

## Grades . . .

What is our first thought when we finish an exam? What do we look for first when a teacher hands us back a paper? The grades, of course—that black or red mark on a piece of paper that can determine our moods for days, weeks, or a semester—that mark which means more or less cuts and overnights—the grade which makes us pass or fail.

If a grade in a course is good, life is fine. We retain our cuts and overnights and sometimes we are fired with enthusiasm to study that excellent course more. If the grade in a course is bad, life is no longer bright. We may lose cuts and overnights and often we feel a strong dislike for that stupid course.

Do we ever think what a grade really signifies? Is it only a symbol on a record in the dean's office which holds sway over our cutting privileges? A grade supposedly is an indication of our knowledge of tested material, an indication of our ability to present facts clearly and accurately in a paper. And we really want to gain knowledge and to write accurate honest papers, don't we? If not, why are we here? This is a college—we are here to learn—and today grades are the only means of testing our knowledge.

But do we not all have the wrong idea about grades? Do we not put emphasis on the less important part of grading—the reward value they have in the form of cuts? Some of us say that we are forced to work for grades and put them first on our list of goals. We must get good grades to stay here and have cuts and overnights. We are usually the ones who are satisfied with things as they are and go on working—or hoping—just for grades and their rewards.

Others of us say that the present system of grading used by most colleges is unfair and that grades are a poor indication of our achievements. Perhaps this is true, but the present grading system used by Salem must continue if our college is to remain on the list of accredited colleges.

If we do consider the system unfair, is it not then unworthy of ruling our thoughts and goals? Why can't the ones who dislike the present state of importance grades hold put more emphasis on what we learn, not on what grades we get?

But we repeat—if we do not think about grades and work for them, we may not be able to stay here. Can we not put our thoughts and efforts on knowledge instead? The results would be the same. We would have our grades—necessary evils—but we would have a better set of values. We might even start asking "What did you learn in that course?" rather than "What was your grade in that course?"

R. D.

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## Date? Where?

By Dorothy Morris

A glance at the crowd in the Dean's office on any Thursday or Friday after lunch shows that many Salemites leave campus for the week-end. Where do they go?

According to a survey of about fifty girls Carolina seems to be at the head of the list for Salem girls when they go off for a good time. Davidson is next in line. State follows Wake Forest, Annapolis, and Salem itself tied for third place. Duke trails far behind with only a few votes.

When asked why they wanted to go to these campuses, many girls actually did not know. Most girls wanted to go to the school where their boy friend, fiance, or steady, goes. The ones who stood up for a week-end at Salem go with boys here in town and want to be with them on familiar ground.

**Gertie Johnson:** Any place.

**Myra Dickson:** University of Virginia because the boys are gentlemen.

**Louise Fike:** Carolina—'cause they party best.

**Lola Dawson:** I like Davidson

because the parties don't seem to be an escape but a pleasure.

**Dora Cameron:** Carolina—it's such a quaint campus.

**Alice McNeely:** Davidson, I guess. But I think it depends on the boy you're dating anywhere.

**Flossie Cole:** Salem—Bill.

**Phoebe Barnhardt:** I'm prejudiced for Duke because of my twin brother.

**Joanne Field:** Davidson. I like the pretty boys there.

**Ann Simpson:** I liked Center College until Bill went to Fort Bragg.

**Phyllis Forrest:** Oxford University in England because Mr. Engle said they had champagne parties every three years.

**Eleanor McGregor:** State—Because I have a very dear friend there who's a cow.

**Beth Coursey:** Clemson—Even if you look like a stick you get broken on.

**Jean Patton:** Annapolis—'cause Bob's there!

**Ruthie Derrick:** Wake Forest—'cause I almost went there one week-end.

## Dear Papa . . .

By Anne Lowe

Dear Papa,

I understand that Mr. Sam Rayburn has gotten himself in dutch. It seems that he made a speech in the coming election for President. It seems Mr. Rayburn was talking about the South. Mr. Byrnes of South Carolina said us folks wasn't going to vote for a party we was going to vote for the man. It seems to me that the South is left alone a mighty lot until it gets to be election time. Then you'd think we was the finest folks in the United States.

The newspapers say that those truce talks in Korea are just about to break down. The Communists say the Allied men are putting out "deliberately false" meanings of the Red position and the Allied men say the same thing about the Communists. Sometimes I think all those talks are doing is teaching those men how to argue better.

Papa, I got a letter from Uncle Dan the other day and he's still upset about Citizen Truman and his friend Mr. Boyle. Just as soon as Boyle got sprayed with the

R. F. C. polecat perfume, Harry comes out and says that he has complete confidence in his pal Boyle. "It's beginning to look like Harry can't see any harm in a little friendly game of embezzlement," said Uncle Dan, "so long as one of his pals is dealing the cards."

Papa, I'm not quite clear on one point about these RFC loans. Do the folks that pay fer the influence to git the loan also have to pay back the loan? That point hasn't been made very clear in all the investigations. At least, I ain't seen a record where they ever paid anything back. All the hearings deal with them GETTING the money.

If we make our little trip around the country this summer, Papa, there's two wonders of the world I would like to see. One is the Yellowstone National Park and the other is one of them \$100 hats I saw advertised in them New York magazines.

Your ever lov'en daughter,  
Anne

## Eve Of St. Agnes

By Pat Kelly

Dedicated to that valiant little band that gathers every Monday, Wednesday and Friday in Room 1 to climb with him the steps and with some sort of apology to the late John Keats.

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St. Agnes' Eve at Salem College—Ah! it was cold as blazes. The bent old man with the sour old face blew on his wrinkled old hands, plodding beside the ivied old buildings. As he walked and blew he sang tunelessly the impassioned words to that mystic old song: "I Hate Women." Night watchman he was at old Salem College, and he found no joy in his work. Little he cared that a lovely young maiden stood in a festive hall called Gymnasium and scorned to dance with the eager young men. Little he cared that even then a furtive young man was slinking across the ancient square, making his furtive way toward the ivied old buildings. No, the watchman took no heed of the world on that cold St. Agnes' Eve. He made his weary way, mumbling the words to that prehistoric ballad: "In Bed I Should Have Stayed."

But in the festive hall all the fair young maids smiled on all the young men, even those without tuxedos. And all the fair maids danced and gaily laughed. All save one—the lovely Madeline. She, bemused, stood apart, scorning the ancient ritual of the girl-break. It was of St. Agnes she thought, and of the legend of St. Agnes' Eve. Would she truly be visited by a visitation? And would the visitation have a crew cut? Ah rapture! And, perhaps, a touch of peroxide? The maid's heart leaped up to be-

hold the vision of the vision. As in a fair dream she floated toward the massive old door.

There she encountered the aged Dean, the all-knowing, all-seeing Dean. And there she was given a smile by the kindly Dean, who intoned:

"You're leaving us, my dear? So early from the ball?"

Madeline had not sense enough to blush. (Besides she knew not how.) "Yes," she said in fair answer, "I leave to invoke the visitation of St. Agnes' Eve."

"Ah," breathed the aged Dean. "But, my dear, that isn't the way we do things at Salem."

"Isn't it even so," sighed Madeline, floating out the door, floating even to grand Bitting Hall.

In the festive hall behind, the kindly Dean mused and even pondered and then followed after—more in a trot than a float. But soon the Dean's faltering trot brought her to the top of the hill, cold and bleak on St. Agnes' Eve. There she stopped and there she mused.

"Ah," mused the all-seeing, "surely I perceived a shadow move and change its shape behind yon tree."

And the shadow vcrily gave sigh and reply: "It's I."

An English major, thought the all-knowing Dean.

From the shadows then he stepped, the furtive youth, poor Porphyro. And his first words he addressed to her: "Kind Dean, you must help me."

"Ah," murmured the Dean, "but, my boy, that isn't the way we do things at Salem."

"How true," sighed poor Porphyro. "But, Dean, my plea you  
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By Anne Hobbs

Katy staggered painfully toward the infirmary—great sobs heaving from her troubled breast. Today had begun so beautifully. Why must it end like this? As she drew nearer the "hospitable" looking building, Katy's courage began to falter. She stopped and leaned heavily on the iron fountain in the middle of the walk—seeking strength in its cold hardness. She found only the realization that many others had been there before her—pigeons. Taking a deep breath, Katy washed her swollen eyes in the refreshingly stagnant amber rainwater the fountain bowl held and went bravely forward again. The last few faltering steps of her way she cursed her fate—alphabetically, as she had been taught in the I. R. S. seminar. "A"—Ah, woe!, "B"—Bothersome, isn't it?, "C"—Curses!, "D"—Dearie me!

When she had entered the door and the lock had snapped shut behind her, Katy had no more time for hesitation. Miss Maggie Nesia, the nurse, came out to meet her—a ghoulish "at-last-a-patient" smile lighting her face. Miss Nesia in intense silent haste rushed Katy into the office, weighed her, took her temperature and blood pressure and pushed four pills down her throat—two black, one purple, and one a sunny orange. Then she flopped the breathless Katy on the examination table and inquired sweetly, "Are you siek?"

The physically weakened Katy had only the strength to mutter, "I stumbled over a cigarette butt and sprained the third toe nail on my left foot."

An hour later, somewhat revived by a stiff shot of pineapple juice, Katy lay flat on her back gazing at the gray ceiling. Her left leg—bound to the knee—rested on a hot water bottle and was weighted down by ice packs. Miss Nesia, entering with more pineapple juice, saw Katy's disconsolate countenance, and, seeking to console her, slapped her smartly in the stomach, poured the juice down her throat, and heartily exclaimed, "Cheer up. You'll be well in a week or two!" Katy's reply was luckily muffled by a discreet burp and juicy gurgle. Miss Nesia tossed a couple of books in her direction and went out to prepare supper. Katy deftly caught the two five pound volumes and glanced lifelessly at their titles—Paradise Lost or You May Get Out Alive and Paradise Regained or The Magnificent View from Dix Hill.

Though interrupted by many up and downs—the orange pill—Katy managed to finish a chapter from the first book on "Sprains and Your Chances." Completely void of hope now, Katy reviewed her life—as all departing this world in good faith should—said her prayers, and waited for her time to come. As she lay patient and expectant, she reasoned philosophically—"At least my suffering is not in vain. Someone will reap rich benefits. Think of the two column space the story of my misfortune will fill in the Salemite." She could see her picture now—lying on the hard white table. She wondered if she could give the illusion of nails sticking in her back. "I guess I should be reading a Salemite instead of these," she wheezed.

As Katy mused on the great good her martyrdom would bring about, Miss Nesia re-entered with her supper—more pineapple juice. Carried away with the realization of her high calling, Katy seized the glass of juice, raised it on high, and proposed, "A toast to the long and illustrious line of Salem martyrs—may I be the last but not the least!" Then she threw the glass dramatically into a shelf of pill bottles and crumpled limply back to stare at the ceiling and wait. She heard the fleeing Miss Nesia mutter, "Well, of all things!"