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Joseph Freeman (center) with Russian comrades during his trip to the Soviet Union in 1926.
The American Testament of a Revolutionary

LEE ELIHU LOWENFISH

Born in the Ukraine in 1897, Joseph Freeman emigrated with his family to Brooklyn in 1904. In his new country he became, after the encouragement received at Columbia, a genuine romantic and a stubborn idealist, two strains that dominated his life throughout the years no matter how he chose to use his remarkable talents. He was, first of all, a poet influenced in his writing by the English he learned from reading the romantic writers. He was also an orator, who led his debating teams in high school and Columbia College, and who throughout the 1920s and 1930s preached the gospel of idealistic communism. He was, finally, a journalist, who upon graduating from the Columbia School of Journalism in 1920 became one of the youngest American overseas correspondents in Europe. He was the author of several books, most notably, An American Testament, an autobiography published in 1936, and a long novel about European history from the Roman Empire to the twentieth century, Never Call Retreat, issued in 1943.

During his years as a Columbia undergraduate Freeman earned a Phi Beta Kappa key and attracted the attention of many of his professors. The philosopher, Frederick Woodbridge, later Dean
of the Graduate Faculties, quoted from Freeman's term papers for years after his graduation in 1919. Raymond Weaver, Professor of Comparative Literature, urged the young College student to go on to graduate school and become his assistant. So did Professor Irwin Edman, who considered Freeman "my very first favorite pupil," and who encouraged him to write and helped him to publish poetry.

However, the world of action beckoned to Freeman despite his extraordinarily sensitive and poetic soul. "Don Quixote," a poem Freeman wrote for Edman in 1918, foreshadowed the shape of Freeman's young manhood. It began, "He challenged life with dreams, and armed with zest / Tilted the facts of earth in mad delight. . . ." Rejecting the law career urged by his father, who had risen in the new world to become a millionaire contractor and the builder of the first skyscraper in Brooklyn, Freeman chose work in journalism. In this field he hoped he could respond to the demands of the world by using his gifts of language in describing affairs of state. In his first position Freeman served as a Paris and London correspondent for the Chicago Tribune from the summer of 1920 until the autumn of 1921.

Like many a young American abroad, Freeman eagerly explored the culture and cafés of Europe, and he continued to write poetry. The Nation, Pearson's, and The Bookman all published his poems. "Pagan Chant," which appeared in Current Opinion, captured Freeman's brooding, lyrical longings:

I have lost the key
To good and evil;
God and the devil
Are one to me.

I move apart
From the coils of duty;
Only beauty
Can stir my heart:
Skies and seas,
A wind that passes,
Along the grasses,
Fragrant trees,
The flight of birds,
Imperial places,
Music, faces,
Perfect words.

"The coils of duty" could not escape Freeman's attention for very long. His soul demanded the reconciliation of art and revolution. When his poems were accepted by the radical magazine, The Liberator, he was especially excited since it was the successor to the fabled radical Greenwich Village monthly, The Masses.

When Freeman returned to New York in the autumn of 1921, he met Floyd Dell and Max Eastman, the editors of The Liberator. They encouraged his writing, telling him that the radical movement needed a literary voice like his, experimental and free of dogma. Both Dell and Eastman had been born in the 1880s and were tiring of the demands of radical journalism. The success of Dell's autobiographical novel, Moon-calf, published in 1920, had enabled him to buy a house outside New York City where he hoped to retire and to devote his life to literary pursuits. Eastman was eager to travel in Europe to see the Russian revolution first-hand, a journey which was destined to make him a defender of Leon Trotsky and, ultimately, to lead to his bitter renunciation of all radicalism. By 1922, both Dell and Eastman wanted new blood on The Liberator, and they offered Freeman an associate editorship.

Having found the daily routine of work for the Tribune unsatisfying, Freeman hesitated to join another publication. However, the offer to follow in the footsteps of Dell and Eastman proved irresistible. In the spring of 1922 Freeman joined The Liberator staff, which included another new and ardent exponent
of art and revolution, Michael Gold. For the next fifteen years Freeman would never be far from the desks of The Liberator and its successor, The New Masses, which he helped to found in 1926. Throughout the 1920s Freeman was the epitome of the Greenwich Village Bohemian, loving the lifestyle which mingled wine and song and romance with all-night conversation and the pursuit of the modern in all the arts. Freeman would even compose Jazz Age doggerel, such as “The New Woman: 1925 Model”:

> Julia, gentle Julia is her name
> I quite forget the college whence she came.
> She drinks her gin and ale
> By the bottle and the pail
> (And all her little girl friends do the same.)

Despite his Bohemian lifestyle, Freeman never swerved in his commitment to social justice. He had joined the American Communist Party in 1922, shortly after it had surfaced from the underground where the Palmer Raids and government suppression had forced it. He firmly believed that the example of the new Soviet Union was one for all the world to follow. In the fall of 1925, Freeman met the Soviet poet, Vladimir Mayakovsky, during his American tour. He translated Mayakovsky’s “Decree to the Army of Art” for The Nation. A poetic radical like Freeman might well have shown concern for Mayakovsky’s couplet, “He alone is a Communist true / Who burns the bridge for retreat.” But the terrible spectre of Stalinism was only dimly foreseen in the 1920s.

In June of 1926, an excited Freeman sailed for the Soviet Union aboard the first American ship to visit Russia since the revolution. For ten months Freeman traveled widely throughout Russia, concentrating on how Soviet writers and artists had combined their artistic interests with revolutionary commitments. He was fascinated by the experimentation going on in all the arts. He spent time backstage with the renowned theatre director, Vsevold Meyerhold. He re-acquainted himself with Mayakovsky, who
like many of the Soviet artists hoped to combine American techniques with the militant messianism of the new Soviet order. Mayakovsky told him, “I will give you the whole of the broad Russian soul for a couple of American tractors.”

Futurist poet Vladimir Mayakovsky (left) and theatre director Vsevold Meyerhold in 1926 at the time of Freeman’s visit.

Freeman became especially friendly with Sergei Eisenstein, whose 1925 film, “Battleship Potemkin,” was universally acknowledged as a masterpiece of realism. Freeman reported to The New Masses on the full life of the young, one-time engineering student, who employed the advanced technique of montage in his films, cut with what Eisenstein called “scissors held in fists.” Freeman met Eisenstein again during the latter’s visit to the United States in the early 1930s to work in Hollywood with Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford. The Soviet artist later confided to Freeman the difficulties in working with producers who knew “my renown but not my work,” and the painful encounters with the well-meaning but eccentric socialist, Upton Sinclair, on the abortive film project, “Que Viva Mexico!”
When Freeman returned to New York in the spring of 1927, he joined the staff of Tass, the Soviet news agency in the United States recently established by Kenneth Durant, a Philadelphia aristocrat who had been an early supporter of the Bolshevik cause while in the diplomatic service in Russia. The painstaking work of writing for Tass did not make Freeman any less a dreamer. He continued to publish in The New Masses, sometimes under the pseudonym of Robert Evans lest his austere boss Durant think he was becoming too vocal a communist. Utilizing his many years of experience as a public speaker, he also lectured to communist workers' groups on the theory and practice of Soviet literature.

In the summer of 1929 Freeman traveled to Mexico on Tass business. He was fascinated by the work of the Mexican muralists and painters, who wielded great political power in a still barely literate society. He had admired the work of Diego Rivera, the volatile painter who had recently been expelled from the Mexican Communist Party. Freeman grew more impressed with the art and politics of the painters, José Orozco and David Siquieros. While in Mexico Freeman also fell in love with, and was briefly married to, Rivera's nineteen-year-old mural assistant, a California painter named Ione Robinson.

As the 1930s began and the Depression swept many artists and writers leftward, Freeman continued the search for his "holy grail" of art and revolution. In 1931, he was host to the Soviet novelist Boris Pilnyak on his American tour, accompanying him to Hollywood where they collaborated on a never-filmed screenplay for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, entitled "Soviet." Generous with his time and his contacts, Freeman also opened doors in Russia for such notable American travelers as writer Waldo Frank and photographer Margaret Bourke-White. Freeman frequently requested that American Communist Party officials send him again to Russia, but they always told him that he was too valuable at home as a publicist for the Party.

The triumph of Hitler in early 1933 intensified Freeman's politi-
The American Testament of a Revolutionary

cal activities. He spoke in March at Madison Square Garden before the first anti-fascist rally in America, and then journeyed cross-country, helping to organize John Reed Clubs of writers and artists wishing to serve the communist cause. Many young writers were inspired by Freeman's insistence that the way a writer could best serve the cause was to write well. "A party card does not automatically endow a Communist with artistic genius," he declared.

The strains of the speaking tour forced him to rest in Florida
in the early months of 1934. Freeman's national fame at this time can be measured by the remark of gossip columnist, Walter Winchell, who noted that the "Reditor of the New Masses," was vacationing in Florida "incognito of course." Freeman was never concerned about notoriety in the right-wing press. He was, however, more deeply hurt by the virulent charges that Max Eastman now launched against him as a "paid agent of Moscow." In mid-1934, trying to shrug off the bitter polemics of radical politics, he decided that it was time for him to make a lasting contribution to the literature of art and revolution. With his new wife, the artist Charmion von Wiegand, Freeman retreated to a little house
in the Catskills and began work on the book which became *An American Testament: A Narrative of Rebels and Romantics*.

Freeman intended *An American Testament* as "a narrative of ideas" that explained how a sensitive poet and intellectual had turned towards communism. The book was a rich account filled with experiences from childhood and college through his encounters with artists and revolutionaries in the Soviet Union. When published in the fall of 1936, *An American Testament* received considerable critical acclaim.

Unfortunately, the book appeared at the time that the great purge of non-Stalinists was convulsing the communist movement. At a May 1937 session of the Communist International in Moscow, the book was denounced for its treatment of Trotsky as an erring individual rather than as a traitor. Freeman was rebuked for mentioning the existence of detention camps, and he also drew attack for depicting Stalin as an earthy political leader—quoting Stalin's remark to a Party conference, "Excuse my breath, comrades, I ate herring for lunch"—instead of presenting him as an infallible, if not divine figure.

When Freeman learned of his denunciation in Moscow, he behaved like a good Bolshevik soldier. He ordered the withdrawal of publicity and the cancellation of a speaking tour for the book. Nothing could return Freeman to good graces in the Party, however. In August of 1939 he was denounced in an influential communist journal and was subject to total excommunication, a torment for a man of his gregarious nature. He found solace in Wordsworth's long poem, *The Prelude*, which was concerned, in part, with the French Revolution and the English romantic's subsequent disillusionment. Summoned before New York State anti-communist investigating committees in 1940 and to Washington during the McCarthy period, Freeman refused to testify against his friends and former political comrades. He would only say that he had entered the communist movement as a poet in 1922 and departed as a poet in 1939.
Lee Elihu Lowenfish

Freeman's ambitious novel, *Never Call Retreat*, was published in 1943. Told in flashback by a Viennese history professor who had recently escaped from a concentration camp, the story contained discourses on the French Revolution, the post-World War I schism between socialists and communists, and the history of early Christianity. The latter theme was presented in the form of four playlets about Eusebius, the fourth century Christian heretic. By highlighting Eusebius's vision, "All men are equal not in capacity but in value," Freeman was, doubtless, writing about his own break with the communist dogmatism of class warfare.

*Never Call Retreat* was praised by Thomas Mann and received a front-page review in *The New York Times Book Review*. After its publication, Freeman joined the staff of the radio program, "Information Please," and toured Europe with the show after the end of the war. Freed from the necessity for political activity, he hoped that the post-war era might see the continuation of cooperation between Russia and the United States, the subject of his article in a July 1945 issue of *Life* magazine. His next novel, *The Long Pursuit*, published in 1947, was not a success. It dealt with a U.S.O. European tour, not unlike his own in 1945, and the machinations of a Caesar-like figure. The story, however, was too involved and contained too many characters to bring it into focus.

The failure of *The Long Pursuit* turned Freeman to a new career in public relations. From 1948 to 1952 he served with distinction as a copywriter for the Edward Bernays organization. He brought to this work his gift for language and his genuine desire for better human communication. Throughout the last twenty years of his life, he never lost his sense of adventurousness in both his writing and his thought. Towards the end he became interested in Buddhist philosophy, a passion he shared with his wife, a follower of Mondriaan in the 1940s, who began to use Tibetan themes in her own painting.

The fruitless passions of the Cold War are largely responsible for the obscurity of Freeman today. Anti-communism in America
required former communists to either denounce their past radicalism or suffer oblivion. Refusing to adopt the posture of either the “penitent sinner” or the “groveling informer,” Freeman recorded his own disillusionment with past politics in a private manner. The vast archive of his unpublished writing and correspondence, now deposited at Columbia, confirms the quality of his mind, the variety of his interests and the unchanging nature of his romantic and rebellious character. He surely deserves recognition as a poet and a thinker, a man whose story was forecast at the end of his early poem, “Don Quixote”:

And yet, the world may laugh. Dreams never die.
To them who find, like him, no rest from strife
For that millennium sweet Shelley sings,
To them his pathos is a living cry
That man is more than dreamless dust, and life
A glorious incongruity of things.
Edmund Blunden’s Ghosts

MIRIAM J. BENKOVITZ

EDMUND BLUNDEN was slow to write a prose account of his experiences in the war of 1914-1918; but having once written it as Undertones of War, he could not let it be. Poetry came more readily for Blunden: “Festubert, 1916,” “The Late Stand-to,” “Third Ypres,” and others. In that respect, he was like many of his contemporaries. Rupert Brooke (possibly the last English poet to believe in the “romance and chivalry of war”), Siegfried Sassoon, Richard Aldington, Wilfred Owen and Isaac Rosenberg (both killed in battle) produced poetry literally in the trenches, within sight and sound of artillery attack. But writing a prose narrative was another matter. Just as Richard Aldington made more than one false start in composing Death of a Hero, his first and finest novel, one about the war, and actually wrote it ten years after the war, so Blunden tried as early as 1918, shortly before the war ended, and succeeded only ten years later and half a world away from England in writing Undertones of War, a volume which includes an extensive prose statement and a small selection of poems.

Blunden’s first attempt to record his wartime experiences in prose is called De Bello Germanico. It is filled with zeal and un-evaluated detail, but before “Rabbit” Blunden, as his mates called him, had set down even half his career as a soldier, he abandoned the book. He did so, according to his brother George, because of the “unnerved state into which the Country fell towards the end of 1918.” That may be the reason, but Edmund Blunden was dissatisfied with his work. He said that when he began it he had “drifted into a backwater”; and he criticized it later as “noisy with depressing forced gaiety then very much the rage.” In any case, the incomplete book lay gathering dust until two years after its author had published Undertones of War, when in 1930 his brother
published *De Bello Germanico* in an edition of 275 copies, of which twenty-five were signed by Edmund Blunden.

Blunden spent much of the 1920s as a teacher in Tokyo. There and then, but after considerable hesitation, he determined to “go over the ground again,” the ground “so thickly and innumerably . . . strewn with the facts or notions of war experience.” The result was *Undertones of War*, published by Richard Cobden-Sanderson in December 1928.

This book, *Undertones of War*, begins with Blunden’s orders and departure for France. Once past that, he takes up the same events with which *De Bello Germanico* opens, that is, the arrival at Béthune with his immediately subsequent movements. *Undertones of War*, however, is far more extensive than the earlier book. It covers the greater part of 1916–1917 with reference not only to the “holding attack” in the vicinity of Béthune but also to the
British line at Vimy, the Ancre, Thiepval Wood, Ypres, and the Somme. Through it all, the heat and the cold, the mud and the wet, the filth, the vermin, the hunger and noise and exhaustion, is the recurrent danger of death underlined by the slaughter of companions. Blunden’s account is matter-of-fact, dispassionate. He did not hate those whom he fought or love unduly those whom he guarded.

Blunden’s “elders and betters” received the book well and thus affirmed his faith in England despite “signs of a decline” which he saw in the “newer habits of life.” Nevertheless, he was uneasy. He feared “the debt of the war must be paid in a subtle coinage still”; but if another war could be avoided, another day must come “when the sky is what it used to be.” That depended on the “rising generation.” Blunden was convinced that they could “save themselves trouble” by attending to him.

So Blunden went on worrying his tale. Less than a year after publication, that is, at the end of July 1929, he “embellished” a copy of *Undertones of War* for its publisher, Richard Cobden-Sanderson. That copy is a part of the Rare Book Collection of the Columbia University Libraries. Blunden began his embellishment on the free end-paper with these verses:

Richard, had presiding Fate  
Sweetened our Battalion's state  
By posting you to us, how soon  
Would you & I have reached Béthune;  
With a hundred francs to spare  
Lorry-jumped to St Omer;  
Seen the harvest looking well  
While we ambled to Cassel,  
And made the midnight echoes ring  
With Cheerfulness at Poperinghe,  
Even the line and its long nights  
Of wiring, digging, bombs and lights,  
Would have tried to entertain  
While Richard cursed the rats and rain.
"Embellished" by
the Author for his friend and
publisher RICHARD
July 27, 1929.

Richard, had presiding Fate
Sweetened our Battalion's state
By posting you to us, how soon
Would you & I have reached Béthune;
With a hundred francs to spare,
Lorry jumped to St Omer;
Seen the harvest looking well
While we ambled to Cassel,
And made the midnight echoes ring
With cheerfulness at Poperinge.
Even the line and its long nights
Of wiring, digging, bombs and lights,
Would have tried to entertain
While Richard cursed the rats and rain.

Inscription and poem written by Blunden in the copy of Undertones of War, presented to his publisher, Richard Cobden-Sanderson. (Friends Endowed Fund)
Such geniality was short-lived, and as he enlarged his text here and there with autograph comments in his careful, exquisite script and with hand-drawn maps and pictures set down in the margins of the book, Blunden was once again in the dreadful context of war. In the margin of the second page of his “Preliminary,” Blunden identified three dead comrades named in the text only by initials: “Tice, Collyer, Vidler. When I went to the Menin Gate, an entrance to a Belgian village, Collyer’s name was the first I distinguished.” On page 4, opposite an account of a shocking explosion, Blunden supplied a drawing of what had exploded, a Hales rifle-grenade; on page 6 is a map of the district in which De Bello Germanico and the first part of Undertones of War were enacted, and in the margin of page 8, Blunden reported the death “in the March battle 1918” of Swain, a kindly quartermaster described in the text. To the map printed on page 9, Blunden added detail with ink. To the account on page 20 “of shells bursting over the doorway of battalion headquarters” well behind the front trench, he added the name of Neville Lytton, a friend who emerged as the artillery-fire broke. On page 64, Blunden added horror to this restrained statement “Forms shrouded with blankets lay still on our firestep . . .” with a marginal note: “I looked at one dead face, & thought I have never seen anything so strangely terrible; it belonged to no ordinary human conception of last feelings either of past or future.”

In the text of pages 146 and 147, Blunden told how he took a salvage party towards Thiepval to replace equipment which his battalion had lost or had damaged in battle and how, intimidated by “big shells snouting up the grey mud and derelict timber,” he and his men soon came on “greying haversacked British dead” whose respirators and knapsacks and rifles were welcome plunder. His marginal note states, “We were by this time scarcely capable of feeling anything at all about this job of turning over dead Englishmen and stripping them. Our chief thought was that there was plenty of stuff to salvage, & we should soon be done.” On page
170, he drew a map to clarify his sixteenth chapter, called “A German Performance.” Blunden enlarged a description on page 214 of his advance into “No Man’s Land” during a violent battle with these remarks:

I am told 2 men who joined us for going over were killed, but at the time I did not notice it. We were carrying a good weight of signalling stores, ammunition & other equipment. This also I did not much notice.

These are only a few of the marginalia which embellish Cobden-Sanderson’s copy of Undertones of War. There are several more maps and drawings and many more comments. One or two addi-
tions are quotations, among them these lines on page 133 about Horatio Bottomley, journalist and fraudulent financier:

“He’s the man to
see us righted—
as a Rule:
When you’re strugglin’ up the
Trench,
Oo’s a-lookin’ to
your Wench?
Mr. Bottomley—
John Bull.”

None of this went into the second edition of Undertones, issued in 1930. For it, Blunden wrote a new preface and made a number of revisions and additions, all for syntactical improvement or for the sake of accuracy or emphasis. Apparently, however, the hour had still not come “when agony’s clawed face softens into the smilingness of a young spring day,” and Blunden went “over the ground” once more.

For the first of a series called “Contemporary Essays,” edited by Sylva Norman and produced by The White Owl Press, London, Blunden wrote Fall In, Ghosts. Published in 1932, it presents his impression of an annual dinner attended by three battalions, the eleventh, the twelfth, and the thirteenth, which were raised and brigaded together and which underwent the same experiences in Belgium and France. He concentrates on his own battalion, the eleventh, since his purpose, he said, was to typify. In the beginning, the essay is informed with nostalgia and affection. Blunden meditates on the meaning of the battalion to its other members and to himself. He speaks with warm liking of Colonel G. H. Harrison, his former commander of whose “merry eye and life-giving soldierly gesture” Blunden had written in Undertones of War. He is happy to see once again a comrade named Worley, whom the marginalia of Undertones reported as experiencing a period of psychosis so severe that he could not “endure such a reminder” of
the war as the annual gathering of the battalion. For Blunden, even the places of those terrible years 1916-1917 now have less compelling associations. But when he tries to fill seats vacated by the men who have moved to stand convivially in small groups for more intimate talking and drinking and singing, the old pain returns. As he fills the empty seats with revenants, ghosts of comrades long since dead in battle—Tice, Vidler, Collyer, Clifford, Daniels, Sergeant Major Ball, and how many more—Blunden concludes about the men, both the dead and the living, who are for him the battalion:

But if I may diagnose, these are for ever a shade different from those
who missed their former experiences. They are accustomed to looking into those memories which would not often be welcome talk to their neighbours. They see the works of the Lord, but his wonders in the deep are past; those too they saw. The mystery of that, the misery and the dignity reside for them in the word, ‘the battalion.’ The future cannot rival the attraction. They, we, are years behind even the present, and minor reservations and limitations of date, place and contact yield to one strong retrospective migratory devotion. . . . Will there be chairs enough for all of us, as the troops return to the tables . . . ? At what point do we separate from those other listeners I named? Are we not all in the same boat? Fall in, ghosts.
The New Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library

ADOLF K. PLACZEK

It is finally done. It took a long time—nearly twenty years of dreaming, scheming, trying and urging, five years of planning, and three years of building—but it is done. It will now take some time to make it really work in its new setting, but it is done.

I am speaking of the new quarters for the combined Avery-Fine Arts Library. Let me first re-introduce the old library. The Avery Memorial Architectural Library was established as a branch of the then Columbia College Library in 1890 through the gift of Samuel Putnam Avery (1822–1904). It was to be a memorial to his departed architect-son Henry Ogden Avery (1852–90). Its core was the approximately 2,000 fine volumes in architecture and the decorative arts left by young Avery; an endowment for the future purchase of books was added. Out of these relatively modest beginnings there developed one of the great libraries of architecture. First tucked away in a room in the 49th Street building, then the home of Columbia College, it moved in 1897 to the new campus on Morningside Heights and was given a room in the newly completed Low Memorial Library. In 1912 the Avery Library acquired a proud building of its own, Avery Hall. A four-story, neo-Renaissance Palazzo, it was built through the generosity of Samuel Putnam Avery II (1847–1920), son of the original donor. The architect was Charles Follen McKim (1847–1909), of the great firm of McKim Mead and White, who had provided the master plan for the campus and had so brilliantly designed Low Library.

Through the Avery endowment, through fine gifts, and thanks to the vigorous support by the University, the Avery Library—under a succession of outstanding librarians such as Talbot F. Hamlin,
who served from 1934 to 1945, and James Grote Van Derpool, from 1946 to 1959—grew at a pace not envisioned even by the founders. From the 2,000 volumes in 1890 the library developed to 50,000 in 1954. In the years of my own stewardship, beginning in 1960, it has more than doubled to its present 110,000. In 1921, the art books of the Avery Library were set up as a separate branch library of Avery, located in Schermerhorn Hall and named the Fine Arts Library. Its growth, too, has been remarkable: 20,000 volumes in 1954, nearly 60,000 in 1977. Contributing decisively to Avery's present preeminence was the fact that no momentum was lost during the war and post-war years, when so many European libraries came to a standstill in their development and suffered painful and sometimes irremediable gaps in the coverage of those years.

Thus, by 1954, the need for added space had become desperately
Architectural and Fine Arts Library

apparent. Plans were prepared in those years for a Columbia Art Center, of which the Avery Library was to be a part, by no means an uncontroversial concept when it concerned a library so firmly rooted in a great historic building. The Art Center was never built. The events of 1968 brought an end to many of the major plans for outward extension of the campus. In the meantime, Avery and Fine Arts continued to grow—not only in numbers of volumes, but also in numbers of readers and in the staff needed to take care of both. The Art History Department experienced a dramatic revival in 1957 after the appointment of Rudolf Wittkower as chairman. Also, new programs were started in the School of Architecture, above all, the program in Historic Preservation under James Marston Fitch, a pioneer enterprise of national impact,
Adolf K. Placzek

depending heavily on the resources of Avery. A whole new field
of instruction, urban planning, had come into being. The time of
“every seat taken” was upon us, and soon thereafter what some-
body described as the “era of the window-sills,” when even the win-
dow-sills were put to use as book-shelves. In 1972 the great reading
room’s handsome alcove system of almost private reading areas
had reluctantly to be abandoned in favor of double-faced stacks
throughout the bays, a painful and very unpopular decision, but
one which did clear the window-sills. The archive of architectural
drawings, one of the glories of Avery, also continued to grow as
new collections came to the Library. Outstanding acquisitions of
the last fifteen years are the Louis Henry Sullivan and the Frank
Lloyd Wright collections, then the Hugh Ferriss drawings, the
Greene and Greene collection and the incomparable drawings of
Giovanni Battista Piranesi.

With the demise of the Art Center idea, other ideas for expan-
sion had to be explored. One was to use the entire Avery building
for the library, with a new building for the School of Architec-
ture. This was what Samuel Putnam Avery II had intended. How-
ever, neither funds nor campus space for a new Architecture
building were available, quite apart from the question whether or
not it would have been desirable to build one. Nor, as it turned
out, could the upper floors of Avery Hall take the structural load
of book stacks.

What all this finally came to was the stark and bold: “if you
can’t go up and if you can’t go out, go down,” underground, that
is: a conclusion reached by urban planners and campus architects
in many critical places; Harvard and Yale came to it at roughly
the same time, in the early 1970’s. The particular difficulty of such
a plan, which had first been proposed to Columbia in the I. M. Pei
Report of 1969, lay in the tightly laid-out campus grid of McKim
Mead and White. Avery Hall itself, one of the finest buildings of
its kind, had to remain basically inviolate. And yet new, contem-
porary, lively and practical spaces had to be created. The archi-
tect of the project had to take into account the often conflicting requirements of the librarians, art historians, city planners, architects and their respective, deeply committed constituencies. Also over his shoulder, ever-present, there was the long shadow of Charles Follen McKim.

Alexander Kouzmanoff, the architect, solved the complex task daringly, imaginatively and effectively. As chairman of design at Columbia's School of Architecture, he was intimately connected
with Avery’s operations and needs—his choice also represented an innovation, namely the University’s turning to outstanding talent within its own ranks rather than calling on one of the big architectural firms on which it had relied in past decades. Plans were developed in 1972–74. They met the approval of the heirs of Samuel Putnam Avery II whose original grant in 1910 had contributed the bulk of the present funds. Some generous contributions were added. Construction was begun in the fall of 1974. In the summer of 1977, the Fine Arts Library moved into the new Avery quarters. With this move, the physical job can be considered completed, although the operational problems of a vastly expanded three-level, thirteen-room library of 40,000 square feet, as compared to the previous 18,000 total, will be with us for some time to come. It may be added that through these nearly three years of disruption, noise, plaster dust, jackhammers and drills, not to speak of crews of workmen, lack of office space and lack of heat, etc., etc., the library remained open and functioning throughout—a tribute to its devoted and committed staff as well as to the cooperation and patience of the readers.

The central area (ca. 150 by 80 feet) of the extension is under the Fayerweather Court, an excavation 30 feet deep, divided into two levels. It provides a large and a small auditorium, class rooms and wide exhibition spaces for the School of Architecture on the lower level and the new reading room and Reference-service area for the library on the upper level. These levels are connected to the old Avery building by separate staircases: directly to the old McKim Reading Room on one level, and to the elevator lobby of the School of Architecture on the other, a most skillful linkage of spaces. The first of these, the grand stair between the two reading rooms, the old and the new, under a skylight, achieves a particularly dramatic opening of a classical space into a modern one.

In the center of the new reading room, receiving the readers who have come down the stairs, is the reference and charge desk. All service is transacted from this core. Next to the desk are the
card catalogs (including the unique Avery Index to Periodicals), the reference collection, and the library staff offices: the whole, a complex but compact area of interrelated functions. On the other side of the desk are the stacks of the former Ware Library, the circulating component of Avery-Fine Arts, and the city planning section with cubicles for microfilm reading, typing, and special projects. The shelves for current periodicals round out this informal reading space.

In the basement level of the old Avery building, now fully open toward the new rooms, a spacious art history graduate reading room has been installed, and the bound periodicals have been moved to a larger room.

Another highly welcome feature of the extension is the rare book reading room which is adjacent to the library staff offices. The priceless volumes of Avery's treasure house can, at last, be handled separately from the current material, in the way in which great print rooms of museums or rare book collections would have their material used: a reader in Avery can now ask for the latest
pamphlet on solar heating or the first incunabulum on Architecture (Leon Battista Alberti’s treatise, published in 1485), but in different areas and under different procedures.

The former carpenter shop, a huge hall (200 feet long) under the terrace in front of Schermerhorn, with direct access from Amsterdam Avenue, was turned over by the University to the Avery project. A concrete slab now divides this high space into two storeys, continuing the levels established under the Fayerweather court. A new rare book stack area, with sophisticated temperature and humidity control, was provided at the east end of the wing. From this there is easy access to the rare book reading room and to a special seminar room, thus creating another compact and complex package of functions: special storage and use of rare material in one interconnected area. The seminar room—not a class room, but a library room—is designated for the group study of rare books. It will also serve as a museum room, exhibiting in rotating exhibitions the works of Florine Stettheimer (1871-1944), who left a fine collection of her paintings and sketches to the University. The seminar room was made possible through funds provided by her estate, and it will bear her name.

Last, but definitely not least, we come to the new spaces for the Fine Arts Library. 50,000 volumes are now housed in consecutive, easily readable sequence in the western wing of the remodeled Schermerhorn Terrace-Carpenter shop. Carrels are interspersed among the stacks. This whole area is accessible directly from the central reading room. Up to 10,000 folio volumes and special material are housed on the lower level of the wing. On the same lower level are also—another “long last”—adequate rooms for Avery’s archives of architectural drawings, blue-prints and photographic material, a particularly fast-growing section of the library.

Considerable thought was given to the renaming of the newly constituted library. “Avery Architectural Library” is one of the best-known architectural libraries in the world (if not the best-
known). It is referred to by that name in countless book acknowledgments. The printed card catalogs of the library, internationally used, carry the imprint of “Avery Architectural Library.” The new designation, “Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library,” thus continues the traditional and well-known name without slighting the important new component of the Fine Arts collection. The minor conflict between an adjective and a noun in the title, will, we hope, be accepted by a public which would have sorely missed the familiar “Architectural . . .”

The library is now fully functioning: its future growth is assured, and its future seems bright. It can now continue to serve not only Columbia University, but the nation, as a preeminent research institution, a memory bank and an active social, intellectual and artistic force.
These are to certify that John Masefield Esquire 1st

by The King's Command, hereby appointed

to the Place and Quality of Poet Laureate in

Ordinary to His Majesty, in the Room of


This Appointment to be during His Majesty's

Pleasure and to become void on the death of the Sovereign

I have held, exercised and enjoy

the said Place, together with all Rights, Profits, Privileges

and Advantages thereto belonging.

Given under my Hand and Seal

this 26th. day of May 1920,

in the 26th. Year of His Majesty's Reign.

[Signature]
The John Masefield Centenary

KENNETH A. LOHF

THE Centenary of the birth of John Masefield, the English poet from rural Herefordshire who became his country's Poet Laureate, is being celebrated at Columbia with an exhibition in Low Library Rotunda of first editions, autograph letters, manuscripts, drawings and portraits. Having published poetry for well over sixty years, Masefield became widely respected during his lifetime both in England and in America as a writer of ballads, sonnets and narrative poems. However, his voluminous writings, which were notable over a broader literary range, included novels, historical works, plays and literary criticism. The more than one hundred books and several hundred essays and reviews that he published, along with his enthusiastic espousal of literary causes, are ample evidence of a commitment to the literary life. Thus, although Masefield is now largely remembered as Poet Laureate, he is also honored in the centenary exhibition at Columbia as a man of letters.

With the exception of two original portraits of Masefield—the Sir John Lavery oil painting lent by Dr. Corliss Lamont and the William Strang chalk drawing lent by Dr. Dallas Pratt—and the warrant of appointment as Poet Laureate, also lent by Dr. Lamont, the items in the exhibition have been drawn from the extensive Masefield holdings in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library. The foundation of the Columbia Collection dates from the 1944 gift by Frederick Coykendall, chairman of the University's board of trustees, of 170 volumes by and about the poet. This far-reaching benefaction was followed over the next three decades by individual donations from Solton and Julia Engel, Eleanor Langley Fletcher, George M. Jaffin, George Milne and Mary Louisa Sutliff, and by acquisitions supported by the Charles W. Mixer Fund and the Friends Endowed Fund.

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Oil portrait of Masefield by Sir John Lavery, 1937.
In honor of the Centenary, Dr. Lamont has presented the single most impressive volume now in the Masefield Collection: copy number one of the first limited edition of the poet's most celebrated narrative poem, *Reynard the Fox*, inscribed by Masefield for his wife and embellished by him throughout the volume with more than one hundred watercolor and pen-and-ink drawings. Dr. Lamont is also largely responsible for the Library's holdings of Masefield manuscripts. His gifts in this area range from three notebooks containing drafts of poems and essays to the group of seventy-two letters written by Masefield to his wife, Constance, in 1917 when the poet was with the British Army in northern France. In addition, Dr. Lamont has presented Masefield's own copy of *The Poetical Works of John Keats* containing his autograph notes and annotations on ninety pages.

During his stay in America in 1895 Masefield lived for a short time with James Alexander MacLachlan and his wife, Mary, in Yonkers. Their daughter, Helen MacLachlan, knowing of Columbia's plan for a centenary exhibition, decided early last year to place at Columbia her extensive Masefield collection of 528 letters and 123 inscribed editions. Miss MacLachlan's splendid gift, which includes the series of 368 letters written by the poet to her and her family over a seventy-year period, has provided for the exhibition books, letters and photographs from virtually every period of Masefield's distinguished career as poet and public figure.

The publication of the illustrated catalogue of this anniversary exhibition was made possible by a gift from Dr. Lamont, who also contributed to the book a memoir recounting his association with Masefield, whom he fondly recalls as "a gracious, sparkling, ennobling personality." On Thursday afternoon, February 2, at a reception in the Rotunda, the Friends and their guests opened the exhibition, which will continue in Low through March 3. It will then be moved to the third floor exhibition area of Butler Library where it will remain on view through the end of June.
Our Growing Collections

KENNETH A. LOHF

Anshen gift. The author and editor, Dr. Ruth Nanda Anshen, has established a collection of her papers with an initial gift of files of correspondence with writers, philosophers, scientists, psychologists and educators, among which are Benedetto Croce, Albert Einstein, Sigmund Freud, Erich Fromm, Walter Gropius, Carl Gustav Jung, Jacques Maritain, Lewis Mumford and Paul Tillich. There is also correspondence with publishers and writers relating to the more than one hundred volumes which Dr. Anshen has edited in the well-known series, World Perspectives, Credo Perspectives, Religious Perspectives, The Science of Culture Series, Perspectives in Humanism and The Tree of Life Series. Ranging from physics and biology to philosophy, education, psychology and esthetics, these series have been concerned with new trends in scientific thought and the mutual intelligibility of the various branches of art and science. In addition to the correspondents named above, the collection contains letters from Jacques Barzun, Charles A. Beard, Franz Boas, Rachel Carson, Joyce Cary, Aaron Copeland, John Dewey, Felix Frankfurter, Étienne Gilson, John Haldane, Aldous Huxley, Konrad Lorenz, Thomas Mann, Gunnar Myrdal, Reinhold Niebuhr, Romain Rolland, Bertrand Russell, Ignazio Silone and Sigrid Undset.

Class of 1923 gift. The annual gifts of the College Class of 1923 have added to the collection of early English books a number of titles that have assisted us in completing holdings of individual authors. Several works by the English poet John Donne have been donated in the past, and recently the Class has presented a fine copy of Donne’s Fifty Sermons Preached by that Learned and Reverend Divine, printed in London in 1649. This, the second volume of Donne’s sermons, was edited by his son, who delayed publication
by some five years for fear of persecution from the Commonwealth government.

*Clifford gift.* Professor James L. Clifford (A.M., 1932; Ph.D., 1941), who has frequently enriched the Library's eighteenth century literary holdings by his generous gifts, has now presented an extraordinary group of original manuscripts: three autograph

The signatures of Jacob Shaw and John Brickell appear on the title-page of the copy of Lucian which they used as students at King's College in 1775. (Feldman gift)
diaries of Hester Thrale Piozzi for 1789, 1816 and 1820; and two autograph diaries of her second husband, Gabriel Piozzi, for 1803 and 1806. These diaries, which are believed to be the only such manuscripts in an American library, contain entries relating to friends, appointments, correspondence received, reading and financial transactions and guests. Professor Clifford is writing an article on the diaries for a future issue of *Columns*.

_Feldman gift._ Dr. Thalia Phillips Howe Feldman (A.M., 1944; Ph.D., 1952) has presented, for inclusion in the Columbiana Library, the copy of _Lucian's Dialogues_ that was used by two King's College students, Jacob Shaw and John Brickell, who enrolled in 1774. Entitled _Excerpta Quaedam ex Luciani Samosatensis Operibus_, the volume was published in London and Eton in 1771, and had originally been owned by one M. Sterling, whose signature appears on the title-page along with those of the two students, which are dated 1775. In addition, Jacob Shaw's name appears on two other pages in the volume with the date 1776.

_Halsband gift._ Professor Robert Halsband (A.M., 1936) has presented two rare editions relating to the Ottoman Empire: Paul Rycaut, _The Present State of the Ottoman Empire_, London, 1668; and G. A. Olivier, _Atlas pour Servir au Voyage dans L'Empire Othoman, L'Égypte et la Perse_, Paris [1807]. Both of these works are profusely illustrated with engravings of scenes, maps, natives in costume, flora and fauna.

_James estate gift._ As a gift from the estate of their mother, the late Louise Russell James, her children, Mrs. Mary Eliot Ford (M.Educ., 1976; Ph.D., 1971) and Dr. William Ellery James (M.D., 1945), have presented the Kelmscott Press edition of William Morris's _The Well at the World's End_, printed in Hammersmith in 1896. Issued in an edition of 350 copies, the work is bound in the original vellum, and is handsomely illustrated with
"Friends in Need Meet in the Wildwood": woodcut by Sir Edward Burne-Jones, surrounded by a border designed by William Morris, in the Kelmscott Press printing of *The Well at the World's End*. (James estate gift)
four full-page woodcuts by Sir Edward Burne-Jones. Appearing just a few months before the Press’s monumental edition of Chaucer, *The Well at the World’s End* also has an elaborate title leaf with a wood-engraved border, as well as ornaments and initial letters, designed by Morris.

*Kaufmann gift.* Mrs. Helen L. Kaufmann (A.B., 1908, B.) has donated for inclusion in the Melville Cane Papers the group of 122 letters written to her by the poet during the years, 1957-1977, in which he discusses the two writers’ literary activities, their travels and the performing arts. Also included in Mrs. Kaufmann’s gift are over fifty of Cane’s poetry manuscripts, primarily typescripts, as well as several drafts of short prose works.

*Kraus gift.* Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Peter Kraus have presented first editions of two works important in the history of French literature: Paul Verlaine, *Epigrammes*, Paris, 1894, one of one thousand copies on *vélin d’Angoulême*, inscribed by the author to Irénée Decroix; and Émile Zola, *Nana*, Paris, 1880, one of 325 copies on Holland paper. Both volumes, bound in half morocco, have the original printed wrappers bound in.

*Lada-Mocarski gift.* To the collection of underground publications of World War II, established more than twenty years ago by her husband, the late Valerian Lada-Mocarski (A.M., 1954), Mrs. Lada-Mocarski has added by her recent gift a group of eight pieces of rare sheet music of songs of the underground resistance movement, published in Paris and Amsterdam in 1944 and 1945.

*Lamont gift.* Since its establishment some five years ago, the Rockwell Kent Collection has been enlarged through a series of gifts by Dr. Corliss Lamont (Ph.D., 1932). His recent benefaction has added four examples of Kent’s art work which strengthen considerably this extensive collection: a design for fabric, in tempera, “The Palisades,” ca. 1950, measuring 26 by 28 inches; a highly
finished pen-and-ink drawing, “Harvesters,” 1935, executed in Kent’s characteristic bold style; a pen-and-ink drawing, “Reading Nick Carter,” 1920, signed “H.Jr.” (“Hogarth, Jr.”, Kent’s pseudonym at the time); and two architectural studies in watercolor and pencil of colonial country houses in South Carolina and Maryland, drawn by Kent while studying at Columbia’s School of Architecture in 1903.
Keilmicb A. Lohf


Pepper gift. Mr. Morton Pepper, who has enriched our collections by his past gifts of early mathematical books and manuscripts, has recently presented a collection of more than three hundred important editions of works in American and English literature, the fine

“Harvesters”: pen and ink drawing by Rockwell Kent, 1935. (Lamont gift)
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arts and printing history, including: Pierre François Basan, *Collection de Cent-Vingt Estampes, Gravées d’Après les Tableaux & Dessins qui Composoient le Cabinet de M. Poullain*, Paris, 1781; D. H. Lawrence’s copy of Thomas Hardy’s *The Life and Death of the Mayor of Casterbridge*, London, 1913, with Lawrence’s initials on the fly-leaf; a large-paper copy of John Johnson, *Typographia, or the Printers’ Instructor*, London, 1824; James J. Morier, *The Adventures of Hajji Baba*, London, 1824, three volumes, in the original boards; Tobias Smollett, *Travels Through France and Italy*, London, 1766, two volumes, bound in contemporary calf; and five volumes from the library of the poet Eugene Field, each of which bears Field’s bookplate and signature.

Ray gift. Dr. Gordon N. Ray (L.L.D., 1969) has presented a collection of 130 autograph letters of English artists, writers and historical figures, as well as American and French literary and historical figures. Prominent among the artists represented in the gift are George Cruikshank, Richard Doyle, Myles Birket Foster, Benjamin R. Haydon, David Roberts and G. F. Watts. In addition, Dr. Ray’s gift included a copy of Anatole France, *Thaïs*, published in Paris in 1900, and illustrated by Paul-Albert Laurens. This copy is one of forty with the illustrations in three states, and is bound by Chambolle-Duru in full brown morocco with morocco doublures, inlaid with tan morocco.

Solomon gift. Mr. Joseph Solomon has presented a collection of theatre and opera publications and programs, a file of *Metropolitan Opera News* and eight scrapbooks of clippings, programs and photographs relating to theatre productions in New York and abroad during the period 1906 to 1953.

Stolberg gift. In his recent gift Mr. David Stolberg has added a file of approximately 1,500 letters to the papers of his father, the late Benjamin Stolberg. Dating primarily from the 1940s, the correspondence includes letters from authors and public figures such as

Strouse gift. Mr. Norman H. Strouse has presented, for addition to the Christopher Morley Collection, a group of six letters and postcards written by the novelist and poet to his Haverford College friend, E. Page Allinson. Dating from 1909 to 1917, the letters discuss Morley’s travels, lecture schedules, poems and college friends. In almost all these letters Morley addresses his recipient as “Mifflin McGill” and signs himself as “Andrew McGill,” attesting to his fondness for using nicknames with close friends.

Sypher gift. Dr. Francis J. Sypher (A.B., 1963; A.M., 1964; Ph.D., 1968) has presented, for inclusion in the Columbiana Library, the copy of James Thomson’s The Seasons, London, 1827, which was once owned by Charles Short, Professor of Latin in the college from 1867 until his death in 1886. Professor Short’s signature on the fly-leaf is dated 1839, and the volume contains several marginal notations in his hand.

Taylor gift. Among the fifteen volumes of literary and historical works presented by Mr. and Mrs. Davidson Taylor are nine titles, issued in limited editions, written by the newspaperman and bibliophile, Charles Honce, including: Mark Twain’s Associated Press Speech, and Other News Stories on Murder, Modes, Mysteries, Music and Makers of Books, 1940; and A Sherlock Holmes Birthday and Other Bookish Stories Conceived in the Form of News, 1938.

Tuchman gift. Dr. Lester R. Tuchman (A.B., 1924; M.D., 1927) has presented an important group of first editions, including: James Boswell, The Life of Samuel Johnson, 1791, two volumes bound in contemporary calf; Charles Dickens, Bleak House, 1852–

West gift. The Reverend Canon Edward N. West of the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine, who in 1969 established a collection of the papers of the American dramatist Austin Strong, has now donated the following for inclusion in the collection: typescript and holograph notes for Strong’s autobiography, containing numerous references to Robert Louis Stevenson, whose step-daughter Isobel Strong was Austin Strong’s mother; a group of twenty-five miscellaneous watercolor and ink drawings by Strong; and a scrapbook of 43 family photographs including three of Stevenson and one of his father Thomas Stevenson.

Widenmann gift. Miss Elizabeth A. Widenmann (M.S., 1969; Certificate, African Institute, 1970) has donated a collection of 144 children’s books, including a copy in the original printed wrappers of The Ancient & Renowned History of Whittington and His Cat, London, 1809. Printed by Darton and Harvey, the work is illustrated with eleven engravings from George Cruikshank’s designs.

Wilbur gift. To the collection of their papers Robert and Lorraine Wilbur have recently added a file of letters written by theatre personalities, including Orson Welles, James Haynes, Tyrone Guthrie and Judith Anderson.

Woodring gift. Professor and Mrs. Carl Woodring have presented a group of thirteen first and rare editions of works in English literature, including: Gordon Bottomley, King Lear’s Wife, London, 1920, one of fifty copies numbered and signed by the author;
The Centenary of John Masefield's Birth

Illustrated Catalogue of the Exhibition
is available at $7.50

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