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The 1957 Frontier Continued

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Poets in this Issue

JOSEPH LANGLAND, Associate Professor of English at the University of Wyoming, has held the Ford Fellowship to New York City and the Amy Lowell Traveling Poetry Scholarship to Europe. His poems have been widely published; his first collection appeared in *Poets of Today, III*. The second is "well along," says Mr. Langland, and "should be out next year." PHILIP LEGLER's poems have appeared in *Poetry, Western Review, and Prairie Schooner*. He is assistant professor of English at Central Missouri State College. Recently returned from a two-year sojourn in England on a Fulbright grant to Cambridge, SYLVIA PLATH teaches freshman English at Smith, her alma mater. She is married to the British poet, Ted Hughes. Instructor in English at Georgia Tech, twenty-eight-year-old LARRY RUBIN has published poems (in some twenty periodicals), articles (in language journals), and a

short story (*New Campus Writing No. 2*). At present he is working on a novel.

MARVIN SOLOMON, who lives and works in Baltimore, says he possesses "No degrees, honors, prizes, identifying marks except an occasional good poem." His "identifying marks" have appeared in such magazines as *Commentary, The New Yorker, The Paris Review, Poetry: Chicago, Shenandoah, and New World Writing*. Novelist, short-story writer and poet, HOLLIS SUMMERS is Visiting McGuffey Professor of Creative Writing at Ohio University. He recently was announced as one of the winners of the Poetry Award for 1957, conducted by the *Saturday Review*.

ROBERT SWARD is engaged in graduate work in the Poetry Workshop at the University of Iowa. Of "Tom Cobb, Cornhead and Me," Mr. Sward states: "The poem, at least to me, is a truth, a joke, and a delight."

THE 1957 FRONTIER

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Albuquerque's new auditorium has been bringing a variety of the nation's leading concert and stage attractions to New Mexico, and audiences have been discriminating and enthusiastic. The initial programs have ranged from ballet to rock-and-roll and have included local talent as well as stars from Broadway,

Hollywood, and Mexico City. Attendance—often augmented by visitors from neighboring New Mexico communities—has been excellent whenever tickets are priced reasonably, but the public has avoided shows that ask for big-city fees. The size of the auditorium and the enthusiasm of New Mexico audiences indicate that Albuquerque will be a very profitable stop for first-quality

attractions if ticket prices and promotion are aimed at the mass market.

Ironically, after Albuquerque had waited more than twenty-five years for a large auditorium, it found itself in possession of three such arena-type structures at the same time. The municipally-owned Civic Auditorium was dedicated in April; the State Fair Coliseum opened in September; and the University of New Mexico's Johnson Gymnasium was completed in November. An over-generous offering of entertainment events in all three structures in November caused the manager of the Civic Auditorium to suggest that some consultation take place to provide the public with a more even flow of entertainment.

Recent federal and state legislation has enabled the State Library Commission to develop three regional libraries to bring good reading to rural areas. Each regional unit has a bookmobile, with capacity for shelving 1,600 books, two professional librarians, a clerk-typist, and a driver-clerk. The Northern unit is now serving the counties of Santa Fe, Torrance, Taos and Rio Arriba. The Southwestern unit is now being organized and will serve Grant, Luna, Hidalgo, Catron, Sierra, Socorro and Dona Ana counties. Book routes are being planned for the Eastern Plains unit that will cover Curry, DeBaca, Guadalupe, Quay and Roosevelt counties. Three other regional libraries are planned for New Mexico. The first five years of the program

will be financed by federal and state matching funds, and it is expected that the states will be able to assume the subsequent program.

ECONOMIC GROWTH. Much of New Mexico's recent cultural progress is based on the new leisure and mobility—plus new resources and talent—brought by economic development. While business conditions are softening generally throughout the nation, New Mexico's economy continues to show encouraging gains. Non-farm employment reached a record high last year. Retail sales rose about ten per cent in 1957, compared to the prosperous year of 1956.

The Four Corners area, still profiting from a natural gas boom, has become an established oil province. More importantly, two major pipelines and a gasoline refinery are being built to provide markets for the new oil discoveries. In the Grants area, which has more than 70 per cent of the nation's known uranium reserves, construction of four uranium concentrating mills and about a dozen major mines is well under way. Several thousand new jobs are thus assured, and these will help ease some of the unemployment caused by reduced copper, lead and zinc mining in the southwestern corner of the state.

The federal government has continued to acquire land for missile-test purposes between El Paso and

Alamogordo; substantial expansions are taking place at Holloman Air Force Base and White Sands Proving Ground; and a number of Atomic Energy Commission contractors and subcontractors have increased their staffs and activities in Albuquerque.

New Mexico made a rapid start on its share of the big interstate highway program, and a profusion of million-dollar construction contracts is materially aiding the economies of nearby communities. Construction of new schools, streets and sewers, and other public buildings and facilities are augmenting a good volume of residential building.

Summer and fall rains finally broke the long drought. The statewide moisture total last year was the highest since 1941. This was good news for the ranchers, but hailstorms and untimely rains contributed to a \$10 million decline in the state's cotton crop. The year 1957 saw improvement in marketing facilities for fruit and vegetable crops, and there was further localization of livestock feeding and marketing.

LITTLE ROCK. The school integration crisis at Little Rock, Ark. aroused much comment throughout the nation, and some of the cleavage between integrationist and segregationist opinion showed up in New Mexico. Street corner and editorial opinion in many parts of the state deplored the use of Arkansas Na-

tional Guard troops to halt the gradual integration plan developed by the Little Rock Board of Education. But newsmen in the southeastern corner of the state reported that public opinion was sharply divided on the Little Rock question, and East Side editorials denounced the President's use of federal troops in the crisis. Most New Mexicans agreed that the Little Rock crisis damaged America's prestige in the eyes of the world.

While minority problems in the U. S. South capture the headlines, New Mexico's Indian and Spanish-speaking groups are making quiet but significant progress toward solving educational and social problems. Indian groups enriched by mounting oil and uranium revenues are showing caution in the expenditure of this sudden wealth. The Navajos set aside a five-million-dollar trust fund for college scholarships and spent other monies on clothing for school children, water development, health and welfare measures, economic development, and other projects that will help the tribe on a long-term basis. The Laguna Indians have built a community hall and are still studying various uses for royalties coming from the Jack Pile uranium mine. The Jicarilla Apaches, profiting from oil and gas leases, are investing in scholarships and economic development.

Indian school children are attending integrated schools in twenty-two New Mexico school districts, and

this trend is benefiting children of all races. More and more Indians are developing work skills both on and off the reservations, and Indian employees have won high praise from Kerr-McGee, Anaconda, and other industrial firms.

Spanish-American opinion, voiced at the national convention of the American G. I. Forum in Albuquerque last summer, reaffirmed the group's readiness to play a larger role in American life. Plans were made to extend the Forum's active education and integration programs to prepare young Americans of Hispanic descent for the full obligations and privileges of citizenship.

HEALTH. New Mexico had its share of Asiatic Flu victims, but vaccination programs and careful treatment substantially reduced the usual consequences of an epidemic. The whole episode illustrated what can be accomplished when the public is aroused and anxious enough to provide public health officers and private physicians with needed funds and co-operation. The same zeal seems to be less intense in such fields as heart disease and mental health, possibly because the dangers seem more remote.

One benefit arising from the flu scare was the establishment of new diagnostic facilities at the State Health Department's public health laboratory in Albuquerque. The new

service will be useful in detecting a wide variety of diseases ranging from polio to Rocky Mountain spotted fever.

New Mexico opened a new public health laboratory at Clovis recently and is starting another one at Farmington. Progress was noted in dental research, hospital building, mental health, and sewage treatment, but lack of funds seems to be handicapping rehabilitation of mental patients, care of the aged, and other needed programs.

SOCIAL WELFARE. Rapid economic changes and population shifts create social problems, too. Paradoxically, when New Mexico's payrolls reached an all-time high in 1957, unemployment and welfare figures marched higher, too. Juvenile crime, broken homes, and rising automobile accidents captured many headlines. Highway fatalities reached 427 in New Mexico in 1957.

Public concern was reflected in the record attendance of social workers, public officials, business representatives, club women, and legislators at the annual sessions of the New Mexico Conference of Social Welfare. Advances in the fields of casework, health, recreation, probation, and community planning were encouraging, but Dr. Richard Poston, director of the department of community development at Southern Illinois University, observed: "Your

efforts to cope with the situation have been nothing less than heroic . . . [but] you have been so pressed by the ever-increasing need to repair the wrecks that you have had neither the time nor the resources to prevent them from happening. . . .

"If we are going to meet the needs of our people . . . we are going to have to face the task of changing not only disorganized individuals, but of changing disorganized communities that produce them."

SPUTNIK. A great deal of public complacency about America's technological and scientific superiority was shattered when Russia launched the two artificial satellites with unexpected accuracy and power. Least surprised were the engineers and scientists of New Mexico who have been working on many of the same problems. They took advantage of the new climate of opinion to urge improvements in educational programs and ask for more freedom of initiative for scientists.

Much of the public outcry about America's educational system was undoubtedly a form of scapegoating. But New Mexico educators took up the challenge and stepped up serious consideration of programs to stimulate an interest in science at an early age, to give extra work to bright students, to base graduation on competencies achieved instead of time served, and to ask for more college scholarships.

MANY MOONS. The appearance of new moons in the sky made us appreciate the virtues of our old, faithful, one-syllable Moon at last. True, it was usually pale and sickly, and it had the odd habit of fading away and then coming back as big as ever, just like the landlord on rent day. It was quite pitted and scuffed in appearance, possibly because it had been used and abused by generations of minor poets. But it served us well enough when we needed it for harvest festivals, eclipses, canoe rides, and other important matters.

Now at last, we appreciate its passive virtues. When it shines calmly through the cottonwoods into the patio, we do not feel it will either beep or peep at us. We do not have to reach for the newspaper each day to see how many teen-times a day it is circling around us. No one has ever been afraid—recently, at least—that it might crash back to Earth, or burn up, or try any other Communist trick.

We are basically one-moon people who are trying to cope with a multi-moon world. Sometimes we can't help being nostalgic about the past and worried about the future. Our Space men promise that we will soon be able to hit the Moon with a splotch of dye. This seems to be an unfriendly beginning for our Conquest of Space. Maybe we haven't learned much since the days when we approached the Western frontier with a rifle.