all is done in nervous agitation; if it is only pretty good, still it was produced somehow; and the restless fidgeting makes all sense of turning back to the thing done and perfecting it, a horror. The artist who works on these bases (and because of sensitiveness, most artists in their early years scramble about in this way, and many—the dilettanti and the poetasters—remain so for life) is the sort who says airily, "Oh, I never go back and rewrite—I can't polish—I write once and the thing is done with." . . . The real artist, working in the metier that suits him, so that he has brought himself to undertake faithfully, cannot bear to see a thing skimped, uneven, good but irregular and lop-sided; and when from some pressure he sends out a thing which his inner heart knows to be imperfect he suffers a sense of shame which is closely akin to the conviction of sin, the sense of crime. In some sense it is more than that—it is in the true artist the sense that he has betrayed nature and God; he has injured the delicate balance of what ought to be secure and pure—which only the saint and the artist know by instinct, and which only they therefore can betray. (Your common man cannot perceive these things, and is no criminal for disregarding or even breaking them.)

You are by instinct, by physical shaping, by mental bent, by spiritual groping, an artist; and whether you like it or not, you are responsible
(under whatever it is that governs us—one calls it God) to the purities and perfections. You are responsible not on emotional grounds, but terrible ethical requirements which are both without and within you; if you deny them you are nothing, and the demons will be on you again. Consider: when you were working in ceramics, suppose you found a flaw in shape or line; isn't it true that you were restless and wretched until it was set right, and the pure balance was achieved as faithfully as you could manage it? It is the same with everything. You are probably thinking that a man does not always find it possible to work out his life in the metier that is actually his own; this is true—nobody knows it better than I do, who am by instinct an actress, by desire a writer, by small talent a graphic artist—and who because I had to eat, went into teaching. This is all part of the grinding business which is called in general, life; one simply has to transfer the sound instincts of one form of expression into the thing which one finds one has to do. It means a struggle of considerable anguish for some years; but if one gives up—The necessary thing is to find the general basis on which one’s effort can be expended best, and then in spite of distaste or suffering accept responsibility, and with ethical determination (which must with the years become a mellow yielding, or the nature goes sour and is wholly unproductive) keeps the balances sound and clear and decent in the lesser choice just as one would in the greater, if one had had ability to make it, or been allowed to make it.

You are writing a play. This is the same thing exactly as shaping a really fine amphora. It must be as good as you can make it, or you are faithless to yourself, to the cosmos endlessly searching for balance, to God who awaits the arrival of all of us at the point where we find pure balance instantly, happily, gravely, continuously, always. (This is probably heaven, or what we allude to by that term.) It may be, when you leave it as perfect as you can make it, still an imperfect thing; but if you worked responsibly, faithfully, decently, ethically, it is at least a sound step in development, and hence beautiful. This is the reason why I have so strong a feeling, amounting almost to a yearning, about much of the work turned in to Dramatists’ Alliance. These people, however imperfect their product may be, are at least doing their best—the work is perhaps imperfect, but it is not impure. It is the intention, the ethical will, which makes the difference.

The question is the grave one of the future: are you going to measure a work of art in terms of weeks?—are you, because the shop seems suddenly stuffy, going to leave a jar in any shape just so long as it suggests a jar?—are you going to sacrifice the deep inner responsibilities which the artist is doomed to serve, for any reason at all short of illness, family service, starvation? The proper modern answer is “I have to serve my individuality.” What is the individuality which has no ethical basis? A
poor show, no more. Another answer is "This is just expediency; I'll really finish the job later." No. This would be really just another intention without sound base and without resolution; remember how long it took to grind out, against boredom and the clutter of small interests, the rewriting of a shorter thing. It is not fun to return and rewrite; that is one of those disciplines which human inertia detests. Once you hand in the play, it is done for.

The thing which oppresses me—not only about you, but about myself, about human beings in general as I have seen them—is that these make-shifts, these promises, create a habit of living slovenly, of scrambling about everything, of always putting off the fine thing for the sake of the small thing, the trivial, superficial, passing instant or caprice or wish or amusement. And because inertia is so fearfully potent a force in us—nobody ever realizes the shocking power of it, I think—it is much easier to form these habits of scramble and promise and frittered energy than it is to keep up (and they must be constantly renewed) the apparently simple habits of doing jobs quietly, constructively, patiently, bit by bit, day by day. We flatter ourselves into thinking that work is better if it is done in spurts, by "inspiration"—"when we feel like it," and so on. These are all excuses.

And because you have a great inner sensitiveness to balance and purity, sweetness, soundness, if you fall into one more of these frittered promise performances, and one more, and one more, you will be living a life you despise—and then it will be much too late to begin again easily. Not too late to begin again—it never is that; but it just gets harder all the time. And you have not the excessive energy which late in life can be devoted to re-creation of the soul; it takes excessive energy....

One must in all fairness take into consideration your reasons for suddenly marking a stop signal, when two months ago you were rationally allotting time for a job as big as you had undertaken. I have no idea what they are beyond the general term, nervousness. Without doubt the sudden view of a friend's going off to a sedate job has something to do with it; probably also you have a sudden understanding of the immense gap you will feel in fall without the companionship you have had for two years; possibly your understandable longing for a home of your own and a naturally satisfied life has something to do with it. But you have stood these things before, and stand them now, and even if you leave at a fixed (however rationally impossible) time, you will stand them for perhaps months and years after this. To let these things command your judgment is to be a child frightened by bogeys—and old bogeys, which the child should recognize by this time. To assume that there is a virtue in this sudden defiance of reason, in a meaningless but passionate insistence on leaving simply because you want to, because you are tired of being dependent, because you want to be earning a living, is adjusting a mask. It is excellent to wish to be mature and independent—but not at the
expense of scamped work. It is sound to admit that had you paid more
attention to matters as they went by, you would have been out with some­
thing accomplished before now; but not as an excuse for virtually
dropping out with more work treated inattentively. Are you writing a play
or amusing yourself? Are you responsible for showing in this created
thing the best that is in you, or are you going to have what your nerves
demand at the expense of your spirit?

It is possible that devoted attention will provide the finished play in
good form and the sensitive, delicate, deeply suggestive expression of
which you are capable at your best, and within the five months remaining
of the year. But it will not be possible to finish it well if you have a half
dozen other pressures weighing you down. You are piling them on, or
keeping old ones piled on, with the old alarming extreme of belief that
you can accomplish inhuman things in no time at all; you will find these
things impossible to do wholly, and will scramble through them all,
giving little spurts of attention to each, never soundly accomplishing any
of them, feeding the old demon of restlessness which produces only two
children—distaste for life as you find it (really, as you have made it), and
lack of confidence in yourself.

For the confidence I have tried to give you (I have tried three quite
wrong ways, and made a botch of them all) can, of course, come from no
one but yourself. A man's feet steadily on the ground can come only from
learning to walk early, and by degrees until firmness becomes a way of
life. You look—a little piteously, I think—everywhere for confidence, as
romantics look to happiness; to friends, to audiences, to activities in
which you may be a notable success, to uncritical affection when you can
find it. These things can supply nothing but passing comfort. Not real
confidence. You are, I hope—at least you should be—gaining confidence
from the very grimness of your exercises in discipline. But these will be all
defeated, and go for naught, if you wreck your growing solidity on resent­
ful hysteria, on the feeling that you must escape from the present, which
seems a trap only because your nerves tell you it is so. Is your indi­
viduality to be what you want and wish and will have, or is it to be a rock
and shadow in the lee of which other people may grow up and find a
footing (whether you are happy or not)?

The only answer I know is a cliché; but clichés are what they are largely
because so many people have found them to be true, and repeated them.
He who loseth his life shall find it. Your life has never been quite what you
hoped it would be (it is safe to say that like the lives of other people, it
never will); you center much of your feeling and thinking on pressing
against the thorns of circumstance and yearning for satisfaction; your will
is largely turned to your desire, and some means of fulfilling it. All this is
wholly natural in the very young, and you have grown up late; but it is
time for you to understand that the personal urge, the personal need, is
not living. Life is two-thirds endurance—and a fine thing too, since the
fact gives brilliant edge to the small happinesses and stinging joys which would scarcely be felt if they were not weighed against the greater mass of life's usual dullness or pain or ugliness or emptiness; but endurance is not the answer alone. One who endures merely, is a shabby object. You are learning to discipline your ways in small things, and will proceed, God willing, to the greater; but discipline, though it be my favorite word, and something I myself have to lean on at fifty-five, is not the answer either. You have to devote yourself to something outside yourself, to lose yourself, to live most fully. Notice I don't say "to some one outside yourself"—devotion to some person has always in it something of hope or satisfaction which goes back to the personal, and is often an emotional rather than a devotional thing in the true sense. The artist who is an artist, who lives up to what his nature demands in the deepest sense, is one who devotes himself to creation; that is why he is one of the really happiest of men—he has ceased to worry about what he wants, about what he would like, about whom he would love. He is making a sculpture, a tray, a ring, a chair, a poem: the inner balance to which he is so sensitive is attuning itself to recreation of the balance in a purely conceived and devotedly wrought object or idea, for which he is anxious, through which he is consecrated; he cannot leave it imperfect as long as he can with purity and earnest labor refine it; it is at once himself and something wholly independent of him, as a child is after birth. When it is done, it is perhaps foreign to him, perhaps intensely close for some time—this depends on the extent to which his intention for it was really consummated; it must be replaced eventually by the urge for a new creation. He has lost himself in the thing he has worked upon; he has, in the highest and truest sense, found the self which is his deepest and sweetest part. Is your play to be a lovely child or an abortion, hurried into life against time and marked by the surgeon's instruments?

Dismiss fixed ideas of time as you dismissed fixed ideas of a career; try not to think of lost friends, your age and the supposed shame of dependence (remember that you are really nineteen or twenty, not what the calendar tells you, because of physical and spiritual malnutrition which you are just now, and by your own effort along, making up); forget everything but a lovely creation, of your duty to it and to the God who made you capable of it; devote yourself (in the real sense of devotion—which is hard work). You will be happy in a sense that you have rarely known, and time will cease to worry you; it will be a blur in which by degrees you are accomplishing a thing you love more than woman or man; and whether the play is accepted by someone or not, produced or not, you will have a profundity of satisfaction that will mean the only true self confidence. This I can tell you from solid experience; I am capable only of fairy tales, and many of those trivial, but the accomplishment of my life so far is the creation, against odds it is not necessary to go into, of the Roland story. It has an absolute beauty which is mine and not mine, but in which I had
Mrs. Hardcastle in Oliver Goldsmith's *She Stoops To Conquer* as played by Margery Bailey in 1935 at Stanford University.

—Photograph courtesy of Hillbarn Theatre at Foster City
enough hand, and into which I put enough sweat, to make me impen-
vious to the professional setting I live in (not wholly pleasant), the
absence of human contacts, the constant shifts which teaching entails in
acquaintance, the hollowness of almost everything else. When I am dead
I shall be forgotten almost at once, but the story which is the finest I have
to give will exist. There are two others which I dread to set down for fear
they will not be what I think they ought to be; I am not a sound artist, or I
should not be able to resist them. Still, the confidence from the part-way
attempt is much.

Remember too that the artist cannot live alone, or lose himself alone. If
he has no living connections, he must make some; he cannot devote him-
self even to beauty in a void. That is the miracle of teaching: one creates in
a classroom to a considerable extent, but only if he devotes himself—not
to the persons before him, but to the ideas he tries to make clear. If you
teach, and teach with all you have, you will be astonished to see how on
the mornings when you come in half dead from one reason or another,
you are taken up and supported and renewed by the force of ideas and
the eager receptive flash of people younger than you who are going
through the marvellous process of transmuting words into ideas. It is—
like all devotion of any sort at all—a religious experience. But you only
find yourself in it by losing your merely personal self, I think. This is not to
idealize children or young women and men, who are just human, and a
good third of the time refractory, restless, sullen, or dull; but the inter-
change of force in a moderately good class is something inexplicable,
expressible, and lovely beyond thinking. . .

This is long because it is a mea culpa—I have failed you very badly, I
have been too soft on one hand and too pressing on the other, I have not
been able to live up to what you fancied I am—and these hypocrisies are
very necessary for the sensitive—so that having plucked the heart out of
my mystery, you find me but human, and cannot be led any more than
you could be driven. This is natural. But from the difficulties of my own
young years, which I remember very well indeed, I have tried to find
some way to say what in some measure you can find even in a life that
seems outwardly extremely dull; what can come if the extremes are side-
stepped; what in all positiveness will belong to you as a sound instinctive
artist of the true type—not at all like my own minuscule status as
creator—if you respect your art and your inner self and throw away the
dross that at your age and with your nervous temperament gets in their
way. This is a feeble effort, but most profoundly felt. God bless you.

Robert Brauns entered Stanford as a freshman in 1930, and it was inevitable
that a shared interest in drama should soon bring Dr. Bailey and him together, first
as teacher and student, then as colleagues and friends. Brauns was a founding
member of Dramatists's Alliance. Sam Rolph, as designer, and he were instrumental in developing the Hillbarn Theatre into one of the finest non-professional theatre groups on the West Coast. At least a dozen of the Alliance plays were presented at Hillbarn.

TO ROBERT BRAUNS
August 18, 1932
My dear Robert,

I hope you will not regard the suggestion I am about to make as an intrusion on your affairs or your sure management of them. I make it because I feel somewhat responsible for the university's bad training of you so far, and distinctly responsible for a misunderstanding which you have (very civilly) never taxed me with.

First off, you stand as incomplete in the composition class because I thought that the work should amount to three hours at least, and totally forgot (or misunderstood) your proviso before entering the class that you could do but two hours of writing.

Next, I believe you had better arrange for an incomplete in one class this summer. You cannot be enjoying your reading very much, swallowing it at the rate you must be doing; you cannot be learning—or digesting—much of it, if any, and mere collection of facts is not education; you will probably not have time to do proper work for the report for Herben. It is important to finish Herben's work well because he is a visiting professor, and it would be equally impossible to ask him for an incomplete or give him a poor botched piece of work as representative of what his teaching means to you. It is equally dangerous, however possible, to ask Miss [Edith] Mirrielees for an incomplete; like all human beings she gains hard impressions from one defect in a person she does not know well.

So I think—as it is the simplest and easiest class, from which you derive least new material, and which you can now make up by reading and reports quite alone by yourself, you might do well to arrange for an incomplete in Shakespeare. I should advise your continuing to come to class, and if possible to take the final; but even this would relieve you of writing two weekly reports. If you are badly pressed for time, I can excuse you from class and from the final. Your grade would be + inc. until the papers came in and the exam was taken.

It is not a good idea to have two incompletes on your record; so, though you could easily do both in the fall quarter at home, and because I do feel uncomfortable about your position regarding the two-hour business in composition, perhaps I had better cancel that incomplete for 3 hours in composition and give you your grade for two hours. These appearances makes some difference in your chances for scholarships sometimes. It is true you did more than enough for two hours in the composition class, and true also that perhaps you will only do any writing at home if you feel
you must for some given purpose; I am naturally anxious for you to do as much writing as possible, because you have a singular flair for it.

But seeing how pushed and harried you look all the time, and realizing as always that your sense and intelligence make all of us demand too much of your physical years of strength and experience, I cannot avoid offering this slight release for your last two weeks.

Affectionately yours,
M. Bailey

TO ROBERT BRAUNS
November 25, 1932

[It is] Thanksgiving day and I am at Asilomar, in a corner room upstairs...

... But gosh, how self conscious Carmel is, ... and how over-womaned. I am relieved after all that women are reduced to the minimum at Stanford. There are few things worse for men, especially young ones, than too many women: the relationship is bound to approximate the medieval lady-and-page situation. ... or possibly as somebody once said it is a town of defeated men, and a sort of dry rot has set in before they arrive. One or two looked masculine enough, but one detected in the rough clothes and close shaving a sort of acting of a part. Real men don't find that necessary. It isn't necessary to live in Carmel to find beauty, either; the person who cannot find or make it elsewhere is lacking in just that thing which brands the colony here. ... Andy and I agree that we always feel faintly sick on leaving Carmel, however lovely the country is. Even Jeffers's rocks have something innately false to healthy existence in them.

... ... ... ... ...

TO ROBERT BRAUNS
Thanksgiving Day 1935
My most dearly loved,

... ... ...

You know me well enough by now to understand that my chief difficulty is a violent and primitive mind, with a thin over layer of hardly acquired reason which can sometimes subdue my savage to decent regard for the inevitable and for other people's rights. When I was pretty badly crippled at twenty six I had not acquired that thin armory and could only pound down the passion that rather frightened and repelled one young man with the result of a useless long illness that comes trotting back every time it gets a chance. But to think that nearly twenty years have made so little difference in one's major responses is depressing.

... ... ...

What I need—vitality and masculinity and intelligence in a very vivid
degree. I have never found it in anybody to the degree of content and joy which it gives me in you; and when, as I know very well, it can be on occasion flooded with infinitely sweet tenderness, it is everything a woman could require. That you go off cheerfully about your own affairs as if it did not matter at all to you is something every female has to learn as the concomitant of masculinity; women insistently refer to this male shift of interest as something selfish or hard or cruel; it is merely natural. The most manly men concentrate on one thing after another, not on several at once, and while women gird at the man who loves them and leaves them cheerily, I notice they have a sort of contempt for the creature who is forever at their skirts with all his projects for them to look over.

From her days as a Stanford student until Dr. Bailey's death, Myna Brunton Hughes was closely associated with her. She served as a governor of Dramatists's Alliance and frequently assisted Dr. Bailey with publications, lecture series, and classes of the Institute of Renaissance Studies. Hughes was head of the Drama department of the Katherine Burke School in San Francisco.

The letter below, in its original form, consists of nine typed pages (single-spaced, narrow margins), took seven hours at the typewriter, and is a typical one. In planning the year's activities for Dramatists's Alliance, Dr. Bailey shares with Hughes not only the problems and tasks to be anticipated and considered, but the responsibilities gently assigned to Miss Hughes herself. The innumerable questions to be answered and the great attention to detail are representative of Dr. Bailey's approach to any activity in which she was engaged, as will be seen in the Ashland letters.

It is also evident that Dr. Bailey relies on Hughes's own good judgment in many of the matters discussed, so that the questions asked and the alternatives offered are truly open for discussion. As the years pass, however, while Dr. Bailey continues to ask questions, more and more frequently she provides the answers herself. By the time she is involved with the Oregon Shakespearean Festival ten years later, this latter habit has become increasingly annoying to a number of her associates.

TO MYNA BRUNTON HUGHES
Thursday, March 7, 1938
My dear Love,

Matters for the season seem to be shaping with commendable clarity. I asked Hamard (that pleasant red-haired fellow who read the young lover in DISTANT HARVEST?), Temple (The Jack Temple, brother of Shirley, who was here some years ago, and is now doing graduate work), and Ted Hatlen, director from Indiana who is here for graduate work, to meet with me, Clancy, and Gillis, for preliminaries about summer program. [James
Clancy and Hugh Gillis were Drama professors at San Jose State. This was in some antediluvian era—it may even have been before Christmas, and I may already have told you all about it. Anyhow, we decided to give readings in spring quarter, since Ramshead is clearly too busy to keep up a program of them; it will perhaps make us a little money, and get the campus used to hearing readings again—everybody has fallen somewhat out of the habit of them. LITTLE FOXES is out of course since it is traveling now; we might do a Dorothy Sayers verse play, or Saroyan's HIGHLANDS with something Temple wants to work up—a scene from GRAPES OF WRATH (not a bad combination!), for one, and a comedy for the other. The students wanted to hear YES, MY DARLING DAUGHTER for this winter, and we might try that, since the two plays of the quarter current have been extremely raffish; Gillis, who said he would write about plays—AND DID!—reported that we could get PRIMROSE PATH for nothing. That was the one about a whole family of naughty ladies, which half succeeded, half failed in New York. It is worth looking into. Still, since we agreed to give comedies in summer in order to support the summer program of comedy on the boards, we might save that for the type of modern comedy, after giving the Molière we intended some years ago, and perhaps a shocker such as Wycherley. I admit I cringe before the COUNTRY WIFE or PLAIN DEALER, but the DANCING MASTER is milder, very funny, and attractive to raffish persons anxious to hear anything of Wycherley, probably!

In summer we begin with a lecture on comedy, which James Wood of San Jose has consented, through Clancy, to give; I don't know how good he will be, but he is no fool, and can be as witty as Shaw in delivery when he chooses. The next lecture will be on classic comedy, either Greek or Roman or both together. Little Harsh here is not going to be on duty this summer, but he has shown a most lively interest and help, giving me the name of the visiting classicist with the news that the man is drama-conscious rather than philosophy-conscious, as many classicists are; if Bellinger of Yale refuses to lecture, and I doubt he will, since summer people expect that, I can count I think on Virgil Whitaker. Next, Hatlen, who took his M.A. at Cornell under Drummond in something connected with comedia dell'arte, will lecture on that; he is very eager, and so is Temple, to follow the lecture, either on that night or later on, by a comedia dell'arte performance done in the middle-of-the-room technique. It should be fun, and effective. After that we should have something on Molière. . . . What do you think? If I could only get Briggs to talk upon Jonson I should feel I had accomplished something, but he hates it, and will probably think he is doing enough in teaching his Jonson class on request during summer. Jim [James Sandoe] is coming west late to see about getting settled for the year 1940–41 in Berkeley library school; do
you think we should risk repetition and pet-boy-returns by asking him to sound off about Shadwell? I must really center my mind on these affairs, but I am so thick mentally that it is a perfect labor. I am lucky to have the young so sympathetic and helpful this year.

As for summer readings, the lads suggested Molière (or Wycherley) Jonson, and a modern—perhaps Shaw or the trifling PRIMROSE play, or the NIGHT OFF affair. We have not decided yet whether to keep the old-play-revived in the week of assembly, where it is announced, or to put it earlier in order to illustrate techniques based on commedia dell'arte roots. The lads also suggested, and I think shrewdly, that it might be a good idea to have old Chaplin films, from the time when Charlie was really still using the old methods more; a company in Buffalo, Mendelowitz tells me, has a supply of them in fair condition. I should like still better to get Savo's film done for Hecht and McArthur, ONCE IN A BLUE MOON; it is better dell'arte technique than Chaplin's and lovely as well. Hatlen is now for sheer need of funds, teaching at Idaho, and Temple is feeling spring by getting fractious at the mere idea of classes and discipline—so I shall have to do that writing too, no doubt. The exhibits will be Margaret's old programs of the Bonstelle group, already set for the library cases, with pix of some of the people in their young years—you should see Melvin Douglas at twenty—milk-fed infant goat! Temple also thinks he can get a number of pix of Eddie Collins, the old veteran comic who has been in BLUE BIRD with Shirley, to give him a set of character photos and even costumes—that would be fun for the museum; I am, however, so tired that I simply dread the very idea of struggling with... all the arranging. You will probably fancy that there is a hell of a lot of movie stuff in the picture this year—but if we can use it with rationality, we might as well, while we have an approach!

The judges are all in order; to be sure that I had people near at hand to do the reading first, I decided after a good deal of dillydallying to ask the visiting instructors in speech to help out on plays (one is an ass, but with a potent position at home, and apparently has to be cottoned to, and the other really is they say a good soul), and after Drummond of Cornell refused with pleasant regrets because he had been ill and was trying to convalesce—to make the newly willing Morrison, who is no slouch as a critic, do his part for the Gray Award. I have not heard a squeak from the McGaws since I sent them the annos I thought they'd want; but this year is the last I bother with them, I think; so they don’t matter. For verse drama then, we have Orson Welles as director-actor representative; George Peavey of Hawaii (the nice soul) as academic man; Emily Balzer as actress graduate of London Art School. For comedy, Fontanne as actress-director; Thatcher Alred of Utah as director; Bob Brauns as director. I am in a good deal of a pickle here because Bob is going off to his eternal dance recital for two weeks from April 29 to May 10, just the time the final reading should be speeded; he said, when given his choice of
matter to judge, that he would just as soon do verse, which would in a way be better since there is no scramble about getting that out in time for performance, whereas comedy is to be put on as a play. Should you—considering how things are—add him to the verse list and get someone else to do comedy? Trick is that Welles may not be trustworthy about sending up an answer, whereas I think Fontanne will be business-like. Well, anyhow—for criticism Brooks Atkinson of The New York Times, Charlton Laird as academic man, Roland Morrison as director. I feel very feeble about facing the reading without your sound decisions and rapid reading on the spot; no amount of sending down bundles is going to equal talking over the stuff. However, the early date for closing is better off for everything else all around; so perhaps I should not Repine Unduly.

Would you advise four judges under any circumstances? That means more waiting and more stumbling around, I think.

I am somewhat pleased with the back page of the anno, which we did not have last year because I fancied we might send some of the things off by one-cent stamps. This fourth page took time, but was worth it, since it pleased the department and Heffner, and according to report has already persuaded one person to come here as a student this summer; the list of sources at the foot, tossed in, looks as if we were so self-confident that we could afford to be off-hand! If only everybody knew how Heff [chair of the Stanford drama department] had to see Briggs and shift programs and fuss to get any drama on the English program at all this year!—since Kennedy had given us all the impression that Heff wanted to teach all the drama himself, we were all laying off very strongly, and had to be brung back by appeal after the first announcement was ready. Assembly Week looks very full and pompous, even with the few things we have certainly under our hats, and with the improvements bound to occur, it should do well. The book show frankly is a pipe dream, but I am pretty sure we can get Brentano and some of the others agitated, since the publishers are all getting into the habit of sending letters asking whether we do not wish to have their representative talk to our classes about publication? The Stanford Press will have a fit, anyhow, since they have just published Mrs. Hazel Glaister Robertson's book on children's theatre—a very good book too—and will welcome any show to push it. So many things are turning up anyhow that we may welcome the Tuesday in which to put them. The Tuesday evening concert is set as usual, with Chester assuring me that they have seized a date from us, and I for once being unscarable because I knew all about it first, and in fact count on the concert as a very pleasant addition to the week. I am not pleased with the tentative subject for the session on director's problems, and I wish you could find time to tackle that yourself, by letter or otherwise. Would putting on the original play be better? Ralph Schram and Mrs. McDonald have just put on a Scotch play by one of Bob's actors, the Scotch doctor, and are probably popping with
excitement about it. On the other hand, that seems sudden and a far cry from last year's choosing the play. Would plays in limited space be better, with Edwin Duerr of Berkeley, who plays in that awful Wheeler Hall, the chief attraction? We don't want to forget that we are talking with directors in order to help writers; will that help writers? (What I had in mind in suggesting casting was the problem of the play with endless casts of people speaking two lines, the difficulties of doubling, etc.) One more suggestion is this: two people in Canada, one the head of community drama in B.C., a Major Bullock-Webster, and one a director who has worked with him, a Mrs. Firkins, have expressed their intention to come down to the Assembly; I have written asking them to plan to join the discussions, and he has agreed, but in a very general way, asking what our plans are. I think he is probably an old walrus of a man, who may be deadly; her first letter sounded better, but she has not answered mine—there may be politics or jealousy or something of which I wot nothing. I asked them both if they would not like to have a complete afternoon or evening (with a dinner to meet other directors of the region) in which they could discuss Canadian problems as they saw fit. There seems to be no specific wish for that in his vague answer and her silence. Should we try to use them in this director's session, or make another place for them in a new afternoon on starting and encouraging the community theatre? Millbrae has a promising new one, and the Mrs. Padley who found my new house for me has started one with some success in Menlo Park, and I think they would welcome ideas. We might also be able to get plays produced by new units if we showed interest in new units and bolstered them by using the Canadians as decoration for their part of it. Wot say?

The rival performance in old techniques might be done by one of these groups if we get at them early enough; otherwise we might leave that evening to the simple matter of showing the Chaplin-Savo films. I think we should not attempt another puppet show too soon. If the revival is really a play staged, we shall have to do it in the Quad little theatre, since Heff is really getting smoke-producing about the number of events in the Memorial Hall—as well he might. He requires that if he is to put on the comedy at all, he must be sure of the theatres for rehearsal, doubly difficult with a new play, all week long. I can see a delightful revival in the old little theatre—it is all it is really fit for. But what do you think? Considering the state of our weariness, it might be better to use the films, and get some rest ourselves—they require so much less management. The worst of it is that Charles Denny's film comes the very next evening, and I don't want the whole program to smack of cinema.

Charles has promised definitely to be here, ready to talk on how his film was financed and arranged, and I have heard of three other people in Sacramento and Seattle and San Mateo who ought to be interested enough in it to put in an appearance and provide discussion. I think also that Orville Goldner, who is now where he has wanted to be for years, at
the head of a new visual education unit in the state service, will come
down to talk on school-community production. That day is the conces­sion to the teachers, and I hope we get them in numbers. Still, it makes
awkward the production of Chaplins the day before, doesn’t it? Or should
we drop the revival?

Having the seminar in criticism on Friday afternoon seems best since it
is near the gala day of the week, but we could have it on Wednesday
evening quite as well. Will you review the ten best plays this year? You
must have a more prominent place on actual program than reading
essays and directing plays gives you; and whether you have been able to
follow all the arguments about all the plays or not, you will have had time
after you arrive to read them and make up your mind as to their values; it
will perhaps be a good thing that you do come up after reading is fairly
over, since the review will be a fresh viewpoint, and individual.

I have no main lecturer for Friday evening—hence the somewhat
watery (to our ear) placement of the Gray essay on the lecturer’s evening.
We might get Sheldon Cheney, but everybody sneers and says Oh, passe;
the fair is taking all Blanche Bates’s time again. Martha Graham is to be
here at Mills again this summer, but I think her interests are too far from
ours to be immediately useful, don’t you? I can’t think of a soul who
would draw such crowds that we could demand a good fee for entrance
and thus pay a big shot. Can you?

There is just one suggestion I think of: Mathilde Weil, a critic well
accredited by association with numbers of important people in New
York, who has been a literary agent in N.Y. for years, is for some reason
setting up business in S.F. She has spoken to the Penwomen of the city on
What Producers Want, and I think we might get her to do herself a stroke
of business and ourselves a service by such a plan as this one—Ask her to
come down for a small fee, say $25, to lecture on this subject, with the
understanding that she would come down for the whole day before it;
during the day she would talk over scripts which had been sent in defi­
nitely for her criticism, at a reading fee she would set. What do you think?
Naturally I should prefer someone of the stature of Simonson, though
God wot I should hope for a better lecturer. We are not, of course, obliged
to have a lecturer, but I like the idea within the plan of the week . . . .

I think we might have different people well posted on various critics
and their influence, with free play to all savage remarks; we might be able
to get Wood Soanes to come down to speak in general. But if we had one
person talking on Nathan, one on Krutch, one on Mantle, one on John
Mason Brown, it would be fun, I think—with some general side swipes
about how frightfully the boys repeat publicity stuff without real
discrimination—witness the career of Mr. Maurice Evans.

I was frankly stuck for a subject for Saturday afternoon which should
accent comedy, till I remembered that Mrs. Shephard, the woman who
brought out the first Paul Bunyan stories and who is still working on the
Margery Bailey as Mrs. Borkman (1947) in Henrik Ibsen's *John Gabriel Borkman* at the original Hillbarn Theatre in San Mateo.
Tall Tale in America, is teaching at San Jose State. She is pleasant and brisk, and full of good spirits, and could lead off talking about the exaggerated qualities of American humor; then someone else could follow with material on the early American comedies full of “character parts,” and possibly a third deal with family comedy as it rages on stage, screen, radio, and where not—and why it does so. This would be a help to the writers, and not unacademic. Question is, who after Mrs. Shephard? Heff won’t do anything; he frankly says he is learning to say no, and he says it to me while he is still helping other people with addresses of one sort or another. Do you think Louis Wann would be good? Did you hear him lecture while he was here? I think one George Savage at Washington State is an ambitious young man who would go anywhere to talk on anything; but I don’t know how good he is. I simply can’t depend any longer on Frank Fenton. Do you think we should do something else on that afternoon anyway? It may be time for a change. We might give the Gray essay then, with people prepared to challenge it by having read it before. Or we might do that at lunch and skip the critics.

The comedy definitely is to be given, so thank God I don’t need to worry as to whether it will be or not, as I did last year; with all the good will in the world, Stevens was so vague so long that I very nearly went into a catalepsy waiting for decision. As to whether there will be two other comedies or not, I don’t know; but at any rate one is to be either MERRY WIVES or HENRY IV with Heff as Falstaff. He will do it very conventionally, I think, but it will be great fun. I would we had the sperrit to be Mrs. Page and Mrs. Ford! What fun that would be.

The publications sound even more pompous than anything else, but the bulletin is the same thing as usual; I shall simply try to keep notes going day by day on a stencil so that Grace Margaret can run it off before end of summer. The PLAYERS’ NURSERY is—or was originally—to be a brochure like the Poultney book of last year, to accompany the show of old programs. But Hugh Gillis, who undertook to do it alone, is apparently the sort of man who simply gets inflamed by things he likes to do; he has planned it so well that I am supervising it as graduate work on an independent-study number. More, he decided to beard Cornell while she was here, and to our all astonishment—you remember how chill she was to Margaret years ago—she not only received him with open arms, told him all she could remember, and expressed herself warmly, but asked earnestly if she might not write a dedication or preface or something to it. If we can only earn the cash somewhere, I should like to have a photolith page or two with the old photos Margaret has, and the Cornell signature; even without that, it will certainly be a meaty bit. Hugh will have a time getting the MS out of her probably, but that is his affair, which he is quite willing to worry about alone. It is so pleasant to have someone else do a whole job himself!
THE NEWS

Architectural: All Palo Alto is a mess while the underpass gets under way; the faculty, headed by Sam Morris of the Engineering school, had the sense to petition for continuation of it to the gates, or we should have had two years of dirt and discouragement instead of this one. The buses go twice an hour only, and all the way round by the creek road to get to town; they come out by Embarcadero. The library tower gets lovelier every day; from any angle it seems to grow out of other buildings or the masses of trees, and to draw them up to itself, so that it provides the focal point we have needed so long. Tardelli my gardener has uprooted the last of the cement I want to get rid of, and the blaze of daffodils against mauve primulas and under deep pink fruit blossoms on my young trees is extremely heartening. I went mad and ordered a lot of books because the pound went down, and now I look as if I would have to have more shelving built somehow. I thought I was going to finish my cataloguing this quarter. Ho hoho. (Note-not Yo-ho-ho-ho.)

Departmental: The English department has at last taken off that inane requirement for 24 hours of advanced language, or at least allowed that the same amount of philosophy or history or writing is acceptable; more, it has arranged for a system of advising in which a small group of students goes through the hands of one person for their whole two upper years, with consequent knowledge of them by him, and possibility of arranged programs made under his supervision!!! Shakespeare has been divided into two courses, Comedies (with two famous tragedies for those who may not be able to take the other half, such as education majors and others who can spare time for but one quarter) and Tragedies, with two famous comedies ditto ditto ditto. I was told my place distinctly as one of the old and negligible when Virgil Whittaker said “You teach Shakespeare chiefly by describing plays you have seen, don’t you? Well, why don’t we divide the course so that you can do that, and leave the other half, which I’ll be teaching, to plays which require analysis?” I haven’t yet thought up a complete answer.

I have been writing for seven hours and can’t remember any more. . . .

The extant letters from Dr. Bailey to Grace Margaret Webster date from January, 1935, through January 27, 1963, disclosing particularly easy rapport between these two friends, in which Dr. Bailey reveals her private self perhaps most easily. G. M. Webster received her B.A. in English from Stanford in 1932, becoming one of the coterie of friends who continued close association with Dr. Bailey until her death in 1963. Webster was a medical secretary and, as an avocation, a skilled binder of rare books. She was also active in Dramatists’s Alliance. She died April 6, 1976.

I am grateful to Katharine Webster, her sister, for making these letters available.
TO GRACE MARGARET WEBSTER
[Postcard mailed from Los Angeles, February 25, 1939]
I am arrived in the land of pulgue and alumni, where we are all so tough we sit on cactus without a pang. . . .

TO GRACE MARGARET WEBSTER
January 4 [1941]
Friar’s Pocket cannot be represented at the housewarming because of the low state of (1) exchequer and (2) clanking knees; but the Abbess sends best wishes for the party and the new household.

James Sandoe was as avid a correspondent as Dr. Bailey herself. He had been a student of Dr. Bailey’s in the 1930s. Later he became a faculty member at the University of Colorado and the two met primarily in Ashland during the summers where Sandoe frequently acted and directed. Sandoe was nationally recognized as reviewer and critic for The New York Herald Tribune in the field of crime fiction. He died May 29, 1980.

TO JAMES SANDOE
Candlemas [February 2], 1944
Friars’ Pocket, Palo Alto
Biluffid Jas,

This is by way of being a Valentine instead of a Christmas letter, but I have at least begun the regimen of calendar which will—I trust—manage a somewhat more regulated trickle of information to the extreme few who have the patience to write to me.

My delays have been in part physical, in part professional. I have reached them years in which one goes to a party or to a city matinee, one “Rests” the day afterward, staggers to classes the day after that, and winds up with a migraine head which would tear a cat to make all split, the day after that. I am enchanted to be now so definitely aged that children—even in these days, and in Palo Alto, home of the brash—stand up in the bus to let me lower the carcass to a folded position; but as usual, you can’t have anything without paying for it, and I am paying for the happy independence of age by having to endure its inferior biological aspects. It is possible that were I less a patriot I should get along better; but what with the enforced patriotism of carrying my own groceries and butcheries and standing in line for hours to show ration books (not to speak of sitting in freezing corners of shops after calling a taxi to take me and the week’s stuff home, and waiting there for 40–70 minutes), and what with the voluntary patriotism of trying to teach composition to army engineers, the end of last quarter on January 1 found my hide on the fence. The excellent Mose [adopted cat] I do not regard as a drag, since
the six hours weekly I spend in making his porridge is small payment for the company he is and the exquisiteness of his truly cavalier manners (his final name has become Moses P. G. Knight) but all this means more time spent in doing things one did not have to do before, and having less energy to do anything else afterwards. Last quarter saw 50 in Shakespeare class, eight in comedy, 20 in engineering composition; no assistant to be had for love or money in our own department, so I finally garroted a very intelligent psychology major who bestowed on me twelve hours a month—more than she could afford. The only thing to do is to keep the mind off it, or ensues—nightmares. I had forgotten how interesting composition was, and enjoyed it much, as I liked the engineers much—but the two together were impossible. The classes differed, as they always do in civilian groupings, and mine seems to have been a low one; all but four of the 20 have been rolled out since autumn.

Much of the draining exhaustion you see on every faculty face is the result of such panicking work or simply of the feeling of frantic pressure which the army occupation brings with it. Last quarter there were 5000 people stuffed on quad, and that is some 2000 more than there is room for; the military are like military in every country under the sun—they are now no longer persons since they are in uniform, but people, and they are so used to marching everywhere that they expect to march through any civilian—unless he stands and waits aside—without noticing it. They are filthy in their habits, there are no more hall waste boxes than there were in your time, there is a 50% reduced janitor staff, and the resultant plowing through knee-high waste is disheartening too. Without doubt some of my own weariness in the face of them has been the result of various battles, which are pointless and useless but fun while they last and woe and weariness of the flesh later on. There was, for instance, the war of the study-hall; next door to my office, in the daytime, a foreign-language group met for "study," which consisted of uproarious racket, and one afternoon I advanced upon same, opened the door, and observed "Army or no army, there is to be less noise in here—I am trying to get some work done. QUIET—do you hear?" Upon retreating in good order to the prepared situation, I found myself followed by a meek individual with a few stripes on its sleeve, which protested that the unit was studying; a flea was put in his ear before I observed that he must be a sergeant or something—and from that day the unit was seen in that room no more. A somewhat better technique has been employed in the evenings when I have been working in the office, surrounded by six rooms of screaming howling banging thumping crashing soldiery "studying." Taking a stiff notebook and very long pencil, I advance, upon each door in solemn silence, wait till the din has ceased and the crowd notices the stranger; then I say with horrid gravity, "What is the number of this company?"—and keep on repeating it until some intimidated
sheep says "Company L" or whatever; I write the fact apparently with a considerable note, and solemnly close the door. This is warranted to create peace for 28 minutes—punctuated by loud but sincere SHHH's of course.

The battle of the Entry to the Basement was the fiercest engagement, however. You recollect that from time immemorial the door into the basement at English Corner has been but half-opened; although I persuaded Frank Walker to put stairs in place of that idiotic slide which used to be half of the exit way outside, the crowding is still bad. As I go in of a morning or afternoon, invariably a horde of army is coming out. For some time I stood and waited for army to stream along; then I got tired of it and caused a change. Followed by a vastly amused Nancy—the assistant—one afternoon I came down the steps and kept on when I reached the door; six soldiers were assuming that I would heave backwards, but naturally one of them was in advance because of the narrow opening and me. He came on so fast that his chin was virtually in my eye, and lost his balance badly when I planted a hand flat on his midriff and said firmly, "Now see here; I am (1) a woman and (2) three times as old as you are—you just wait till I pass you." He done so—and so done the six behind, considerably packed on each other. The recalcitrant Nancy remained behind to laugh, and one of the warriors whispered to her nervously, "Is she always like that?" I never inquired what was Nancy's answer, but at least since that time there is a nice wide passageway between ranks of khaki—and no mean mockery about it—whenever I try to get in. The lads gossip a great deal, apparently, and word gets around about everything.

As to the university otherwise, things plop along—1400 girls this quarter, who make up for the reduction in army personnel. I have been of opinion from the first that the girls would be faithful to civilization and sense, and thought there would be enough of them to keep the quad fires burning. Miss Mirrielees, that exiled patriot, who went, you remember, to the wars in 1917 as a Red Cross something and was the first American woman in Germany etc etc etc etc, said all the girls would of course be in the WAC's and WAVes and so forth. I wish I'd laid a bet. True, other colleges of different nature have suffered badly; Oklahoma A & M, where Clubb holds forth, has usually 6000 students of whom more than half are girls; last fall 400 girls turned up. . . . You infer correctly that I am no friend to the female in uniform. It is difficult to see the gasping need of it so stressed at present, when the army is closing induction camps and admirals are screaming about war being over in less time than it takes to remember where the Marshall Islands are. The "Shall We Take the Fathers?" yowl is another irritation. If there were stringent need or honest reporting of effects one would keep quiet, but when it is evident that we fear frightful news of death by torture only to sell bonds, that the father draft is a congressional election gag, and the administration still pampers
labor to a degree simply staggering to the imagination, one does not feel sure that any moves or sacrifices from civilians are used for the war at all.

Rumors have been going about since 1939 that Stanford would close its doors any minute, and apparently some of the faculty were intimidated into belief of such nonsense. At any rate, at the last academic council meeting the president took some time to allay such fears, stating definitely the determination of the administration to keep open no matter whether the ASTP stopped tomorrow or not, and to keep all the faculty on the rolls through whatever difficulties might lie ahead—"We think too much of the future of this place to make any such mistake." Yet this week when Myna came down, she asked whether she could say anything to Miss Burke, who had expressed hesitation about continuing to arrange applications for the graduating girls at the school, "since Stanford was definitely closing." The new president [Wallace Sterling] is a splendid fellow, honest as day, sound as the proverbial nut—but not yet having a sufficiently thick skin. He is clearly still in that idealistic state which occupied the minds of most of us in the earlier Stanford, and is appalled by both the cynical effrontery and spite of his faculty and the outrageous impertinence of alumni correspondence. I realized after two of his gentle and hesitating corrections of complaint from faculty and alumni sources that I had come for years to take ill temper and hatred for granted as a regular expression of faculty feeling, without which one could suspect hypocrisy or over-strained repression; he can't get used to it, having still the student idea of an enlightened and honorable group of men as faculty, devoted to learning, tolerant of each other, warmly friendly and always dependable in pinches. The only thing right in all that is the pinches; I do not think that Stanford men have changed for the worse or that a new group of money and place-grabbing monstrosities have replaced the old saints. But I do recollect my extreme horror at hearing my adored Briggs say, one time when I was stressing the opinion of Murray as a sure proof that something or other must be all right, "Murray! You'll find, my dear girl, that Murray is the smartest politician on this campus!" Poor Tresidder is still in that same horrified state on discovering that we are all able politicians—or else nobodies.

He has been a little tactless about stressing the undergraduate and the liberal arts as the chief aims of the University in this administration—and the result is, that when he starts a mild little examination of the lower division (admittedly filled with flaws), and views kindly a suggestion that we have a four-year college inside the University, he gets stacks of mail screaming that he is forsaking (or murdering, or obliterating, or deserting, or maiming, or ignoring, or degrading) the graduate school. He denies this now too much—in fact lets us all see too easily that he is affected by all this ugly criticism outside and the ugly backbiting inside. He reminds me of nothing so much as of Planty Pall when he became
prime minister and found that he could do little and was excoriated much.

The Carradine performances were very interesting, though even more amateurish in spots than the Thornton company's were. The direction was supposed to be by Carradine himself, but one Michael Jeffreys was listed as directing manager; whoever did the work, some of it was intelligent and very thoughtful, some of it clumsy and vulgar beyond belief. This is to the credit of all—there was not a breath of Hollywood in the whole thing. The sets were John Barrymore's old ones, the costumes were economical to a fault, the props ditto; there was no playing the swagger on the part of the "star."

You would have rejoiced to see the MERCHANT, the best of their offerings, on which a good deal of color was expended in back curtains and added costumes. The Shylock was played down very carefully—simply an old meanie and not sufficiently the miser to my taste, but thank God not a tragic Hero—and the young people were the play.

I have developed the very pleasant habit, when coming home half dead, but refusing to wallow into dinner-getting while in that state, of merely putting on water to boil or hamburg to reheat in the oven, and sitting down with the papers and the decanter for a decent and much-recruiting half hour. Fattening, alas, but peaceful. Fattening also, alas ditto, are the stuffs which one must consume on the 16 points allowed a single human being, even though supporting a star boarder from the Papal Choir. Curried eggs, macaroni, the only meat one gets—pork—lay on the pounds like nucoa; and as I can walk only seven blocks at the outside, exercise is a thing of the past. Wallowing on floors and waving legs never took an ounce from my frame. You would be astonished at the supine quality of my existence: up in the dark at 7:30; half an hour getting coffee and oranges ready, feeding the Star Boarder, and getting a bath—that's 8; fifty minutes to absorb breakfast and endeavor to come alive, forty minutes to dress and wrestle with the aging hairs, which are also supine and sloppy as old people's hair is, and want to lie down all the time; tramp to the bus and wait in the goddamndest chill, finally arriving half an hour later for a ten o'clock. People wonder that I do not enjoy the early morning hours. In my opinion they are meant for slumber, not galloping in, and I consider—especially in winter—ten to be a reprehensibly early hour at which to hold class. Two classes; then lunch in the office with Chester (except on those days when he lunches with his department or the humanities staff), since the union is so crowded and the food so minute in quantity that it is a chore to get up there and suffer. The afternoons this quarter are open, since we were advised seminars are out of fashion, and the only one I give I squeeze in at 10–12 on my open day, Tuesday; I mail answers to inquiries, correct all my own papers this
quarter, get out one or at most two letters which have been waiting answer since last fall—and it is five o’clock, time to walk to the engineering corner in order not to stand all the way home on the bus; you can now tell the asses from the intelligent by the people who still wait at the oak for the bus, and never fail to look disheartened at seeing it crammed to the roof when it arrives there. I visit nobody, I go nowhere, and still time goes by like lightning.

The one person I have visited has been Jean Adams, of whom without doubt your Mother has told you. It was a pleasure to be with her, hideous as the obviously rapid dissolution was, because the spirit was infectiously gay and interested as ever; I had taken her murder mysteries when she asked for them, till she said mildly that she had to go slow on them because the morphine seemed to make them into vague oppressions that she had to keep warding off all night, and the discovery that she had read but two of Trollope, and liked him, made a new supply of reading a simple matter. I can imagine nobody better for a death bed than Trollope: his sanity, his shrewd penetration of pretense, and the unending up-buoying sense of amazing vitality would keep your mind happily living when everything else was slipping away. I added my petitions, naturally, to those of everybody who knew her, that it would be soon, and yet did not realize when she gaily said that Clayton was coming on furlough, that she had sent for him. Fortunately he was still here when she died early last Thursday, in the low hours when people so often let go at last and start off alone. I find myself mourning with an inward intensity which gets the best of me in spite of discipline, and have muffed a week’s classes very sadly since I can’t keep my mind fixed on them; but the mourning is all quite selfish—nobody in his senses would wish to have had that marvellous courage and spirit racked for a single hour needlessly. . . .

TO GRACE MARGARET WEBSTER
Sunday [1947]
Dear Grace Margaret,

I departed in such a hurly-burly of scuttle in the fear of missing bus as well as train that I fear I did not tell you clearly how pleasant an evening last night was. For much of a week I have felt like the exhumed skeleton of a dead rat, ill articulated and probably smelly; but the evening was—as all of you tired creatures were aware (Proctor being dead on his feet, poor lamb, and you probably in internal knots again from exhaustion)—was wonderfully revivifying, and after a half day of sleep following the two hour bus ride home, I have no convinced objection to living as of this moment.

It is wonderfully exciting to a person from dull uncultivated university pedantry circles to come into a room full of ideas and good talk and fresh expression. I have often wondered why Stanford faculty people are so
excessively dull, and wonder more every time I meet some of the young fry from the state colleges, who are far more on their toes. Thanks for providing phoenix fire and a solacing supper. I wish I ever did as well by you.

TO GRACE MARGARET WEBSTER  
[April 9, 1948]  
My dear love,

I do perfectly well, except for soreness naturally, and have added to the legend of the hospital in a hilarious manner which will describe when I see you; there has been moving about to bathroom and such (in spite of nurses and belly bands)—since I cannot bear bed pans. So you see I am perfectly well. ("You must not think of yourself as obese," says [Dr.] Liston—"you are immensely neurocellar and strong." I daresay, this is a wry result of bearing down on the lancets!!)

The inevitable sequela are setting up—tears, and the most LUSCIOUS and lecherous dreams—I have been saving them up, apparently!

TO JAMES SANDOE  
Saturday, Febr. 2, 1952  
Dear Jim,

The news of your Mother's going was in the paper last night; and before I go downtown to send flowers to Win I write to you. There is no point in my being sentimental, though one remembers with a pang all the pleasant times in the Hamilton Street house and the unfailing geniality which prevailed there; it is a fearful thing to live beyond one's time, and be aware of it. The excellent thing in your Mother's courage was that she did not allow herself to seem frightened or drooping, and to live for more than a year with death staring you in the face but inert about doing its duty by you, is a harrowing thing to endure.

The thing which will come hard on you and Win is something people never realize until it strikes at them; you have probably already felt the cold chill which accompanies the stark fact that there is nobody now between you and the abyss—you are now the older generation, on whom the children look as the wall between them and the inevitable. It is something one cannot imagine, and cannot convey to anyone who has not yet experienced the sensation—for it was, in my case, a distinct physical sense of having to be braced now, all alone, for the finals.

These occasions always create a sort of summing up on one's own part, if one be past 40; and I understand perfectly (thank goodness I have the wit to understand it) how singularly blessed I am, and how much I ought to put into efforts to balance the account. The Humes consider themselves my own family, and in some sense are nearer to me than to their own kin, without losing anything proper in those directions; the
Dillingers regard me as a sort of aunt, and lately, through the alumni lecture-visits south, I have come to be very closely intimate with the young Jim Algars and their brood of four boys and a girl. I am petted by the young in the Alliance business and in the amount of assistance I get in the office; and even the general public has an air of spreading the carpet which staggeres me considerably: in January the Drama department asked me to give a ballad recital in the little theatre, and both the managing faculty man McKelvey and I thought that some 60 or so might turn up. Three hundred were squeezed into stage and seats of the auditorium and 200 were turned away, with comic grumbling next day. I am still puzzled—unless it be that they all think I am older than I feel I am, and had better evince interest while I still waggle about!—And all one does for this is to lecture like mad (I have really learned how to lecture incisively at last, I think), read original plays, knit armor for Ashland, and trot about with the young. Alas, I have never learned to be all things to all men, and cannot give up privacy for the sake of every juvenile passerby, as a decent faculty person should; I am going to be a-social till I am no more, and I am too tired to pay or receive calls. It is an oddly indirect sort of existence, but dash it all, the best I can do.

Virgil Whitaker is making an excellent head of department, cutting down silly waste such as the girls's leaving Friday noon from the office, and yet Johnson having a special student to check library files; alas, he gives away all too simply the fact that the department has been run too long, and continues to run, on a spy system—"I hear you are assigning a weekly paper," he writes, "so you will need considerable assistance." I don't mind the implication, though I told him, distinctly, that if I took over the 18th century again on Work's departure, it would be taught as literature, not as preparation (with quizzes) for graduate examinations; especially I don't mind it in consideration of the fact that the considerable assistance he believes to be worth $50 of department time!

TO PHILLIP PERSKY
May 21, 1952
Dear Phil,

I have been remiss in not showing you how glad I am that you are returning—happy news that your next to last letter held.

You will find hot weather awaiting you, I fear. Last Monday all the seminar room doors had to be left open, and all transoms; an indication of the new Youth Movements occurred in the middle of class because of this wide-open effect. One of the transoms (letting in upon the next room, 200 N) began to close; I went in to ask that it be left open for air. The pimply youth involved in his books stood up grudgingly to open it, but in the act
demanded, "Haven’t you any other windows in that room?" I fear you will find my answer characteristic in the worst way: "Young man, do not cross-examine me; I need that transom open for air. That is my office, this is not your room; there are in fact others to which you should go." He went.

It is largely because of this independence of the adorable student and my equally lovable colleagues, whom I do not in general call by the first name, that I have come to my final cropper. I don’t remember whether I told you that the chairman asked me to drop 344 C and give Introduction to Drama, in order to bring numbers of students into the department? Or that I answered to the effect that my sem was three quarters long, had been so announced, and would remain so, and that I would take on the lower-division class extra if he wished? His reply should have been my warning signal: "Sorry we cannot tempt you to give the drama class, since you know more about it than the rest of us; and I confess I have always thought you more successful with undergraduates than with graduate classes."

... This is the 16th year I have been an associate professor only; I am to be so until I retire. The appointment notice which arrived two weeks ago reads, "You are reappointed associate professor for the next four years, 1952–56, at [a raise of $300 in salary which has been coming to me for the three years past]." Usually in the last five years the solid teacher is ranked as professor, if not before, merely to give him increase of notable funds in the pension—as one throws a bone to the old dog by the fire; but not the wicked monster Miss B. The thing that rankles is the full professorship of that ass J. S., or the other ass, or the other ass—while I am of the rank of children, whom I have taught as freshmen. The foundations pour out money to find out what is the matter with college teaching. This is what’s the matter. Departments appoint merely the pedants and politicians, and relegate the solid teachers to the basement. No man with a family can risk teaching well; he won’t get promoted.

This is too glum for such extended treatment. There is nothing to be done about it so long as the president either knows not the facts or has introduced a new scheme of promotion....

The week is alive with theatricals: BRIGADOON at the community theatre; FIRST LADY at Millbrae; GOOD-BYE MY FANCY at Redwood; NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH at Menlo. You will be glad to hear that I went to the S.F. State College OTHELLO last week and found it passionately acted on a line of direction and interpretation of lines which was new, vital, and effective. Many of the minor characters were beardless infants, as they always are in schools, but the grasp of the play was admirable, and the Iago very nearly perfect. The Othello was dark, winning, majestic, and agonized in really frank and touching manner, but his gesture was at times monotonous. Let us draw the veil over the Desdemona; the Emilia was very fine. I can’t imagine why they pick the
best girls for the Emilia and let nothing in particular play D. This one was old enough to be mother to the rest of the cast. But you must wait till you arrive to hear of the MACBETH at Monterey, in the course of the ANTA festival; it requires gestures to make you believe it.

..........................................................

TO MYNA BRUNTON HUGHES
23 Febr. 1953
Dear MBH,

..........................................................

At any rate, do not lean on me for either one of the commentators. I cannot seem to get through your heads that much of the remoteness about Dramatists's Alliance in Paly is the too-frequent accent on that eternal Bailey woman. And notice that when last year I hoped to be in the background, circumstances made it a virtual necessity for me to be far too much in the public eye—reviewing as planned, but also reviewing when J... gave out, and scraping plates in full view of the onlookers to boot. I am admittedly thin-skinned, and the pert joke of J... and his friend go under my hide far more than it was meant to do; but the joyous shrieks of laughter on the part of all of you at Governors' meeting was the giveaway. One should always be alert to enjoyment of satire—it is educational. Nothing would persuade me to appear on a program of Dramatists's Alliance this year, even if it meant losing assembly program, or replacing someone who had died on the floor, much less fainted stupidly. There is a limit to the jackassery which one can accomplish; and nothing is so fatal to an organization as having a comic old party thrust forward as the chief representative of it.

..........................................................

(To Oliver: Arp-arp, wff! Grr-yi-yi-yi; wff! wff!)

It is necessary to include a portion of a memorandum sent by Myna Hughes to understand Dr. Bailey's letter of March 31.

Sunday
March 29, 1953

To: Dr. Bailey; Miss Wattenberger;
Mr. Persky of Dramatists's Alliance
and Theatre Bond

It is with considerable fury that I have cancelled my plans for Palm Sunday afternoon in order to get in the mail before evening the enclosed. Fury because I can see no good reason for needless duplication of effort, waste of time, and waste of postage. ... Brock is interested in a reply from Dramatists's Alliance officially not from any chairman of any committee. I considered my functions at an end following my report of last Sunday

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when those to PUT ON THE PROGRAM were selected and following my directing to them, Brock’s questions which only they could adequately answer.

......

Your obedient servant.

[Myna Hughes]

TO MYNA BRUNTON HUGHES
Tuesday, March 31st. 1953
Dear Myna,

I am taking into consideration your age, your probable physical state and its effects on your disposition, and your life as a child of many loving people who were willing to be your slaves. But this must be understood at once, and clearly. You are not to address me in the terms of your latest letter, again.

Since three people, who were (except for Betty) not at all responsible for the Monterey plans, spent an entire afternoon working out what you should have shaped with your committee, and since it was clearly headed impersonally memorandum, so that it could be sent to any one from anyone without embarrassment, there was no need whatever for you to engage in fury, cancel appointments in a hysterical manner, and spend another afternoon on it. Please observe that my covering letter stated distinctly (paragraph four) *If you wish to copy this off*. There was no necessity to do more than write a brief covering note and slip the thing in the mail.

......

I also had to give up a day’s work (not amusements or Social Obligations) in order to get this thing together.....

TO MYNA BRUNTON HUGHES
Monday 18 May 1953
Dear MBH,

......

We think of Theatre-Bonding to Los Gatos on Friday May 29, to see James Clancy and Patricia Beaudry in THE SEAGULL. Dinner at Hotel Lyndon at 6, $2.25 all told, and tickets (I think) $1.20. Will you consider whether you want to come *mit*, whether you want to bring Grace Margaret? It is arena staging, but good, I actually like their stuff—Can you say *yes* or *no* on the 24th at Braunses?

TO GRACE MARGARET WEBSTER
[Christmas card, 1954]
My lamb,

...... I have found that all relatives seem to people’s friends like third-rate,
ill-conceived characters in a badly written book. To my sister's friends I was a dragon spitting poison what time I was not an iceberg wrecking all near it; and to my friends (as to me more than often) she seemed unbelievable. So I simply cannot begin to try to understand your father who seems compounded of Victorian Way-of-all-flesh tyranny and a childish inability to see the actual world as it is. As for McCarthy and his cohorts—!!

TO VIRGIL WHITAKER
6 April 1956
Dear Virgil,

. . . .

I am happy to offer felicitations on the summer school post at Harvard; that is a feather in your cap and the university's. Please do not, however, teach the young idea in the east that the ghost in Hamlet is a demon; it shows an inattention to the play's construction which is fatal. . . . .

Mrs. Jones asked me for you whether I had a copy of the Tuesday evening address to send you, since somebody asked for it at some meeting or other. I never speak from written pages—a deadly practice; and I see no reason why there should have been a tape recording, as several sentimentalists have suggested. The Daily had—for a wonder—a report without major nonsense obliterating the ideas. So did the Palo Alto Times. Dean Nora Coy has written to me asking for the text of the world-shaking remarks, and I judge she is the person who asked you for a copy. This is another good natured sentimentalist, a Theta in my own class. I am sending her the Daily review, and I think that will satisfy everybody.

One of my comments was a statement of the disgusting truth that politics seemed to be replacing both scholarship and teaching, to say nothing of true cultivation. It was unkind to stress the fact in a year when George has made the office something of what it was when Alden was head—quietly efficient, unchangeably kind, courteous without palaver, unflaggingly considerate, tactful, and discreet—and hence as effective as any steam roller that ever was—if not more effective. He makes a wonderful head. . . .

(I have, by the way, never heard a peep from the main offices about the letter you wrote announcing that you thought I might keep my re-built hallway-with-transoms; I am blandly assuming that silence means consent. At least no parking could take place here, and I understand that parking is the acute problem.)

I must get a record of the great chorus from Beethoven's opera [Fidelio]—"Freiheit, freiheit!"—I can't sing it, and every week the idea of it rises higher in

Yours affectionately,
A series of "family portraits," kindly supplied by Angele Bailey of Walnut Creek, first cousin to Margery Bailey, and by Mrs. George Crane of Palo Alto, shows Dr. Bailey from young womanhood in 1913 to 1956, the year of her retirement from Stanford University.
Probably 1930s
TO GRACE MARGARET WEBSTER
5 November 1956
Well, my girl!

To assure you that I am coming East, I beg to inform you that I have
(airmail special delivery enclosing same for return) ordered from Sol
Hurok 2 seats at $4.15 mezzanine space for TROILUS AND CRESSIDA;
RICHARD II; MACBETH; and ROMEO AND JULIET.

I shall come on the somewhat slow absolutely through train on which
one need not change at all in Chicago. Either I travel on Xmas day or stay a
day in N.Y. before proceeding to Washington for the meeting. It is 18
years since I have been to the East—fancy how provincial I shall be!

I leave tomorrow for L.A. where I lecture on 2 sequent Thursdays to the
medical school, which is being made cultural apparently! Much love and
anticipation of holidays, and all the felicitations due to you!!

TO JOSEPH MALTBY
[Nov. 23, 1956]
Dear Jo,

Mr. Loftis was much impressed by your thesis, and said its critical
quality and expression were worthy of dissertation levels. He mentioned
as well a paragraph or sentence in which you forgave All, apparently, and
was impressed by that too. I haven’t managed to get around to the dean’s
office to lap it up as yet, but I shall, never fear.

I am obliged to have an assistant at Ashland this summer—someone
with a car, who has patience and humor for standing my short temper,
who can stand putting up exhibits by the Hour—etc. Cash can’t go beyond
$200 for six weeks, July 15–August 30. If necessary July 21 could be
beginning date—not later.

Could you consider it? You would enjoy the season and the work
would be rewarding. Let me hear as soon as you possibly can, will you?

TO THOMAS SELLER
Thanksgiving Day, 1956
Dear Tom,

This is a day which always holds a peculiar gravity for me, and in 1956 it
merits a more than usual seriousness of meditation on the bounties and
benefits which have marked my days.

Retirement itself is a boon, but the glowing warmth of affection which
produced the gifts marking the occasion is the thing which has been my
deepest source of reflection this fall. When I was working with the
students of 1929–1938 I had a strong suspicion that I would never see
another group so astonishingly and alertly remarkable, as I had never seen anything to approach the lot of you before that time. Perhaps the climax was indeed the offshoot of the first years, the wonderful summer of 1936. I have been grateful ever since for the 30s, and fortunately I have wits enough to realize the intensity of my good luck in having so many of you within arms’s reach, as it were.

Without forced alumni rituals or even constant correspondence, a strong link still exists among us all—the stronger for being silent and taken for granted, perhaps. Never forget, if you feel remote, a little dryly alone, that Seller is a magic word in the ears of the rest of us, as Brauns and Sandoe are, I know, in yours.

This must be your family now, as it has been mine for 20 years. It is a wonderfully glowing and immediate one really, always warmly aware of the quiet inner relationship. As you grow older you will feel its influence and silent connection even more than you do now, I think.

I am grateful to you all, for everything, and to the kind, constant, loyal and tender spirit called Thomas Seller I particularly return a thankful grace to the Master and Giver.

TO GRACE MARGARET WEBSTER
Thanksgiving Day, 1956
Dear GMW,

This is a suitable time for expressing my sharp awareness of all the goods I have been blessed with in an uneven and somewhat fretful life. Retirement is much; the generous gifts from all of you signaling the great event were more; but in all, I think my greatest sense of blessing comes in knowing that you are well on your way. Thanks to you for your share in the summer presentations; more thanks for your courage and decisiveness in creating a life which is to me a constant source of gratified admiration and stimulation.

I shall be arriving to look upon a segment of it in late December. At present I am not positive whether I can stop first in New York, proceed to Washington for the meeting of MLA, and then return (to N.Y.), or whether some other jockeying for position of dates and travel will be best.

Anyhow, I have eight tickets for the Old Vic people at the Wintergarden, all in the mezzanine at an idiotic price of $4.15 each....

Will you be out of debt or otherwise free enough to pay these prices? I can’t pretend to be fairy godmother these days, alas! However, I can do 2/3 if you can afford but 1/3. Pooh for security and possible future hospital bills!

I have done nothing about the modern plays, since I assume you will have seen them all by December. I have no particular yen for the over-praised FAIR LADY, and shan’t attempt to see more than ANNE FRANK, in which a June graduate from Stanford is now playing the sister, and
LONG JOURNEY.

. . . . I'll be letting you know what, then, where, more definitely in a week or so.

TO PHILLIP PERSKY
16 January 1961
Fillippo mio—
O, O, O, O, O, O, O!!!

WHAT a package! WHAT a remembrance! WHAT a nice warm cozy double-blanketed time in the rain (if any ever comes again in this droughty area) and in the chill of summer Ashland nights!!!!!!!

Oh MY

The big box—oddly lightish in weight—arrived on December 29, and I resolved to keep it for a New Year's surprise; then on New Year's Eve I had worked so long at the office that I was flat, and stayed flat the next day—and this was not the spirit in which to greet a buxom box from Italy. So I put it in full sight with a red bow ten inches across, fastened to one corner, and enjoyed its existence till January 6—which I need not remind you, and the song implies, is the last of the 12 days of Christmas.

So it got opened, and I thought it was going to prove a Roman blanket. I unfolded and unfolded and unfolded and unfolded, and FINALLY I SAW A COLLAR and knew what it was. Oh Philly! It was better than all the talking hens and maids a-milking and lords a-leaping—in short, better than all the 12 days of Christmas and the partridge on the pear-tree. Oh gracious! It is big enough to go around even me, twice over; and when one pulls it close across the back, one can sit with virtually two layers of blanket over the knees. Heaven bless the Loden, whether that name is the village or the style of the weaver or whatever. The main fact is that every-time I look at it in the front closet, let alone put it on, I am virtually holding my hands out to the warm fire of kindness and affection and remembering of the long history of getting me a new cape! I don't even feel a chill at thinking what you paid for it in lire! Not being able to wait for a rain or an extra cold day, I wear it to go to the post box at night, and if I could purr I should be rattling the windows of the entire block.

Well. From this incomplete and tepid rendering of bliss, you can see what a success your holiday present was. . . .

Written after seeing a performance of Measure for Measure at Stanford University. Before going to Stanford, James Clancy had for many years directed plays at San Jose State College.

TO JAMES CLANCY
9 June 1962
Dear Jim,
My chief response to the play was an awful feeling that our responses to it looked like collusion! What saved the situation was my awful positiveness about the play's not being funny. The fun, especially in the Duke—even in prosing in beautiful verse to Claudio about life and death—quite re-created the play for me—and there is nothing so wonderful as seeing fresh and newly vivid Shakespeare. The close reading you gave ALL the lines produced fine effects (especially the Duke's exhausted "Friar, advise this man")—I have not laughed so hard for months. You were very lucky in your Isabella, who was at once sensitive (but not priggish) and sturdy; her costume was a great help to her, giving solidity without ponderousness, and Risso's dull olive costume under the black law robes made all sorts of suggestions. I have not yet got over Escalus, whose dignity and warmth and rich-voiced humor made him the whole person he ought to be, and not just a kind old bore; his officer without a word made a part merely by his make-up and his secretarial hunch-up shoulders. The general feeling was that these were individuals with personal responses, not people mouthing sentiments. Brauns sat beside me enchanted, with his mouth slightly open all evening. He had a year's touring in Shakespeare, and cannot be persuaded to put on one of the plays; I was delighted to see his conversion—the most telling remark was, "It's good to see a production that makes you see the play as new, and gives you thoughts of doing it yourself some time." Imagine—M. for M.!

I was perhaps chiefly moved by the terrible explicitness—done with control and discretion—of Risso's attack on Isabella. The degrees leading up to it—his excellent struggle to know what is happening to him, his sudden removal of the legal headgear, so that one quite jumped at seeing thick, young, black hair and believed what was to come; the pulling off one sleeve of the robe, still arguing, and casting all of it off so that the light silk figure moved you to sympathy for the symbolic death he had been living in the maw of the courts. Wonderful symbolism through costume. And the girl, losing her headdress in Angelo's angry clutch, picking it up wearily and then appearing in all later scenes with her brown hair flowing—this got rid of the novice business early on, and also gave scope for her human weaknesses. I thought her struggle to plead for Angelo was magnificently timed and paced—you could see the anguish of giving up her detestation; and it was quite clear that she was not doing it for Mariana's sake, but for principle's and spirit's sake. Mariana was a bit dry, but she understood what was required of her: the dance was a little pathetic as it should have been, and when Angelo went out ignoring her to their wedding, her little kind, tender run after him was delicately moving.

I am beginning to believe that Risso is a heroic actor, or (as in his Henry VI Suffolk and his Angelo) a mature man in actual throes of passion he can't master. I did not approve of his rather jumpy and self-conscious Hamlet, which had no princeliness whatever. The basic emotions are
what his racial inheritance teaches him. In a few years he'll tear the theatre apart as LEAR. But he'll never do a delicate and tender Romeo with violent thrashing through at intervals.

I was satisfied to see that both audiences and cast seemed grateful for having really worthwhile theatre on that stage.

TO PAULINE JEIDY
24 October 1962
Mrs. Pauline Jeidy
Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Ventura County, California
Dear Mrs. Jeidy,

I am very deeply touched by your invitations to attend and assist conferences in Ventura or the sister cities, and embarrassed to realize that I must seem uninterested or indifferent to your ambitious programs by repeated refusals to take part in them.

But the fact is that I am 71 years of age and riddled with arthritis—specifically in the knees and feet on which one must be propped for lecturing; it has taken me over three weeks of complete rest and dosing to get over the demands of the Shakespeare summer, and I cannot risk engagements which may produce another effect of the same kind. Even if I commanded a car and managed a simple method of traveling, the extreme nervous tension which I am apparently not strong-willed enough to control would create exhaustion; that creates a general acidity, and that urges on arthritis in the most useful joints.

To be sure that I am not merely tired and hypochondriacal, I consulted a gruff and truthful doctor, who admitted the duties of my position, but decided that at my age the first duty is to reasonable well-being. If I am to have it, he thinks more rest and less medicine is the sovereign panacea. Four or five hours a day is the limit for me—who used to go at the rate of anything from eight to 16! If I push myself to complete a job of simple editing, or keep at it too long, down I go again.

This is a lengthy letter of the type to be found from Geriatric Resorts, where conversation is limited to exchanges of symptoms. I have written at length to assure you that I go nowhere to address conferences or professional sessions, and limit my activities to the Shakespeare Institute, to which I owe my only obligations after the year of retirement. Accept my apologies and thanks, and believe me ever

Yours most sincerely,

TO GRACE MARGARET WEBSTER
27 January '63
Dear Grace Margaret,

Now—what shall we do to get you off to the haunts of Yurp?

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Could you bring yourself to borrow from a bank or the favorite brother, and go off when Myna does, this summer? You are so used to each other that even the terrible nervous strain that invariably exists between fellow travelers could be got over, I think. She is a hardy little creature. I could no more dream of hiking about by myself in a car alone in a strange country than fly—even if I could drive! Between your singularly hardy courage and Myna’s bustling impetus, I find my “image of myself” (what a piece of jargon that is!) to be something on the order of one of those electric light bugs—the clumsy things that have all sorts of armor, and keep falling upside down and waving their silly legs foolishly in air (When you step on them, though, the shell puts up a good resistance!).

TO SISTER MARY HUMILIATA
March 5, 1963
Sister Mary Humiliata, I.H.M.
Immaculate Heart College
2021 N. Western Avenue
Los Angeles, 27, Cal.
Dear Madam President:

I am full of regret that I am obliged to refuse a second time your kind invitation to participate in the college’s spring drama program. It would be, as you know, something very close to my chief interests, and, of course, would be a delightful occasion for a visit to you all. But the lack of energy which caused my first refusal a year or two ago is even greater at present, and rheumatism has caused a lameness of foot which makes physical activity painful and creative of nervous tension. I have been, in fact, advised by those who know that I should limit myself to the admittedly onerous duties owing to the Ashland Festival, and in obedience to this advice, I have already dropped Dramatists’s Alliance, after a quarter of a century devoted to it, and have ceased to carry on my effort to serve theatre in the area by the notices of Theatre Bond.

I daresay I shall end up in one of those dreadful new “senior citizen resorts,” but I persist in my limited housekeeping because I like to be independent. The Way of the World should be a good representative of the Restoration spirit for actors and audiences, and I shall be thinking particularly of you all on your date of May 12, which is my 72nd birthday. The best of good luck to the enterprise, and my sincere and apologetic regret.

TO PHILIP PERSKY
Thursday, 14 March [1963]
Caro Philippo amabile e grazioso,
This is a late day to send my happy thanks to you for the truly noble
M. C. Bradbrook, a scholar from Oxford's Gerton College, is shown examining a book from the library of the Institute of Renaissance Studies, as Institute Director Margery Bailey looks on. The photo was taken in 1959.
party at Persky Place; it has taken all this time for the dinner and its weighty effects to settle down to normal (Scales, 201).

You should be, as far as man below in this Vale of Tears can be, a comfortable and satisfied person; observe that I do not say happy, since happiness is a state far too much exaggerated by romantics, and one which rarely is recognized for what it is in its few transitory moments—a passing glow in the general labor of existence. Wonderful was the day that I met the 17th century, with its apparently cold persuasion that the worst of life was to recognize that one is uneasy, and the best of it an enjoyment of serenity or content, which have been reached by the sane creature’s discipline of his will and his senses.

. . . . .

Following is an undated poem by Margery Bailey.

The Old Mad Wag to a Young One
Mourning and grief must fade
Excellent jests endure;
More strong than love, it is laughter gives
Communion sure.
Ignore the click of time
Heed not the trivial breath
We shall be very merry in your mind
After my death.
From the time that Margery Bailey and Angus Bowmer met at Stanford University in 1940 until her death in 1963, these two continued an uneasy, colorful, frustrating, and wonderfully productive relationship. Had they not met, no doubt the Oregon Shakespearean Festival in Ashland, Oregon, would still be flourishing as America's finest. But there is equally no doubt that it would be decidedly different.

This selection begins with a letter addressed to the Board of Directors. It serves as an excellent summary of achievements and goals of the Festival and gives the reader a brief overview of the Festival's history through 1960. Thereafter, the letters, which are less than one-third of her correspondence on Ashland, are ordered by date. Much of the later correspondence is with William Patton, General Manager of the Festival. I am greatly indebted to him for making the correspondence available to me.

29 November 1960
Board of Directors
Oregon Shakespeare Festival and Institute

Dear Sirs:

It is not unwise, I believe, at the present time to arrive at some distinct statement of the educational character of the Festival and Institute, because various events of the past ten years and financial successes of recent seasons have tended to obscure this essential element in our purposes and in our successful history.

The Festival was founded by Mr. Bowmer, himself a college professor, as a means to increase enjoyment of Shakespeare and to create a center for study of classic acting. The papers of incorporation include provision for both performing theatre and a future school of acting and Shakespearean study. This original plan took firm shape in 1947–8–9 through the addition to Mr. Bowmer's staff of Stanford graduate students as director and costumer; James Sandoe (M.A. Columbia University, assistant professor at the University of Colorado) as director; and Dr. Margery Bailey as advisory commentator. These persons were academic in training but experienced in classic theatre through acting and direct-
ing; Mr. Bowmer steadily built, with their aid, the policies which have been the underpinning of sound values in the Festival:

— to train in Shakespearean staging, and to mould into unified performance and interplay, style, and abilities, the best actors to be found for the purpose—almost exclusively through university drama departments where some beginning in classic acting had been effected;

— to teach the public how simply and directly the Shakespeare plays reveal themselves when performed on the Tudor stage for which he wrote and when performed by a cast of fresh and devoted young actors without heavy preconceptions of conventional "Shakespeare style" (i.e., the methods of the Kembles, Irving, Booth);

— to assist both of these aims by lectures on Tudor life and thought and on basic values in acting.

Plans for a year-round theatre school, not attached to any college, were the next aim, the first step in which was the foundation of a company resident in Ashland through autumn and winter, and composed largely of members in the summer Shakespeare company. The first season, largely devoted to modern drama as a variation and refreshment for the company, was increasingly successful in the old Vining theatre of Ashland. It was cut short by a fire which destroyed the theatre building and most of the Festival records and photographs; as the Vining had been the only available building suitable for theatre and school, all plans had to be reconsidered. The goals remained constant, but the means of approaching them through new educational channels remained in flux for about two years. Certain minor policies, all of which have an educational point, grew to satisfactory solidity:

— to reduce settings and properties to the barest essentials, leaving the whole impact of the play to the actors and their immediate embellishment of costume and banners, armor, swords, and austerely conventionalized thrones, benches, tree shapes. This has had the excellent effect of focusing attention on the movement and the lines of the plays themselves, and has produced a corps of imaginative and intelligent actors and directors;

— to give in each season a fixed repertory of play-types—a history play (these to be given in their historical order, not in the order of their composition by Shakespeare), a great tragedy, a familiar comedy, and one of the less well-known plays (serious or comic). To this scheme was added the performance, for only one or two nights, of such difficult and unpopular Shakespeare plays as TITUS ANDRONICUS and TIMON OF ATHENS. This resulted in the surprising discovery that, acted in the Ashland manner and on the Tudor stage, these plays had great merit and appeal—a distinct education in drama for actors, directors, and audiences. In recent seasons, all of Shakespeare's plays have been absorbed into the
regular schedule, as has the extra play of Shakespeare's contemporaries, as a means of educating actors and public in the general Tudor temper and showing the superiority of Shakespeare to the best among his colleagues;
— to experiment with lighting in order to approximate the day-time performance of Shakespeare's day and to investigate impressions to be made on audience mood;
— to extend the period of costume beyond Tudor times, and launch upon Stuart styles or (later) the styles of Spain and Italy in the first two decades of the 17th century.

It must be emphasized before leaving this time in Festival history that the firm educational basis for presenting this regular repertory (point 2 above) was maintained at considerable loss in box-office returns: the comedies made money, but the tragedies fell behind them, and the history plays frequently drew only about 200 auditors a night. The fame of Ashland as a Festival town in which the history plays can be always seen, and seen to immense advantage, has created in recent years a capacity audience for history as well as comedy and tragedy.

In the 1950s the Festival directors and Board members were obliged to decide whether their project was to turn toward professional theatre or to remain educational in purpose and scope—by the request for definite assertion of status from the Internal Revenue officials. The Festival was established to their satisfaction as a non-profit, educational project, and the Festival personnel undertook further experiments in a somewhat self-conscious wish to solidify its position. The first of these was theatrical in nature, the second academic; both were educational in purpose:

1. In line with experiments proceeding at many drama departments in leading universities, Mr. Bowmer accepted the offer of several professional actors to join the company for a summer as guest artists on fellowships. He had attempted such a move in the early years of the Ashland Shakespeare experiment, before he had assumed the corps of young directors from Carnegie Institute of Technology, Stanford, and Colorado; the results had been unhappy in that the Canadian actor who came to him was conventional in style, uncooperative, and (without thorough cause for it) condescending. Recommendations from dependable persons gave cause to feel that professional assistance might work out in these later seasons. The result, however, was the same: the professionals stood out from the general company and made no effort to create a play rather than a starring vehicle; they stood out less from any excellence than because of mannerisms and peculiarities (Bottom, for instance, was played as a worn-out nightclub entertainer; Hamlet's mother as a neurasthenic); they fought with their costumes (which the lady among them did not know how to wear and use correctly, and did not care to learn about); worst of all, they gave advice to members of the company as being capable of better direction than the director; they were unteachable in a
form which they had not experienced before and from which they could 
have learned much.

This experiment, at the behest of the Ford Foundation, was repeated in 
1959; the results were equally unhappy. The actor playing Antony was 
past learning his lines, and physically lacking in resilience and tragic 
feeling; he complained that he had not been directed so as to know what 
to do—he was 42 years of age—and sent for a Hollywood wig (which 
would mask his thick throat and romanticize his appearance) without 
regard to its inappropriate medieval form. The actor playing King John 
gave an excellent performance, but stated that he alone was the play, 
"dragging the rest of the cast after him" (a comment wholly untrue), 
indulged in a walk derived from the lanky lurchings of Henry Irving, and 
took the genuine applause of the cast on the curtain as merely his due. 
Both of these worthies gave advice to cast members, less for their sake 
(and not at all for the sake of the play) than for the augmentation of their 
own prized entrances and effects.

2. At the urgent request of the General Manager, Mr. Patton, Dr. Bailey 
undertook to develop the lectures given by Mr. Sandoe and her into a 
more formal system. The first step was a field course in Shakespeare 
offered through the English department of Stanford University, of which 
Dr. Bailey was a member, with the support and consent of the Stanford 
administrative offices. Meetings of the class, which studied both the plays 
and the performances in daily rehearsal, took space in the Ashland Hotel 
Lithia for lectures (two hours daily for a short-term course of two weeks) 
and for demonstrations by the Festival costumers and masters of make­ 
up and swordplay.

After the first year, classes met in the newly built parish hall of the Epis­ 
copal Church; after Dr. Bailey's retirement in 1956, coordination with 
Stanford University was maintained by the Department of Drama, and 
through the lively interest of Dr. Arthur Kreiseman (head of the division 
of Humanities in Ashland's Southern Oregon College) credit was also 
given to approved courses by an expanding staff of teachers, in his own 
college as well.

Students in this Institute of Renaissance Studies are for the most part 
teachers in high school and the lesser colleges; the Festival actors are not 
required to participate, but are encouraged to do so by reduced fees and 
special programming with their needs in mind. They collaborate 
generously in presenting readings for the general public (which serve to 
test their independent skill and command of material) and in presenting 
lectures for a public series. Whether they enter Institute courses or not, 
they receive at reduced rate the classbook of the year, giving background 
materail and illustration for the plays of the season; and have the 
privilege of reading in the Festival library of rare books and modern 
criticism, which is maintained by the Festival Board and the Ashland 
Public Library (where it is housed). To many of the actors and public it is
the first opportunity to enjoy first editions of Holinshed, Stow, Hooker, Eliot, Selden, Bacon, Spenser, Heywood, and other 16th century masters.

The Institute attracts to comradeship with actors and students, mature scholars who apply for Fellowships in order to study Shakespeare production on a stage of Tudor character and to make use of the library. One of the former Fellows is now on Fulbright scholarship, studying near-Eastern theatre; another, a full professor at the University of California at Berkeley, brings out his critical work on productions of OTHELLO in 1961.

Grants have been made to the Festival and Institute from State and Foundation: the Ford Foundation assigned to Mr. Bowmer, as director of the Festival, $10,000 for addition of professional actors to the season of 1959 and for travel among the Festivals of Europe and Britain. In 1959 also, the state of Oregon, celebrating its centennial, allotted, in all, $15,000 to the Festival and Institute for encouragement of their program of cultural education and art in joined effectiveness. This gift was made without dictation or other proviso as to the way in which it should be spent.

The program has been increasingly worthy and has met with annually increased enthusiasm, appreciation, and financial security. It is acknowledged to be one of the most thorough aspects of highly specialized, solidly effective, educational theatre, less academic (in the unhappy sense of that word) than truly cultural and fruitful to ever-growing thousands who frequent it.

I regret the extent of this letter, but I thought it advisable to make it as far as possible a complete statement of our various experiments, failures, and successes. I hope to stand corrected if any detail of date or other fact require alteration; if not, may I suggest that these notes be added to others in a history of the Festival and Institute? As years pass, much that has not, perhaps, been set down in completeness may vanish from hasty records and dimming memories.

I am always, gentlemen of the Board,
Yours faithfully,
Margery Bailey
Professor of English, Emeritus,
Stanford University, Director of the
Institute of Renaissance Studies

18 February 1948
Dr. Elmo Stevenson
President of Southern Oregon College

My dear Dr. Stevenson,

Mr. Bowmer has told me of his discussion with you concerning the possibility of building an academic connection to the drama classes of
Southern Oregon's summer program, and has left me much honored by your interest in having me come to Ashland as a member of the summer faculty for classes and lectures. I should like nothing better than to come and assist in inaugurating your remarkable plan, since it corresponds closely to a play of two summers here at Stanford in 1935–6, which—with the administrative imagination of Dr. Wilbur—was brought to considerable solidity in a program under my direction. It died upon the opening of the new theatre with a new staff who of course had their own ideas of what theatre should contribute in a college.

However, as perhaps Mr. Bowmer remembered to say, I am already under contract to the University of Southern California for the summer; it will be impossible for me to manage both or to leave the arrangements already made. I am so exceedingly earnest and anxious for the development of the Festival in a thoroughly solid way, however, that I have the temerity to make a suggestion which will I hope please you. In our Stage Classics Production summers in 1935–6, my chief assistant was a former student of mine who has just returned from Columbia with a Master's degree—James Sayre Sandoe. He had always been deeply interested in the stage, had done much in his undergraduate days to lift the standards of both college and community theatres in Palo Alto, and had made himself a bibliographical expert on first editions of stage literature, especially in the 17th–18th century. From us Mr. Sandoe went to the English department of the University of Colorado, and was detached from it by Mr. Ellsworth, chief librarian at the time, to head the Order Division of the Colorado University Library, where he now is. For the past years his avocation has been bibliographical and critical consideration of the mystery story and its sources, in the course of which he has produced the best and most thoughtful anthology of the form yet to appear, reviewed for the Chicago SUN, and made himself recognized among the increasing number of serious critics on the subject as the definitive bibliographical authority in the field. His interest in drama has never ceased, and for three years he produced in the open air theatre at Colorado in summer Shakespeare plays which made history for the institution; I went there in 1945 for the summer session to teach and collaborate with him. We hoped that an eventual academically grounded and highly artistically produced series of productions might ensue, but the administration had not the imagination to grasp the importance of the project.

Mr. Sandoe has taught at Colorado advanced classes in Shakespeare; in 18th century literature; in Restoration and 18th century comedy; in bibliography and the use of the library; in composition. He acted and directed as an undergraduate at Stanford, Sheridan's THE CRITIC and Marlowe's FAUSTUS, and acted also in ROMEO AND JULIET (Mercutio), THE ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE (the title role), and various light modern plays. At Colorado he directed and acted the title role in
Shakespeare's RICHARD II and in 1944 to 1946 directed the summer productions of ROMEO AND JULIET, THE MERCHANT OF VENICE, and HENRY IV part 1. His lecturing style is incisive, firm, witty, and stimulating; his scholarship is irreproachable.

To press my suggestion upon you would be both rude and indiscreet; but I am so earnestly full of hope for the beginnings which Southern Oregon has made that I perhaps go too far in my anxiety to see the academic-production unit established firmly and early, in the hands and minds of visiting people who will understand your problems and have complete sympathy with the very important future of the whole plan. This is without any question an important step in the general cultivation of a whole area, and with the happy physical set-up may well make history and be a model for other units of the same sort throughout the country. Then we may hope for a national theatre—without which, I think, no nation is completely sure of its culture. The living quality of the stage makes it a great teacher, and to have the classics accented in a college summer rather than the trifling modern pieces which are often meretricious in form and idea, is a contribution to education which deserves applause from all well-wishers to American culture—among whom I hope to rank myself as

Yours faithfully,

1 March 1949
Dear Angus,

Mr. Stevenson has writ a very pleasant letter saying that I am to teach Shaxper 201-3, and an advanced course. The courses I can find outlined as you wish them given, in the announcement of courses which doubtless exists here in the education library with all others; but what books do you wish used? There is no point in pushing on a new text when it may not be used again. And how are these texts ordered? Will you order them, or shall I? Please issue orders which I can follow to suit your plans.

I take it Jim is tending to all ideas on lectures and so on, since he was—as usual—so happily successful at it last year, and has been doing that sort of thing in Boulder far more than I have been doing here. I'll fit in where youse guys want me. As to classes, however, I have begged to have mine assigned where possible to 10 a.m. or later, since I am a dead worm until nine, and simply nothing but a corpse at eight. Is this an outrage, or will it be deemed so? God save us.

Jim in a recent note says that as things are with his gang, he has to take a month on leave, a month vacation, and hence depart on Aug. 11. This is frightful, but I suppose can't be helped. He would like to revive the vague suggestion I made last year that several of us might occupy one house;
would that scandalize the natives? I have known towns which persist in being scandalized at an octogenarian grandma occupying a house with a male of 20; the relationship here is the same. Doug Russell might care to join us and might not; I see nobody at the theatre, and have not repeated the idea to him.

... God he knoweth how I am to get my house ready for tenants, give a final on June 15, and be in Ashland also on that day. But things will settle down in course of time. I will not take a plane even to reach Ashland, which I consider a lesser paradise. My very best regards to Mrs. Bowmer.

Cordially always yours,

Hotel Lithia
Ashland
18 August 1949

The Ashland Chamber of Commerce

Gentlemen:

Will you allow a stranger, and a person who is neither director nor business owner, to address you on the nettling question of the Shakespeare Festival? I observe in the News Review that criticism from a Portland paper has nettled your group into a criticism of the festival personnel for an interest in research and acting rather than in advertisement and local expansiveness; and that Mr. Edwards offers the kind explanation of the festival's growing too fast for its own good. It is rather the fact, I believe (as an observer), that mistakes have been made but that much has been accomplished.

Suppose I dismiss at once, if I can, the idea that it is an error for the festival group to be interested in research and acting. If they were not, you would have either a shabby festival or none at all. But let me grant also that since (for instance) the Independence Day parade is so bright a celebration, and brings so many people here, that the group erred in not devoting a little research and costume to a charming float. The festival can be a major industry for the town if properly managed, but the festival group should stick to their knitting and turn out a nucleus which is artistically fine, and not spend too much time on what the News reporter calls ballyhoo. The merchants must advance and ask advice on detail of Tudor days and ways in order to adapt these to their purposes.

It is not possible, I have found, to take ideas to the merchants. Although a professor of 58 years, teaching at the College for the summer and acting in one of the plays, I was so earnest about the town's sharing the festival idea and carrying it prominently through the year, that I fear I made myself into a rather absurd salesman, I made no sales. The response was always "It would cost too much" or "You can't make money on that
without mass production, and there’s no big outlet here” or “There’s no demand for it.” I gave up, tired out, and retired from the field.

I began my intrusion on the idea of a town’s business interest in the festival, last year, after my first visit. Some five or six pages of suggestions for advertisement, highway figures and notices, souvenir figures of wood or ceramics, designs for napkins, pillows, leather work, scrapbooks, etc., etc., etc., etc., were forwarded to Festival Directors Dodge, McDonnell, and Robinett. The directors have busied themselves vitally, with the result that there are this year the shields along the main street suggested in my letter; the collection of carved figures in wood and other trifles originated by George and Mrs. Loomis, also suggested in my letter; the use of a familiar insigne on small goods such as paperweights, etc., also suggested. The merchants will not accept these things; there is no demand for them. The Lions Club sells them at a booth in the festival grounds.

In California an insigne was designed, and in Ashland the design was approved by the producing director; plates were made, with the idea of using the design as a bookplate for the collection the festival has started at the College library, as a motif for stickers which should go on envelopes sent out by merchants, tourists, festival actors, and so forth, as a design for tourist stationery, as place cards for banquets and as cards for exchanges of photographs between festival and other drama groups over the country. I enclose an example of the design used as a seal or sticker. The chief stationer in town rejected the stationery idea at once unless it was (1) very cheap or (2) de luxe, in an expensive box. Many would display the seals or use them, none would buy them as far as I was able to peddle my wares. The cards, already printed, were used as banquet place cards for the Governor’s dinner, and packets of the seals, with groups of the carved wooden figures, were used as decorations for the tables. A few of the beautiful myrtlewood shields—“conversation pieces” as they are called, for the lapel, were also used. Merchants will not buy these and sell them—there is not enough money in them.

Another idea which died aborning was a booklet of photos from the plays, or of the silhouettes of the actors cut so beautifully by Miss Depew of the College and copied by negative for me by The Memory Lane Studio. The photographer could not put out the photos for enough to make money, as far as the drama pictures were concerned; I was assured that the silhouettes would not sell at all. The Lions Club is offering the silhouettes; Bushnell is offering singles and groups of the photos as he wishes to group them; the shop’s first idea was to offer 200 photos for $20, and—I think naturally—there have been no takers.

As far as advertisement is concerned, the merchants have done nobly in the handsome banners spread in all store windows; if the Portland critic could not see those, he was blind and insensitive to a very dignified and suitable type of banner display. I have never seen anything so good or
so loyally displayed. But when a student of mine made connections with a
large Medford shop and obtained permission to display festival material
in a front window there for a week, the lack of organization, which is the
chief difficulty perhaps, broke everything down. There were not enough
costumes to spare for a dangerous expedition away from town—they
might not get back in time for the next week show; the paper for dramatic
photos requested by the Medford store (enlargements 14 × 20) ran short
in the middle of the job. There was no window display in Medford.

That was the time when I gave up. It was irresistible not to conclude
that I had rushed in where a stranger should not and that the time was not
ripe for audacious assault by the merchants upon tourist trade. “There’s
no demand for it” is the refrain which still puzzles me. But as a university
professor and an amateur actress I am not capable of judging economics
of supply and demand.

The supply is still on my hands. There are some 4000 seals which my
friends and I have not packaged. The heart has been taken out of us.

But to J. Logan White, Mrs. Ager of Memory Lane, and the Lions, go my
heartiest thanks for collaboration, understanding, and effort to assist,
which I shall remember very warmly for a long time.

Allow me to subscribe myself, gentlemen,

Your cordially sincere friend and servant,

Jan. 22, 1950

Dear Angus,

. . . .

I owe a long letter to Jim, and must get this off as shortly as I can. Your
two queries may be briefly answered, I think. First, as to analyzing the
plays before the directors take them up for the season: I cannot think that
this would be tactically a happy idea. The directors are all grown men,
who have their own ideas, and even if they were willing to listen to what
might seem to them dictation, it is not a sure bet that I am right always or
generally, or that—if I were always so—the director would find himself
able to reproduce what he might have felt he gained. It must also be said
that I am still studying the plays as I see these earnest and productive
minds producing them, and I should not be able to analyze the play, cold,
anywhere near as fully as I am able to analyze it with the pro’s and con’s of
performance illuminating my earlier judgments. The great value of the
plays is that everybody derives much from them, and the academic mind
perhaps most of all.

As to the conclusion of AYLI [As You Like It], I have suggested to
Douglas that he consult the library’s volume on the drawings of Inigo
Jones for masques by Ben Jonson. The figures are diaphanous things,
very fey-like and gorgeous, and I am sure that that is what Shakespeare
wanted for his gala finale.—Or, to have the peasants and clowns decked
in spurious glory, if you want to accent the satiric note. Rosalind manages
the whole thing, however, and in spite of her sharp tongue I think Shakespeare did not intend her to seem satiric; in fact to have Phoebe dressed as enchantingly as possible would go far to heal her woes, and to have diaphanous goods in the forest for the dressing of the appearances at the end is no more absurd than all the other things in Arden. It is frankly a crazy play, as S. tells us by the title—just a revue of his day—and it was without doubt dressed as masques were dressed. If you can manage a "machine" for the descent of the appearances, you should do so, with smoke coming out of the mouths of the dragons which are supposed to propel it. Couldn’t something of the kind be rigged from the upper elements of the beams? Or just a glorious procession along the balcony might do. I hope you will allow a little greenery on the stage, which never seems barren for greater action. Somewhere I have a print of a very old peasant May dance which is used in Munich to celebrate the cessation of the plague in the 14th century. The characters carry flexible garlanded lengths of green stuff which (held in each hand) creates a high arc above each head. The intertwining dance is thus a very lovely thing, and all sorts of figures may be evolved with the crossing of the withes or sequent marching with them. If I can lay hand on the small copy I had made of the picture for the German department here, I’ll send one along with this; if not now, then later.

All sorts of warm regards and good wishes and hopes to you all.

28 April 1950
Dear Angus,

Thanks very much for the newsletter, which is not only most enjoyable but an admirable idea to keep the spirit of the summer glowing. Don’t worry about Falstaff; you will probably be overloaded with a couple of dozen fat men before the end of June. Last night I went to an Orchesis performance, where Eller did a dance interpretation of Cleopatra. It was exceedingly good, and if she can only be taught to read well she might do a very good Cleo this summer if there is an absence of anyone else. She can assume regality by sheer posture, and she can be furious and wildly funny without losing a basic human largeness—and that is the absolute essential for the character. Her face is bony enough, too, and the bones have enough dignity, to warrant Cleopatra’s remarks about herself as being past her salad days. I grew really very enthusiastic about the idea.

......

20 July 1950
Dear Pair [Angus and Gertrude Bowmer],

It was a sad thing for me that I saw so little of you; but weeks so near performance are no time to hang around people in the thick of things, and perhaps the damned spots which have kept me wretched for weeks may have been (for you at least) a blessing in disguise. When not attempting to
say something sensible with a flat and vacuous mind, I was plop on the hotel bed, livid with a nasty salve which is supposed to be useful against whatever it is that makes me burn and itch.

I don’t know how much the committee in Medford has got after the expenses are all totalled up. The case of the young man who needs cash was repeated to Mrs. Schuler, at any rate. I think a formal application should be made by students or workers, and probably a set form would be a convenience—as well as removing any sense of begging which a sensitive man might feel in writing a personal appeal.

.....

The little I saw of rehearsals convinces me that the staff is growing more solidly cohesive, and the actors more confident, each year. The stage pictures were lively, not static, and the reading surpassed anything of the general scenes I had experienced before.... It ought to be a very good season—I hear that a Texan has written up wanting ten seats for one performance.

.....

24 September 1950
Dear Angus,

I am sending up a book which may brighten your labors on the history of English literature: Marchette Chute's *Geoffrey Chaucer and England*. It is one of the gayest books I have read in ages, and an excellent introduction to medieval-renaissance life in general as well as useful in rapid and genial treatment of C's work—so genial in fact that I defy any student to read it and then hesitate as to whether he wants to get out a volume of Chaucer entire from the library.

If it fails to please you personally, just give it to the library; there it will be useful. But I think it will cheer up your spirits on the first part of the course, no?

.....

I have had at last a singular letter from Sandoe admitting he has been "dull witted though honest" in his expressions, breezily dismissing his performances as things he "prefers to forget," and requiring my first notes as calmly as if he had not dismissed me as commentator and ignored my existence while the choosing of plays for 1951 was going on (during my visit to Medford in July). He now asks my opinion on dropping MEASURE FOR MEASURE! It is a little late to invite me on the considerations now. When I was up in July, it was made clear that Curt would be the academic authority from this time on. To this I had no objection, but I do not respond pleasantly to being thrown away and picked up all the time. I was obliged to assume that you agreed with all these points of view, since Jim's expression (or disregard, either) was so firm; and nothing is so important to me now that I can waste time running to check up on where I stand.
The letter is so confused in tone and phrasing (half bullying, half apologetic) that I am more sure than ever that Jim is not well. I think he requires a long vacation without the responsibilities that make him so desperately nervous.

22 February 1951

Dear Angus,

The alumni conference fell on me this year with remarks about its being my turn to go down to Los Angeles and lecture. They took well my suggestion “Shakespeare in Action”—discussion of the Ashland project. I have some photos, and about 25 of the 1950 programs left; have you any earlier ones you can send down? . . .

The usual excitement prevails here about the summer—people all getting set with what dates they can get away and go on; several voices (Chester Barker and so on) sympathized with me because there “would be no season this year, as Angus is going to a bigger job.” I took this to be mid-season jitters, and remarked usually that he couldn’t get a bigger job if he tried. . . .

I have a born clown here in a taxi driver who is going to be an actor; he did so well at Paly [Palo Alto] and San Mateo that other theatres have asked him to try out soon. He wants to go to Ashland, and needs the experience in developing voice and learning classic movements. Are you trying-out here or not? James writes that if he does MEASURE he wants me to do Mrs. Overdone; but I shan’t think of it unless you feel it is useful. The paucity of women’s roles is a problem, and you probably have some person in Oregon who can bring in more members than I can.

9 April 1951

Dear Angus,

I am pleased that you want to have general auditions. So many people have shown interest that I believe you may get some of your best people from groups outside the [Stanford] university. What—by the way—of having auditions somewhere else than at the university? A lot of people are easily intimidated by the look of Memorial Hall and the insufferable manners of the students, and so would not do their best.

Hume writes from Sacramento that he has a remarkably good girl there who wants to go north to learn as much as anything else. Mrs. Fontaine (Mamma of Joan) is director of a community theatre in Los Gatos and does a very good job indeed. She has sent word by one of the persons gathering the theatres together for the July festival here, that she wants to recommend a number of her group. They are near enough to report here. Could you stop at Sacramento? Or shall I tell Hume to get his people down here?

If you would like, I’ll find out whether it be possible to have an after-
noon at the Paly civic theatre for audition. It is a simple place to reach, has no haughty airs, and is now in the hands of a pleasant man, Ralph Schram; he became director when Ralph Welles resigned this spring. The center has the big theatre which you probably remember and a small rehearsal hall, and a large assembly room, all one flat floor. I believe that you could have one of these as a theatre-to-theatre courtesy, without rent. I shall not move in the matter till I hear from you. You may prefer to write yourself and suggest arrangements.

I suggest this because I feel that the Stanford students get their somewhat overbearing air from the fact that they feel themselves the center of theatrics here—when as a matter of fact they are a minor part of it.

WHAT happened to that ass of a woman who wrote up Shakespeare in America? The total omission of Ashland at least proves that THEATRE ARTS is not moved by the amount or source of its advertising. But all of us, from Jackman to Myna Hughes, are boiling with indignation. The insufferable part of it is that the San Diego lot, who had to come up to Ashland to learn how to go ahead, pose as the only thing on the coast. Never mind: in OPERA & CONCERT recently, Dorothy Nichols quoted a survey made by someone for a Columbia University project; it alluded to the three worthwhile theatre activities on the Pacific Coast—Pasadena Playhouse, Ashland, and Brauns's Hillbarn in San Mateo. When one is safe in a survey, pooh for THEATRE ARTS!

31 January 1952
Dear Angus:

A hurried note to tell you how and why. Some sort of row appears to be abrewing in the summer festival group down here, and a distinct feeling that I had better turn in some work at home occasionally—though it is payless!!! If one is to keep a project going, even with the help of others, one has to be on the home soil, as you know better than anyone else.

Do not be annoyed that I suggest a young woman, Eleanor Prosser, who is not yet an M.A., in my place; Ashland might enjoy more kudos with Jim Cunningham, but there would be war when he swore at what he considers stupidity or laggard thinking, and he would otherwise be a hedgehog in the tablecloth, I fear. Still, University of Chicago will get him. Please note, however, my accent, which is truly sincere, on our duty to think of what Stevenson needs for his summertime gals. I got the idea last summer that Mrs. S. was operating as a sort of time-filler, and more than a little eager to be off about her social duties and so on; Miss Prosser is new enough to such work to find it genuinely absorbing, however draining it is to the energy. There is no question that she can manage the Shakespeare class or classes in a more down-to-earth manner than Jim Sandoe envisages as the proper way to approach special studies. He will be scandalized at my suggestion, since he believes Ashland should have “a really great Shakespearean scholar” on hand; that is for the future, not
for a present in which quite mature people say they would like to have someone step out at the beginning of a play and say what it is all going to be about.

I hear indirectly that Jim has appointed Fletcher to teach in his stead, and of course this may all be settled already. Fletch has the brains and he has a certain charm, but he is too remote and too abstracted to command the classes as the Shakespeare teacher has to do in summer, and I am not at all sure he would care to undertake the post. Miss Prosser has immense energy, a knowledge of acting style, a fresh and vivid attitude to the Shakespeare plays, and the sort of devotion which would repay the whole festival a thousand times back for anything it does for her.

The spring season sounds good; I have seen ARSENIC at least three times, and could see it three more; it is one of the few perfectly built modern plays, I think.

27 August 1952
Dear Angus,

This is a scrambled letter in place of a call pour prendre congé; but I should have written it, I think, even if manners were not involved. It is a period of hasty organization and re-organization. . . . This much you should hear, from a person completely impersonal and wholly disinterested—one, moreover, who knows how hard it is for a teacher and organization to know securely just how well and clearly his work or influence is going. The Sunday before I left, Hanson came in to say good­bye and told me with enthusiasm of the first meeting for plans. He is not a merely sentimental person, and he remembers acridly the difficulties of the last weeks of last spring—so his remarks have considerable weight.

This is the general cast of them: that everything was “starting off firmly and well because Angus had taken a firm hold, a domination, of the whole situation.” He thinks they all appreciate the distinctness with which plans were examined and agreed on, the tolerance with which you heard their ideas and talked them over, . . . but over and over the phrasing was “Angus is going to be master alone, there is going to be some definite­ness about decisions, Angus is going to be firm and decisive.” The scuffles with past festival boards, who required directing as partial return for your festival salary, probably got you down, and gave you a certain uneasiness which resulted in constant consultation of Sandoe or G.; I do not think you ever realized how much this uncertainty as to whose ideas were leading the organizations, affected the general companies. Certainly it gave rise to personal gossip, petty fractiousness, belief in favoritism, and so on. The new assurance you should have as a result of being solidly supported as Master, will show itself also in the acting and financial ranks of both organizations.

My remarks to the board of directors about our all having to realize that
impersonal, large considerations must govern hereafter, sprang from observation of the growing earnestness of the casts we have had, and the way in which they gathered together to protect the health of the association; they are concerned less with themselves, I think, than with the excellence of the whole structure, to which they hope to return, or send others to work. Their uncertainty as to who was *Domine* was, I felt, a major weakness in the structure. As I said in the meeting, off the record, too many were uncertain as to whether G. was an actor-and-director, or whether he was a partner who had been in on the matter from the first and from the intensely personal (and pleasantly affectionate) relations between G. and your household, I think he himself felt that he was virtually co-director-in-chief. Of course his resonant voice and large person give an impression of self-confidence and authority which he may not have intended, but it seemed even to me that the years were producing more and more Angus-and-I pronouncements. I could never answer criticisms and objections from the various casts, because I was as much outside the main planning group as they were; and the settling of a whole season over a breakfast table seemed to me so extremely dangerous in its effects that I admit I shared the uneasiness of the casts. (An example of the ineffective planning is this year's plays, in which we have three heavy dragging plays full of exposition, and one thoughtful comedy—although we *seem* to have great variety in types presented; this shows how much the business manager, who hears requests and comments, should be represented on the planning board or staff, and I suspect that just this is the cause of the easy and varied program of next year. There has been too much effort to avoid repetition, and too great fear of giving favorite plays often.)

If the directors are all on a level, with you distinctly and unquestionably above them all and never reduced to their own level by being a director among them, you have energy, time, and authority enough for the growing needs of personnel and planning. Better, you can watch them all impersonally, with an eye to elevating one or another alternately to a position of managership (about program, etc.) with the certainty that none will feel established as co-commander; and to feed this number of capable people, from whom (should anything happen to you) the board could choose a temporary successor, you should continually elevate the most experienced and talented actors to directing. There is no one else who can do these important things. There should be no one else, if you concentrate on these general matters with the authority you have shown.

It is an excellent thing to be democratic, though I am no great friend to mob rule; but republicanism is another thing; and in the arts, as in almost anything else, busy and sensitive people want certainty, a supervising master with an equable and flexible hand. The excessive burden of work
you have always carried, the trust you have put in the somewhat wild ideas of G., the dependence on the pedantry of Sandoe, have made you appear to be nervous, hesitant, and then suddenly dictatorial (with the dictates often disregarded the next year when temper has cooled and common sense has reasserted itself); with a normal position to keep and adore, you will be able to dominate all divisions of Ashland labors as you should, without threats and half-promises. If the board sees your position as I hope they do, you will get away from Ashland from time to time, and find refreshment and new associations while making new contacts for the festival. I had forgotten that this was exactly what you wished in the beginning, without the duty of directing added on; and in spite my uneasiness at brashly opening up a number of things in my comments to the board, I was glad that I had put such emphasis on that. I wish I could be more closely useful, but I am too old, too remote, and too much a believer in clear divisions of labor, to rush in where angels fear to tread. My spot is with the publications.

19 May 1953
My dear Angus,

A letter from Paul Reinhardt thanking me for a museum catalogue adds in a side note that he does not understand the idea of Morocco’s Concubine [in THE MERCHANT OF VENICE], which Graham has listed for a costume.

I can only assume that this is one of the attendants to Morocco when he enters for the choice of caskets. There is nothing in the play to warrant this intrusion, and much which denies it—Morocco’s dignified words of accepting the rules of the caskets preclude anything attemptedly funny, which this idea can only suggest.

This is the sort of thing which makes me very uneasy about touring in which Graham’s New York taste will be dominant. If you recollect the beauty of Eddie’s Morocco in the last MERCHANT, I think you will regret additions of this type.

It is possible that you will say, as of the treatment of MUCH ADO last year—“Well, the audience laughed, didn’t they?” An audience would also laugh at seeing an elephant brought in to stand on its head in the middle of OTHELLO; audience upheaval is not a final test of decent directing. The festival has arrived at a point where every director should attempt to attain the levels of the 1951 season, not to derogate from those levels to provoke laughter by unwarranted means.

The addition of unnecessary and doubtfully tasteful details is precisely what I wrote the Colorado article to condemn; it is ironic that the first season thereafter shows materials as false to text and to artistic feeling at Ashland as there were in Coburn’s handling of a dirty sock in his MERRY WIVES.

My opinion is academically sound, whatever disagreement there may
be as to taste. If Graham perseveres introducing something so false to lines and character as a concubine for Morocco, I cannot afford to be listed on the program as academic adviser. Please omit me in your lists and advertisements if you wish to retain claptrap in the plays.

This will create no pain to you or to me; it will relieve me of being obliged to explain an unnecessary and stupid coarseness in performance, against which I have inveighed constantly as the New York nasty touch.

Angus Bowmer's response to the preceding letter follows.

May 21st, 1953
Dear Dr. Bailey:

I have just written a note to Paul Reinhardt reprimanding him for putting me in the position of being "pressured" into good taste. I feel that good taste is never arrived at through force. I agree perfectly with you as to the inappropriateness of the concubine in Morocco's train but I prefer to handle these things in my own way and in my own good time.

The loss of your wholehearted support of the festival would do irreparable harm to our project but I cannot say that I respond happily to threats. Surely you know me well enough to be able to talk these things out with me on the basis of good judgment, for I respect your opinion in these matters more highly than that of anyone else I know.

Sincerely,

2 June 1953
Dear Angus,

Herewith a copy of the cover for fellowship to Marcuse. Today arrived an abject note of apology from Reinhardt. Remembered that I had not had time to open a letter from you some two weeks ago, and fished it out from the unanswered pile on the desk.

My wish not to appear in a program which lists Morocco's concubine is no threat; simple self-protection. Allowing such a suggestion to waste the time of costume designer and director is odd management in a project which is full of suggestible (or on the other hand supercilious) young people.

Don't make either Reinhardt or me your whipping boy for Graham's bad taste or your acceptance of it for so much as one day.

Yours,

Wednesday, 21 October 1953
Dear Angus,

This answer to your excellent letter on the school project has been deliberately delayed until I could have at least five minutes with either Grommon or Whitaker. By sheer coincidence I had mentioned the mere
shell of my own idea of an institute the day before your letter arrived; I caught the two after a department meeting and asked whether such an idea would be feasible. Neither was cold or uninterested, but in the hurry at noon both were off, as was I, in a moment.

I saw Whitaker [chairman of the Stanford English department] Tuesday, expressing to him only what I had had in mind, because I am not positive what you wish or project as yet, in complete form; and to clear this off, let me outline the conversation. I suggested that as Grommon had had such success with his seven days of institute for teachers, in which they wrote a paper on a subject which had been followed in sessions and reading during the week, and for which each received two Stanford hours,—why would it not be feasible to have a specialized institute at Ashland, in which the teacher (not an undergraduate) should receive two or three [credit] hours for attending two weeks of rehearsal and two run-throughs of finished performance, with lectures and reading, and a paper either in criticism of the plays as performed or on some subject cogent to the ideas in one of them? Could Stanford hours be granted? (I thought that if we could start something thus, with Stanford accepting the work for hours, we could use that as a leverage elsewhere.) Whitaker was much interested, and friendly to the idea, but he had to say that he was much afraid that it could not be wangled because of . . . probable difficulties.

. . . . .

I understand that the Stanford drama department has at last accepted Pasadena Playhouse school hours as transfer units; I may be wrong in this. It would be worth while having Mr. Kerr find out whether San Jose [State College] would be inclined to allow their graduate teachers to offer two or three units or more from work done at the proposed Ashland school. I cannot approach Heffner; you might. . . .

I think you are beginning too largely andexpensively, and if James Sandoe advises you, he will also dream of Great Scholars as he has done often in the past. This sort of large, fixed, curriculum-conscious establishment is simply beyond Ashland now and for several years to come, for reasons which I shall set down presently.

Is not your main idea at present an honest double-headed one?—to see that the actors get a more coordinated style or more solid information as a basis of general merit which will produce well-coordinated performances; and [for tax purposes] . . . to show that classes are being given in a non-professional theatrical institute, which gives firm educational additions to the educative excellence of the performances? You do not need an entire school set up for that. . . . The agony of getting a faculty, drumming up enrollment, finding a place for classes near the theatre, would take effort away from the festival quite as badly as touring would. What you need is something to support festival, not dig holes in it.

. . . . .

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Whether or not you have taxes remitted, you need classes, or at least hours spent in study of form and content, right now. These can be simple, short, not occupying the entire summer perhaps, but general and required—and the reason is, that no matter how well a man may know his job, he may not coalesce well with the others on the large stage; and general accepted standards of movement, make-up, etc., may well be demanded of everybody, since the exercise will do them good.

This sort of thing would apply to the actors chiefly, but I see no reason why Drama and English teachers should not profit from it as well, if the timing were arranged for their convenience as well as that of the cast’s. This is specialized and professional training, which the actors need to accept generally, and which teachers may profit by in merely watching exercises. For instance, Peppard [George Peppard, later a film and TV star] who knows a good deal about techniques of gesture, or Miss Joyce Womack, or Risso, need constant attention to whole bodily movement, which in Helen Davies is almost perfected: Peppard and Richard Risso are leaden-footed, and Risso allows his chest to sag and his arms to hang motionless. Nicholas Probst has bodily movement down as well as Paul Kliss or William Ball, but all three need to be deprived of unpleasant and too-obvious mannerisms. Mere correction now and then has no effect on these people; but one hour a week at which they would exercise under correction would benefit them all.

We have talked endlessly about the need of common objectives of make-up, and no more needs to be said of that—a major requirement. We were extremely fortunate in having Frank Pinnock as fence master this year, and his brilliant management of the choreography of fence, for the stage, is priceless; he should be one of the first people selected for assured place in the classes—what he has to give is what most drama schools lack; they give fencing, but not fencing for the stage—and for this large stage in particular.

The information on the meaning of the plays, on the building of scenes, and why they are so built, how and why they are effective, is necessary in my opinion, but more dangerous to manage for the actors. I think actors and directors both are far too inarticulate—and need to be got out of it. There is no reason why the actors should not be required to consider the meaning of their parts, or parts they wish to play or to criticize, or why they should not be expected to write at least one report on the play or plays of the season. You would find out some extremely ghastly misconceptions in their heads. However, the difficulty of criticizing the plays as they go on is obvious; such a course makes life hard for the directors, and blood would probably flow. Pleasant and lovable as Curt is, he riled so many by his (admittedly narrow and pedantic) constant nagging that he was virtually useless, apparently. It might be possible to have discussion of the plays’s underlying elements, as we did with LEAR or in summer lectures earlier, and ask for written reaction to it, without defi-
nite criticism of the staging.

Or another subject might be struck each year—the conception on which the plays are written. For instance, it was impossible in snatches of conversation to get the idea of the complete gentleman through Peppard's skull; he never got the notion of what made Bassanio an excellent character. In LEAR the idea of order was important, in MACBETH the supernatural—etc., etc., etc. The actors would be far richer for having some extended time spent on these things instead of hearing snatched lectures here and there; even one Tudor theme a season would be worth five lectures and some assigned reading, at least—and I do not think the actors would resent this as an encroachment on their time.

The suggestion of educating people in theatre business is also feasible and sound.

The sum of $250 for [teaching] a three-hour class is a reminiscence of antediluvian days, and the Board must not think in terms of it. For any one of the classes I have mentioned, $500, either for the entire summer or for the immensely more difficult arrangement of a concentrated course, is MINIMUM. You can therefore, I suspect, allow but three or four teachers—and that is, at present, sufficient, I believe. There must be a completely definite scheme of time spent and remuneration, so that there will not be martyrdom on one hand and anger on the part of the Board if the teacher fail to put in the proper time. In case of the business classes, these would be virtually laboratory work in the box office—but notice that there is a need for room in which to type out news stories, make ad lay-outs, etc., keep records of stories printed, and so on.

. . . . There should be some income from the outsiders who get the benefit of these classes. The actors get them without pay, probably; the teachers and others ought to pay a fee beyond the price of tickets. If that wretched hotel scheme had gone through, it would have been possible to conduct classes and allow the visitors lodging and meals for a general fee: say, $150 overall, which would give a vacation and three college hours; otherwise, ticket $12; registration for three hours, $45 (with lodging to be found by the individual—though some system could be worked out with motel-keepers, perhaps). Persons from Medford and Ashland who "just love lectures" could subscribe to the lecture course only for $10; anyone doing work which is supervised and criticized should pay a full fee of $45 or $50. For any of this there must be assurance that hours will be accepted in graduate programs by education departments of reputable colleges, if not by English or Drama departments.

. . . . [For] arrangement with at least three colleges for acceptance of hours thus gained, I suggest the state colleges, SF and SJ, Stanford, the Catholic schools such as Univ. of SF and SF college for Women, in our part of the world; the Scripps Colleges; the desert universities such as
Dr. Bailey is shown in Ashland with George Whitaker, who is otherwise not identified. They are seated in front of an early outdoor stage.
Nevada, N.M., Colorado, Denver, Wyoming, Montana. Begin small, and extend from there. It is possible that the female colleges such as Stephens, Goucher, Wells, would respond; annos should be sent to Vassar, Bryn Mawr, Smith, Holyoke, Wellesley, even if acceptance is not expected. The drama schools would be a feather in the cap, and should make no difficulties—Yale, Wisconsin, Cornell, Iowa, Carnegie, Antioch, Texas, Washington. . . .

Wednesday, 18 Nov. 1953
Dear William Patton,

I send this note from Dr. Whitaker to you because of our recent discussion of how best to start out on the festival school plans. You will recollect that I had already seen Dr. Whitaker, and found him well-disposed, but assumed that I should have to see him again to discover what he had done about consulting administration here; this note arrived today, before I had been able to make connections with him. It is gratifying to see how much he has exerted himself for the plan, and how excellently he has proposed our aims.

Though his suggestion of a Stanford field-course, which should (apparently) cover a concentrated examination of the plays of a current season, with reading and papers, observation of rehearsals and performances, and critical treatment of these,—may seem to remove all initiative—and possibly immediate income—from the festival, I must assume that two goods come from these difficulties. If the students pay Stanford tuition, then I assume that the university pays the salary of the supervisor of the field-course, and the festival gains kudos without gaining or losing money—except in tickets which would in this plan not be part of tuition, of course.

The second point, that kudos itself, answers many of the worries we were thrashing out during our late discussion. That is, if the festival may announce and the Stanford Anno of Courses announces (in the calm manner of the Geology field-trip class which I enclose on a torn Stanford Anno page) a field or laboratory course in Shakespeare-in-production, for the purpose of a greater intellectual grasp of the plays, we do not need to ask meekly of Denver or Colorado or elsewhere whether their departments will accept festival hours. We simply offer Stanford hours, which can be transferred to other universities in the regular manner by the registrar's office—or, as Whitaker of course hopes, induces the students thus given a taste of Stanford fare, to go to Stanford for more units in other classes. This unmistakably genuine and solid start may have important repercussions. Certainly, as far as I know, Stanford will be the first to start out bravely in combining stage and literary study at a distance from the home class-rooms. This fact should be a feather in the festival's cap in that its productions were regarded by the Stanford department of a quality to warrant expenditure of university time and money, and univer-
sity trust that prestige will be enhanced and not reduced by the connection.

Even if the connection does not last very long, it is a solid basis for a start, and reduces worry about acceptance; I think in fact that we might be able to start this summer if this works out, whereas we might well have had to falter without assurance of acceptance from universities who might take the units of festival alone in transfer units. By the time I retire, Laurence Ryan in Department of English will be suitable to bring up; at least someone else may be found—and with university standing, invitation to other faculties will have more secure probability of acceptance.

You will see that Whitaker is thinking in terms of the geology field-course which I send to you; he thinks of a concentrated two weeks of attendance, criticism, background reading, and written reports; he is not thinking, as he seemed to do when I first saw him, of a straight repetition of Shakespeare 25, which would have to occupy a whole summer, and could only be repeated entire next year. The concentrated field course would benefit the festival as well, since people taking two hours for this season's plays might well wish to reappear for two hours next year for the next season's offerings, and we should thus have a continuous repetition of interest in plays and classes.

Sunday, 17 January 1954

Dear Shakespeare [Wm. Patton],

Here you have Mr. Whitaker's comment on my first letter outlining the proposed Field Course in Shakespeare, and my answer, edited from the first suggestion in the light of his comments. He has given reasons for all his hesitations about one thing or another, and I believe them to be cogent ones. The best line in his letter is the remark on the eagerness of Registrar Hall to see the thing through a meeting of the Board of Trustees. The scheme is to be placed before the Exec. Comm. of my department tomorrow, since we have to get over the major amount of work about the Announcement of Courses for 1954-5.

As soon as anything is secure, we must get out a release—or get the University to do so—reaching teachers: College English, English Journal, Shakespeare Newsletter certainly.

Good news resulting from the address at L.A. at Thanksgiving, before the National Conference of Teachers of English. I was not pleased at my management of the idea, but apparently it staggered the assemblage sufficiently to make Hatfield, editor of College English, suggest that it be made an article for the March number of that journal. I had to cut down the specifically pointed allusions to Ashland, but I think he will leave un molested the allusions to Angus and his pioneering in a stage which revivifies the plays. Today I received a letter saying that the article I sent was to be used in both the journals I mentioned above. This means, I have no doubt, that the editor lacked material somehow, and used what he
could get; but whether this be the case or not, the important point is that a
large audience of college and high school teachers—some 14,000 or
more—will get The Word in time to show interest and get information.

More good news of a publicity character; the committee preparing the
mid-California meeting of Teachers of English at Berkeley on April 11th
has asked me to address them on "What the Teacher Should Know Before
Teaching Shakespeare." That has overtones of the caretaker's daughter
and the What the Young Man series, but let that pass. I shall need many
more brochures. Rosemary Boezinger and her mother are getting up
letters on the immensely vital contribution of the festival to a knowledge
of Shakespeare and to English teaching; Mrs. B., who knows Dr. Faust,
one head of the Ford Foundation, intends to send him her letter as a per­
sonal expression; it ought to pave the way for an application for funds
from that source.

Sunday, 14 February 1954
Dear Williams, Dawkins and Patton:
— and a happy St. Valentine's Day to you. I shall endeavor to be hearty
and cheery in this hasty letter to you, but it is slightly upgrade work.

My shortness of funds explains why I have not sent a check for the new
seating in the theatre as yet. I have had an idea, however, and suggested it
to Cope, who merely looked owlish and said that loans from banks had
been dropped as a possibility. My suggestion is this. Some time ago, when
Hillbarn had to borrow a lot to get in order again, Myna Hughes offered
them $2000, with the comment that she wanted to invest it, and would
sooner have the interest rate they would have to pay a bank than the
smaller interest the bank would give to her if she kept it in savings; they
borrowed a far smaller sum of her and have already paid it back. If you
like, I should have no hesitation about asking her whether she would care
to invest on the same basis in Ashland seats, and she would have no
hesitation in answering frankly yes or no. Shall I approach her on the sub­
ject? Cope says that the Board is as usual wanting to buy in installments,
only 200 seats this year; which means that the seating will age unevenly,
and— with prices going up every year—the future seats will be more
expensive than those first ones, and upset the boys all over again. One
would think none of them were business men with some understanding
of borrowing; they act like small-time tabbies with $200 left to them by
Grandpa.

When the Bowmers were here, there was so much going on about
ANTA and PhD theses that I did not hear of Angus's chat with Brooks
Atkinson, of The New York Times, and that worthy's remark that if he went
anywhere, his paper would pay his—or another critic's—way. This is
good—but if some of the publicity money is spent in getting a lecture
from him, we could assure ourselves that he would come himself; we
should not put up with a lesser person, since it is the weight of his name
that New York will pay attention to.

I am so fed up with the months of dangling while Stanford fusses that I
am about ready to kick off the good old Alma Mater and try for a settled
situation of our own. Whitaker had me scared by the insistence that
colleges take transferred units only from other, established, institutions
of learning; but Persky has attended, or friends of his have attended, an
Institute of Semantics in Connecticut, quite independent from any
college at all, and so like us—and have got four hours credit for the six-
weeks course from U. of Kansas and other colleges and universities.
WHAT WE NEED TO DO IS TO START OUT BOLDLY WITH SEVERAL
CLASSES, not just one, and array ourselves as an institute or academy of
Tudor or Classic Stage Studies. We should then make ANTA wake up and
hand us a certification as an academy of stage work accepted by them—
see the marked paragraph on the duplicator sheet I send you. That asso-
ciation does nothing whatever of general value, as you see from the
watery tone of the pages concerned there; if we insist we can gouge
acceptance out of them, I think. If not from the Eastern coast, we can get it,
I feel sure, from Regional Council of ANTA here on the west coast. The
next meeting of the Board of the regional council, of which I am a member
(and it is packed with Stanford people and our friends) occurs March 14.
Make up your minds before then.

25 February 1954
Dear "Shakespeare":

Registrar Hall writes to Mr. Whitaker that the Field Course may be
called a Stanford course this summer and appear on the schedules,
though it can not be in the summer anno, which is already in print. He
says the fee will be this year $35, though next year it must rise. (In view of
the shaky stuff offered by the Langner lot, for $200–300 for six weeks of
possible classes, this is low indeed). Enrollment must take place in
Ashland by correspondence, after application to assistant registrar here.
Sounds worse than it really will be. I think Eleanor [Prosser] is coming up
after all, and she may be able to help me as the registering secretary. DO
NOT ANNOUNCE THIS TILL I WRITE YOU FINAL WORD; but this
should be fixed this weekend.

27 July 1954
Memorandum on HAMLET [to Angus Bowmer]:

I am having considerable difficulty with protest on the part of the Field-
Course class concerning the present status of HAMLET. Most of the
criticism is warranted, and I cannot find reasonable defense for the mat-
ters they object to. These are listed briefly:

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—Why is the text mangled by cutting of "Something is rotten in the state" and shift of your to our in "than is known of in your philosophy"? If the directors are afraid of laughter, they should expect it at "smells to heaven," and no laughter is forthcoming. It is upsetting to miss well known lines.

—if corrections are to be made thus, why not change the silly line "Hawk-hand-saw" to "hawk hernshaw," the obvious intention?

—why, when a ghost is distinctly described as "full arm'd cap a pie" does he appear completely wrapped up in a black sheet? This makes him nothing but a floating face on his first appearance, and the alarm of the audience, which should precede that of Horatio, is not felt—the effect is of an actor speaking merely on cue, and the audience has to look for the ghost. If he is hard to see, the soldiers, used to the vision, would see it first.

—Horatio is described as a poor scholar; why is he costumed as an ambassador by the Holy Roman Empire? His clothes are suitable to Guildenstern, and as the actors are much of a size (I suppose this refers to Ebert & Peppard) the costumes ought to be exchanged; Guildenstern's is that of a quiet merchant, not of a courtier. It would do for a scholar.

—the tricky lighting of full blaze on forestage and dimness in back, and the fluctuating back and forth, whenever the ghost walks, is distracting and unnecessary.

—why do the king and queen come down from the throne to wheedle Hamlet? This is stupid politically on the part of Claudius, who is not a stupid man, and makes the scene domestic instead of courtly; moreover, that much fuss about a sulky prince would make the court suspicious. It is completely undignified, and looks merely as if the directors wanted some motion somewhere.

—why, when Hamlet properly treats the soldiers with polite reserve, shaking hands only with his equal, in intellect at least (Horatio)—why does he shake hands with an actor, who had no place in society at all? His words are all the words of a kind and pleasant, but consciously superior, patron, not a jolly good friend to the actors.

—why does he [Hamlet] poke his head through the back curtain when the royal couple and Polonius are speaking of him? What is this supposed to show? It is actually more funny than otherwise.

—why does Hamlet give Ophelia such an ugly shove that she falls down in one scene while he uses a fairly polite tone for the nasty things he says to her before the play? There ought to be a line of development there, and there is no connection of attitude or idea whatever.

—why does Hamlet seem to think of the play the last minute, and charge at the table in a melodramatic manner, when it is clear the idea occurred to him—and should be shown to be occurring to
him—while the actor is reciting? He immediately asks about inserting a speech for a purpose; yet when the actor goes back to this idea after his self-criticism in the speech about Hecuba, he behaves as if the notion of testing the king had just entered his head. The whole sequence is too slow; it ought to be a burst of angry feeling inserted between a first inkling of idea, and final development of it.

—why is the actor spending so much time reciting bad poetry before Hamlet? As the play is directed in a historically conventional manner, why not observe the usual convention of making this speech wildly bold and artificial? The extreme sentimentality of the actor's delivery would never suggest using the company for a murder-play to test the king. This is one of the demerits of the performance—the scenes are treated in single patches for the momentary effect, without any sense of their purpose in motivating future action. The action of the players who perform in the murder-play is exaggerated; why not prepare for this? That whole sequence falls apart entirely, and seems very slow as a result.

—Ophelia is played strictly in the conventional manner, even to the old picture dress (“going mad in white satin”) and unbraided hair. She has not been an invalid, nor in bed; can't she be played as a soft fool, if necessary, without the use of a costume and get-up which is by now burlesqued everywhere as a reason for not going to see Shakespeare plays?

—why does Ophelia do a ballet? Is she (the actress) aware that the girl is supposed to be in a dazed state? She seems very alert and coy.

—why does Hamlet have to get into such an awkward huddle in discussing the portraits of the kings with his mother, and in sitting beside Ophelia during the play? It is clumsy and confused.

—why does Hamlet have to stand virtually on top of the king and yell in his ear when he hesitates to kill him while praying? The king would hear it across a whole room, however hard he was trying to pray.

—why does the king kneel in front of nothing at all, instead of having some indication of a chapel before which he attempts to repent? All the actor can do is walk around a while and then get down on his knees in a place useful for Hamlet to star in. This production is advertised as getting away from star system, but the play is acted for one person only, in the usual way.

—why does Hamlet ask Horatio who the funeral is for, if Horatio was meeting him at the quay?—and why is his rhetorical question “who is this, etc.”, obviously shouted at Laertes, spoken quietly to Horatio?

—why does he say “Goodnight, mother” in a stagey whisper when he disappears with the corpse of Polonius?—and why, when his last word to his mother's body is “Wretched queen, farewell,” does he go up and kiss the remains with sentimental fervor? That address is a critical and unfriendly one.
—why, when Laertes died very quickly of the poisoned sword, does
Hamlet walk around for what in normal time would be 15 minutes
talking heartily and with no signs of suffering at all?

—why does the awkward clutter of Hamlet in Horatio's arms persist for
all the rest of the play? It makes Horatio, in his noisy costume, more
important than the dead prince. And why, when Hamlet dies at last,
does the actor cut off "The rest is silence" into "The rest is si . . ."? The
sentence is short enough in its original form.

The general comment, which also I cannot help sharing, is that there is
no heart in the performance whatever; they are all just reciting scene after
scene without any force of character or sense of the progression of the
action. The result is a tedious vapidity with a few good rousing crashes
here and there. My own chief objection is that the star is still playing in
two modes and on more than two planes: in the active scenes he leaps
about with commendable agility, and some sense of the scene's meaning;
the moment he goes into soliloquy he begins to do elocutionary gestures
without meaning or connection to the words ("the very faculties of eyes
and ears" has a double-arm open up gesture suitable to an announce­
ment of freedom ringing or of God's being with us—it has no meaning in
context).

I can only conclude from the increasingly watery tepidity of per­
formance that the actors have become so confused among the mingled
styles of 1820, 1840, 1870, 1900, and the superimposed patches from
Adams, Dover Wilson, and Bailey, that they have given up trying to find a
clear directing line; and so alarmed by two directors instead of one that
they are confused and uncertain. Two weeks ago, the queen was begin­
ning construction of a good character; Rosencrantz and Guildenstern
were distinguishable individuals; Graham was giving promise that if the
Hamlet himself was hopeless with confusion, the tragedy of Claudius
would at least be appealing and compelling.

This week everybody and everything is first. The queen is nothing, the
two spies are the usual pair of twins, and for the first time I see Claudius
Graham in completely dull recitation with a walk-around here and there.
There is nothing to be done about it this late, and the irony of having both
front AND back of the program given to the feeblest play of the season
can only give pain to anyone sensitive to the greatest of the plays and to
artistic values. I agree with my rebellious students that this is the worst of
the old-fashioned star system.

Some helpful changes can be made in the very bad lighting of the ghost
scenes, which should not be in two times of day (the forestage is high
noon if anything); I agree that Ebert and Peppard should change
costumes; I agree that the vulgar shove to Ophelia (which comes out of
Olivier's vulgar film treatment) should be altered; I agree that the king's
kneeling in open space reduces that powerful scene to rhetoric and
nothing more; I agree that the ghost should appear at least in chain mail,
with a crown over the helmet—the aluminum paint on the mail would reflect light a little and let us see him more easily; I agree that Hamlet's head poking through a curtain without any meaning is only hilarious; I agree that the place where laughter will come, if any, is the appearance of Ophelia in a costume which was parodied and laughed at before 1790.

I have done my best to assure the class that the directors have decided that a modern and vital Hamlet would not be understood by a yokel audience, for which this is designed apparently, and that the whole effort is to bring in all the famous historical methods used by famous actors, up to and including Gielgud and Olivier; one exercise will be a dissection of the direction allotting each historical item to the actor who made it famous. This will be useful, but it will not make a good performance.

Friday, 19 Aug. 1954
Dear Knox and Suzie [Fowler],

Upon later thought, I believe I should ask to be excused from my engagement for Sunday evening after the concert at your pleasant apartment. In the present state of depressed and explosive tension, I suspect that the conversation would turn into irritated denigration of everything about the festival, and I have no intention of appearing to be one of the malcontents. Criticism is one thing; general angry disapproval is another. At this time in the season, and in his moment in festival development, nothing of the merely adverse is of value to anyone.

I must also, as gently as possible, point out to you that I have subdued my own temper toward the Fowler family for a fortnight, and on sound cause for displeasure. While objecting with uncontrolled violence to the errors of others, you must not forget certain failings of your own.

You will recollect that I asked you as early as March whether you would find time to give a demonstration of dance for the projected Stanford field course. The answer was kind and generous, promising any possible assistance. After that period, the program of dance came up. I do not consider it necessary to remind you of my services to the program, down to extended correction of a carefully spaced piece of stenciling.

When it was clear that you were to be involved in festival work to a great extent (as were the Pinnocks, Chavez, and Graham), I took the trouble to make out a definite blank schedule of spaces with the request that all of you give me an idea of where you could fit in. This took time, but seemed the clearest and most helpful way to frame my request. The class personnel wished to leave early, and I was worried as to how I could manage everything. Pinnock sent his wife with their copy at once; Graham answered me the next day. I never received the civility of an answer from you at all.

When I asked Knox whether the sheet has been received, the answer was that Suzie would see me some time soon. I did not ask to be seen; I asked for a definite statement, which could have been left at my apart-
ment or in the bulletin box backstage at any time. Now, if you object to the
festival directors’ being evasive or unjustly vague in their communica-
tions, where do you stand in this matter? If you were hopelessly involved,
the helpful and honest thing was to say so at once, so that I could adjust
my program without you in some semblance of order. As it was, I had a
choice of running after you (a move unsuitable to my seniority and situa-
tion) or of awaiting your pleasure. In the long run, I was obliged lamely to
explain to the class that of course everyone was very busy, and that in
irregular theatre life, disappointments must be expected. The explana-
tion was the more embarrassing because I had sent to every registrant a
copy of your dance program with the note that a reduced and concen-
trated version of this would be part of the class program. Added to other
explanations, which were due almost constantly, this was depressing to
the class and to me.

Graham gave a second demonstration of make-up at class request; 
Chavez found time not only to lecture well on heraldry but to assist
Pinnock in the demonstration of weapons and their use.

Knox assisted in janitor work, a pleasant gift was presented, the
Fowlers assisted Russell in the costume parade. I did not ask for these
things. In March I had asked for a dance demonstration, and had been
promised it. I have never had even a distinct expression of what was
probably the fact—that work pressed so much as to make collaboration
impossible. I should have been disappointed by the news, but that would
have been better than utter silence until class was over and everyone was
gone.

Censure is never very useful. I do not intend this note to be censorious.
It simply points out that disappointments which have not been due to
casting or apprentice standing or scholarship amounts, exist this summer.
It would be small-minded to suggest that time might have been found for
a dance demonstration if so much time had not been spent in critical
intrigue.

This is the residue: in any future reference, which I shall be glad to
write if you need it, I shall express my admiration of your talents, your
charm, your enthusiasm. I shall not be able to speak—at least until you are
older and more stable—of dependability, thoughtful integrity, and a clear
sense of obligation. All these are essential to well-being in any profes-
sional existence.

Yours affectionately always,

Knox Fowler’s reply to the preceding letter is given here. The misunderstanding was later resolved.
August 21, 1954
Miss Bailey—

This is to advise you of receipt of your unfortunate letter. This note is
sadly written only to clarify a point (the one worth bothering with!). In regard to the condensed version of the dance concert for your class, you seem to overlook the midnight meeting in front of your apartment (after the Tudor Guild meeting and witnessed by the Allens) where you assured us that no dance demonstration was needed, that your class was not even aware that we were going to do it! We did not return your schedule, since up to now personal meetings with you were much more enjoyable and profitable to all. This point I want clearly understood: We were most anxious to aid your class in any way (and did!). You canceled the dance—not us! Any service or help is always forthcoming from us.

We will miss you Sunday night, but rest assured our parties are not negative!

Thank you again for your many kindnesses and helpful friendship. Best wishes for a most happy year. Further correspondence seems unnecessary, but we will always welcome you any time you wish to see us—

Suzi joins me in sending our regards and sorrow over this current misunderstanding. We refuse to join the ranks of those who have been embittered by your letters.

Most affectionately,

30 January 1955
Mr. A. C. Allen, Jr.
Head of the Committee on Education for the Festival Board

My dear Mr. Allen,

This letter will serve to give information which largely affects the management of the festival, but which should be reported in full to the committee on education by their officer, the Educational Director; for the present I am in this post. In part the report concerns this year; in part it concerns future possibilities.

Last summer the festival class was listed in the Stanford schedule only on the basis that it was a trial run, without salary paid to the professor teaching it. The festival paid a sum of $350, which was considered a token payment—also because of the somewhat sudden beginnings of the activity. My valuation of my services in preparing, administering, and teaching the summer course of 20 lecture-hours in two weeks, was and is $1,000; Stanford was to pay $500 of this and the festival to pay a token sum toward the total. Dr. Whitaker has informed me that the summer classes are reckoned by the number of weeks only, not by the lecture hours (amounting here to two-thirds of a full quarter's work); Stanford therefore will pay me only $250.

The Festival Board and your committee should consider whether it is
incumbent on the festival management to pay more than $250 for their share of salary, without attention to the idea of its being a token payment. Into the consideration should come such points as these: whether the festival gains more than Stanford from the arrangement; how far expense of travel should enter the salary given; how far supplying classroom space should affect sums shared. It should be remembered in any discussion that from the first, Dr. Whitaker has made it plain that the Stanford connection ceases after my retirement in 1956; he does not trust his young men to "draw" well enough to make the class acceptable to university management. His feeling is not well-based, but he will not deviate from it. This means that the festival must be ready to assume total responsibility financially, or make other arrangements, or drop the plan of classes as a first step to a theatre school.

Mr. Bowmer during winter vacation had an extended conversation with Dr. Stevenson [President] of Southern Oregon College; I offer what I understand to be the main lines of it. This is verbal report; I have not seen any written suggestions.

Dr. Stevenson believes that now he has the right to offer humanities courses as well as courses in education in a higher level than was possible in 1950–52; he can undertake the literature classes for the festival during the summer at the college. These would be full-time classes instead of the two-weeks special course as now given; the dates would be June 15 or thereabout, to August 9–10. Mr. Bowmer suggests that I teach three classes, full time, at the college through these dates, and give the special two-weeks' course in the last two weeks of August. This plan is impossible as long as I teach through the year at Stanford; I doubt that it would be productive even when I have the time and energy to undertake such a schedule. The Committee and the Board must consider whether repetition is advisable, or whether the two weeks' course should be dropped, or whether I should be retained for one and not the other—leaving the college courses to be taught by other visiting professors or by younger members of the staff such as Mr. Sandoe. If the college takes over all classes, does the festival wish to give up all idea for the present of a theatre school?

Considerations here are the financial burden lifted from the festival by college-paid salaries; the value of college credit for classes after Stanford closes its connection with festival; the fact that festival books are now housed at the public library rather than at the college, so as to serve visitors and townspeople and facilitate exhibitions of Tudor materials—all this being a service the college might hesitate to undertake; the possibilities of numbers in any class which must go through full-time summer work; the relative convenience of college classrooms and unsettled space for teaching in town near the theatre; the question whether, if the college maintains its presentation of Shakespeare summer classes, the festival wishes to continue plans for school housing in the
future, either as a summer or an all-year plan.

Mr. Bowmer has been anxious to have special lecturers at the festival from time to time. Mr. Sandoe suggests for this year, in a letter addressed to Mr. Bowmer, Mr. Patton, and me, that his former department head, Dr. George Reynolds of the University of Colorado (now emeritus after retirement in 1950), be invited for a series of lectures (two or three) on the methods of production on the Tudor stage. This is Dr. Reynolds's special subject. I am suggesting to Mr. Bowmer that Dr. Stevenson consider the appointment of Dr. Reynolds for a full-time summer post either in 1955 or 1956; this would be a means to try out the relative value and drawing power of full-time college courses and the special two-weeks course, as far as the Festival is concerned, without placing the burden on one teacher. I am sending copies of this letter to Mr. Bowmer and Mr. Sandoe.

As Stanford has announced this year's course in its catalogue, the time cannot be changed from the dates announced (July 22–August 6). The Reverend Mr. Thompson has offered Trinity Hall as classroom space for those dates. These facts are secure. The Committee must consider the rest.

4 November 1955
Dear Bill,

.....

The Special Library Collection for the Festival, maintained at the Ashland Public Library and increased by gifts from private donors, will be greatly expanded in 1955, chiefly by Tudor and Stuart works affecting our knowledge of the season's plays (RICHARD III, ROMEO & JULIET, CYMBELINE, LOVE'S LABOR'S LOST)... .

6 December 1955
Dear Bill P.,

.....

I think we need the word Renaissance in the incorporated title; we do not deal exclusively with Shakespeare, but with all the influences on his work, and these are European as well as English; they also go back before Tudor days and forward into Jacobean days, so that Tudor is not large enough a title. It was suggested by both a group here and (quite coincidentally) by the people I questioned in the North, that INSTITUTE OF RENAISSANCE STUDIES was the truest and most representative title. It sounds academic, but we are academic, and the people who are coming are increasingly teachers and graduates. We need not hesitate because of the original idea of a theatre school, since clearly that must be a long way off still on account of the new need for theatre building; moreover, at present at least, Angus does not wish the actors to be instructed in lectures covering the plays. This he made perfectly clear and finally definite
on his trip down here: the reason is that the directors find it hard enough
to command their casts without having to fend off argument from actors
on playing the plays according to the lectures. Angus politely admitted
that a weaker instructor would not be amiss, but that my unfortunate
energy and decisiveness of manner tended to make actors think my
remarks final. He thought the directors ought not to face the doubled
responsibility of directing as they believed to be right, and answering
possible objections all the time from the casts. My own opinion naturally
differs from his, but he speaks apparently for other persons beside him-
self, and as the plays come first, nothing must come in the way of smooth
progress in direction.

Four of the next eight letters are from Festival General Manager Patton, cover-
ing nearly a year during which the two correspondents work through their
misunderstandings.

November 26, 1956

Dear Dr. Bailey:

Your recent letters have disturbed me increasingly. Usually I am able to
accept your attacks and lack of courtesy as reflections of your impatience
with matters that are not being resolved quickly enough to suit your will.
Lately your criticisms have been so widely, yet pointedly directed
(without much antidote by way of constructive suggestions) that I
honestly fear you will lose the cooperation of the very people you may
need most to help continue to build the institute.

This is by no means a personal threat. While my respect for your
methods often deteriorates, I still believe too much in what we are all
working toward to not want to further every promising aspect of the
festival. Nor do I have any other individual specifically in mind. Never-
theless, I am in a good position to observe reactions, and I have never
found searing blasts, whether made by members of the Board or staff,
anything but destructive to the very cause at hand.

Believe me, I know you act in ways you consider to be best and most
effective—and I fully understand your loathing of “pussyfooting.” I also
understand that I risk the loss of what friendship you may still retain for
me, by taking the liberty of these remarks. In any event, what I have said is
not in self-interest.

You will discover, once you know the many considerations at hand,
that our financial situation is not as rosy as you seem to have gathered. As
yet the complete budget has not been approved—as the previous
minutes may have led you to believe. When all is resolved, you may be
sure that I will send you a copy of the complete budget.

Sincerely,

Bill Patton
18 December 1956
Dear Patton,

The University sent me a statement for the May bill for photolith work in November or early this month; I forwarded it to you with the request that it be honored.

Today, in clearing the decks before I leave for the East, I called to see whether all was clear at the Comptroller's office. The bill has not been paid.

I am sending my check today to the Comptroller for the amount ($22.07). If you have made out a check for the amount, please cancel it. The amount is due on work for the past year, not the coming one, so do not include it in any budgetary lists.

Yours very truly,
[n.d.]  
Dear Bailey:

Did it occur to you that if Stanford took from May to November to send you a second statement, that they must also be behind on current posting? A check covering the $22.07 was sent from this office to the Controller on December 7, 1956, with instructions that it be credited to your account. I suggest you cancel your check. The matter has been cleared from festival books, entered as a past-due Institute account from the 1956 season, and cannot now be changed.

If you wish to persist in these ill-advised bits of acidic correspondence, you will henceforth find that I can reply on the same level. How about keeping me informed as to your whereabouts. Should matters arise requiring your immediate consideration (not an impossibility), I can scarcely be of much help if I am continually kept in the dark as to where you can be reached . . . when you're away from Palo Alto for extended periods, that is. What is the status of reprinting for the announcement of courses?

I hope that in the midst of this self-generated unpleasantness you will find comfort in the new brochure.

"Patton"

15 January 1957
Mr. William Patton, General Manager
Oregon Shakespearean Festival Association
Dear Mr. Patton,

I regret very much that your nerves have been exacerbated by correspondence, since it is obvious that from overwork or other causes you are definitely unwell. It is not normal for a young man of your years to undergo these seizures of hysteria, and—far more dangerous—to lose his control to such an extent as to confide his state to letters which must go into general files. Forty years of teaching have accustomed me to recogni-
tion of neurotics, incipient and developed, and to the necessity (how­
ever tedious) of calling up patience for dealing with infantile rages. I shall
be glad to observe the rules which you have been suggesting with
increasing fervor, if that will ease your spirit. At present the difficulty
seems to be that I do not salute you with forms suitable to your power and
importance as manager; I myself like formality rather than first-naming
or last-naming, and hope that the heading of this letter is what you
require.

Enclosed you will please find the notation from the University accom­
panying a check sent to me for the amount duplicated by your payment of
$22.07. Many thanks for paying the sum. I note also the rough proof for
the Theatre Arts advertisement, which is handsome and dignified, and in
which the Institute occupies its rational and relative place. I appreciate the
offer to have $80 used for personals in the Saturday Review; since the
suggested notice was given at the end of an extended letter (11/20/56) it
will take time to find it—so enclose a copied draft for you to use if you see fit.
(Will you use the generally accepted form of address employed in the
draft? "Be so good" or "Be so kind" seems laborious to a modern ear, but it
is a politeness which is suitable to the high level of the business we repre­
sent, I believe.)

I am glad to have the budget copy in final form. Work has been going
forward on the announcement, but nothing could be suggested as to
paper and so forth until budget seemed acceptable. If you have no objec­
tion, I should like to write direct to Wally Iverson about cover paper; if all
the book is coated stuff it may be brighter in reproduction and possibly
cheaper as well. The separate stock for covers means extra labor in cut­
ting and assembling. A library list with notes of numbers for each institu­
tion will be forwarded soon.

Yours with good wishes for 1957,

January 17, 1957
Dear Dr. Bailey:

Your suggestion for the dates of insertion and number of words for the
SATURDAY REVIEW advertisement are fine with me. I do believe, how­
ever, that it is important to give an idea of the dates involved. Since this ad
is primarily for the Institute, which covers a greater period of time than
the plays, I would suggest the following change in copy:

RENAISSANCE INSTITUTE COURSES, June–August.
Shakespeare on authentic Elizabethan stage. Yearbook
"Ashland Studies."
Write: SHAKESPEARE, Ashland, Oregon

I shall not write to Miss Dardaganis until I have received your com-
ments on the above. You may object to my dropping the “in Shakespeare” portion of the yearbook title, but I believe the subject matter is clearly enough implied by substituting “Shakespeare” for the uninformative Post Box number in the address.

It may be that unbeknown to me I am as you state “definitely unwell”—and that, as with one who has “BO,” even my best friends won’t tell me. But fortunately I haven’t lost my sense of humor. The first paragraph in your last letter is really a lulu. I consider it classic, and nearly as well worth framing as some of the blasts you have sent to Bill Dawkins in years past.

I’m sure that Wally Iverson would send you prices, if you wish to write to him direct. The paper used for the inside of the book last year was a coated paper, but of an inexpensive nature. You may also wish to write to Klockers in order to obtain a comparative bid for letter-press work, or perhaps offset throughout. Since we had about 500 copies left over last year, it may be that you will want to cut down on the quantity somewhat and improve the quality of paper. The only governing factor for you will be the maximum cost figure published in the budget.

Enclosed is your W-2 Withholding form. Thank you for the clipping and photo for Newsletter cut possibilities; I’m sorry not to be able to give you a word count, but as yet it is still up in the air as to how much of the coming issue will be devoted to building plans. Your plan to supply copy that can be cut, or portions used later, is much appreciated.

Sincerely,
William Patton

25 August 1957

Dear William Patton,

Thank you for the salary check in the amount of $750, hideously cut down by taxes. I am sorry you are confused about expenditures, but you do not need at present to worry at all about the assistantship, which did indeed come out of my own funds.

You cannot be expected to remember in detail all letters from all staff members; but the whole matter of salaries occupied a good deal of Board attention last autumn. I needed both a sound faculty member, one who could also be appointed as profector, and an assistant who would take over from me the hauling of books from one place to another, mailing, shifting metal chairs into and out of two public rooms twice a week, hanging prints, and setting up exhibits (all much more exhausting than they sound). I asked Mrs. Cotton for permission to request an assistant, and was advised to find a pleasant Ashland lady to do all this back-breaking work; I did not, therefore, even ask about a faculty member, since it was clear I should get nowhere.

Hence the division of my salary into $750 for me and $250 for Dr. Blue. If you look at the budget, it is listed as honorarium, which I understand is
not taxable under income tax or social security tax. I do not understand your difficulty in thus avoiding reduction of his fee. It should be full $250.

When the Board accepted my proposition to share my salary either for a professor or an assistant, the professorship was granted and nothing was done, naturally, about an assistant. I could not possibly confront the work of the Institute (to which is added a constant barrage of interviews, addresses, engagements which are very taxing to any rational person, and demands for small services of one sort and another which take time and energy), without physical help of some sort. You have forgotten that I asked permission to give a “scholarship” of $200 in order to get sufficient help, and that the Board had to pass some sort of resolution allowing me to spend my own money for help they ought to pay for.

Since my assistant was paid in two checks of $100 each before I was paid this year’s salary, I can not see how you can deduct it in any way from taxes on that salary. It all seems extremely comic when the sketch is outlined in full: I am allowed to serve the Institute by teaching, administering schedule and personnel, setting up exhibits and lectures, publicising by television addresses, hiring faculty and assistant, writing news stories and brochure material all year long—and receive just enough payment to insure the loss of income from social security while being charged for a withholding of more soc. sec. funds. . . . But my sense of comedy has never been as strong as it ought to be.

August 26, 1957

Dear Dr. Bailey:

Enclosed please find our check in the amount of $240.00 to cover the SOC tuitions. I understand that 80% of the sum is to be returned and credited to the Institute.

I had not forgotten your request to the Board last Fall for an assistant. At the time, however, you stated that you believed you could locate someone willing to do the work in the return for waiving of fees for class work. That was the last I heard of the matter; thus my concern when I discovered that you were paying out of pocket and losing additional withholding—that is, withholding on money you actually did not receive. I only wish you had let me know your change in plans in order that an adjustment could have been made for tax purposes.

It is easy to understand your impatience with the lack of funds with which to operate the Institute. I personally can’t see how we can continue to expand it without outside help, though. The funds simply can’t be indefinitely increased out of box office receipts with all the pressures elsewhere. The suggestion for the Profectorate coming out of the $1,000 to be paid you was actually your own. Last year the Institute cost a total of $1,724.72, with an income of but $764.65. The $960.07 difference had to be made up out of box office receipts. This is not to question the worth of
This photograph appeared in the program for the 1962 Ashland season, on the page devoted to the Institute of Renaissance Studies. At the time, Margery Bailey, although retired from Stanford University, was still executive director of the Institute.
the Institute, just to point up the pressing need for other financial assistance to allow it to flourish. . . . In any event, I believe the basis of your criticism is wrong, and that the thinking should not be how we cut down on production, scholarships, etc. to provide additional funds for the Institute; rather how else we might obtain the needed money.

On the brighter side of the ledger: A Rev. Don Glenn of Milton, Washington, has agreed to finance the $60, or so, cost Eddie Chavez estimates for the display case for the chain mail! I’ll fill you in on the details when next I see you.

Sincerely,
Bill Patton

27 August 1957
Dear William Patton,

. . . .

Do not fret about my recollecting that I offered to demote myself in order to get the services of Dr. Blue; I believe I mentioned it in my letter. Do not fancy that I expect to have “production, scholarships, etc., cut down to provide additional funds for the Institute”; I am afraid this is an exaggeration of phrase. A great deal of money from box office is wasted on other things, as you realize if you think clearly.

If the Institute cost $1724.72 last year, this is amazingly little for the very great service in personal relations and publicity of a markedly dignified order which it does for you. These effects (and observe that through the collaboration of the library staff, the Institute is able to effect also an immediate pulling power on ambitious towns nearby, which send ticket-buyers to us after their Shakespeare library exhibits) you could not duplicate in print for less than $5000. More, such a sum in print and in the salary of a highly trained public relations officer produces evanescent impressions; one does not remember news very long. People do remember personal service, sympathy, and effort to please and inform, in a far more important and lingering manner, which leads to future box office. No person who ever attended Institute as credited student or auditor has ever been anything but a source of continuous advertisement, as the case is also with the festival of which I consider the Institute to be a part. . . .

The sums of money brought in by the Institute are therefore, in view of the great services it turns in, sheer velvet, and the amount seems to me a respectable one. Do not continue to overlook the investment which the Institute has made in library supplies. The rare books in the Ashland Library are festival investment, which increases yearly in (a) new items which now have brought the bought value of the collection to more than $3600 and (b) the increased value of all old books with every year. As other copies disappear, remaining copies rise sharply in value. When the festival dissolves, or other desperate occasion arises, the rare books at
least in the collection can be sold for very nearly twice what was paid for
them; at an auction this might vary, but would certainly be on the higher
side of prices. . . .

My third partial financial report of the summer will be sent shortly—
and with it the receipt from the College.

Yours cordially,
M. Bailey

16 October 1957
Dear Mrs. Cotton,

You do well to ask for some statement of hope and intent about the
festival collection. I have been remiss in not seeing before this that some
suggestion as to clear terms of acceptance was necessary for both Festival
and Library Board. The gift is meant well, and has been of some use, but
occasionally I tend to think it is more headache to Miss Mason and the
Board than it is worth as a public trust, and to the festival administration a
remote and vague bundle of stuff for which anyone who is safely
graduated from a university need have no care.

Your phrasing of your belief in the donors's intent (I think I may safely
speak for Mr. Sandoe as well as myself) is the right view, with one impor-
tant exception. The books are presented to the festival organization, and
the library was asked to house them so that they would be centrally
located, safe, and usable. There was not at any time a notion that this
housing was to be temporary, or "until the festival could build a
museum." Valuable books must be listed clearly, watched devotedly, con-
trolled by trained personnel who may assist use or deny it with authority;
in short, they must be kept in a regulated library. They cannot be stored
on shelves in a locked room or left to amateur assistants who cannot list or
control their use; and it would be more than useless in town and festival if
the collection were stored in a future festival museum which would have
no trained caretaker and would be closed for much of the year.

I have hoped that the presence of the collection in the library would, as
you say, give reputation and kudos to town and library. It is for that reason
that I am anxious to proceed with the circulating library loan exhibits
suggested by Mrs. King of Coos Bay. I hope to issue a catalogue of the
collection, and to write with Miss Mason an article for the Library Journal
on the way in which a small-town library has served its own village, its
neighbors, an increasing mass of visitors, and American cultivation, by
generously supervising a collection which can not be cared for other-
wise. This is a small and poor return for what the Library Board and
librarian pour out upon the books, the Institute, and the general organiza-
tion of the festival.

But ownership comes down flatly to a matter of possible sale. If at any
time the festival were moved to another town, the collection would have
to accompany it. If the festival collapsed at some future time, owing considerable sums, the collection could be sold by legal order, as a valuable possession. The fact is that in such case, the library would (as things stand at present) have nothing to show for years of care and much appreciated service but the imponderable sense of having given generously and assisted an effort to raise standards of American culture. Since I am a teacher, and much concerned with libraries, I have a fatal tendency to take these things for granted; teachers and librarians are used to a continuous pouring out of inherited riches without return in cash or credit.

However, the Ashland Library is a public library; it belongs to the town. Though the town, through the Library Board, has been unbelievably generous, and has perhaps gained a little repute through caring for the collection, it is probable that some definite understanding should be phrased for the protection of both festival and library from the vague and heady enthusiasms of donors and friends.

The festival as such has taken no responsibility for the collection in care or control; the first suggestion in that direction is the present one, as to whether the overall insurance carried by the festival administration should be sufficient cover for the collection of books. Certainly, when several books borrowed from the Stanford library were stolen in 1954, festival insurance covered the amounts represented in the theft. A devastating fire which might wipe out the entire library building and the whole collection would be a larger matter: at present, the library's fee for insuring the collection is, I believe, 12 dollars the year. It is, as I said, a reasonable caution on the part of the library, which undertook a certain responsibility in accepting the housing of the collection. However, the festival, in paying insurance fees, would evince a warm appreciation of what the library is doing for a festival possession.

It is possible also that some agreement should be drawn up, stating that in case of desuetude or collapse on the part of the festival as a producing activity, and hence the obvious collapse also of its Institute, the Ashland Public Library should have first right to offer for the collection—or indeed should receive it in payment for long service and care. I do not know whether this agreement would render the collection free of legal control in case of festival failure. I do not know, either, that the town would care to have the collection on its shelves if the festival were not in Ashland as its point of interest.

Possibly the situation would be simplified if the festival administration should assume that the collection is perhaps the most important direct service of the town to the festival interests, and consider some means of returning the great generosity of the town. This might be gifts of money or exhibit rarities; payment for library care, or a token payment at least; outright assignment of the collection to the library and the town of Ashland, providing the growing investment in rare volumes as a financial return for care and service; assistance in building a new wing at the
library (which Miss Mason dreams of erecting in a style reminiscent of Tudor town houses in beam and plaster) instead of adding a useless "library" room in the festival plans.

I regret the necessity of pinning the relationship down to cash expenditure and returns. A splendidly warm attachment between town and theatre has been marked by the care of the collection and the continuous additions to it, and the very nebulousness of the link has been part of its value, in my view. However, the festival must understand the growing value of what it possesses, and the only way to make it clear is to quote dollars and cents, the language of management. It should also know how to be grateful for unprecedented generosity on the part of the town and its library and Library Board. A discussion by both Festival and Library Boards may be required—or by assigned committees.

25 March 1958
Dear W. P.,

There is no point in listing the pother which has kept me frantically busy; enough to remark that an ANTA party for the nasty Brooks Atkinson was one; the creature simply came out by direction of his paper—and at what a time! I have a suspicion it was at behest of the Ford Foundation people, who are interested in S.F. theatre. Definite answers hereafter, first; glad cries afterwards. I write in a hurry because I start for a lecture date in L.A. in three hours—hope it's productive.

.....

Turner, at last ANTA meeting, was enthusiastic about the wonderful help his college got from Angus and Graham in the drama festival; they were particularly thrilled by the unusual make-up demonstration. This is the sort of thing which means more than dragging a dilapidated company all over the country. If AB and Dick could wangle time for visits to schools with this program or something like it, we'd have a publicity stunt unapproached. ANTA meeting Sunday stressed drama and schools, and gave a lot of new and productive ideas. The students know so little about plays that small doses are better than full-scale performances of the classics, I think. In the country schools around Sacramento, the children in the grades and junior high have to be told that they may laugh and clap, and that there will be a break so that they can get a drink of water, etc. This staggers me, but the lads know whereof they speak.

[n.d.]
Mrs. R. L. Holland Mattison
5612 South Eye Street
Tacoma, Washington
My dear Mrs. Mattison,

Mr. Bowmer has turned over the appealing Shakespeare items to me as head of the Institute and Library Collection for the festival—with the very
welcome letter, so full of interest to anyone connected with theatre.

The edition from which your pages come is the same as that of the three handsome volumes brought out by Charles Knight in the middle of the 19th century; the interesting thing is to see that this publication is an effort to get Shakespeare's plays to the people who could not afford the luxurious first edition. Apparently there was great interest in both Britain and America in these channels, but the English serial edition I have seen is not at all handsome; and in your numbers the pages are exactly what those of the original edition were.

I find great interest in them because of the excellent steel engravings—accurate records of the mannerisms and costumes adopted by the famous actors of the 19th century. In our Festival Collection we have a section devoted to changing productions, and the shifts in style among actors of the several generations after the 18th century.

You ask us only for advice on disposing of the collected numbers; but I should like to proffer our hope that you will find it possible to present them to the Festival here at Ashland. It is increasingly valuable, and has been generously housed in the public library of the town, so that the gifts by which it is increased are immediately available to the general public. We feel ourselves greatly in the debt of the library and its board, and wish to increase the values of the collection in every way. Many times we are obliged to beg off from accepting gifts which are but duplicates of recent editions; but yours is a genuine "find," which might not bring more than five or six dollars among bookshops and agents, but which fills a definite niche in our library. Since all our books are gifts, and the festival (with a necessary building program on its hands) does not budget a sum for the purchase of books, I do not suggest buying the items from you. Yet if you feel that you may make them a gift, be assured that they will be carefully cared for, and most sincerely appreciated. May I hold those you send until you let me know whether we may hope to have the fellow-volumes?

6 October 1958
Dear General,

Speaking of members, you have no idea of the warm effect even on me who knows the workings, when the card pleasantly announcing the general meeting arrived. People may not be able to go, and without doubt it is better that elections should be kept in the control of local people anyhow—but the gesture of reminding people that they are members with a vote is of major importance in keeping their interest—and perhaps in winning their affectionate loyalty. That will pay off in actual cash. The notice had just the right personal touch, and the hand-signature was equally right. I have, as you recall, worried a good deal about the shaky lack of integrity in disregarding notices of meeting and election; I was almost amused at noticing how wonderfully good I felt at seeing this mild
but important little card—good because of the card's effect, not merely because I agreed with the policy. I shan’t be surprised to hear that pleasant repercussions come from other people too. You will all be dining Angus this evening; it is bound to be a wonderful party, since the idea is so sincere and good.

24 October 1958
Dear General and Important Affianced Person:

Our latest letters crossed, so that my mild mischief in sending regards to Miss Douglass must have seemed a chill reception indeed to the news you sent—which had not arrived when I wrote. Will you give her (since I seem to have misplaced my address sheets AGAIN) the envelope of affectionate good wishes which I enclose here?—and send me, if there be such, a duplicate of the winter addresses of everybody?

I have of course regulated my books to accord with the closed accounts of the festival year. I hope to get off the budget approved by the education committee last summer, with an addition caused by the departure of Loper from festival plans of 1959, to the North as soon as possible. Is there a deadline in the immediate fortnight?

Theatre Bond goes to a performance of Jose Ferrer in the wholly new pre-Broadway production EDWIN BOOTH on November 15th—matinee, followed by dinner at Bardelli’s with argument on the play (and if we can get him, comment by Ferrer himself). Could you and the future spouse come down for a brief vacation (probably plus business as usual) and subscribe to the occasion? I’ll send definite notices later.

14 November 1958
Dear General,

Dr. Blue has sent me word that the Board passed the education committee’s budget with my additions, and without any groans—which was good of them in such a year as this. May I have some money as soon as you can send it? I have been paying the assistant, paying for postage and such miscellanies as the annual gallon of white glue, and so on, and it is beginning to mount up. I do not, naturally, dictate how you send it—in separate checks or in one check; but since some will come to me as repayment, perhaps one paper for Institute of Renaissance Studies, with indication of payment direction, will be most immediately useful.

The sums should, I think be—

postage . . . $30.00 (more when Inst. Bn. goes out)
miscellaneous . . . 40.00
assistant’s “scholarship”
Oct-Nov-Dec . . . 75.00
20 April 1959
Dear General,

I was staggered by the audacity of Dr. Kreisman in demanding the $3000 for the library, and am beyond speech to find that by so fine a vote of the committee, we get it! The news report observing that objection amounted to sulk because Ashland was getting (in all, with the $12000 before granted) "one-third of the cultural funds for the southern part of the state" is comic. If there are other large and hard-working cultural elements, why don't they speak up and promise something? Jackson ought to have been busy—and as a matter of fact, where is the Medford Library, which scorns to subscribe to the Ashland Studies? Ha.

25 October 1960
Dear General,

I cannot be entirely sorry I missed you, since we should simply have exchanged cold and flu. I have been up and down with this dismal affliction all October, and had to miss Hanson on his Tuesday evening reading as well as the Patton family. (With two and a half instead of just two, I think family is the right word?) News of the new home sounds very gratifying, and His-er Nibs should be in high feather on arrival; there are few infants who have a spang new home to go right into!

... ... ...

The new membership seems to me one of the ablest we have ever had; the struggle with men who know their minds is doubtless exhausting occasionally, but the comfort that attends it is the excellence of the minds, and above all the intelligent and complete devotion which the recent boards have lavished on their association with the festival. I am particularly delighted to have the silent and shrewd Mr. Moffat, with youth added to his other estima ble qualities, as President. I believe he is equable, candid, understanding, and (with mildness) firm. The names you mention add up to only seven; are the other eight men who were but half through their service? How one realizes the whizz of time indeed, on seeing . . . Mrs. Pinnock a big gun in Tudor Guild, and the worthy Frank a Board member. I have never had sense enough to remember that I shall be 70 next May—not much of a century left.

May 28, 1963
Mr. Wm. Patton
Box 27
Ashland, Ore
Dear WP:

I send you a copy of my letter to Father Alvord, which explains the letter he sent to me, announcing that he was obliged to occupy the front room in the Parish House this summer, but could allow us the next two small rooms, as well as the large one. He needs the space without ques-
tion, and my only fear is that, seeing the big, horrible church sign in red, white and blue, and nothing else on the building, inquirers may pass us up. So will you be sure to have your Grounds workers put up the metal sign on the parking in the same place that it held last year? Father Alvord is a very good-natured creature, and he may have no objection to my putting a sign in the glass upper part of the front door, as well.

... ... As to the now settled policy about memberships. I should perhaps make yet another suggestion, which has been revolving in the back of my mind: I should like very much to have some recognition in the Institute for people who have done the many tedious chores that have to be fitted in and cannot be paid for; it has occurred to me that a small medal, even of pewter, no larger than a half dollar, might be not too expensive to use. These persons should be called Companions of the Festival. Recipients might use this small medal to pass in to lectures, or receive consideration on the price for auditing, without being an annoyance or offense to other visitors. [I noticed, for instance, that when it was possible to present the membership cards, both Mr. and Mrs. Davis attended all the lectures with beaming looks. They both do an enormous amount in small, individual ways for the Tudor Guild, the library, and (I think still) in giving breakfast to the cast, don't they?] What do you think of this? The celebration committee is investigating the possibility of small, interesting remembrances in silver, or steel, for the people who are to receive Honors; and the Tudor Guild is investigating a suggestion I made years ago about having aluminum coins made in Elizabethan coin designs, for use at the Guild booth. I had no idea where to find makers of such coins, and did not trouble to do any research on it, but Mr. Bash is sure that he can find a maker.

The medal for the Companions should be something between the more valuable item and the shopping playthings.

I'm sorry I must include in this letter another requisition for postage, which takes wings very rapidly, and another on my travel budget to pay part of my taxi fees. Every few days I am unable to walk as far as the bus because of arthritis in the joint of the great toe on one foot, and the bills for cabs have kept me strapped all spring. Since I have expenses in getting the house ready for a summer tenant, I have to make things as easy for myself as I can.

Western Union Telegram

WM PATTON CARE SHAKESPEARE OFFICE
Jun 19 1963 840 A PDT
MARC ANTHONY HOTEL ASHLAND ORG
DR BAILEY DIED TODAY. DETAILS LATER.
C W BARKER
FICTION
NEVER used to go to the office Christmas party, but I got tired of people asking me afterward where I was and if I saw this or that. Besides, it is on company time. So last year I went, and believe it or not, I was the star.

We were all standing around the food, which is what you do at an office party. I had had my quota of one highball and had gone off to the side by the tall curtains, to let somebody else get at the food table. The party was in the executive reception room on the twelfth floor, which is where the top brass operate. I have been with the company 36 years, but this was the first time I ever actually stood in the executive reception room.

How they eat at these parties! One man was hovering over the chafing dish full of little meat balls in sauce, and he was spearing them one by one with a toothpick and putting them in his mouth like a machine. Several women were juggling two plates apiece, stacking things on them as though it were their last meal for a month. Others just camped beside the table and reached out left and right for shrimp, pineapple-wrapped-in-bacon, tiny hot dogs, cheese tarts, little piroshki, chocolate cookies, strawberry tarts, cheddar wedges, and candied almonds, stuffing everything into their faces in no logical order at all. It was really quite revolting.

There were some young women from Advertising behind me, laughing and carrying on, and I didn’t pay any attention to them until I heard this harsh bark, a gagging cough, and a scraping of heels on the floor.

I turned around, and there was Donna Musica, the most beautiful girl in the entire building, bending over with her hand to her throat and a wild look in her eyes. She was jerking her head in the most awful way, and the others were just wringing their hands. They were going to slap her on the back, but I said, “Don’t do that.” I had read about this in a magazine.

Without even thinking, I went behind her and grabbed her around the waist. You have to understand, I have never done such a thing in my life. I have not held a woman so close since I was 15. And I have certainly never
held one from behind. And an extraordinary sensation it was, her firm-
ness, you know, pressing against me. She was wearing a soft wool knit
dress.

I hooked my hands together with the knuckles on the outside and set
them just under her ribs and gave a sudden, sharp tug. I pulled her right
to me. She made a most ugly sound, a sort of super cough, and some-
thing came out, which she neatly caught in her hand. Then she
straightened and took a great big breath and turned to me with tears in
her eyes and a gorgeous smile.

“Thank you!” she said. “Thank you!”

I shrugged and smiled.

“My God,” she said, “you saved my life, I think. I was really choking
there.”

“Oh no,” I said. And then there was a lot of confusion, and people were
patting me on the shoulder and patting her and taking her away to the
ladies room.

When I got home that night I was still thinking about it, or more to the
point, about Donna. She is on the short side but slim, and she is very well
developed. She has long straight hair, Indian straight and very black and
very fine, and I happen to know it smells lovely, sort of leafy. Brown eyes
and a straight nose and pointed chin and extremely light skin, so smooth
you can’t see any pores.

I told Albert about my adventure at supper. Albert is my brother. His
wife died some years ago, and I have lived with him ever since. He said he
had no idea I knew the Heimlich Maneuver, and I said I didn’t know I
knew either, but it just came to me.

I thought about her the next day too. I am in Accounting, and we don’t
see much of the Advertising people. When I got on the elevator I looked
to see if she was on it, but she wasn’t. I wondered what she would say to
me. Oh Mr. Billings, she would say, I want to thank you again. I would say,
Oh, call me George, for heaven’s sake. And then she would say, Won’t you
let me buy you a drink? Or something? And I would say, Well, Donna,
well. I couldn’t decide what I would say.

I eat lunch early, and when I went to the cafeteria I glanced around first
to see if she was there. I did that every day for two weeks before I figured
that she must eat with the late crowd. But one day I was eating at a small
table against the rear wall, reading Newsweek, when a bunch of young
women rushed in and splashed themselves down at the next table,
laughing and making a lot of noise and clatter.

One of them was Donna. She had her back to me. I bent my head so in
case she turned around she couldn’t tell who it was. My posture is not
very good as it is. I could hear some of what they were saying, and one girl
knew her from school, it seemed, anyway from a long time ago. She kept
calling her Donna Marie.

I thought about how it would go.
She would say, Oh Mr. Billings, how are you, I never got to really thank you. And I would say, Oh call me George, for heaven's sake, Donna Marie. And she would say, Won't you let me buy you a drink? And I would say, Why don't we just get a cup of coffee or something? You're looking well, Donna Marie, I would say, and she would say, Why, thank you.

It is my impression that young women talk about hair a great deal, and I would be interested to hear what she had to say about hers. I would ask her how she kept it brushed so nicely, and tell her how my mother used to brush hers one hundred strokes every night of her life. I would ask how long it took to dry, which must be a problem.

I didn't catch sight of her again until nearly April, when I spotted her at the back of an elevator one morning. I said, "Oh, sorry," and stepped out as though I were waiting for someone. I had my head down, so I don't know if she saw me or not.

Once in the summer when I had eaten lunch downtown (I always do on my birthday), I was walking back to our building when I realized she and two friends were walking ahead of me on the sidewalk, so I slowed up. It would not have done to pass them and simply wave debonairly, yet I could hardly have moved alongside them.

Oh hello, Mr. Billings, she would have had to say, how are you? Do you know my friends, so-and-so and so-and-so? And then I would have said, Oh hello Donna Marie.

No, she would have said Hi. Oh hi, Mr. Billings. And I would have said, Oh hi, Donna Marie. Call me George, for heaven's sake. I must say, you're looking great. Thanks to you, she would say, and I still want to buy you that drink.

Wait a minute. She hadn't asked me the first time yet. Maybe I should start. Oh hi, Donna Marie, you're looking great. Say, I've been meaning to get hold of you. Will you let me buy you a cup of coffee? I'll give you a ring.

Right after the Labor Day weekend I saw her coming down our corridor with some papers in her hand. She looked gorgeous. She had a red velvet band in her hair that made her look like Alice in Wonderland. I was walking toward her, and there were no doors at that spot for me to duck into, so I simply buried my head in the papers I was carrying (I am always carrying papers) and moved my lips and frowned. She didn't speak. Possibly she didn't notice me because she was in a hurry. Young people often don't notice what is going on around them, I have found. Even major things.

For a whole week after that she took to eating lunch early, for what reason I can't imagine. I tried eating even earlier, but the cafeteria sandwich lady wasn't on duty yet at eleven-thirty, and so I wound up going out to lunch at the Gotham Sandwich across the street for the week. It was nice not to have to scout out the place in advance every time.
Suddenly it was December again. I had planned to skip the office party, but my deskmate, Walter Orbis, inveigled me into going, and I figured I could talk to him. Which is what I did. We stood by the food table stoking up (and I have to admit I was making as much of a pig of myself as anyone), and I was just about to take him off to the side where we would have room to talk shop when I saw her come into the room. I was eating a banana tart at the time.

And wouldn't you know, I was so surprised I gulped the whole thing, and it stuck halfway down. I am not that fond of banana in the first place. I was out of breath and foolishly gasped for air, which jammed the thing firmly in my gullet. I was choking. I waved my arms. Walter looked puzzled. He is not a quick thinker.

My eyes were watering and I was beginning to feel dizzy. Suddenly two arms clamped around me from behind and I felt a terrific tug at my stomach and the banana tart popped out.

I turned around. It was Donna Marie, smiling so widely her gums showed.

"Thanks!" I said. "Miss Musica! Thank you!"
"Now we're even, George," she said, with a friendly sort of giggle. "Now you can relax."

What did she mean by that? How did she know my name?
POETRY
Winterbourne

morning’s first bellowing cow
awakens him before a clock’s alarm
or a cock’s crow.

a stitch of sleep suturing the corner of one eye
creates a squint that causes the inch of sky
beneath his lowered blinds to blur

into a fissure of snow falling.
when he punctures the ice in a barrel,
placed outside his door to capture rain

& the melt from his weather-gnawed eaves,
the first shard he sucks knifes into his teeth,
the tissue surrounding both eyes so tight

the horizon tilts in the riffs of snow,
the long day stretching so far in front of him
he knows another cycle of chores

will spin him over the winterbourne creek he must cross
each polar morning on the way to his barn & the bellowing cow,
unaware of oddities & the miracle of a creek flowing only in winter.
Where the river road crosses the tracks

hardhack blooms. Dense pink clusters give them away betray them like rust on leaves recalls the argentine sheen of you after showers the burns on my chest left by the wide rough lick of your tongue.

One naked body always creates the nudity of another the beauty of birth and of first breath but where the river road crosses the tracks a blush of dusk obscures the curves two crusts of earth collide below hollow rushes along the steep bank as a red sun descends into yellow reeds.
On His Book

Paper is thin,
grows brittle quickly,
and will burn.

By what compulsion
should we make public
much privacies,

such immaterial
matter? God
pronounces lastly his

silent declarative
sentence, but this
flutter, this

linen content, not
us, surely in the end
not us.

What we held true
we now let go of
as a lie,

let float up into
thin air, let sink
in water, in

dust, like a
wreath, let lie
still, let burn.
Recuperation

I realized last night
I cannot remember
the faces of either
of my psychiatrists,
looked at a long time
a long time ago.

I remember some dreams
I dreamed in those days,
a flare falling
from a traffic light—
catching it in my hands,
tossing it back.

But those faces—if I met them
on a crowded street
by day, or by night
in the empty scenery
I see then, I know
I would not know them.

Time and God both
are called physicians,
but the mind, that gentle
layer on of hands,
I submit to its regimen,
I am reconciled to amputation.

The old are well,
the sane as well
are well enough,
and the dead have died.
We come to have been merely
ourselves. Well, well,

and when you say that,
what do you mean?
How do you feel about that?
I feel that the past
can do without me,
Doctor, as I you.
Bach’s Wife

1
Woe unto us daughters
of music, who shall, the Bible
says, be brought low,
and sometimes, yes,
after the last note
of the organ comes to nothing,
or the song of the oriole
out in the almond orchard
dims into blue air,
or the child home with fever
finally sleeps, I think
I understand, until
something simple distracts me—
my own breathing, the vibrato
of water boiling in the kettle
on the hob, or the warm perfume
of loaves now baking
in the oven, or my man
will come into the kitchen
and want to dance, or tease me
because in church once
long ago I sang, a thing
not to be done by girls,
though they be the daughters
of music, and I smile
but hardly hear him, for
if I am anywhere,
it’s here among the chimes
of pots, kettle solos,
perfume of new bread,
amen, with so much to do
before the other mouths
I love come in singing
hungry, hungry, and eat up
everything I serve
except the pots, which rust
will get anyway,
but now the organ stops
and, in the homely silence,
it comes to me—that other,
muter silence after
the bells have beaten me down
in the cold gray hollow
of the great church
and I feel small as a child,
tiny daughter of music
judged by the weight of stone,
but wife of music too
and mother of it, glad
to get back home, amen,
to her own kitchen
where what she knows she knows,
even in the dark, like the dear,
scarred face of this table,
and the rest—habit,
but after the last goodnight,
the last candle snuffed,
I often think of Him
slack on His Cross, His eyes
closed in the cold
of His empty house,
alone in the same dark
I lie in, hearing the others
breathe, so near, so shut
in their own still selves,
no music now to comfort
any of us—odd thoughts
for a girl, but maybe not
for a daughter of music,
and then I also curl
into sleep and dream
of mice quietly eating
their way up from the cellar
through everything, but now
the bread is ready to take
from the oven, amen,
and each dish set
at its appointed place—
mine the cracked one, yes—
and I discover myself
humming a tune I heard
this morning in the market,
or staring out the window,
the washclout hanging limp
from one hand as I listen hard
for something beyond my breathing
and find myself pitying
those who never will taste
this bread, never stand here
watching for the gold flash
of the oriole singing
deep in the crown of leaves
whose voice, the Bible says,
shall rise up, even
as the daughters of music
shall be brought low
and never know why, but most
of all—and this I could never
tell my man whose steps
I hear come to me now—
I pity the steeple lifting
beyond the orchard, its bells
so still, its bellropes
dangling helpless in space,
its spire trying so hard
against heaven’s silence
and oh yes, no doubt holy,
holy and alone.
Contributors

Brian Burke has published more than 100 poems and stories in periodicals and anthologies in this country, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and Singapore. His degrees in creative writing are from York University, Toronto, and the University of British Columbia, Vancouver. Previous employment has been with the Vancouver Canucks and the Stratford Shakespearean Theater. He now teaches literature at Coquitlam College, White Rock, B.C.

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Leonard Nathan is a professor in the Department of Rhetoric at the University of California, Berkeley, from which came his undergraduate and graduate degrees. With G. Milosz, he has translated, for Harcourt Brace in 1985, Happy as a Dog's Tail: Poems of Anna Swir and, for Ecco Press, 1989, Selected Poems of Aleksander Wat.

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To Prospective Contributors

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