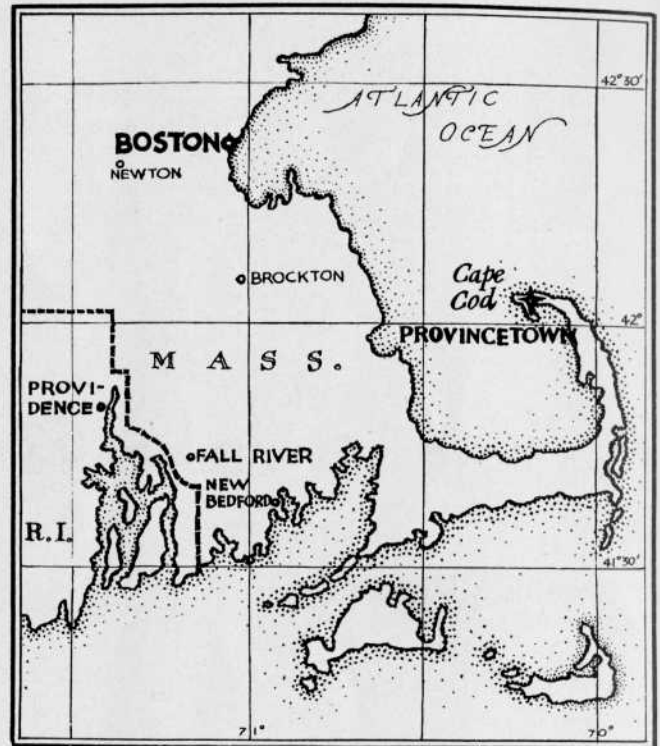


Provincetown, Massachusetts, enjoys a widespread reputation throughout the United States for its celebrated theater and for the literary figures who make it their home. George Milburn, '30ex, celebrated short story writer, finds Provincetown charming and fully up to the recommendation of Mary Heaton Vorse. However, Oklahoma has its charms as well and Mr Milburn balances East and West

East, I say, is east

BY GEORGE MILBURN, '30



SEVERAL times the Editor has asked me to write an article about Provincetown for *The Sooner Magazine*. I should like very much to do it, for my own satisfaction as well as for his. I have made a dozen false starts on such a piece, once got several hundred words down, before I finally decided that I might as well try to write something about Lake Como for him. I know nothing at all about Lake Como, but I am sure that I could write about it with far more confidence than I could about this remote little tip of Cape Cod where we have spent the winter.

Provincetown, to be sure, is probably the most written-about village in what our Mr Shaw calls this nation of villagers. Encouraged as I am by the Editor's vigorous promptings, it seems that I should have no difficulty in applying my meager talents to a subject that many renowned novelists and playwrights have already made familiar. But when I attempt to resolve on paper my eight months here I come to the inevitable conclusion that Provincetown will never be a familiar subject to me.

Of course I did not come to Cape Cod to write about it. What I have to write about Oklahoma is enough to occupy me the rest of my days. We came here because we were looking for a place where a slender and uncertain income would not necessarily mean poverty. Mary Heaton Vorse invited me to come and have a look at Provincetown. It is, in her opinion, the only place in the world to have a

home. She said: "You'll either like it very much, or not at all. No one ever feels half-way about Provincetown." As soon as I saw it I knew that we had found our home for the winter. And yet, on the eve of our going away, I can honestly say that I fit neither of Mary Vorse's classifications.

Once this winter we were on the verge of buying a house here for our permanent home. It was a beautiful old place set high on a promontory looking out over the bay. It had early fireplaces and exquisite old panelling and hand-wrought hardware. It was in good repair, and, times being what they are, we could have taken it on our own terms. For the moment, but only for the moment, I was ready to move in and call it home. It was only when we were walking away that I realized the enormity of what we were about to do. Then I knew that our settling down in Cape Cod was as much out of the question as our emigrating to China. Our home, and I mean our ideal home, will always be some place in Oklahoma.

This, I hope, does not give the impression that I have grown sentimental about my native state. I have not lost sight of the gross disadvantages Oklahoma sets in the way of civilized living. Permit me one example. A few months ago *The Sooner Magazine* published an article that attempted to mitigate the crime of mob violence. Come on, boys, let's laugh it off! Now in Oklahoma, where it is a common practice for cowards to settle a grievance by banding together to don

fantastic costumes and to sneak up on their victim after nightfall, I suppose that not one man in a hundred would consider that appalling sentiment indecent. But here in Provincetown, where mob vengeance is unknown, any illiterate fisherman would find that spirit of condoning a vicious crime against the community shameful if not utterly incredible. In this, and in several other guarantees to the individual that I could mention, Cape Cod is as far ahead of Oklahoma in civilization as Norman is ahead of a Hottentot village.

Perhaps you wonder why, if I feel that way about it, I should ever want to come back to Oklahoma to make a home. Or, I suppose you don't wonder, knowing me. But that would be the usual query. Last winter one editorial writer in Oklahoma even went so far as to publish his private and erroneous assumption that I had expressed my joy at being out of the state. The truth is, my attachment to that region and its people is too deep for me ever to stay away long. This is the fourth time I have lived out of Oklahoma for a considerable period, and when I left last spring I had no illusion that I was shaking Oklahoma's dust from my feet forever. I happen not to accept the stupid belief that a complacent citizen is a good citizen. If I were not sincerely interested in Oklahoma as a place to live, certainly I should never take the trouble to criticize its flagrant disgraces.

That may be the reason I find it so

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self-respect. And men will be creative in strange new forms of art and of life.

This ideal state lies in a new dimension. Men have frequently said that "when science fails what we need is more science." The solution is not quite so simple. Science is good in its own way but its method has definite limitations. What we need now is social vision and loyalty. We need to have the human values clarified and vivified. These things do not lie in the line of increasing scientific knowledge, but in a line at right angles, so to speak, containing no component of the feverish chase for wealth and knowledge. It will indeed stand in functional relation to wealth and knowledge but it will be complementary to them and not a mere extension of them. In this dimension lie all the ancient treasures of the race including the teachings of Plato and the Hebrew prophets.

How shall these new insights be utilized in the contemporary scene? No one should be so naïve as to hope for immediate and complete success. The world of actuality is ever with us. Hereditary institutions are tough-fibered: no revolution either radical or conservative is likely to occur in America over night. Civilization is going to muddle along. There will be many violent demands, blundering political adjustments, revolutionary changes disguised under old forms, wars and rumors of wars. Dictatorships may come and go. The actual world will not soon contain within its geographical limits the land of heart's desire.

In this confusion the business of men of social conscience will be to keep sensitive to the want and misery of men as well as to their possibilities. They will keep the ideal of a just and dynamic social order alive even though it cannot be immediately enacted. They will realize that within certain limitations they have power to act and that they are responsible for public opinion and social measures. They will try to insure that technology and technique will be used for the common good, that every farmer in the river bottom, every worker in a factory, every life anywhere however humble shall share in the benefits which human intelligence has made possible.

While in New York last fall, I had the privilege of attending a psychiatric clinic for children conducted in connection with a large hospital. The mothers came in with the patients and sat in the midst of the group. A competent young physician kindly but deftly and swiftly questioned the child and the mother and gave directions. In some instances the children had been at the clinic before and in such cases the physician quickly inquired what had occurred since the last visit and gave further directions. Here were humanity and efficiency mingled—kindness without sentimentality, despatch without cruelty. This clinic was a symbol to me of what the machine age could legitimately ac-

complish. Benefits like these should be carried to all conditions of men.

Abundance of life can be provided by scientific technique and machine technology if appropriate social adjustments can be worked out. As we contemplate this vision we have something of the experience of the great reformer—here is a goal worthy of a complete commitment.

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FUNCTIONAL COSTS OF GOVERNMENT

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per capita cost was \$91.42—\$53.22 for intrastate and \$38.20 for federal.

The common schools cost \$31,857,959. This averages \$13.30 per capita, and is 14.5 per cent of the total governmental cost. Education on the college level cost \$5,599,699. This was 2.6 per cent of the total expenditure. However, nearly one-third of the revenue for collegiate education came from the fees paid by the students and from the income of the land grants.

Debt service cost \$43,967,209, which is 20.1 per cent of the total and averaged \$18.37 per capita.

Highways cost \$34,153,047, which is 15.6 per cent of the total and averaged \$14.27 per capita. This is for construction and maintenance only. No data could be found to show the money value of the labor item for the road poll tax. Interest and amortizations for the road and bridge bonds amounted to approximately \$4,464,345. Highways, therefore, cost more than \$38,600,000.00.

Pensions cost approximately \$21,727,140. This is 9.9 per cent of the total and was \$9.07 per capita. The net current cost of rural schools in Oklahoma for 1931 was \$9.28 per capita. This per capita is based on the rural population of 1,574,439.

Postal service cost \$6.89 per capita. The total was \$16,503,288 for Oklahoma's share of the cost.

Other costs were: Army and navy \$13,899,737; agriculture \$8,152,354; administration \$7,645,066; law enforcement \$7,144,174; finance and accounting \$4,976,586; utilities \$4,477,290; commerce \$3,726,019; health and sanitation \$2,774,584; courts \$2,508,414; charity \$1,930,145; eleemosynary institutions \$1,878,093; parks and recreation \$1,791,920; fire departments \$1,710,755; buildings \$930,099; legislation \$537,451; labor \$238,093.

The costs of municipal government in Oklahoma have been tabulated for each city having a population of 2,500 inhabitants and over. Debt service and current expenses for schools and municipal purposes are computed separately. The costs of the schools for negroes appear as separate items, because these schools are financed by the county as a

unit. This study shows the following conclusions for these cities:

In Oklahoma cities with population over 30,000, the per capita for the net current expenses of the schools was 11.7 per cent of the total per capita cost for all government.

In Oklahoma cities with population over 10,000 and under 30,000, the per capita for the net current expenses of the schools was ten per cent of the total per capita for all government.

In Oklahoma cities with populations over 5,000 and under 10,000, the per capita for the net current expenses of the schools was 8.57 per cent of the total per capita for all government.

In Oklahoma cities with population over 2,500 and under 5,000 the per capita for the net current expenses of the schools was 8.5 per cent of the total per capita for all government.

No evidence was found of any concerted planning for the expenditure of these vast sums. Whether the amounts spent for each of these twenty two functions represents their relative social and economic values is a question outside the scope of this undertaking. This is an important consideration and invites further study.

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EAST, I SAY, IS EAST

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difficult to write an article about Provincetown. My sympathies are not rooted here. I have no ties to the place whatsoever, and neither its advantages nor its disadvantages move me strongly. We have spent a happy winter here, but I believe that I should feel as much a stranger after eight years as I do now after eight months. Any observation about the place that I might make would be extremely superficial, because I have never identified myself as a part of it.

At least I can say that Provincetown is one of the most beautiful places we have ever seen. A detailed map will show that the Cape does not end in a point, but in a thin hook, almost a curlicue, making a bay within a bay. The small bay is Provincetown Harbor—"the habber" local dialect has it. On a clear day we look out across the calm harbor, lying like dark molten glass, a curiously desert-like scene, and see to the eastward, not the Atlantic, but the graceful blue and yellow curve of the Cape. Back of our house, to the north and westward, lie the fields covered with tarred fish nets drying; the brush covered dunes, and the cranberry bogs. The low, white-sanded line of Long Point with a light-house castle at the tip stretches along the southern edge of the harbor. Out at Race Point, a few miles to the northwest, one can look toward Boston, or westward across Cape Cod Bay toward Plymouth. The Atlantic is reached by following the

inner shoreline eastward and crossing over at a point where the Cape is scarcely a mile across.

It is easy enough to give these simple geographical details. But when I attempt to describe the strange beauty of the place, or, what is far more elusive, the character of Cape Cod people, that is something beyond my powers.

Provincetown itself, I can go on to say, follows the curving shoreline for several miles. It really has only two streets, named Commercial and Bradford, but always spoken of here as the Front Street and the Back Street. Commercial, the front street, runs along the harbor's edge. Bradford Street parallels it along the edge of the dunes, in places commanding a high view of the harbor. These streets are connected at intervals by short lanes.

It is a village with a dignity and a quiet beauty that I have never seen in a Middle Western town. Its long shaded streets of neat Cape Cod houses, white with green shutters, its great trees, its fringes of dunes, its rambling, salt-bleached wharves, even its large gray fish-freezing plants, all seem perfectly fitted to its setting, and not at all a sore spot on nature as so many of our small towns out there are. Age, I have no doubt, has softened Provincetown's first harshness, but the men who built this town utilized its natural surroundings to the utmost. Whether by design or accident, consciously or unconsciously, I do not know.

The only eyesore in town, as far as I am concerned, is the Pilgrim Monument, erected some years ago to commemorate the spot where the Pilgrims first landed on American soil. This purposeless tower of gray stone is a replica of the Mangia Torre del Siena. Why an imitation of an Italian Renaissance tower should have been set up as a monument to the landing of these English Protestants is a mystery. I can readily believe that the original tower in Tuscany is a beautiful structure, but here in Provincetown nothing could be more out of place. It spoils one of the loveliest hills in town.

To complete the irony, this Pilgrim Monument is surrounded on three sides by a solid Portuguese settlement. Back in the days when this was a great whaling port, the whalers used to sail with skeleton crews until they reached the Azores. There they would take on Portuguese hands, paying a dollar a head for the long, arduous voyage. When the voyage ended in some Cape port, these Portuguese would be set ashore and the process of getting cheap labor would be repeated. The residue here on the Cape multiplied. Meanwhile the original English stock was petering out. Nowadays the Portuguese control town elections and run the place to suit themselves. The grocery clerks speak Portuguese and the local movie even shows Portuguese talking pictures.

You asked if there were not some celebrities living in Provincetown. I should answer no. They would not be celebrities in Provincetown. They'd just be Summer people—Summer people if they have lived here the year 'round for twenty years. All strangers and outsiders, whether they be vacationists, antique-collectors, artists, or writers, are Summer people to the old residents. Their attitude toward Summer people is illustrated by a story that Mary Vorse tells about an old fellow who owned a second-hand store here. All summer the sign over his place of business read: "Antique Shoppe." But promptly at the end of the season (the last of the vacation crowds depart early in September, after one grand spree on Labor Day) he would go out and reverse the sign over his door, displaying on its other side: "Old Junk for Sale."

The only novelists we know here are Mary Vorse and John Dos Passos. Eugene O'Neill has not lived here for several years and his house out at Piquot Hill has been washed into the sea by storms. Traces of the tradition set by the old Provincetown Theatre are still to be found, but the playwrights all seem too light in the poop to make much headway in carrying it on.

Now that I think of it, our closest companions here this winter have been Jack and Bud Beauchamp, two brothers from Montana.¹ Jack is a painter of great promise and Bud, at twenty five, has had several short stories published in the *Saturday Evening Post*. We were not attracted to them by their achievements, however. Our bond to them has been a warmer, deeper feeling than anything based on mere accomplishment could be. We fell on their necks when we heard that they were from Montana. Montana seemed so close to home.

A SOONER LAW SCHOOL DEAN

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trict Judge Goddard in 33 Federal (2) 202 where he quoted almost verbatim the concluding paragraph of Chapter Seven. Dr. Manley O. Hudson, Harvard Law School, cites this work in his volume of cases on International Law on page 64 as supplementary reading on the problem of recognition. On page 546 in the same volume he refers the reader to an article of Doctor Hervey's in *Michigan Law Review*, volume 27, page 751. Professor Ernst H. Feilchenfeld of the Harvard Law School, in reviewing this work, in the *Harvard Law Review* for January, 1929, states that the conclusion "shows common sense and displays a progressive spirit."

In January, 1930, Doctor Hervey edited the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* on

the "Anti-Trust Laws of the United States," and wrote some parts of it. This was used by the late Professor Seagers of Columbia university for a time as the text in his course on the anti-trust laws. His opinion: "One of the best compilations which have appeared on the subject."

Space prevents printing in full the interesting excerpts from his radio talk over WFI printed in the *Philadelphia Record*. He gives names and cases of the holding companies which have so complicated the picture of the public utilities, overburdening them with capital and supervision which are passed on in higher rates to the public. This sort of comment four years ago was confined to *The Nation* and *The New Republic*; it is a sign of a changing attitude, in which men like Doctor Hervey will become at least as important as men like Insull, that such frank testimony is common in the newspapers today.

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THE STATUS OF COLLEGE ENTRANCE TESTS

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better, than others are considerably worse if such conditions can be conceived. This chart pictures the conditions under which the small high schools of the state, and in a slightly less degree, the larger high schools, prepare a finished product which by law must be received by the colleges without question of fitness.

That the selective influences determining who is to go to college are not influences coming out of achievement or standards of preparation is indicated by the college freshman test in English, which has been given to large numbers of Oklahoma college freshmen during the last five years. The reading test, which is a part of this college freshman English test, shows conclusively that the same wide range in reading ability found in all grade levels from the second to the twelfth are carried right on over into the college level.

The accompanying table gives some estimate of the wide range of reading ability of college freshmen in Oklahoma.¹ This table reveals the fact that some freshmen with reading ability as low as fourth grade level present themselves for entrance into Oklahoma colleges from Oklahoma accredited high schools. The table further reveals, in the percentile column, that more than 14 per cent of the college freshmen have reading ability below the seventh grade; that more than thirty five per cent have reading ability below the ninth grade level; and that more than half of the college freshmen in Oklahoma read below the tenth grade level.

¹See *University of Oklahoma Bulletin*, New Series No. 463, "Report of the Oklahoma College Freshman Test—Results," by J. W. Shepherd.