

Old Main Mural

What It Means To Art

(Editor's Note: this is the last in a series of articles designed to acquaint the student with the significance of the incomplete Henry Varnum Poor mural in the lobby of Old Main.)

By Jane Wolbarst

Following its execution, the Henry Varnum Poor mural gained wide-spread attention on the part of artists and art critics all over the country. Magazines featured pictures and lengthy articles on the subject, many of them reproducing sections of the mural on their covers. Newspapers showered praise on Poor and his work. The artistic world buzzed with admiration and approval of the mural, and members of this circle turned their eyes toward State College, which had meant little or nothing to them before.

Forbes Watson, writing in the August 1940 issue of the Magazine of Art, had this to say about the mural, "All the idealism of America is romantically, unsentimentally, and powerfully interpreted in painter terms. Unity of light, one of Poor's stated aims in this work in order to put it in what he terms 'one skin,' and the freest and most subtle fresco painting give to the observer of this monumental work a sense of pride and happiness in America and in the knowledge that America has a Henry Poor."

Significant Contribution
The Art Digest of September

1, 1940, described the work as "A compelling aesthetic statement," while The Art News called it "a significant contribution to American painting."

Newspapers such as The Philadelphia Inquirer, The Pittsburgh Press, and The Philadelphia Record came out with full page spreads explaining the significance of various sections of the mural.

Dorothy Grafly, noted critic on The Record, made this statement, "With much of the world at war in the fall of 1940, Pennsylvania State College, in the dedication of Henry Varnum Poor's landmark mural, focuses interest not on carnage but on culture."

In an impressive book published in 1940 and entitled "Varnum Poor," Peyton Boswell Jr. devoted several pages to discussion of the mural, including numerous close-ups of various segments.

"Here is a beautiful mural painting," wrote Boswell, "not monotonous earth-brown and black decoration minus perspective. Poor gave the Penn State fresco all his skill and talent. His

architectural sense was utilized to turn what might have been a handicap into an asset—he developed his design in such a manner that two large columns do not mar the mural, but rather mark off three natural divisions, each a compositional unit. At the same time there is a welcome omission of any jig-saw design once so popular with American muralists.

Great Achievement

"College and artist have shared a mutually beneficial experience; the artist has brought forth one of the great achievements in American mural art; the college is possessor of a painting that will be visited and admired as long as Old Main stands—and it is a sturdy building."

Adding its praise, Parnassus magazine wrote in April 1941 that the mural's "unity of conception, power and freedom of execution, and richness of color make it a source of enjoyment, imaginative experience, and inspiration to prospective artists of the art department and to the student body as a whole."

Henry Varnum Poor, himself, hasn't missed out when it comes to laurels. Peyton Boswell refers to him as "one of the most versatile talents in American art today."

And Edward Alden Jewell of The New York Times once wrote, "For my part I will pit Henry Varnum Poor against any living artist."

Should Be Completed

Thus it is easy to see that our mural is a recognized work of art, and that its artist has reached the peak in his field. It should also be easy to see that every effort should be expended by the student body to complete the work.

Six years ago, The Collegian published an article entitled "Isn't It About Time To Take Steps To Have Mr. Poor's Mural Finished?"

Now the question arises again. Let's hope it's answered before another six years have elapsed.

Engravings At Library

Seventy original engravings by William Hogarth, 18th century artist, are on exhibition in the Library. They were lent to the College by Josh Kligerman, '32.

The artist made these engravings both to amuse and instruct the public as well as to make a living. In his "Memoirs" he tells something of his ideas and aims: "I therefore turned my thoughts to painting and engraving modern moral subjects—subjects that will both entertain and improve the mind bid fair to be of the greatest public utility."

An exhibition that only a few metropolitan collections can equal in numbers, the Library Hogarth showing offers a wide variety of subjects and interest. Modern art critics point out that Hogarth's strong draftsmanship is largely responsible for keeping his engravings alive. Hogarth's prints are the pictorial equivalent of the works of Fielding, Smollett, Sterne, and other un-genteel 18th century English writers.

Like successive scenes of a play, several engravings follow each other to tell a story, as in the series called "The Harlot's Progress," "Marriage a la Mode," "Self Portrait with his Dog," "Gin Lane" and "The Stages of Cruelty" are other single prints or groups of prints included in the exhibition.

Some of the prints are directly related to Hogarth's paintings, while others were designed purely as engravings. A few of the engravings were executed by other hands following compositions worked out by the artist.

The exhibition will continue until May. Some of the prints are for sale to the public.

Livestock Club Presents Show

The Little International, livestock show patterned after the International held each year in Chicago, will be presented by Block and Bridle Club on April 13. At this time the champion showmen and fitters of horses, cows, pigs, and sheep will be selected by the judges and awarded prizes.

The most valuable of the prizes being offered is the registered Duroc-Jersey gilt hog to be awarded to the grand champion showman of hogs by the King Farms of Morrisville.

In making the announcement, Herbert Terndrup, president of the club, said that any student, regardless of school or curricula, is eligible to enter the fitting and showing contest. To draw an animal for the show, the student should be present at the Block and Bridle Club meeting in 206 Agriculture Building at 7 p. m. Monday.

The greatest need, according to Samuel Laub, vice-president of the club, is for students to show hogs. Of the 16 hogs to be shown, only 8 have been claimed up to this time. Any student who wishes to show a hog or other animal, but is unable to attend the meeting, should contact Samuel Laub at the Sheep Barn, or Robert Smith by calling 4073 as soon as possible.

Try This Simple Formula; You Too Can Be A BMOC

The first weeks of any semester present almost insurmountable difficulties. New classes forever being changed to outlandish buildings, new books that exist only in the prof's mind and on the extinct lists of the various bookstores, new rooms, or no rooms, as the case may be, new fees to pay, new schedules to follow—in short, it's a mess. But by far the most difficult feat of any new semester is impressing the underlings of the campus that you happen to be a BMOC.

Getting to be a BMOC is an important factor in college life, far more important than pulling good grades or getting enough to eat; everyone knows this. Joe College was a BMOC last semester, but the only person who saw him eating breakfast with Pete Falloon that one time, graduated last February. But there is no need for Joe to despair; he can become a BMOC again by following the simple program listed below.

Know Your Holdoggers
The first step is to make good, influential buddies. Most characters on campus who have big important names know so many people that a few extra friends, of the "hello there" variety, will make no difference anyways. So Joe should first pick out the most

prominent guy he knows and go up to him in the Corner Room with hearty smiles or the old-old story of having loaned him his crib note on the econ final. Several buddies of this type and he's set. By the way, holding an empty booth in the Corner is a great inducement for friendship, if Joe is selective in his choice of companions.

Second, he should make a point of patronizing the Skellar regularly. A membership in the Skellar League insures invitations to all sorts of parties, with all sorts of opportunities of meeting new people.

Third, he should cash in on his fraternity. Joe shouldn't be content to be a mere member, he should plug for third historian, and maybe get a seat on JFC. Anything to be a big wheel in the Greek societies.

Rah, Rah For Our Side

Fourth, he should go out for one political party in a big way. Really do something, get to be an officer, so that people will know who he is. He should campaign vigorously, but always for the other fellow—there is nothing like being subtle. And if he is constant and begs to be put on committees when his party gets into Cabinet, he may become a little man who makes good.

Last, but certainly not least, he should go out for an activity. Not one of the big, important activities, like Players or Collegian; they require a lot of work. He should try something that sounds good but means little effort, like the Care and Feeding of Catterpillars League. An activity gives a student an identity, proves he gets around.

Following this recipe, Joe cannot help but succeed. BMOC is a wonderful thing, and anyone can be one.

Sister Addresses Lutheran Church

Sister Mildred Winter, field secretary to the Board of Deaconesses, will speak at the Lutheran Church at 7:30 tonight on "The Cross and Service." A reception will be held following this service for all Lutheran students on campus.

This is the opening feature of the Christian Service Institute which the Lutheran Student Association is sponsoring this weekend. On Saturday Sister Mildred will be assisted by Dr. C. P. Harry of the Board of Education, in meeting the students for personal interviews.

Sister Mildred will speak at the LSA meeting at 6:30 p.m. Sunday and at vespers.

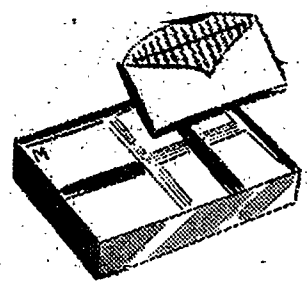
College Health Service

... requests all transfer students who enrolled at the College for the Spring Semester to make arrangements at the Infirmary for a complete physical examination at their earliest convenience.

Naval ROTC

... officers and men at the College contributed a total of \$107.63 to the recent nation-wide Red Cross Drive.

This donation, while from a section of the College students, cannot be included with the College total. All Naval contributions here must be sent in through the offices of the Fourth Naval District.



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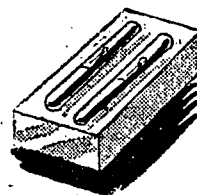
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