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THE FAULKNER NEWSLETTER

& Yoknapatawpha Review

Vol. 1, No. 3

July - September, 1981

Helen: A Courtship Joins Mayday In Facsimile and Trade Editions

By WILLIAM BOOZER

"Don't buy me anything, just make me something."

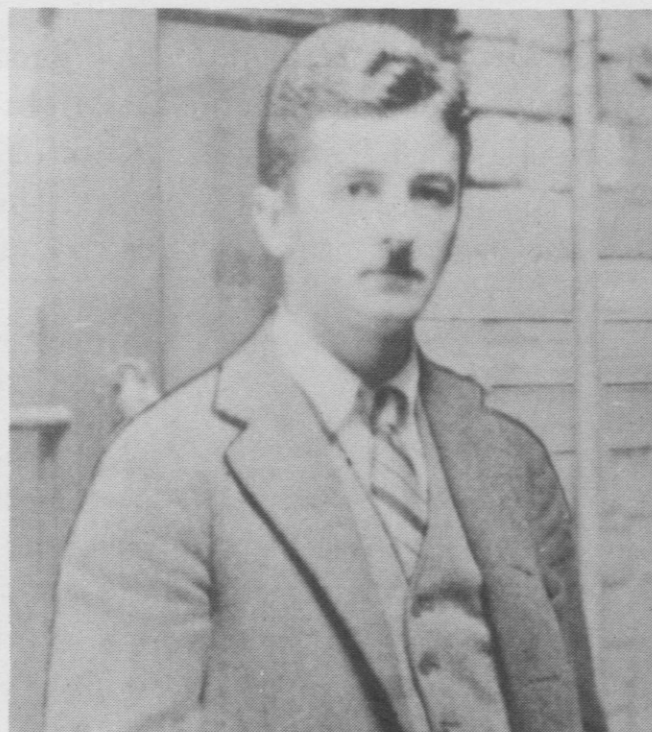
That was Faulkner's request of family at Christmas and on his birthdays. His niece Dean Faulkner Wells remembers as a child giving him things like one-half of one argyle sock. Grown older, she gave him a hand-hooked red wool rug which he kept by his bed until he died.

Faulkner liked to give as well as receive homemade gifts. And nothing he gave family and friends could now be finer than the rare gift volumes he wrote, hand-lettered and bound himself, decorating some of them with his own illustrations. The artist in Faulkner also comes into play in these little handwritten manuscripts in his caterpillar calligraphy, reversing "s" and "n," using "v" for "u," and his "g" and "q" the same minuscule scratch.

Choice among the gift volumes are the two he did for Helen Baird. One is *Mayday*, the allegory of a young knight in search of his true love, Death, published in 125 numbered facsimile copies by Carvel Collins and the University of Notre Dame Press in 1977, and in January last year in a trade edition. The other is *Helen: A Courtship*, 15 love sonnets and an introductory poem.

A boxed facsimile edition of the 18-page *Helen* is being published in 150 numbered copies in September by Tulane University

(Continued Page 4)



FAULKNER and Helen Baird when they knew each other in the mid-1920's.



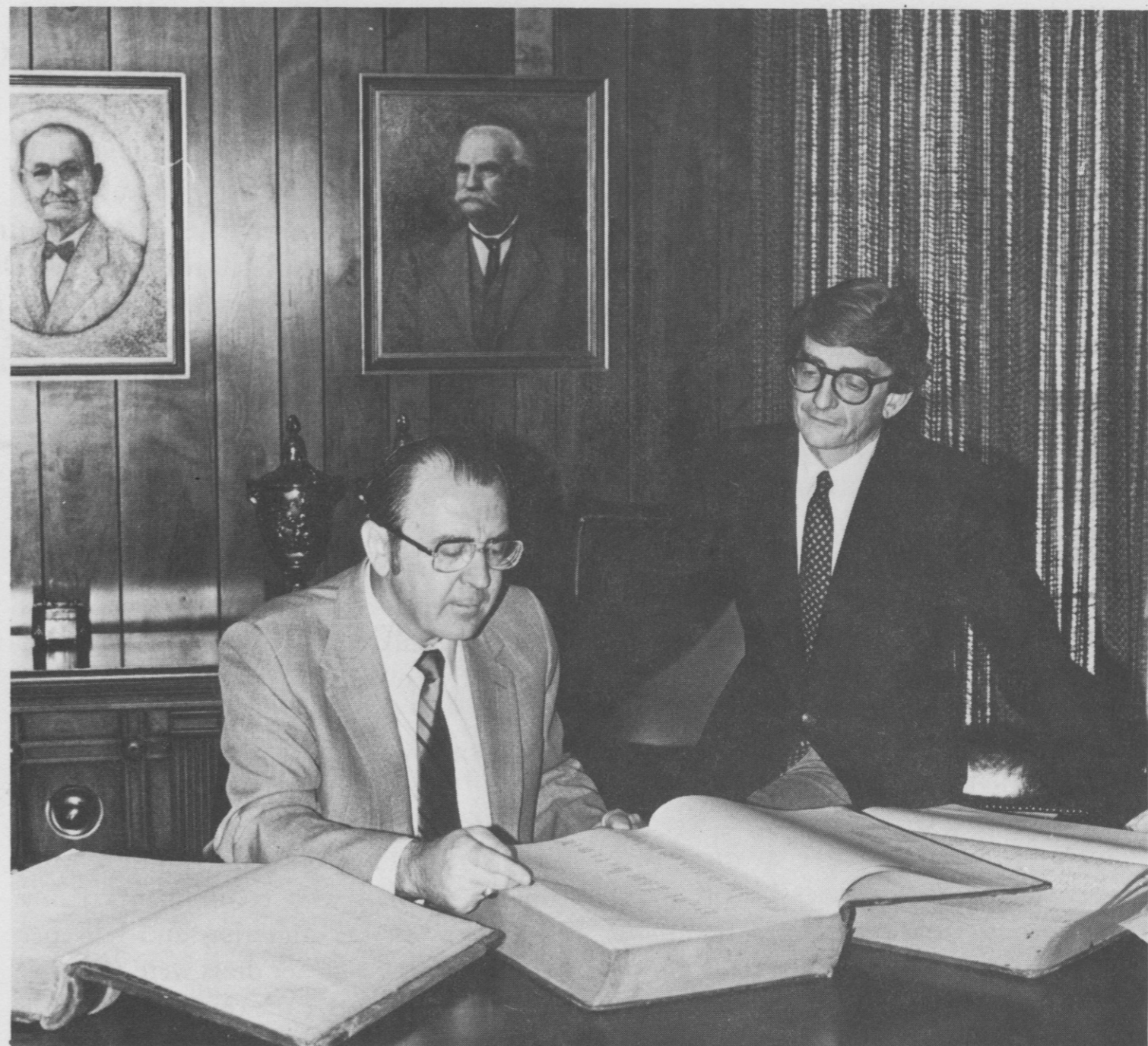
XV

Knew I love once? Was it love or grief
This young body by where I had lain?
And my heart, this single stubborn leaf
That will not die, though root and branch be slain?

O mother Gleep, when one by one these years
Bell their bitter note, and die away
Down Time's slow evening, passionless as tears
When sorrow long has ebbed and grief is gray;

Though warm in dark between the breasts of Death,
That other breast forgot where I did lie,
And from the stalk are stripped the leaves of breath,
There's yet one stubborn leaf that will not die
But restless in the wild and bitter earth,
Gains with each dawn a death, with dusk a birth.

PARIS - SEPTEMBER - 1925



(Photo by Bill Connell.)

EXAMINING LEDGERS of the First National Bank of Oxford, Miss., in which Faulkner posted debits and credits in ink in 1918 are John Black (left), president, and Thomas E. Lamar, assistant vice president. The ledgers also contain entries, not in Faulkner's hand, on a "Bundren" and "Yoknapatawpha Drainage District." On the wall are portraits of Joe Parks (left) and "Young Colonel" J.W.T. Falkner, founders of the bank.

Debits and Credits in Faulkner's Hand Found in Old Bank Ledgers

By THOMAS E. LAMAR

In April of this year, the First National Bank of Oxford, Miss., assigned a task force to destroy outdated records stacked away over the years in the bank's upstairs storage rooms. Records had been retained in keeping with federal statutory requirements since the opening of the bank in October, 1910. It was to be a mountainous undertaking involving the removal of elephantine volumes, stacks of ledgers, and numerous cardboard retention cartons—all representing the wide array of almost 71 years of banking and business activity in Oxford. Nevertheless, it would be burned to make way for renovation, progress, and more records.

For some reason on that first day of cleanup, I left for lunch by the back door of the bank—a reversal of my usual front entrance route. The bank auditor had just begun directing the removal of the oldest and heaviest leatherbound ledgers containing the earliest hand-posted entries of the bank's business.

Knowing that William Faulkner had worked as a bookkeeper for his grandfather, J.W.T. Falkner, the "Young Colonel" who founded our bank, I had frequently inquired of older personnel as to the nature and tenure of his bank work. No one could recall anything substantial.

As the later records had been stored in rows in front of the older ones, I had never been able to locate the original ledgers in the storage rooms. My theory had been that Faulkner had been employed as an apprentice in the bookkeeping department. As the bank's entire staff numbered only five in those days, certainly Faulkner must have been assigned to the less glamorous position as posting bookkeeper. If so, the ledgers before me, doomed for incineration, must contain his own handwritten entries.

We saved them. The bank president agreed to give me time to examine the volumes to search for hand-posted entries by Faulkner, if any existed. It proved to be an interesting treasure hunt.

I scanned ledger after ledger dating from 1910 through 1916. Joseph Blotner, Faulkner's biographer, gives the year 1916 as the time of Faulkner's banking career. I was dismayed to find no trace of his readily identifiable hand.

After several days of examining the cumbersome, dusty volumes containing beautifully inked names, places and numbers in Victorian script, I was exhausted with the whole affair. At this point, I returned all the volumes upstairs from my

(Continued Page 3)

Collector Finds Consolation Stone

By JACK EWING

Faulkner collectors who despair at the cost of a first edition of *The Marble Faun* usually take some consolation in the fact that the *Faun* does not mark the first appearance of Faulkner's name in print.

Though a collection might lack the cornerstone which the slim 1924 volume represents, the collector may assemble a few smaller, earlier "consolation stones" to fill the gap, and without selling a family member to get them. Unfortunately, pre-1924 "stones" are not much more abundant, a few issues of *The Double Dealer*, *The New Republic* of Aug. 6, 1919 and some Ole Miss yearbooks being about the extent of it. One earlier and more abundant of these pre-1924 stones is an unknown or forgotten or overlooked item dating back to 1911.

In the summer of 1911 the 13-year old Faulkner (as he then spelled his name) was being encouraged by his mother to develop his artistic ability. It was, then, perhaps with more than casual interest that on a hot Mississippi afternoon he picked up a copy of the June issue of *St. Nicholas* magazine. It contained an illustrated five page article titled "Model Aeroplanes of 1911," an article that possibly nurtured Faulkner's interest in flight, and another article on the boyhood of King George V.

But even more attractive to the novice artist were the *St. Nicholas* League pages where readers were encouraged to submit original poems, short prose pieces, photos or drawings. The June issue announced the topic for the next drawing contest. Entries were to be "in India ink, very black writing-ink or wash." The topic: "A Visitor" or "Visiting" suitable for a heading for the November issue's League pages. The deadline for entries was July 10, with winners to be announced in the November issue.

Did Faulkner enter the contest? Yes. The confirmation is on page 91 of the November 1911 issue of *St. Nicholas*. Near the bottom of the sixth column, almost indistinguishable from the hundreds of other entries, is the name "William Faulkner." It appears in the group two category, a list of contestants whose entries did not win but who, because of the merit of their entry, did deserve the encouragement of seeing their name in print.

The November 1911 *St. Nicholas* is of more than passing value to the Faulkner collector as it represents perhaps the only national appearance of the name spelled 'Falkner'. Discounting the "regional" Ole Miss yearbooks and beginning with the *New Republic*, the name was "Faulkner".

To be sure, *St. Nicholas* is not *The Marble Faun*, but Faulkner's name in the Nov. 11 issue predates *Faun* by 13 years, is much less scarce and certainly commands a more modest price. It is the most widely circulated and universally overlooked of all the pre-*Faun* Faulkner. It is a "consolation stone," this appearance in a national magazine of the name of a boy who entered a contest in the summer of his 13th year and whose work entitled him to "encouragement."

(Jack Ewing has been teaching high school English at Oakdale, Penn. for 15 years and collecting Faulkner almost that long.)

"Have Cold" . . . "Send Black-leg"

Dear Mac-

Am taking cold, throat is rough, some headache. I want a good cold remedy or tablet. Is there one with, I think, coramine, or will you recommend one and let the bearer have it.

Bill Faulkner

Mac-

Please let bearer have

Black-leg vaccine for calves

Bill Faulkner

THESE NOTES from Faulkner to his longtime pharmacist friend William McNeil Reed are in the files of Oxford's Gathright-Reed Drug Co. Aston Holley, partner in Gathright-Reed, says Faulkner probably meant to ask for Copavin, which requires a prescription, and that Mr. Mac "no doubt sent him some over-the-counter medication" instead. The note from farmer Faulkner at bottom reads "Mac-Please let bearer have Black-leg vaccine for calves."

William Who? Read These and Find Out

The count—or one count—of the novels in which Faulkner appears as a character or is named or otherwise referred to has grown to six.

Faulkner was the first to use Faulkner, putting himself on that outing on Lake Ponchartrain in *Mosquitoes* (pp. 144-145). He is a shabbily-dressed "funny" little sunburned man who compliments Jenny Steinbauer on her digestion and tells her that if the straps of her dress were to break she would "devastate the country."

And now comes Stuart Kaminsky's Toby Peters mystery, *Never Cross a Vampire*. A Hollywood screenwriter named William Faulkner is arrested on a charge of murdering a literary agent, and Toby's job, at which (of course) he succeeds, is to clear Faulkner's name. Enough said.

Shelby Foote has not drawn on Faulkner as a character, but has dropped his name twice in that many novels. On page 241 of *Love in a Dry Season* (1951), Amanda Barcroft reads Faulkner and Balzac and James and others after having raced through Thackeray and Dickens. And on page 163 of *September September* (1977), Foote gives us four paragraphs on Faulkner. Podjo and Rufus are reading *The Commercial Appeal* during a lull in their dirty business in Memphis when Rufus, who "wasn't much (Reeny says) for reading the papers" but who "liked to talk about what he was reading" when he did, announces to Podjo that "Faulkner's sixty today."

Harry Crews draws on Faulkner with past tense use of a four letter word. It is on page 190 of *Karate Is a Thing of the Spirit* (1971). And in Dick Dabney's *The Honor System* (1976) Patrick Henry Roosevelt is in Charlottesville, Va. wooing Phoebe and attending "a conference of Southern writers at the University of Virginia"; we are told on page 14 that he had interviewed Ellen Glasgow and "a little fellow from Mississippi."

Faulkner takes his lumps.

In *Mosquitoes*, Jenny cannot remember, then does recall, his name, and Pat Robyn has "never heard of him."

In *September September*, Podjo, hearing that it is Faulkner's birthday, asks "Who's that?" While Rufus expounds on how Faulkner would "speak to you or he

Letters

I have just finished reading the first issue of *The Faulkner Newsletter* and want to say how much I enjoyed it. The article about the O.B. Emerson collection should be particularly interesting to students of Faulkner. This and other articles should be made available not only to literary scholars but to Faulkner's wide range of admirers.

James F. Kilroy

Chairman, Department of English
Vanderbilt University

What a splendid breakthrough, THE FAULKNER NEWSLETTER! Congratulations on bringing this sort of thing together . . . I particularly like the clarity and attractive, spacious layout of your edition . . . Kudos for this achievement!

Hal Richardson

University of Louisville
Chairman, the Jesse Stuart Foundation

To be honest. . . I had about come to the opinion that I did not want to see any more newsletters. . . But your first issue makes me eat my words. . . It is especially good too, that the *Newsletter* is copiously illustrated; I only hope that there will be enough of a flurry of subscriptions to justify continuing that expensive practice. The one—perhaps the only—area of Faulkner scholarship in which there is a dearth is what may be called the iconography of [Faulkner's] works. . . Congratulations!

Patrick G. Hogan Jr.

University of Houston

wouldn't, depending on how he felt that day," calling up the "Count No-Count" moniker, Reeny remembers having read *Sanctuary*, or part of it, while in school "when people were saying how dirty it was. I didn't think it was all that dirty—or all that understandable either, far as that goes."

And in *The Honor System*, Patrick Henry Roosevelt "hadn't gotten" the name of the little fellow from Mississippi.

Well, everyone has to be some place doing something. Some are just better known than others, doing things more memorable than "liar by profession" (Faulkner tells Jenny) or being uppity on the streets of home. Nobody's perfect.

—WB

THE FAULKNER NEWSLETTER
& Yoknapatawpha Review

Lawrence Wells

Publisher

William Boozer

Editor

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Vol. 1, No. 3

July-Sept., 1981

Puzzling Prose From Stone's Fire

Should any readers of *The Faulkner Newsletter* have information about the following short fiction, I would be grateful for their passing it along.

Most of the few hundred sheets of Faulkner's writing which I salvaged from the debris left from the burning of Phil Stone's Oxford house were poems, many of which are now owned by the University of Texas and by L.D. Brodsky. But among the poems were a few especially charred sheets of prose fiction. They were found in a group between sheets of Faulkner's "Lilacs" poem and sheets of other poetry identifiable as by Faulkner, but the badly burned typed sheets of prose bear no visible corrections in Faulkner's hand. The chief reason for this query is the absence of any proof whatever that these short works of fiction were written by Faulkner.

One story, which deals with farming in the South, includes as character names "Miss Martha," "Mrs. Simpson," and "Mr. Simpson." Another story—or possibly the same one—has a title which ends in the word "Unshod." Another story, set in a hospital at Christmas, seems to have as a central character "Sybil," whose last name could be "Goodrun" and whose father is in the hospital. Other characters in this story are "Mrs. Morton," "Clyde," and "Claude."

Carvel Collins

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Banker Faulkner in Holograph . . .

(From Page One)

main floor office. I was sitting on a chair up there in dim light when recollections by my father, William T. Lamar, that Faulkner had worked at the bank as a bookkeeper stirred me to keep looking. I went through the ledgers for 1917. Nothing. Hours later, I opened 1918. There, undeniably, in the startlingly fresh, delicate, vertical, half-written and half-printed attitude which only his hand expressed, page after page from January through March solidly bore postings in Faulkner's hand. I felt like the British archaeologist peering for the first time through the crack into Tutankhamun's tomb.

essentially were to post demand debits and demand credits—checks drawn or deposits made by bank customers. These were posted in the large cash books on a daily basis. The work gravitated to his station at the posting desk from the teller window, and he entered the same transactions under that day's date in three columns, giving the customer's name, to whom payable, and the amount. Credits, or deposits, were handled similarly but were in two-column entries, recording the name of the customer and the amount of the deposit. Totals were drawn at the close of posting both pages. Simple enough, but necessary in the bank's early bookkeeping. But how important or how best related to Faulkner, the later novelist?

Several Oxford authorities concurred that these pages were definitely holographed by Faulkner. Agreeing were Howard G. Duvall Jr., an Oxford clothier and Faulkner collector, Dr. James W. Webb, curator of Rowan Oak and chairman emeritus of the University of Mississippi Department of English, and Dr. Thomas Verich, Ole Miss archivist and curator of the Mississippi Collection. Later, L.D. Brodsky, industrialist and eminent Faulkner collector, Lawrence Wells, owner of Yoknapatawpha Press and publisher of *The Faulkner Newsletter*, and William Boozar, *FN* editor, affirmed earlier assumptions about the entries. The bank's board of directors agreed to donate the early ledgers to the Ole Miss archives to be placed with the University's Faulkner Collection.

"In addition to their interest as graphic documentation per se of Faulkner's employment, the cash books are valuable as primary biblio-biographical sources for Faulkner's life and work," Verich reports. "They bear centrally on the people and places which later emerge in Faulkner's literary creations and offer new evidence fixing Faulkner's personal chronology. . . Scholars will find these records rich in Faulkner literary associations both in terms of characters. . . and of place. . . The materials included here not in Faulkner's hand also are valuable resources for documenting the socio-economic interactions at play in the small town which became Faulkner's fictional Jefferson."

(Thomas E. Lamar is assistant vice president of First National Bank of Oxford.)

Verich, in a letter to the bank's directors, relates the importance of the ledgers. "These unique materials. . . document a little known period in the working life of William Faulkner," he states. "Documentation for Faulkner's work experience, apart from his principal occupation as a writer, is excessively rare and has never been offered in the market nor is present in any of the large institutional collections of Faulkneriana at the University of Virginia and the Humanities Research Center at the University of Texas."

Apparently, Faulkner's grandfather thought a banking career would be ideal for his oldest grandson—someone to hand the bank to at his retirement. Faulkner's duties

Editor's Note: Two bank ledgers with Faulkner's entries, covering January-March, 1918, were found by Lamar, and these, along with 23 other ledgers, have been appraised at \$19,500. Lamar believes he was able to save all ledgers with Faulkner's inked entries. But with another source in Oxford "confident" that one or more ledgers with Faulkner postings found their way to the incinerator, Faulkner's complete employment history at the bank might still be in doubt. In any event, we know when he left the bank. According to the ledgers, his last day as a banker was March 30, 1918. On that date, Faulkner posted checks in amounts of \$5, \$6.40, \$4 and \$7 by J.M. Falkner, posted his own deposit in the amount of \$30, a \$3 check against his account (WM Falkner to C.H. Roach,) cashed checks for \$24.05 and \$1, and left town. Joseph Blotner in *Faulkner: A Biography* records the date of the marriage of Estelle Oldham to Cornell Franklin as April 18, 1918. In early April, Blotner reports, Faulkner rode with family members to Memphis, caught a train for New Haven to move in with Phil Stone at Yale, and on April 10 was posting ledgers at the Winchester Repeating Arms Co. Those March 30 final Faulkner bank ledger entries prompt interesting speculation that, with his sweetheart about to marry another man, 20-year-old William Faulkner was in a hurry to depart Oxford. The demand debits and credits in Faulkner's hand end at some point during that working day, with the remainder of the day's business recorded in someone else's handwriting.

Mar 15

*W T Lamar
Gibson
Mrs J A Cook
S W Jones
Wades
H G Niedman
Mr Woodwin & Sons
Gibson
Fullerby
Mr Salvoce
Cobbini*

130
3495
30
925
65
100
136521
5647
7
170588
6955

AS A BOOKKEEPER at the First National Bank of Oxford, William Faulkner made an entry on March 15, 1918, for his personal account, a deposit of \$5 (above). The old bank ledgers also contain many entries, in another hand, of checks drawn on an account called the Yoknapatawpha Drainage District (below). (Photo by Bill Connell.)

*The Leader
Audrey Bederbaugh National Clock + S
Yoknapatawpha Drainage Dist B 7 Murray
A C Neill Smith + Scott Tools
J B Roach The Crebbin Investment
Cooperative Stores Inc. Cooperative Stores
Jula Mercantile Co Mrs. Queenswar
C H Roach J W Jeter, Cashier
Branthill Bros 74 Ste. Midway Co
H R Boley Jobbie Strauther*

Abish Wins First PEN/Faulkner Award

The first PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction has gone to Walter Abish for his novel "How German Is It," from New Directions.

The novel was cited for its coolly controlled irony, cutting satire, and as a "remarkably original, brilliantly executed work." The award carries a \$2,000 cash prize.

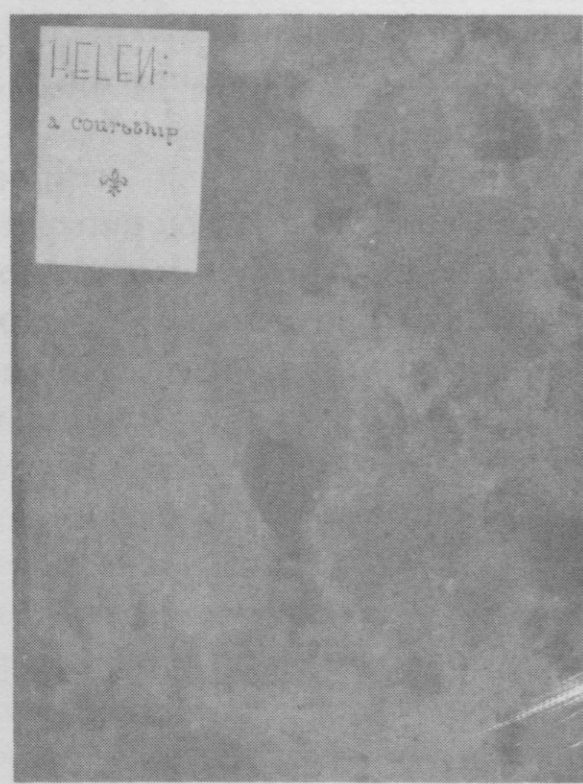
Abish was born in Vienna and has lived in Shanghai and Israel. He became an American citizen in 1960 and makes his home in New York, where he lectures at Columbia University.

For the Collector Who Has (Almost) Everything

Faulkner prices are soaring, someone said. Here is an entry in a late 1980 "Winterize Your Eyes" listing (Catalogue 3) from Roger Richards Books, New York:

23. For the Faulkner collector who has everything. A pristine dust jacket, never folded, to INTRUDER IN THE DUST. (1948). Apparently sent as an extra, this one has never been used. With jacket design by the artist, E. McKnight Kauffer, and photo of Faulkner, it's suitable for framing. 150.00.

William Faulkner HELEN: A COURTSHIP



Front cover of Faulkner's gift volume for Helen Baird

Yoknapatawpha Press is pleased to announce the joint publication, with Tulane University, of *Helen: A Courtship*.

When he was 29 and living on the Mississippi Gulf Coast in 1926, William Faulkner made a gift of a slim, hand-lettered volume of sixteen poems for Helen Baird. Seven of these sixteen poems are now being published for the first time.

The 150 facsimiles have been printed to exacting standards by Stein Printing Company of Atlanta, which also produced facsimiles of Faulkner's *Marionettes* and *Mayday*.

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HELEN: A COURTSHIP AND MISSISSIPPI POEMS

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- And accompanying introductions by Carvel Collins and Joseph Blotner
- \$10.95, plus \$1.50 postage
- Publication date: September, 1981
- ISBN 0-916242-13-1

A Checklist

Two Faulkners Headline Current Miscellany List

Two Faulkners—the author and his niece, Dean Faulkner Wells—head this miscellany of current and recent books and reviews. Other items readers will find of interest include the title novella of Alan Cheuse's new book, which reinvents Caddy Compson and, taking some hints from Faulkner's Appendix in the Viking *Portable Faulkner*, follows her into later years. Our Checklist No. 3:

Boozer, William. "A Season For Faulkner," *Southern World* May/June 1981, p. 93. Review of *William Faulkner: His Life and Work*, by David Minter, and *The Ghosts of Rowan Oak: William Faulkner's Ghost Stories for Children*, recounted by Dean Faulkner Wells.

_____. "Faulkner On Faulkner A Fascinating Study," *The Nashville Banner*, March 14, 1981, A-5. Review of *Sanctuary: The Original Text*, by William Faulkner, edited with Afterword and Notes by Noel Polk.

_____. "'Sanctuary': A Twice-Told Tale," *The Commercial Appeal*, April 5, 1981, G-6. Review of *Sanctuary: The Original Text*.

Cheuse, Alan. *Candace & Other Stories*, Cambridge: Applewood Press, 1980, 100 pp., wrappers, \$4.50.

Faulkner, William. *Sanctuary: The Original Text*. Edited, with an Afterword and Notes, by Noel Polk. New York: Random House, 311 pp., \$14.95. Published February 25, 1981.

_____. "The Werewolf." *The Paris Review*, 1981, 79, 25th anniversary double issue. From *The Ghosts of Rowan Oak: William Faulkner's Ghost Stories for Children*, recounted by Dean Faulkner Wells.

Mitgang, Herbert. "Found: A Long-Lost Faulkner Manuscript," *The New York Times*, May 14, 1981, 23. Reports on acquisition by the Berg Collection at New York Public Library of the manuscript of *Soldiers' Pay* and, more recently, four early Faulkner letters. The manuscript was purchased several years ago for \$12,500

The Courthouse



LAFAYETTE COUNTY, Miss. Courthouse and Confederate monument are framed in this 1956 photo by William Boozer, *FN* editor, by wrought iron railing on a second floor landing at Blaylock's Drug Store at the southwest corner of the Oxford Square. The wrought iron and the landing have long since been stripped away.

from a roommate of Faulkner's in the New Orleans days, through Robert A. Wilson of Phoenix Bookshop in New York. The four letters went to Berg from Evelyn Harter Glick, who from 1929 to 1937 worked in design and production for three of Faulkner's publishers, Cape & Smith, Smith & Haas and Random House.

Morris, Willie. "Coming on Back," *Life*, June 1981, pp. 108-110, 113-114, 116, 123. References to Faulkner in article about returning to Mississippi as writer-in-residence at Ole Miss after 20 years in the North, from *Terrains of the Heart and Other Essays on Home*, to be published in September by Yoknapatawpha Press.

Notes on Mississippi Writers, Vol. XIII, No. 1, 1981, Department of English, University of Southern Mississippi. Includes "A Chronology of Events in Faulkner's *Flags in the Dust*," by George F. Hayhoe, and "Faulkner's Dickensian Humor in *The Sound and the Fury*," by Merrit Mosely.

Wells, Dean Faulkner. "William Faulkner's Judith," *Ladies' Home Journal*, June 1981, pp. 72-73, 102-103, 105-106, 108. Illustrated by Tom Bookwalter. From *The Ghosts of Rowan Oak: William Faulkner's Ghost Stories for Children*.

Helen: A Courtship . . .

(From Page One)

and Yoknapatawpha Press. Accompanying it is an essay by Carvel Collins, "Biographical Background for Faulkner's *Helen*." Published at the same time will be a trade edition combining *Helen* and *Mississippi Poems* and including Faulkner's essay "Verse, Old and Nascent: A Pilgrimage," with Collins' introduction to *Helen* and Joseph Blotner's to *Mississippi Poems*.

The latter, a sheaf of 12 poems Faulkner gave to Oxford friend Myrtle Ramey and now owned by Louis Daniel Brodsky, was published along with "Verse, Old and Nascent" by Yoknapatawpha Press in December 1979 with an Afterword by Brodsky.

The deluxe edition of *Helen* is \$155. The trade edition is \$10.95. They are printed by Atlanta's Stein Printing Co., which produced a facsimile of Faulkner's *Marionettes* for Yoknapatawpha Press and the *Mayday* facsimile for NDP.

Faulkner's unmet love for Helen Baird is long ago imbedded in Faulkner lore. Collins, with sources over the years unavailable to others, has given us the definitive account of their relationship and of the histories of *Mayday* and *Helen*, correcting earlier information and providing new material. His essay accompanying *Helen* gives valuable further assessment of Faulkner's poetry, which critics agree is uneven but marked with brilliant flashes.

Helen Baird came from a prominent Nashville family. She was 10 years old when her father, James H. Baird, was killed in 1915 when struck by a train in Nashville. He was president and editor of *The Southern Lumberman*, a trade bible of the industry then and now. At the time of his death, the family was completing a 45-room mansion with wine cellar across Granny White Pike from Nashville's David Lipscomb College.

Faulkner and Helen knew each other in New Orleans and in Pascagoula, Miss. She was partially the model for Myrtle Monson in Faulkner's unfinished novel, *Elmer*, and for Patricia Robyn in *Mosquitoes* and Charlotte Rittenmeyer in *The Wild Palms*.

Faulkner was 27 and Helen 20 when they met in 1925. Faulkner would write that her name "is like a little golden bell hung in my heart." He asked her to marry him, but in 1927 she married Guy Lyman of New Orleans.

It was years later that William Bell Wisdom, a New Orleans advertising executive and collector, acquired *Mayday* and *Helen* from Mrs. Lyman. Wisdom gave Collins full private access to the little books for two decades before presenting them to Tulane in 1972. Wisdom died in 1977, the year after they were made available at Tulane for the first time for research by others.

The two books have been appraised at \$150,000. A higher appraisal of the two would go to *Mayday* because of its three full-page surreal watercolors, making it the only known Faulkner title surviving in good condition which contains illustrations in color. *Mayday*—which also has two black-ink drawings as endpapers, five emblazoned color initials at beginnings of chapters, and a black-ink endpiece design—is bound in marbled blue, green and yellow boards. *Helen*, which is not illustrated, has marbled blue, red, purple, gold and orange boards. Like its companion, *Helen* has a hand-lettered front cover label pasted down. Each of the books is 12mo.

The 16 poems in *Helen*, 10 of them never before fully published outside the single volume gift "edition," are dated from Pascagoula, Majorca, Genoa, Pavia, Lago Maggiore and Paris in June, July, August and September 1925. Faulkner made the booklet in Oxford, Collins reports, dating it "Oxford—Mississippi—June 1926." Collins corrects earlier accounts of Faulkner having given it to Helen Baird while on the Mississippi Gulf Coast in the summer of 1926. "He didn't give it to her, I think, until much later, perhaps not until 1927," Collins tell us. "Contrary to published biographies, Helen was not at Pascagoula in the summer of 1926."

Five of the six fully published sonnets appear in *A Green Bough* (1933). The sixth was published as "The Faun," dedicated to "H.L." (Harold Levy), in *The Double Dealer* Vol. VII (April 1925) along with the essay "Verse"—both of which are reprinted by Collins in *William Faulkner: Early Prose and Poetry*. In addition to the six poems that have had prior publication, the last stanza of another (*Helen* XIV) appeared as XXIII in *A Green Bough*, part of one line of *Helen* X was included in XL in *A Green Bough*, and a holograph partial version of *Helen* XIII is owned by New York book dealer and collector Robert A. Wilson and is pictured in Wilson's *Modern Book Collecting*, published last year by Alfred A. Knopf.

The *Helen* poems are songs laced with passion and corollary fires of unrequited love. He ends them with three questions and a lament which became, with variations and the omission of four lines, XXXIII in *A Green Bough*. (See page one.) Faulkner, we now see, was not the "failed" poet he claimed to have been.

Quotable Quote

"If a writer has to rob his mother, he will not hesitate; the 'Ode on a Grecian Urn' is worth any number of old ladies."

—William Faulkner.

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