

"Mr. Chips" Revival Urged

By JOHN PAUL DUNCAN

At the conclusion of James Hilton's little drama of the kindly pedagogue we recall one of the younger generation closing the door of the professor's home with an almost cheery, "Goodbye, Mr. Chips." It was a "goodbye" which indicated symbolically the closing of a good man's life. Yet it had ring about it which suggested the opening of a new life—if only as begun again in that of the student.

In moments of memory of our early dreams of what a professor should be like we admit to a certain nostalgia. The dream was so close to the reality which was Mr. Chips. We say we admit to a certain nostalgia because the necessities of "big time" modern education seem so much of the time to have obliterated traces of Mr. Chips.

It is almost as though Mr. Chips had willingly said "goodbye" to a life half-ended, rather than finally ending a life true to his calling, with a fond goodbye from his students.

For Mr. Chips was an institution. He embodied some important intellectual values. He had a very broad culture; perhaps too broad to have achieved a place of much importance in this high-powered age of the intellectual specialist. His culture was spelled with a capital C and entailed some attainment in what we have come to call categorically the humanities and the liberal arts. He could quote poetry. He knew something of art. He appreciated music. He dabbled in a way at literature. Undoubtedly he could converse intelligently on politics, was a bit of a philosopher and knew what went on inside a fishing worm. Poor fellow. Many today would call him an educational tinker, a jack of all trades and a master at none. Still, he did know his Latin and loved it so well he taught it during bombing raids.

He was a very human person, in constant close contacts with his students—his home now and then a rallying place for students. His life was a bit like a guppy's in a fish bowl; it had to be pretty open to view as his house was open to all who cared to prowl in and out for a bit of tea and passing

words on politics, the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the ablative absolute.

But mainly he was a teacher. If the classroom was his realm, and there he was a king, it was to him a kingly business which called for deep interest on his part. He was concerned whether his knowledge entered the heads in the room. And, more than simply entered the heads, remained there to live and grow. In fact, what made him a teacher was that he was concerned for the heads themselves; it mattered much about whether each head understood the overwhelming importance of the fact that *utor, fruor, fungor, potior, vescor* and their compounds take the ablative.

Indeed if the worst came to the worst he was still concerned for those heads whether *utor, fruor*, etc., finally entered them or not. Students were important because they were human beings and human beings were important because they were his fellow men and obviously Mr. Chips loved his fellow man.

A lot of other things we wish we had more space to say in a similar vein about him and about our early dream that being a professor was being like him.

For we worry a good deal whether the profession generally, and especially in the great universities in modern America, has too early retirement.

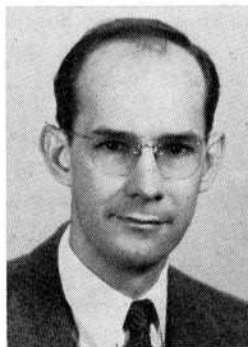
That is: We humbly bow at the shrine of the footnoters; scholarship could not exist for a moment did not some persons push out the horizons of knowledge. We under-

stand and deeply sympathize with that keen devotion to the search for truth—of those who nowadays probably proclaim they do not teach students but a subject. We comprehend the hurried air of business and the tremendous importance of ourselves in helping the business man run main street and our general staffs do direct whole armies in times of war.

We even see some value in having to go through two secretaries to see a department head as one has to do on some large campus, thus raising the professorial prestige to the level of the head of United Steel. Indeed, it may be well if the brain trust is to be left to peruse the riddle of the universe and why the world seems so often headed for Hell, that Sally Freshman shall have to pound in vain on the barred doors of her dear teacher's office while he completes the 1,600th page of a formula proving that when things get too bad, wars do happen. Far be it from us to lend the smallest iota of encouragement to brethren who would belittle knowledge and burn the books (we even keep book advertisements for 10 years back until the fire warden may call any day).

But still, every now and then we do long for Mr. Chips. His open home, his friendly personal interest, his broad culture, his enthusiasm in teachership, his quaintness even—hmm—they made the old boy more than an intellectual robot, a bureaucrat of knowledge.

Of course, he might be criticized for be-



About the Author

Dr. John Paul Duncan, Associate Professor of Government, joined the faculty in 1946. He has done research for the Legislative Council. He will be on leave of absence during 1952-53, having received a handsome fellowship from the Fund for the Advancement of Education. This article first appeared in the Oklahoma Daily, April 18, 1952.

ing a little seedy, or out of date like the country parson, the country lawyer and doctor. But then let's see. Wasn't it once a country lawyer that pulled us through a civil war, and a doctor that managed to—?

Yes, perhaps even Mr. Chips might bring forth some words about living well in a world that seems at times to have lost the art of living at all.

Research

Doctor's Degrees Conferred in June

The degrees of Doctor of Education and Doctor of Philosophy were conferred on the following candidates at the June commencement.

Doctor of Education:

Milton Lowell Bast. Dissertation—"A Comparative Study of the Preparation of Business Teachers With Specific Implications for the State of Oklahoma." Directed by Professor Gerald A. Porter.

Margaret J. Felsing. Dissertation—"Investigation of the Study of Controversial Issues of American Democracy by Pupils in Certain Oklahoma High Schools." Directed by Professor Ellsworth Collings.

Marion Edmund Franklin. Dissertation—"A History of Industrial Education in Oklahoma up to 1950." Directed by Professor F. A. Balyeat.

Ernest Allen Jones. Dissertation—"The Status of Reading Instruction in the Secondary Schools of Oklahoma." Directed by Professor F. A. Balyeat.

John Earl Sands. Dissertation—"A Survey of Facilities and Practices in 112 Teacher Education Institutions Utilizing Programs of Off-Campus Student Teaching." Directed by Professor Ellsworth Collings.

Basel B. Vanschuyver. Dissertation—"Uses of Standardized and Teacher-Made Tests in the Public Schools of the United States." Directed by Professor Henry D. Rinsland.

Guy Newton Waid. Dissertation—"An Opinion Poll of Forty-Four Oklahoma High Schools: Should The High School Help Youth With Certain Common Problems And How Adequate Is the Help Now Given?" Directed by Professor Harlan Bryant.

Doctor of Philosophy:

Carl Dean Douglass. Dissertation—"Studies on the Analysis for and the Preparation of Flavonoid Compounds." Directed by Professor S. H. Wender.

Robert Stevens Harper. Dissertation—"A Conceptual 'Mechanism' Intervening between Stimulus and Response: Based on

In the American Tradition: Gigantic Rushmore Monument

By W. H. SMITH

MOUNT RUSHMORE. By Gilbert C. Fite. Illustrated with photographs. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman. \$3.75.

The idea of carving a gigantic monument in the Black Hills of South Dakota was conceived by Doane Robinson, the state historian, in 1923. The story of Mount Rushmore relates the difficulties encountered by a small but determined group of people in carrying out this most colossal attempt of artistic expression known to man.

After the initial task of arousing public interest and enthusiasm sufficient to get the project under way, its backers were constantly faced, during the long years of its halting progress, with the never-ending task of providing financial backing to keep the work going. Their problems were constantly aggravated by the sculptor, Gutzon Borglum, whose energy, enthusiasm, grandiose plans, and ability to capture the public eye, were equaled only by his inherent inability to work in harmony with anyone, and his mastery of vituperation and abuse which he leveled at his associates.

At the time Borglum was first consulted as to the feasibility of carving a monument in the Black Hills he was in the initial stages of carving the head of Robert E. Lee on Stone Mountain. However, he soon became available for the new project when he was dismissed after reaching the stage of violent disagreement with the administrators of the memorial.

The first actual drilling at Mount Rushmore took place in 1927 and the work was carried on spasmodically until Borglum's

death in 1941. The story, which is as much a tribute to the patience and understanding of Mr. Borglum's administrative associates as it is to the sculptor's drive and ability, is treated with warm and sympathetic interest by Mr. Fite who is himself a native of South Dakota.

The conception of mountain sculpture has always been regarded with mixed emotions by those interested in preserving the natural beauty of our landscapes. The author presents an excellent critical evaluation of the merits of the project in his final chapter. "Borglum's mountain figures are accurate sculptural reproductions. Judged in the tradition of romantic naturalism, they are good heads, powerfully modeled and skillfully executed. As a work of art, however Mount Rushmore has never excited any particular comment in professional circles.—Some critics assert that the main flaw in this gigantic sculpture lies in the weakness of the artistic tradition to which Mr. Borglum belonged.—Most of Borglum's major work was popular because it was naturalistic. The great rank and file could appreciate his efforts because they understood them.—Mount Rushmore was Borglum's conception of art on a grand scale, equal to the other aspects of American greatness. It is a part of the American emphasis upon size and bigness. Colossal sculpture is in the tradition of the skyscraper, the 45,000 ton battleship, the superhighway, the six-engine airplane, the Grand Coulee dam, or the Paul Bunyan legend. To many American citizens, the greatest things in their culture are the largest and the most monumental."

a Study of the Process of Perceiving." Directed by Professor L. B. Hoisington.

Thomas Aylesbury McCoy. Dissertation—"Studies in The Amino Acid Metabolism of *Streptococcus Faecalis* A.T.C.C. No. 6057." Directed by Professor S. H. Wender.

Charles William Oxford. Dissertation—

"Desorption of Hydrocarbons from an Unconsolidated Sand." Directed by Professor R. L. Huntington.

Oscar D. Weaver, Jr. Dissertation—"The Geology of Hughes County, Oklahoma." Directed by Research Professor C. E. Decker.