

New College Bookstore Is Quite A Change From the Old Days

by Dave Parsons
Guilfordian Staff Writer

With the passage of time, words often change or even lose their original meanings as their surroundings are modified. "Bookstore" is one of the better examples of this process which can be found on the Guilford College campus. The current freshman has no conception of those dark days when students literally had to claw their way into the cramped room under Memorial Hall in order to acquire the necessary textbooks and writing supplies.

New students are now greeted by bright, multicolored walls, attractive painting, and shelves of tastefully displayed paperback books and records, not to mention the expanse of light and lebensraum. One can even shop for toiletries, chess sets, Guilford night-shirts, or greeting cards of all varieties.

According to Debbie Miller, manager of the store, it takes students a while to get into the habit of buying paperbacks. But the new student mail boxes in the bookstore building and the buying habits that accompany the daily mail checks have attracted many new, potential customers. An additional drawing point would be the restoration of fountain service in the bookstore building, but the headaches involved in that operation make the idea dubious.

What is the reason for the new look? The answer is fairly simple.

Wills of Greensboro has taken over a former college operation, and they are quite naturally interested in making the venture a profitable one. Their current success must be attributed in large measure to the young, energetic Mrs. Miller, who took the job partly to remain close to college life.

The arrangement of the store is orderly and pleasing to the eye and the sales of records and books are moving surprisingly well. The job is not without headaches, however. Absent-minded professors forget to order books, and when they finally do arrive, union rules prevent truck drivers from carrying them more than a certain distance, often not as far as to the door. Minor thefts are annoying at times and the first few weeks of bill-collecting during the beginning of each semester are exhausting.

A portion of the store's success unfortunately comes from the bad money habits of many students. These students visit the bookstore several times a week with little regard for the bill that they ring up.

But this writer, himself an inveterate book enthusiast, can sympathize with persons who become compulsive book buyers. The purchase of books, after all, implies that they will be read, and a large part of education comes from being exposed to the written and spoken ideas of other people. So who knows? Reading may suddenly replace Batman as the "campiest" campus craze in the Carolinas.

Alma Martin—She's Lived Many Lives

by Bob Wilson
Guilfordian Staff Writer

A biography of Mrs. Alma Martin would be an account of a woman with many acute insights and a great deal of first-hand knowledge of Eastern European history during the 20th century. Mrs. Martin, assistant professor of Russian history at Guilford, has not only studied Russian history, but has witnessed it in the making since the turn of the century.

Alma Martin was born in Estonia when that country was ruled by the Russian Tsar. For her, education began early. Through the instruction of her parents she could read, write, and do the multiplication tables before she entered elementary school. After graduating from a Russian "gymnasium" (similar to our junior college) she attended the Agricultural College in St. Petersburg (now Leningrad) for four years. After the First World War, she continued her education at the University of Tartu (Dorpat) in Estonia and received an "Agronom" degree in 1924. In 1926 she was awarded a Fellowship of the International Education Board and studied as a foreign student at Iowa State University. There she received her M.S. in 1927 and spent that summer doing advanced studies in education and sociology at Cornell University. Alma Ivanovna (as she is known by her students) has never stopped studying. Even now she is teaching herself French. This she adds to the languages of Estonian, English, German, and Russian, which she reads, writes, and speaks fluently.

Mrs. Martin says that she has lived many lives in her one lifetime. These lives include mother, teacher, author, refugee, and the Educational Counselor of the Estonian Ministry of Education (she has been applauded for her work in promoting women's education in Estonia while serving at this post and also for work done in other countries).

In 1944, when the communists occupied Estonia for the second time, Mrs. Martin fled to Germany with her two daughters. There, as a refugee before the end of the war, she made her living as a house maid. At the end of the war she joined the staff of UNRRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration) helping to resettle Displaced Persons from Eastern Europe. Before she came to the United States in 1949, she had fled the communist rule three times. Unfortunately, not all members of her family escaped the "Reds." Her husband died of a heart attack during a mass deportation of Estonian citizens by the communists and, although not certain, she believes her son lost his life to the communists. Also her brother died in a concentration camp in Siberia. Living through four wars and three revolutions, Alma Martin has experienced many hardships (including having her home bombed twice), but she is unhesitant about relating her experiences even though she must find it difficult to do so.

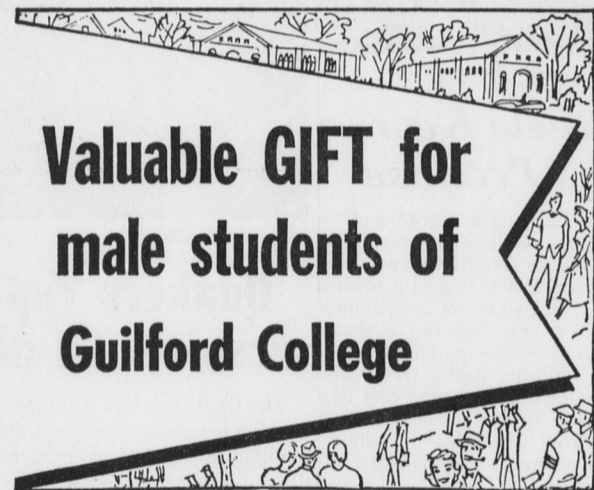
The many lives of which Mrs. Martin speaks have taken her to twenty countries, and have caused her to live under ten different governments, and have made her an extremely interesting person with whom to talk.

On February 28th Lisa Sergia, the visiting Danforth lecturer, emphasized the need for Americans to know the "Russian mind" in order to advance world peace. Here at Guilford students have an excellent opportunity to learn from a woman interested in promoting Russian studies and willing to share her many interesting experiences of Eastern Europe. Why not take advantage of this opportunity?

Don't think because a man prospers in the wrong business that he is living a successful life. Such prosperity will eventually be his defeat.
—Walter E. Isenhour.



ALMA MARTIN: educator and author



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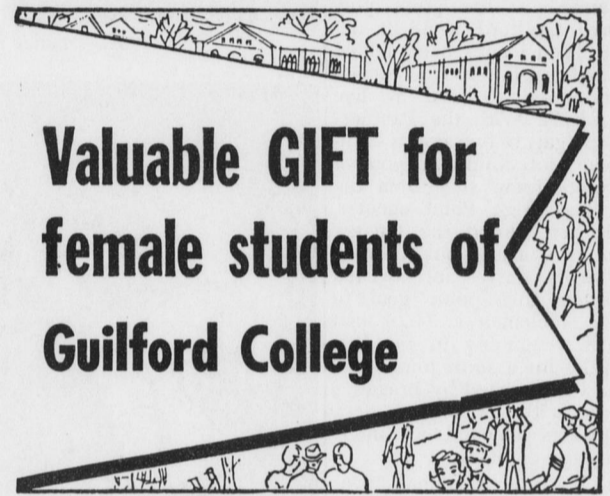
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