

Seeing Things

A SUCCESS STORY
by Catherine Gregory

Once, in a little town in North Carolina, there lived a girl named Jaimal Alestomac. (Her father was of French descent). She was a quiet girl, mousy and unattractive in appearance, with a subdued and uninspired personality. In childhood she had shown only one trace of individuality—while the other little girls played in sand piles, she played in a rock pile. She would hold the rocks in her hand for hours, studying their structure and analyzing their history.

Her school days were uneventful, and she was eventually sent off to college. Unsuspecting, she went in the first day to the Proper Authorities to sign up for her courses. An Authority, rat eyes twinkling behind her little gold rims, smilingly asked her, "And now what courses would you like to take?" As she said the words, she put into Jaimal's hand a schedule with the courses already mimeographed in.

"Oh thank you, but I don't want to take some of these. I want to be a geologist. I want—"

"All the freshmen take that course," said the Authority icily and gestured meaningfully toward the alligator pit by her desk. Jaimal ran out into the hall.

Strangely enough the same thing happened her Sophomore year.

When she became a Junior, Jaimal thrilled with hope when the Authority greeted her with, "What do you want to major in?"

"Geology", said Jaimal. "I just love rocks. I—"

The Authority was turning through her files. "Hmmm. There is a vacant seat in Advanced Theory. You can be a Music Major."

Jaimal looked into the pit at the sleek, well-fed alligators, and smiled weakly.

At graduation, Jaimal found herself with a Voice Major. Born a monotone, she now possessed what might well have been one of the most fully developed monotones in the world.

One day she went to hear a lecture on Rock Layers. The room numbers of the building were not clearly marked and, going through the wrong door, she found herself auditioning with a three piece orchestra. Their number was "Body and Soul" played in the key of D flat. That happened to be her monotone, which was a fortunate coincidence. Deep voices were in vogue then, and so the station master hired her.

On the air she was heard by a visiting Persian prince of fabulous wealth. Her voice reminded him of the oolool, a wind instrument fashioned of tomato cans upon which his old nurse used to play to lull him to sleep. He wired her a proposal. It had nothing to do with her voice, even less with geology, so she declined it.

The next day she was carried by her parents, bound and gagged, in a wheelbarrow to the parcel post office, where she was wrapped and shipped to the Prince. "Nothing but the best for our girl, whether she wants it or not," said her parents as they walked away.

She lived in Persia for several years, and when the Prince died from an excess of pomegranates, she escaped to Algiers. There she opened a little smoky night club, and did a floor show every night accompanied by a native playing the oolool. The club was narrow, dirty, hot, and the tourists thronged there by the hundreds clutching roles of American dollars.

Every night at three, one of the two candles was put out, and the sobbing of the oolool would begin. Weaving her way from table to table, Jaimal would sing of lost loves and beautiful sad days gone forever and wasted lives and the joys and sorrows of the wicked world. After her song was done there would be a great moment of silence, then everyone would shout and cry and throw fistfuls of money at her feet. Jaimal would pick up a fifty dollar bill, stroke it thoughtfully and say, "I really wanted to be a geologist." It never failed to bring down the house.



Scholars Unearth, Decipher; Discoverers Elucidate, Date

by Tootsie Gillespie and Dale Smith

A very ancient stone, found in the northern end of the May Dell, contains many and varied inscriptions which seem to be of an Egyptian character. This suggests that perhaps, contrary to geological and historical opinions, Egyptian civilization started on Salem College campus. It might also indicate that Ignaz Safranski, a precocious lad of ten years who lived in this region in the eighteenth century, might have recorded his thoughts on rock while teaching the alphabet to the ants and then have thrown the rock away when his interests turned to tight-rope walking. The possibility that a cat walked over some wet cement and then buried it has also been considered, but it was decided that a cat would look quite foolish lugging a whole sidewalk down to the May Dell.

At any rate, after tedious translation, the following, however broken in thought and meaning it may be, has been given to you. It seems to be a very early account of the history of Salem College. Its authenticity is not guaranteed, however:

In 200 B. C., a man named Rondthaleus Oedipus Julius Erectus (which was his full name) founded a school for delinquent girls which he called "Salema Agricola" (from the Latin word meaning "school"). The first student, a person of doubtful feminine gender called Clytaemnestra (Russian for "Chloe") Umlaut, was sent to the school because of a mild psychosis, an Electra Complex. She was also rather fond of

her only brother, Comicus Umlaut, who wanted her sent away from home because he had an Oedipus Complex. The father, however, was not in accord with this idea and, as a result, Comicus died shortly after, when the father, in a fit of pique, crushed his head with a small part of the Rosetta stone which, we might add, is missing to this day. Miss Umlaut's first words upon arrival at Salema Agricola were: (here the translation is a bit hazy and it is the translator's feeling that Miss Umlaut would not like to be quoted.

The second, and last student, to attend Salema Agricola, one Cavanaugh Coloneus, was a dull girl addicted to knife throwing. She also played the clavicorn by ear, which won her many life-long friends.

If we are able to believe the translation, it seems that one day Isthmus and Clytaemnestra were engaged in a playful game of girls' wrestling when Clytaemnestra good-naturedly broke Isthmus' left arm, whereupon Isthmus immediately took out one of her knives and playfully cut off Clytaemnestra's toes up to the knee cap (Egyptian: "neepus kapus"). From then on, the two girls were inseparable.

The translation may not be entirely correct but it is sufficiently clear to throw a great deal of light on Salem's ancient culture and history.

With apologies to Max Schulman, Sophocles, Freud, Robert Benchley, Euripides, Darius the Great, the Persian Army, Ignaz Safranski and Oscar Schubert, a boy scout from the Bronx.)

Reporter Stresses Need For Intellectual Curiosity

by Peirano Aiken

Books are no magic potions that automatically bestow Carnegie personalities or Socratic intellects. Taken, however, as a substitute for the aimless diversions of most of us, a literary education has the power of lifting lives out of the rut in which lives tend to settle.

One such program was reported in last year's October issue of Life. According to a "Great Books" plan originated by John Erskine and Robert Hutchins, merchants, white-collar workers and industrial workers are meeting every two weeks to discuss one book from a list of classics. There are now hundreds of these and similar groups scattered around the country—very ordinary men and women intelligently conversing about a Platonic theory or a Shakespearean plot. Literacy is no longer the exclusive privilege of the college graduate: now it is the right of everyone and an expected

credential of the college student.

Probably the greatest hindrance to Salem students' doing outside reading is the lack of time. Most of us are already engrossed in as many extracurricular activities as possible, and there are very few who would have time for a formal literary organization. But why couldn't some good books be given a place in those clubs already established, particularly the language clubs? Another suggestion, that might result in more fun, is for smaller groups of those interested in reading the same book to meet informally in the dorms and let each girl voice her own opinion.

Intellectualism is not important; but a desire to know, to think and to express one's own opinion is a sign of maturity, which is important. And, anyway, Schulman surely wouldn't mind sharing a few bullsessions with—say, Tolstoy.

The Stee Gee . . .

. . . wishes to thank personally everyone who helped to make our dance a success. To members of the student body who worked diligently on the decorations; to Miss Essie and her help, Mr. Regan, Mr. Lawrence, and Miss Stockton; to the faculty and deans who cooperated with us in our many requests—we say thanks. The dance was for your enjoyment; with your help it was a success.

Mary Bryant

It Is Customary

. . . at this time of the school year to make some explanation of the purpose and nature of the Order of the Scorpion.

It must be made clear that the organization is a secret one—secret in regard to membership and meetings as well as activities. This is in order that the work of the group may be carried on without bestowing credit on any particular individual, and so that the group may undertake improvements and remedy certain situations at Salem which go unseen by other organizations.

Membership in the organization should not be looked upon as honorary, for it is composed of those who have shown a sincere desire to initiate improvements at Salem and who have proved their willingness to see that such desires and needs are fulfilled.

Congratulations

The Salemite commends Margaret McCall on her appointment as Fire Chief for the year 1947-48. This position is a responsible one, and considerable thought preceded the appointment by Mr. Weinland. We know that Salem is dependent on its buildings not only for their functional uses, but also for their historical significance. Only the cooperation of the girls in practicing fire safety-rules can insure the permanency of our buildings. Therefore, each girl must shoulder personal responsibility in reducing fire hazards. Danger of our all burning up is somewhat lessened from last year with the "Clewel Smoke House" problem and the "Sisters" problem seemingly solved. Continue the good work, girls, and cooperate with Margaret!

The Salemite

Published every Friday of the College year by the Student body of Salem College
Downtown Office—304-306 South Main Street
Printed by the Sun Printing Company

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Lower floor Main Hall

Subscription Price—\$2.75 a year

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