

October 26, 1971

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Sabbatical Leave Report

During my semester Sabbatical Leave (Spring, 1971), I did independent study and travelled to countries that would enrich my background in the field of literature. My independent research resulted in a revision of my reading textbook entitled The Way To Reading Improvement (Allyn and Bacon, 1968). In addition, I completed the manuscript for a new book, Writing To Inform And Explain (McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1972-73).

In order to revise the reading text, I read considerable new material in the field, thus extending my own knowledge of remedial and developmental reading skills and techniques. I improved sections of the textbook on "reading the paragraph," "using the 'SQ3R' method," and "building a vocabulary." In these areas, I developed new techniques and stressed more efficient ways of improving one's reading and vocabulary skills. Since many of the teachers of reading at this college are using this textbook, I believe that those teachers and their students, as well as me, will benefit from my research and independent study in that field.

The new book on writing is designed to help the student who needs to write effectively for the college program of studies. The approach in this book stresses two tried and proven to be successful methods of teaching writing: (1) explaining completely the skills and techniques of good

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expository writing so that the student may learn how, and (2) presenting contemporary pieces of writing so that the student may see for himself the techniques experienced writers use to structure their flowing thought. Along with these two methods, the book offers the student ample opportunity through written assignments and exercises to practice and apply the knowledge that he is gaining.

In order to write this book, I spent endless hours in analyzing already existing methods of teaching writing. In addition, I developed new methods and presented more effective ways of teaching the writing skills. This study increased my own knowledge in the field. Moreover, the published textbook should benefit students in this college and other colleges and universities.

Equally valuable to my teaching, especially in the field of literature, were my visits to countries especially rich in their contributions to Western Civilization.

In our college catalogue, we list course offerings in literature in this manner:

6A-6B Survey of English Literature (3-3) Year

(May be taken for option of letter grade or Credit/No Credit.)

Three hours lecture.

Prerequisite: English 1A-1B

A historical study of English literature: Beowulf and the Anglo Saxon Period, Chaucer and the Middle Ages, Shakespeare and the Elizabethan Period, Milton and the Puritans, eighteenth century schools and beginnings of the novel, the Romantic Movement, Victorian writers, and modern authors. This course is required of English Majors. It is recommended for Liberal Arts transfer majors.

- 10 Survey of Shakespeare (3) Semester Spring  
(May be taken for option of letter grade or Credit/No Credit.)  
Three hours lecture.  
Prerequisite: English IA.

A study of the major plays and sonnets of Shakespeare as well as their background in history and dramatic form.

- 11A World Literature (3) Semester Fall and Spring  
(May be taken for option of letter grade or Credit/No Credit.)  
Three hours lecture.  
Prerequisite: English IA.

This course is designed to give the student a knowledge and an appreciation of the world's great masterpieces in the field of literature. Emphasis is placed on those works which not only reflect qualities of universal artistic greatness but also the thought and spirit of the ages in which they were written. The first semester covers masterpieces from the early years of the Greek civilization through the Sixteenth Century English Renaissance Civilization.

- 11B World Literature (3) Semester Spring  
(May be taken for option of letter grade or Credit/No Credit.)  
Three hours lecture.  
Prerequisite: English IA.

The focus of this course is on Continental European literature from the 17th to the 20th century, with special attention given to the major authors of each period, such as Voltaire, Goethe, Dostoevsky, Kafka, Sartre, and Camus.

There is no question in my mind that visiting countries on the European continent has enabled me to increase my knowledge of Western Civilization and has revitalized my enthusiasm for teaching courses in English and World Literature. To teach these courses effectively, a teacher must not only know the social, economic, religious, and political aspects of the ages in which the great works of literature were written, but he must, above all, make those ages come alive by capturing the qualities of universal moral and artistic greatness and the spirit and thought of the people who lived in those civilizations.

In the next few pages, I shall try to show in some detail how my travels in London, Greece, and Rome helped me to enrich my own background and to bring alive for my students those ancient times.

Riding by bus from the airport to London on the narrow paved road on which the Roman legions of Julius Caesar marched, I could feel the past all around. On each side lay the picturesque English countryside, much the same as it has been for countless centuries. And its beauty and quaintness explain more than any words its deep influence on England's poets and writers.

In the British Museum are treasures in all fields, especially literature and the arts. Each piece of sculpture, each painting, temple, obelisk, monument, tomb, however, has a history of its own. For this reason, as well as many others, a prolonged stay at the Museum is an adventure into the rich past.

In the King's Library are the GUTENBERG BIBLE, a First Folio of SHAKESPEARE, as well as CAXTON'S "Aesop's Fables" of 1483. In the Manuscript Room, are a collection of rare manuscripts dating back to 963 A.D., along with precious documents, such as the MAGNA CARTA. Among the Biblical manuscripts are the invaluable CODEX SINAITICUS (4 A.D.) and the CODEX ALEXANDRIUS (5 A.D.). In the sealed cases in this room are also manuscripts of CHAUCER, ENGLISH CHRONICLES, including BEDE, along with countless illuminated manuscripts from the MIDDLE AGES. Of historical interest in the Museum are numerous paintings depicting famous ancient battles, vast collections of weapons and armor of the past, Nelson's memorandum on the Battle of Trafalgar, and two logbooks of his flagship HMS VICTORY.

In the Department of Egyptian Antiquities are statues, temples, mummies, mummy cases, obelisks, the ROSETTA STONE, stone sarcophagi, and a large collection of papyri of ancient documents. Religion and burial customs are represented by well preserved materials from ancient temples and

cemeteries.

The TOWER OF LONDON, built by the Norman conquerors as a fortress to guard London, is rich in English history. The WHITE TOWER was built by William I in the 11th century. In the BLOODY TOWER were confined many of England's illustrious prisoners, such as Sir Walter Raleigh. Under the stairway in this tower was found the bodies of Edward V and his brother who were murdered. On the TOWER GREEN is a granite slab marking the spot where Anne Boleyn, Catherine Howard, and Lady Jane Grey were beheaded--a concrete reminder of the enigmatic personality of the "Defender of the Faith," Henry VIII.

Still rising above the city is the massive dome of Saint Paul's Cathedral, built by Sir Christopher Wren in 1666 after the great fire almost destroyed the city. Saint Paul's is the second largest Christian church in the world. Its vastness and beauty are testimony to the genius of its creator. In the crypts below lie the bodies of Wren, Lord Nelson, and the Duke of Wellington and other famous Englishmen.

Westminster Abbey, built by Edward the Confessor and consecrated in 1065, is too well known to detail its significance. It is perfect Gothic, having been enlarged and rebuilt by Henry II. In this Abbey are the remains of England's kings and queens as well as its most illustrious poets and literary men in the POET'S CORNER. The chapels throughout the Abbey are memorable, especially the CHAPEL OF HENRY VII for its beauty and the CHAPEL OF EDWARD THE CONFESSOR for its historical interest.

Perhaps the best way to feel the beauty and majesty of London--a great shrine of history--is to stand on WESTMINSTER BRIDGE, as did Wordsworth in 1802, and view the city stretched out before you.

Wordsworth's words capture for the listener the power and spirit of London and England and what it means and has meant to those living there:

Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!  
The river glideth at his own sweet will:  
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;  
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

When I saw with my own eyes the Greek peninsula with its mountains and isolated valleys and endless seacoast, I understood clearly the independent spirit of the Thebans, the Spartans, the Corinthians, and the Athenians that made the Greek experience a memorable one to study and paradoxically led to the Peloponnesian Wars and the easy conquest by the Macedonian warriors under Philip and Alexander the Great. The pursuit of excellence, the insatiable desire "to know one's self," the belief in justice, and the confidence in the benefits of democracy are the heritage the Greeks left us. The Greek of ancient times, particularly during the Age of Pericles, almost reached the "Heroic Ideal" that he envisioned. He was a man of action, motivated by a strong sense of truth and justice. He believed in self-control and discipline of mind and body.

At OLYMPIA, the site of the ancient Olympic games, the spirit of ancient Greece still lives. As one views those ancient ruins, it is easy to reconstruct in the mind's eye the ancient temples to the gods, the gymnasium where the athletes prepared for the next day's contests, and the victor receiving his reward on the slab that still remains on the slope of a small hill in the stadium itself. But, more important, I could feel the spirit that motivated Baron Pierre de Coubertin to spend his life to promote the development of a youth balanced both spiritually and physically to compete in a revival of the ancient Olympic games in 1896. But his dream

was a greater one: he hoped to unite the world in peace through fair and noble competition. His wish--to have his body buried in France and his heart in Olympia, where he left his noble dream, his true love--was granted. Today, some flowers, surrounded by a railing, embrace a marble monument dedicated to the man with a golden dream that today is still far from realization. Perhaps the youth of the future will make his dream come true.

On the Acropolis in Athens stand the remains of the glory that was ancient Greece. The magnificent temple to the Goddess Athena, the Parthenon, dominates this site of the ancient Panhellenic festivals. I was struck by its size and beauty. Much of the Erechtheum, another famous temple with its porch of maidens, still stands. The impressive Propylaeum, the entrance to the Acropolis with its columns and temple, is pretty much in ruins, but one can visualize from the reconstructed models of the Acropolis the beauty and size of these structures. From the frieze of the Parthenon, one can see in marble the splendor and pomp of the ancient Panhellenic processions up the steps of the Acropolis, through the Propylaeum, and on to the Temple of Athena and feel the spirit of an age that "created a true worship of the soul and spirit where youth could reach the perfection of body and soul."

Rome is the legendary home of Aeneas and Romulus and Remus. But, it is truly the land of the Caesars, Victor Emanuel II, and Benito Mussolini. It is also the land of some of the greatest artists this world has ever known: Raphael, Botticelli, Bramante, Leonardo da Vinci, and Michelangelo--to mention only a few. Within Rome lies Vatican City and the treasures of the Roman Catholic Church, including Saint Peter's Cathedral and the Sistine Chapel.

Ancient Rome conquered the world and gave it "Pax Romana" for 200 years from 31 B.C. to 180 A.D. Rome became great because the Roman at his best was great. Unlike the Greek, he could subjugate himself to authority, especially power that itself carried an aura of Divinity. But, he was himself worthy of an Empire; he was motivated by a strong sense of duty and loyalty to the state and his farmer heritage gave him a love and reverence for the land he was fighting to maintain. He was a great organizer and wise administrator. He was strong, courageous, and patient, willing to follow a task to its conclusion. His literature reveals these characteristics. Beneath the surface and between the lines, one can feel the presence of Rome.

The splendor that was Rome can still be seen as one walks from the King Victor Emanuel II monument on the Piazza Venezia through the Forum of the Caesars to the Colosseum and Arch of Constantine. Each of the Forums is identified by a statue of the emperor who built it. And each statue, arch, temple remains, and fragments of a basilica tells its own history. On the right is the Forum of Julius Caesar, inaugurated in 40 B.C. and restored and transformed by Trajan in 113 A.D. In this place is the Temple of Venus Genetrix, the patron goddess of the Familia Julia, and the Basilica Argentaria where businessmen and merchants assembled to carry on business.

Continuing onward along the Via dei Fori Imperiali, one reaches the main entrance to the principal forum. It was the political and administrative center of ancient Rome and the Empire. Remains are all around; the temples of Vespasian, Concord, Saturn, Diocletian, Castor and Pollus, and Julius Caesar, the Arches of Augustus, Settimius Severus, and Titus, the many Basilicas, the Curia, the seat of the Senate, are vivid reminders of the



life and culture of Roman days.

Through the Arch of Titus, marking the end of the Via Sacra, one leaves the Forum and arrives at the Colosseum, the most grandiose monument of ancient Rome, built by Vaspasian and inaugurated by his son Titus in 80 A.D. This architectural triumph, especially in the use of the arch, seated nearly 80,000 people. Since the floor was destroyed, the intricate tunnel and corridor system which allowed gladiators and beasts to reach the arena rapidly is clearly visible. Outside stood the gigantic statue of Nero from which the structure, along with its great dimensions, derived its name. Close by is the Arch of Constantine, the best preserved triumphant arch, built to commemorate his victory over Maxentius in 313 A.D.

Not far away is a vacant field of immense size where once stood the amphitheater known as the Circus Maximus. In this structure 200,000 persons watched the martyrdom of the Christians until Constantine conquered with the "Sign of the Cross."

In the Piazza della Rotonda stands the Pantheon, built by Agrippa in 27 B.C. and rebuilt by Hadrian in 130 A.D. It is a unique example of building skills incredible for those days. Its colossal dome resting on very thick walls has a distinct beauty, and its interior is majestic with a hole in the dome through which light enters. In the seven chapels are the tombs of many famous persons, including Victor Emanuel II, Humbert I, Queen Margaret, and the painter Raphael.

When one enters the Vatican, he moves into the Renaissance and the revival of the classical spirit combined with the new thought of the modern world. Ahead lies the Basilica of Saint Peter's, the largest Christian church in the world. Originally built by Constantine on the supposed tomb

of Saint Peter, it had fallen into ruins until Pope Nicholas V in 1452 planned a new basilica. In April, 1506, Pope Julius II laid the first stone of this basilica, designed in the shape of a Greek cross with a gigantic cupola by the famous Bramante. It was consecrated a century later by Pope Urban VIII on November 19, 1626. Raphael, Giuliano, and Michelangelo are only a few of the artists who gave their genius to this memorable shrine.

Its interior, due to its immense size and remarkable beauty, is a breathtaking sight. Great genius, religious devotion, and wealth make it possible to have Saint Peter's and the Sistine Chapel. Bernini created the canopy for the Pope's Altar under the great cupola in the Cathedral as well as the Chair, Monument of Urban VIII, and the tomb of Alexander VII.

In the first chapel on the right as one enters the Basilica is the famous "Pieta" carved by Michelangelo when he was only 25 years old. The Gregorian Chapel where lies the body of Gregory XIV was also designed by Michelangelo. The mosaics in this altar and other aisles are by such famous masters as Raphael, Domenichino, and Poussin.

In this Basilica, then, are the works of the greatest masters of the Renaissance, making it one of the most important historical and artistic monuments in the world.

A fitting climax to any tour of this area of Rome is a walk through the Vatican Museum where the treasures of centuries of wealth and power of the Catholic Church may be seen. All ends with a visit to the Sistine Chapel--built by Alessandro de' Dolce for Pope Sixtus IV in 1484; it is almost indescribable because of its beauty. Botticelli, Roselli, Signorelli, and Perugino are responsible for the rich frescoes inspired by the Old Testament that cover the side walls. Between the windows are 24 portraits of Popes

painted by Botticelli, Ghirlandaio, and Fra. Diamante.

But the greatest glory of all is the vault above the chapel with the memorable frescoes by Michelangelo who began the work in 1508 for Julius II and finished it in 1512. One wonders if a work as monumental as this ceiling will ever be duplicated.

The places and the ages of which I write about are ancient history. The teacher who succeeds makes this history with its greatnesses and weaknesses come alive for the student who reads the literature of those times. To be in those places and see what is left of that glory and splendor enriches the teacher's own experiences and contributes to his ability to teach which is what he is in the classroom to do.

*P. Joseph Canavan*

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