



by Vulpius

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Kalamazoo College Cauldron

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To a New York Aristocrat in Mink  
Untitled  
Eyes in the Mirror  
Untitled  
Untitled  
Untitled  
A Letter to Harry  
I Took Some Time to Walk a Mile Alone  
Flight  
Poem to Two Karens  
The Ship of Fools  
Untitled  
Sitting on the Corner of an Orange

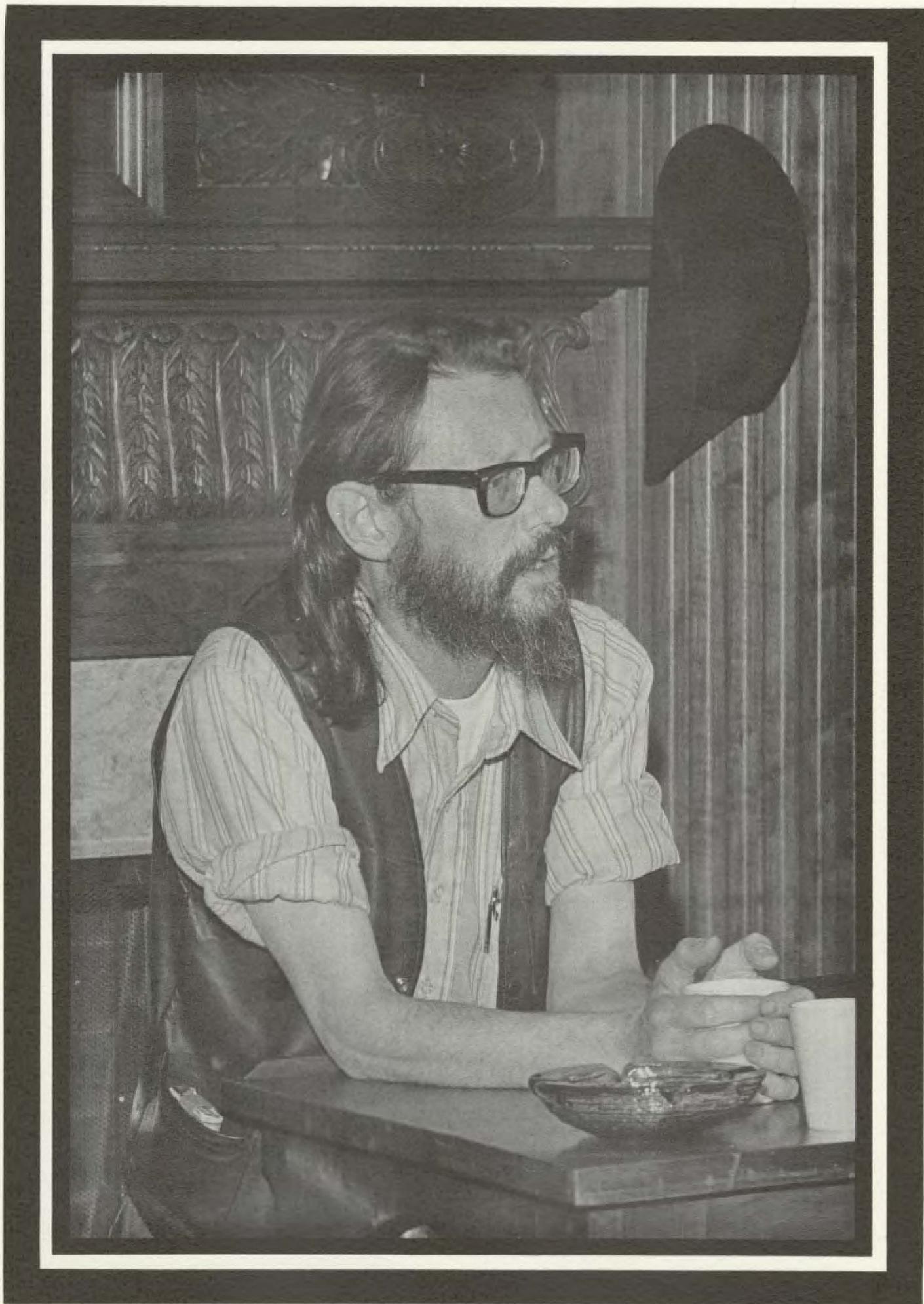
## *prose*

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Roland Grybauskas  
Bruce White

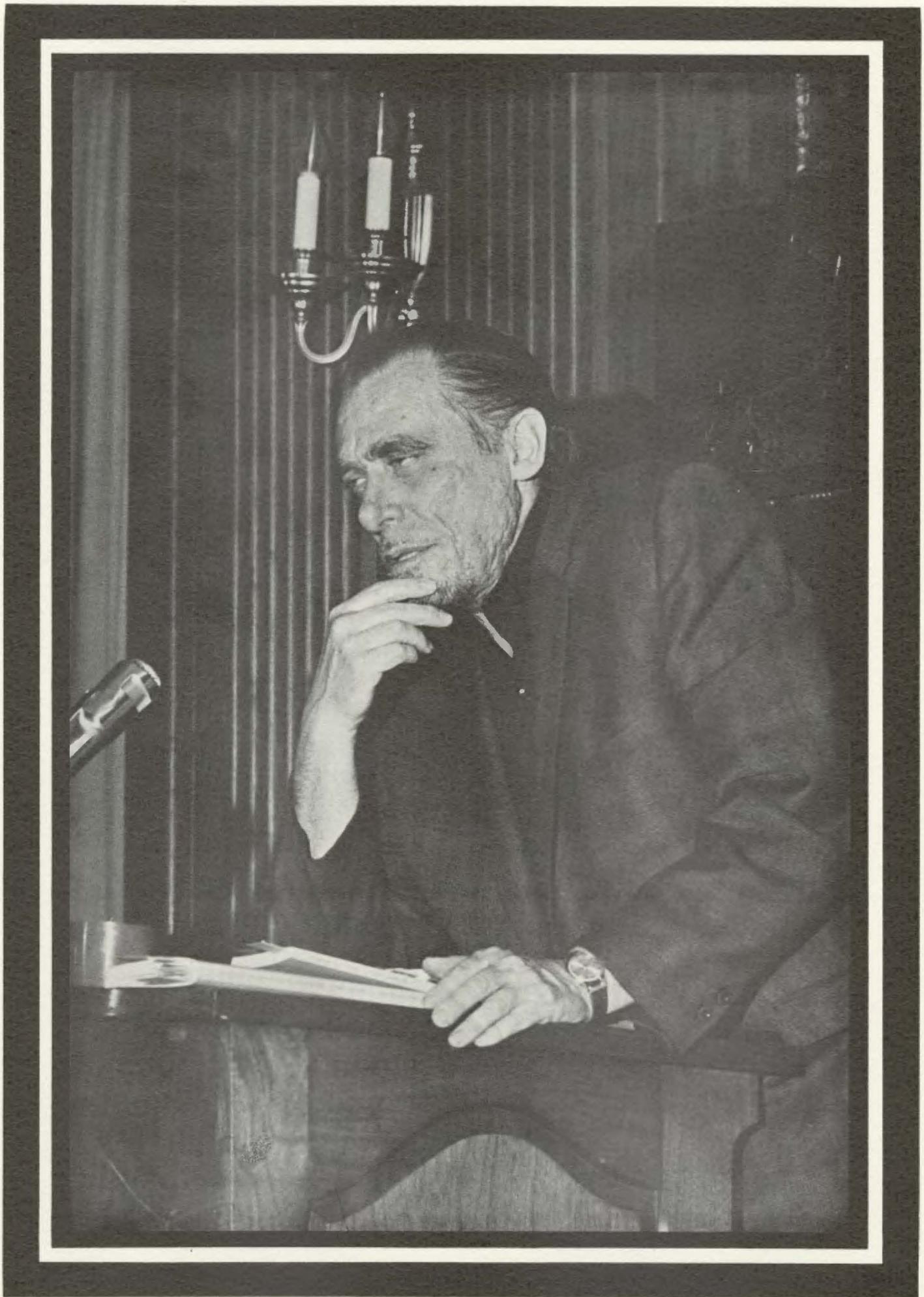
The Flower Papers Found:  
Notes on Stimson  
The Thief of Baghdad

## *photography*

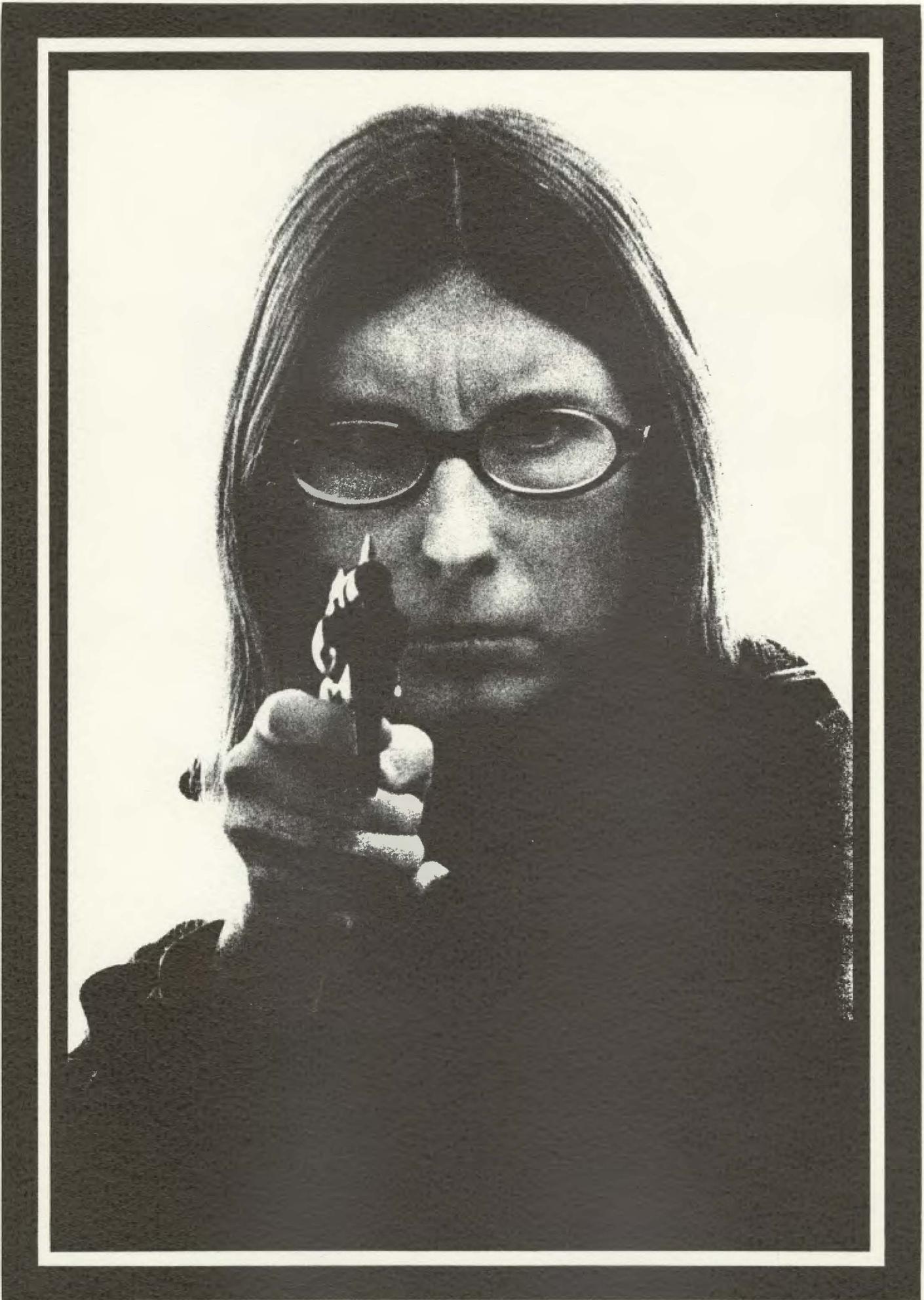
Gene Mellon  
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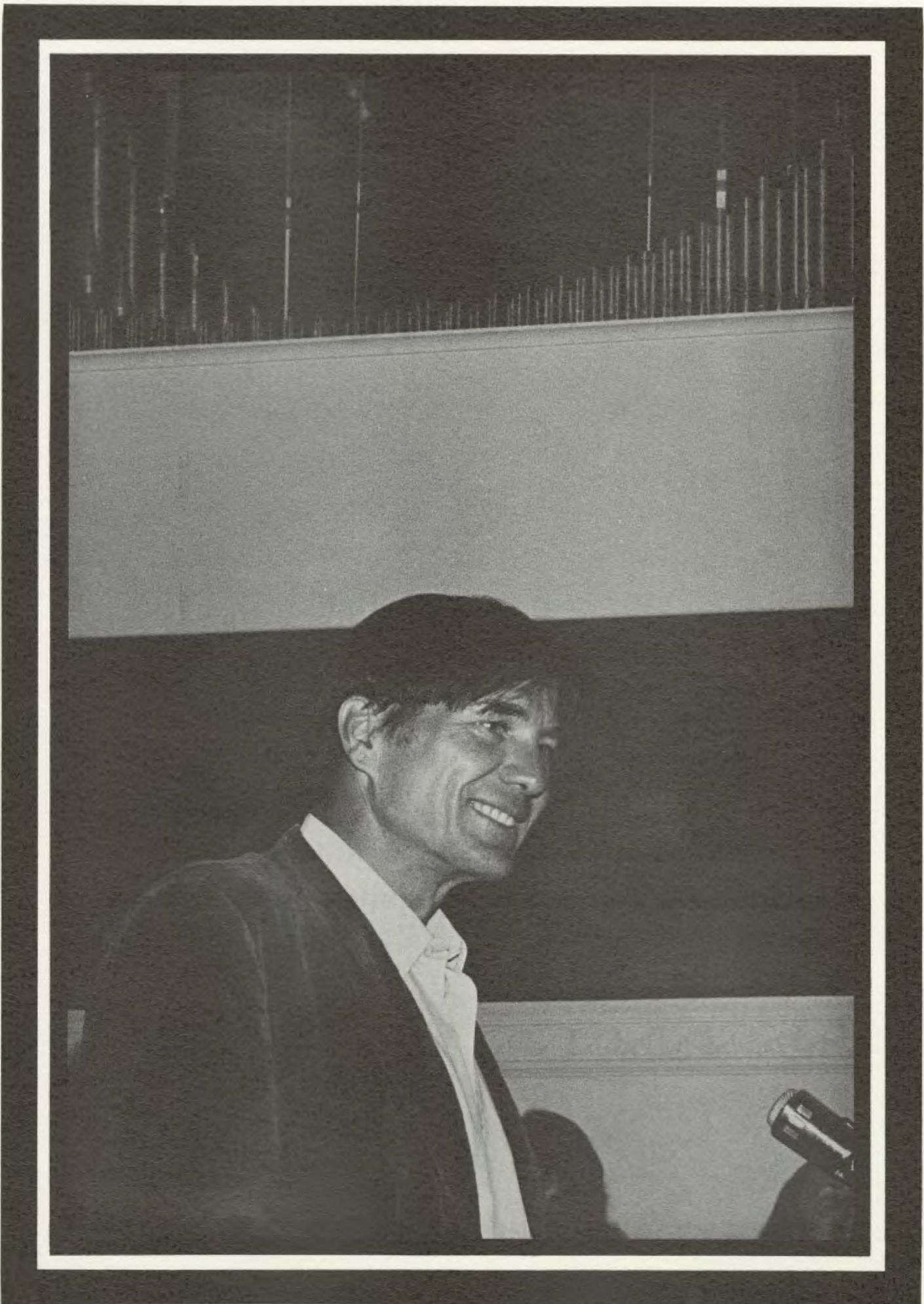
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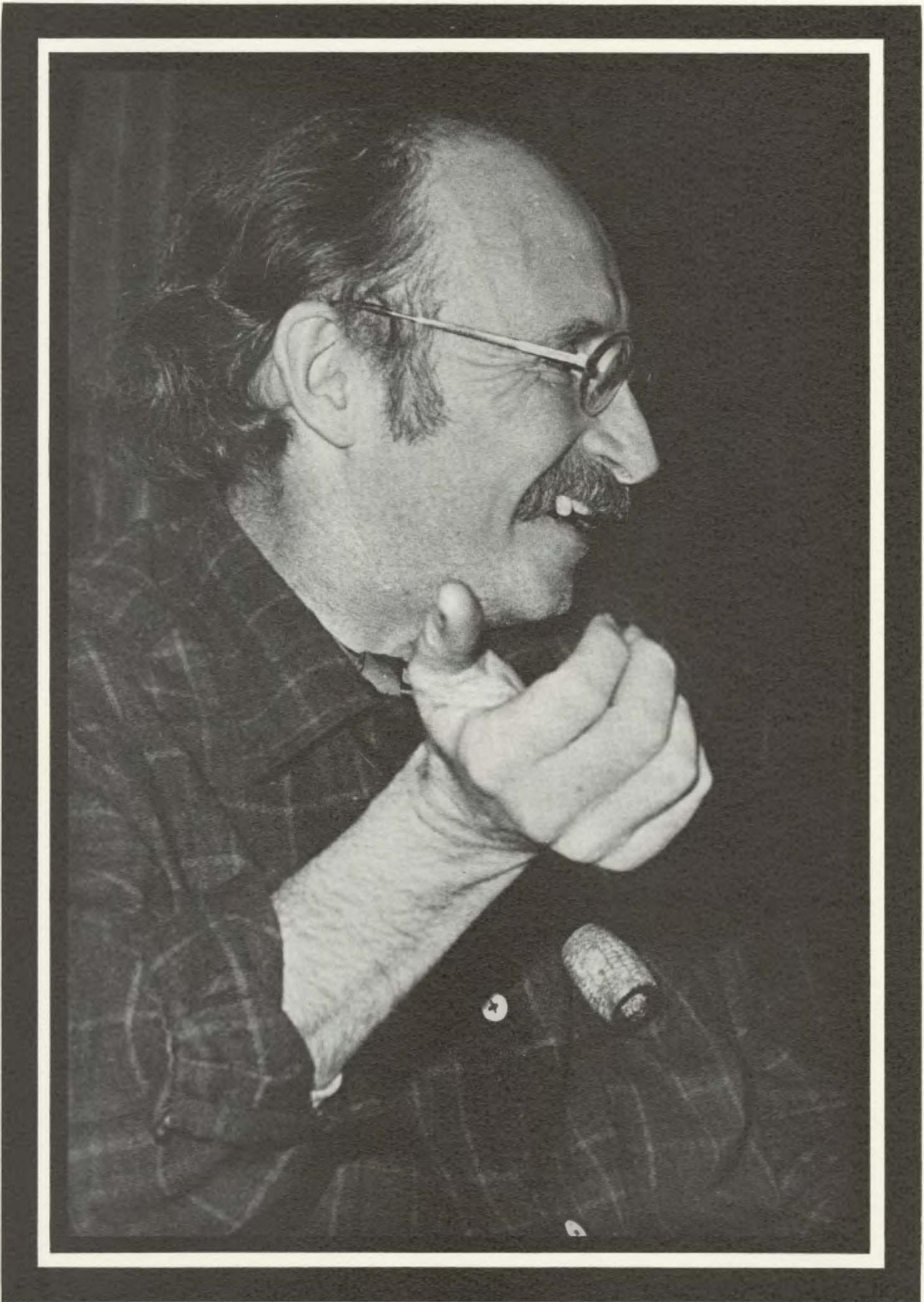
*charles bukowski*



*diane wakoski*



*galway kinnell*



*john logan*

## a dictionary

- Absolute** This has not been a big question since the Inquisition, although I do remember being finger printed for ripping off a bag of peanuts at Thrifty Acres. When they came for me I was eating barbequed ribs and could not shake hands but even then it did not seem terribly important.
- Abstract** That which is not the number of intervals between G's on the staff, nor is the number of right angles in a pair of argyle-slipper-socks but is present in each instance.
- Accident** A snow storm in the Black Forest has grounded your plane. You are waiting in line for the rest room when you discover your ticket is missing. The P.A. system is announcing a sale on artichoke marinade. This is an accident.
- Actual** She wore an iron-on pocket watch and claimed a vested interest in the revolution between mouthfuls of egg salad sandwich. She was not an actual revolutionary but was beautiful in bed. (see Aesthetics)
- Aeon** In Gnosticism a subordinate diety; nothing compared to the silky archons who monogram their teeth and go barefoot year-round but fearsome nonetheless. Many librarians are in fact aeons.
- Aesthetics** Afterwards she macrameed her pubic hair.
- Ascetic** A member of a household receiving food stamps or a member of the Republican Party whose image appears in the mirror.
- Aztec** A means of telling time by sticking out ones tongue. Where the shadow falls, that's what time is.
- Baa** Baa
- Bait** At a seafood restaurant you notice your waitress is tethered on a chord coming out of the cash register.
- Barbican** The more anxious player is likely to grip his racket like a masturbating chimp. This is poor form where endurance is concerned. It is best to relax prior to service.
- Balk** I had her dress off and everything.
- Bamboozie** You get into the wrong car at a drive-in movie. And you know it's the wrong car.
- Baroque** The baroque oyster is said to produce a strain of pearls capable of reciting the lord's prayer. There was speculation as to whether the oyster or the pearl produced the actual sound, although recent experiments (in which a pearl placed in a box of cheezos denounced deficit spending) point toward the pearl. Whether the oyster is itself mute has not been satisfactorily established.
- Baritone** The lady poet has come a long distance for this reading. She squints and it reminds you of your best friend's big sister, or a camp counselor, someone you can confide in, someone who knows. She talks at great length because she is *sensitive* and has *experience*. She is not pretty, but that's for the better because she is *beautiful* and were she pretty you might miss that she is *beautiful*. She says what you've always been afraid to say—about trust and betrayal and says it with simple eloquence, unaffected grace. You are moved. Your friends are moved. One says, "isn't this a sack of shit."

*bruce white*

Poem to two Karens

You balance my days  
fattening my tightropes  
so we can sleepwalk together  
across the falls of our fears.  
You tumble thru my nights  
a rollercoaster acquainting me  
with peaks that had always  
been misted to me.  
You live in my mind sharing  
the same joy with which  
I live in your body.  
This is a cohabitation to which  
your clear light clings  
defeating my darkness.

*brent shearer*

Soft bodies  
bending in my eyes  
See your tender water gone  
I have cried, until  
my bones are dry.  
They clatter in the night.

*christy wallace*

The Ship of Fools

Hieronymous Bosch

Oil on wood.

Paris, Louvre.

One third the middle  
of a triptych the others  
lost at least not to be seen  
all float through  
neutral sea riding a giant  
nutshell  
boat  
a nun and a monk  
central they are  
celebrating a  
god  
three other people open  
mouthed lunge for  
bread  
another man stares  
inquisitive  
into the water below  
and there is  
love  
a woman gives a smiling  
man some spilling wine  
a scarlet  
flag  
flies from the mast  
and a  
soldier  
waits at the bow  
in full battle gear.  
Everyone continues on  
fools  
and the naked demons  
pulling our  
boat  
toward the missing  
right hand doom.

*cliff van eaton*

#### notes on stimson

Morning — gets out of bed, washes down 2 aspirin with some beer left in his shoe from last week. he finds his clothes, takes a bufferin from under his eyelids. his first piss of the day and he eats all the excedrin behind the mirror. at breakfast a strip of bacon and two anacin over easy. in the drugstore he becomes the gourmet critic for the gazette tasting one tablet of st. joseph's aspirin for children out of each bottle on the shelf. druggist gets suspicious, stimson buys what 2 out of 5 doctors recommend and leaves.

rest of the morning quiet — he lies down on the dividing strip in the middle of michigan ave. and tries out his new headphones.

Afternoon — he shoots up for lunch, 30 milligrams of penicillin and a vitamin c salad. comes back to the room, finds the girl he left there last week, he shoots a massive dose of ampicillin into his thigh against V.D. they share a smallpox vaccination and make love in the early afternoon sun. a friend comes by with his new stash of clinical antibiotics, they all eat a couple hits and the three make love in the late afternoon sun. stimson wakes up hungry, chews a chocolate laxative and goes downtown for a free chest x-ray.

That night — he does kool-aid and downs and nobody can find him hidden in the refrigerator.

#### Stimson at night

Stimson did not sleep last night. He has not slept any of the nights in the last 15 months. He has not slept the days either. He has forgotten how to sleep. He is not tired, that is forgotten too. Although great coughing fits of restlessness hit him now and then. One night last week he went to the laundromat and seduced a hot dryer; it cost him his last dime.

Stimson has not dreamed in the last 15 months. He has not forgotten how for his eyes stare at each other with great visions. This sleepless, dreamless time is not wasted. He has learned how to walk in peoples dreams, though this is dangerous. He was once lost for a month in the dreams of a half-crazed Indian girl who was in love with the moon. He escaped only through an eclipse.

*roland grybauskas*

Sometimes,  
when shouts of men  
insist on sharing  
the night  
with pitted dreams,  
I wish that I  
was the boy who had to get married  
in the 11th grade,  
or a prince,  
or a meteor, black in the lower forty,  
or a black  
snake  
that throws its body  
under a tire  
and explodes  
into a note  
so pure  
that hundreds of other spirits  
fall,  
like sniped snipers,  
out of branches,  
out of envy,  
out of hiding,  
out of time,  
into the rigid fist that is their belief,  
or the sighing, unending well, that is China.

*james kahllo*

To a New York Aristocrat in Mink

Sweet, city goddess,  
What wonders must lie under your coat.  
Was your mother sable-skinned, or your  
Father furred by some beneficent fisher man?  
Was their mating under ice,  
Or on the edge of a Canadian creek?

I believe that you are a seal child  
Bought by some olympian agency  
To stir the instincts of hairless men.  
Or perhaps an orphaned mermaid  
Changed by a surgeon (as Zeus turned Io)  
Into a beautiful mink woman.  
Changed because fish are cold  
And scales won't sell.

And whom could you love, my long sea otter?  
Would you bear my cubs  
And carry them in your furred belly?  
Would you warm me through long Yukon nights?

I would brush you with my tongue  
Like an affectionate cat  
And keep you far from stuffy men.  
And I would never mount you—  
For I swear to you now  
That taxidermy is the darkest of arts.

*william burton*

THE FLOWER PAPERS FOUND: (Page 1)

The Editor Commissioned; The Perils of Research;  
An Assessment of the Poet by the Editor, Edmund Curll.

Unless the reader subscribed to *Three Rivers' Review* in the year 1956 and can recall in the third issue a little poem about a girl, he probably has never heard of the poet Henry Flower. The name seldom encourages a critic's footnote, a scholarly nod, or a flurry in the bookstores. It is far from my ambitions as his editor to distinguish this man among men of letters on the merits of a single published poem. Many will have their doubts that Mr. Flower deserves any serious literary consideration whatever; some will consider his writings *un jeu d'esprit* of an insidious literary prankster, a modern MacPherson. I have taken on this task in the hope of proving to the latter group of Thomases that Henry Flower did indeed exist. In deed and in word, exist.

Every writer in America, unless he writes for cereal boxes, knows his situation desperate, knows hunger and impoverishment as a way of life that seldom leads to the recognition he so richly warrants. His table might be compared with that of his critic, who knows French wines better than the "blushful Hippocrene," dines at the most cultured tables of our city, enlivens the conversation with fragments of his latest essay on "The Death of the Novel and the New Journalism." But it occurs to this editor that our age has lost the novel in a sense other than the generic. I am speaking of our loss of sympathy with the Extraordinary and Sublime in literary affairs. The expertise of our modern surgeons have succeeded in removing all the excrescence and useless appendages from the corpse, leaving us the lifeless outline of our tradition. Dr. Johnson in his cerebral majesty, Wordsworth along the Heart, Hawthorne equidistant between them, Blake along the Optic Nerve, Swift in the Bowels, etc. Where are the tonsils and appendices, the thumbs and eyebrows of our sleeping giant? Maintaining along with my poet that there is "substance in the nonessential," I offer this critical essay to the reader in the hope that he will find it of interest. Although Mr. Flower never wrote a poem until he had turned forty-five, although he published but a single poem, I would not have so dedicated myself to this project had I not believed there to be something of value in a literary half-life.

I myself had not heard of the poet Henry Flower until early September, 1969, when I was the recipient of the following letter:

Dear Mr. Curll,

My associates tell me that you are a student. They also tell me that you are a student of literature with a particular interest in the writings of a William Blake. This is commendable, as I have long maintained literature to be as necessary to the community as law or medicine.

I have written you to inquire, Mr. Curll: Have you room in your heart for the writings of another?

My brother was a poet. He passed on forty-two months ago today. His writings—poems, letters, diaries, all 1280 pages—are in my files awaiting an editor who can plow and prune through their bulk. My colleagues (they know something of these matters) tell me that if properly arranged, these materials would have little difficulty in finding a publisher.

If you find this offer appealing, the manuscript awaits your attention in my office. You will share the royalties of the Flower estate. In hopes of seeing you soon, I remain

Sincerely yours,

Harold Flower  
Mayor  
Greenwich, Indiana

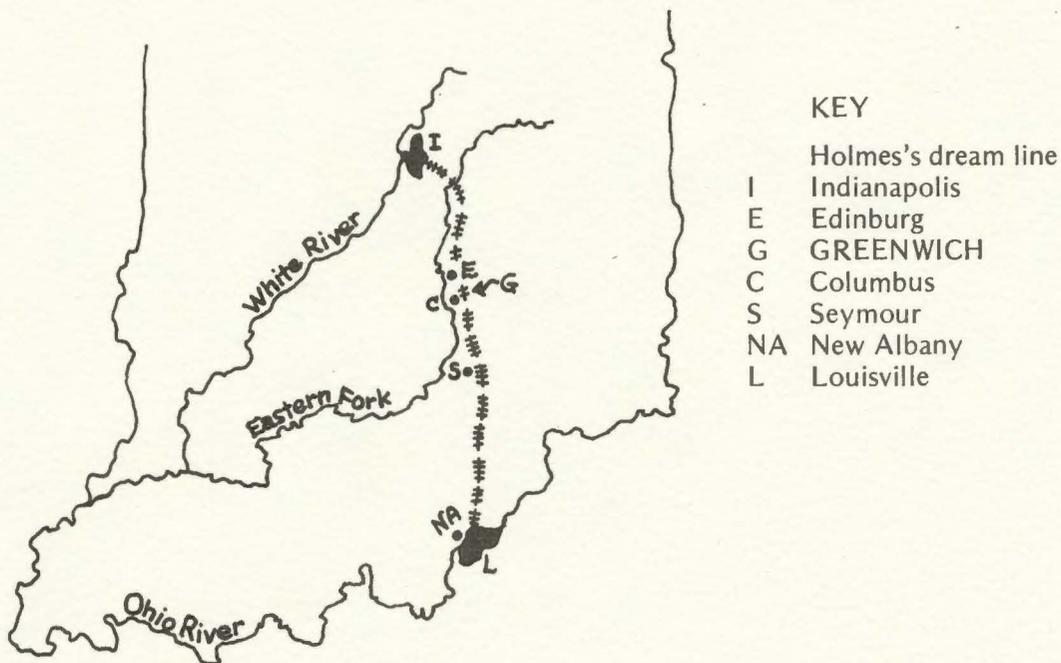
The Flower Papers Found: (Page 2)

I was tremendously intrigued by the offer. Was this my long-denied opportunity to strike out for the territories? I consulted maps, atlases, geographies to locate Greenwich. There was no such city listed. No township, no suburb, no village named Greenwich on the face of Indiana. This distressed me more than a little, but I resolved to pursue the project until I found the town or proved the letter to be a hoax.

Two weeks of fruitless research were spent at the Indiana State Historical Society in Indianapolis among maps, newspapers, histories, diaries. The *Indianapolis Star*, Samuel Midcalf's *Accounts of the Indian Wars*, Mary Felpham's *Indiana Place-Names and Their Origins*, Richard Wyatt's *State History and State Government* (14 vols.) bore no mention of a Greenwich. Then in Francis Westbrook's *Indiana and the Iron Horse* (1933), I came upon the following description of one Jonathan Holmes, a railroad contractor of the 1880's:

But Holmes continued to defy Cooper and Eastern financial power by insisting that Chicago's hog and cattle importation depended more on small farming communities than on the larger cities whose size was swollen by the new industries. In opposition to another Cincinnati-Indianapolis line, Holmes said that he would extend the Louisville line and connect the small towns of New Albany, Seymour, Columbus, Greenwich, and Edinburg to Indianapolis. Cooper exerted his influence in the East and the contract was awarded to Smithson & Sons of Cincinnati.<sup>1</sup>

I drew out my maps again. As the sketch below demonstrates, Westbrook had listed the towns in ascending order as they appear on a north-south axis from Louisville to Indianapolis. New Albany just across the river from Louisville; Seymour 70 miles due north; Columbus 20 miles north of Seymour on the Eastern Fork of the White River; Edinburg 5 miles north of Columbus. And it was within these five miles that Greenwich lay. I did not need to see the name on a map since I knew the coordinates.<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Francis Westbrook, *Indiana and the Iron Horse* (New York, 1933), p. 255.

<sup>2</sup> Holmes never built his railroad, but it is apparent from the towns mentioned that he intended his line to follow the path of the Eastern Fork. Where he planned for the line to cross the river to Indianapolis is uncertain, and the bridge I have drawn on the map is pure speculation.

### The Flower Papers Found: (Page 3)

I did not expect to find a town along that route, but I thought I might find fragments of a town, memories perhaps, clues to the identity of the Flower I was looking for. Nothing but corn. I drove that ten miles more than seven times and saw but one building—The Country Castle, an old barn converted to gasoline and grocery sales. The attendant had never heard of Greenwich and had never heard of the name Flower, but a friend of his, Theodore Green, had married a woman whose name might have been Flower.

This coincidence failed to excite me as it might have several weeks before; I had come to consider myself the victim of a plot bent on destroying my judgment. Some diabolism freshly loose in the world was intent on leading me about by the nose until I reached the point of my departure without achieving a thing. I fixed a limit on the number of seductions to which I would succumb before breaking off for more serious pursuits. Nonetheless, I would look for this Green fellow.

The Greens occupied a shack at the edge of a pine forest near Martinsville. Those were the most despicable living conditions I had witnessed in all my life—bottles, tires, abandoned autos, pages from books, tin cans, debris of every kind cluttered the landscape. A pile of firewood, stacked several feet high, stood at the front of the shack and led upward to an aperture I took to signify a door. As I made my way up these makeshift stairs, I was compelled to pause by a fierce snapping at my heels. Stooping to discover the source of my distress, I was surprised to find an object I had assumed to be a log turn out to be a child, unwashed and presumably unloved. I extricated my trouser cuff from his fingers as gently as possible, apologizing for trampling on him, but nothing I said would assuage his wailing. His cries brought to the door a large, brooding figure I presumed to be his father, Mr. Green. There was some embarrassment at first as we jostled the unruly infant between us and attempted to shake hands, but when his father had returned the child to its log, it lay in perfect contentment as if to tell us through its cooing, "Here is my mother." I introduced myself and we went inside.

I wish words were hellish enough to describe the interior of that shack. It was darker than darkness without a window or a breath of air; the roof hung down on us in misery; all that was immediately discernible was a fat wood-burning stove in the center of the room that sent blue light circling about the walls. I looked for the outlines of my host and asked his forgiveness for my intrusion, explaining that the gasoline attendant had said he might know of someone named Flower.

"GWENDOLYN!! GWENDOLYN!!"

It was the most ungodly shriek I had ever heard. The man was beside himself with grief and rage. I saw his bulk storming from one side of the cabin to the other, bellowing that name, Gwendolyn. I thought him utterly mad and set out to restore him when a chorus of voices from out of the walls began crying out, "MOTHER!! MOTHER!!" A horde of little people, appearing as impoverished and neglected as the babe outside, came from out of nowhere—out of the farthest corner of the room perhaps or out of the stove, which was burning at a greater intensity than when I entered, though the light in the room was not improved. Fists were flinging, tables and walls were pounded, furniture toppled. "MOTHER! MOTHER! GWENDOLYN!" There were thirty persons now in the room. I envisioned the entire structure collapsed by this violent demonstration of a kind I had never witnessed. Screaming some myself, I lunged for the door; but not stopping to consider the woodpile, I tumbled in a heap, abusing the same child I had disturbed when entering.

I was already in my car when Mr. Green appeared at the door, somewhat composed now.

The Flower Papers Found: (Page 4)

"She's my wife. Come this way." He led me behind the house to a large rock, on which this humble epitaph was daubed in black paint:

GWENDYLIN GREEN  
1922-1967  
Ded by Fall  
Rest in Piece

Green told me in the midst of his tears that one day his wife had fallen from the stairs and hit her head on a rock. This was an accident I could well understand. Yes, her name had been Flower before he married her. No, she seldom talked of her relatives, but every Sunday, for reasons unknown to him, she would get in the car and drive to Crawfordsville or Greencastle . . .

Greencastle! I knew this to be the next clue to my elusive quarry. And I resolved that it would be my last such concession, whether this town was the mythical Greenwich or not. The truth is that the widower and his children had quite exhausted me, and the game had grown increasingly sinister. I thanked Mr. Green for his help and departed in haste.

Greencastle is a sleepy college town nested between Indianapolis and Terre Haute. I had little hope that Harold Flower would be mayor of this town, as experience had taught me to look for more subtle evidence. Nor was I surprised that the telephone book listed no one named Flower. Fitchers, Flocharts, Floods, Flynns . . . but no Flowers. I had walked the town from one end to the other and was all for turning back when, standing at a downtown intersection, I saw a sign that affected me with a fear and wonder that my poet would call a "walk through the rose garden." It seemed hours that I stood there, instructing my legs to move; but I knew that those innocuous words on that store window were telling me more of the exquisite architecture of the created order wherein parts most obscured and ill-regarded have life and function to contribute to the whole. The sign conveyed more of this in ten seconds than all the scripture and sermons I had known in a lifetime. It read simply "Harold's Flower Shop." I was home.

Or so it seemed. As I was to find out, the florist's<sup>3</sup> name was not Flower; he had never heard of anyone named Flower. Again I was rebuffed. As I stared into a gardenia, thinking of the days I had lost at the hands of a jokester, an elderly woman dressed in black entered the store and asked for "a dozen of yesterday's." I left the shop with her, noting quite by accident that the flowers she held in her hand were wrapped in a discolored paper on which I saw the words "Dearest Mariana" scrawled. I asked if I might see the paper. It was a letter signed Henry Flower.

I asked the man behind the counter if he knew where this had come from. "Yes, they were found on the stoop one day, and running out of newspapers, we began wrapping flowers in them."

"They? You mean you have more of these?"

"Yes, a whole room full."

I was led into a back room. Scattered about the floor among stems, petals and roots were photographs and papers like the one I held in my hand. I offered him fifty dollars for the lot, and this put him into a frenzy. No doubt he felt that the word Flower appearing in them made them good advertisements, and seeing my

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<sup>3</sup>A retailer of flowers and ornamental plants; and editor or bookseller.

interest so avid, he pretended that these papers were of great value to him in his business. His customers were growing fond of these wrappings, he said. When I told him that these were the writings of a poet that I was editing for publication, the gentleman insisted on sharing two-thirds of my profits with him. I feared, as I had often done that month, that the situation was getting the better of me, and I feared that the treasure would devise more clever methods of eluding me now that I was within the sanctuary. As sailors heave lustily on their oars when they are nearest the shore, as woodsmen swing their mightiest when only a splinter supports the tree, so I reacted with overmuch enthusiasm when I saw I might end my research with *un coup de grace*. Thus I offered my florist friend \$2000 for sole rights to the manuscript. This brought him to reason, you may be sure, and I left the shop—elated and triumphant—my poet tucked underneath my arm.<sup>4</sup>

The losses suffered the manuscript at the expense of flower-wrappings are irreparable, I fear. I had lost two early poems, *Poltergeist* and *Vanity Bench*, and much else that now lies in trash heaps, forever lost to the pages of this anthology.<sup>5</sup> Slightly less than 400 pages are in my possession, which means a net loss of something approaching 900 pages. Sad, indeed.

I must confess that my knowledge of the life of Henry Flower is limited to a few factual matters that I could glean from the manuscript. Friends of the Flower family have been most helpful in providing me reminiscences of Henry, but these are of little relevance since the memory always distorts that which it loves. I know that Henry Flower was born on June 16, 1904 to Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Flower of New Harmony, Indiana. He was the first of twelve children, each one of them born with a congenital defect of one variety or another. Later in his life, Henry would attach symbolic significance to the number of his sisters and brothers, associating it with the signs of the Zodiac, the apostles, and the walls of the New Jerusalem. As a youngster, he was quiet and precocious,<sup>6</sup> accomplished in music and athletics, though his participation in sports and games was restricted because of his epilepsy. In 1926 he graduated from Indiana State Teachers' College with high honors. One student remembers him as "always reading." Two years later he assumed a position in the front office of a local manufacturer only to find himself jobless within a few weeks when the factory was forced to shut down. In the midst of financial uncertainty, Henry became enamored of a band of wandering gypsies that had camped near his home every spring since boyhood and thus joined their company for several years. He might have traveled to California in their caravan, but that is not likely. I next catch sight of him in 1942, when he volunteered as a war correspondent (without pay) for the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*. When he returned to the States, his versatility enabled him to occupy numerous positions: insurance salesman, cook, librarian, hotel clerk, and (of course) poet. He died on March 9, 1966 in an auto wreck.

I cannot overemphasize the importance of epilepsy in forming the mind and character of this poet. Though an unexpected seizure may have lost him one job or another, epilepsy was also the foundation of his spiritual life, his gateway to the Eternal. As he advanced in years and the attacks grew more and more burdensome, Henry saw the wonders of the spiritual world entering and transforming the temporal. The distinguished poet and critic Thomas Snaster Toile, has this to say of the apocalyptic turn of Henry's thought:

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<sup>4</sup>If any of my readers have frequented this shop and out of curiosity preserved a paper or two, kindly send them to me in care of this magazine.

<sup>5</sup>I am pleased to note that "anthology" derives from the Greek and means "flower-gathering."

<sup>6</sup>Also a botanical term. It means "bearing blossoms before leaves."

The Flower Papers Found: (Page 6)

William Blake saw the outlines of Armageddon in the outbreak of the French Revolution; William Butler Yeats saw them in the Irish uprisings of 1916; Henry Flower saw similar evidences in astrological configurations, in old manuscripts at Burnfield Library, and in plant morphology. Instead of saying that Henry *saw* the Apocalypse, I ought to say that he *lived* it; he was as convinced that events would reach a historical climax as he was inwardly certain that his next seizure of epilepsy would prove more devastating than his last. History and Henry are quite inseparable as he imagined himself a species of diving barometer, a prophet, a visionary—whatever.

Thus it is that Henry in his late years felt less and less inclined to the writing of poetry: it is a fundamental law of mysticism that the intensity of vision is inversely proportional to the ability to communicate that vision. And thus it is that Henry said before his death, "I always waken to the idea that I am a colligation of sensation and thought, a living poem that no man can read, a cipher. Each day I go out among people and inherit my name. I can do nothing. I can say nothing. Where virtue is deep and natural, there is poetry without words."

There are certain poets in the language that demand the reader leave his critical baggage behind before he makes the journey. Pope said to readers of Shakespeare, "Do not look for classical qualities, proportion, or symmetry in this man whose imagination was as stupendous as a Gothic Cathedral." There are certain poets that invite a sympathetic, rather than a judgmental, response; they invite us to enter a mental universe of their own design. To criticize the decor smacks of impoliteness. By participating wholly in the vision of a single artist, the reader is made more aware of the continuity of literary tradition than that voracious reader who consumes much but digests precious little. Did not Shakespeare write,

. . . Flowers distilled, though they with winter meet,  
Lose but their show. Their substance still lives sweet.

(Sonnet 5)

Why strive to comprehend the whole if it might be better comprehended by a study of a single part. Did not Milton write . . .

. . . so from the root  
Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the leaves  
More airy, last the bright consummate Flower  
Spirits odorous breathe.

(PL. V. 478-482)

Thus, it does little good to criticize the unproductivity of my poet. (Did not Rodin say that "slowness is beauty" and what is more beautiful than the unfolding of the flower blossom?) You might as well ask of the tree why it doesn't stop imitating a tree. HENRY FLOWER IS A LIVING METAPHOR AND WOULD HAVE BEEN A FAR, FAR BETTER POET IF HE HAD NEVER WRITTEN A SINGLE WORD! It is fortunate for our sakes that his spiritual existence was mediated by a temporal and physical one—otherwise we might have never seen that the garden he cultivated blooms for all humankind.

*edmund curll - dan coyle*

I took some time to walk a mile alone

I took some time to walk a mile alone,  
until stone fences disappeared easily;  
and I found myself looking from the edge  
of the double path of an old dirt road . . .

and I started to wander toward fields,  
rolling and endless, indiscernible bounds;  
where grasses flow free and easy and,  
where grows a lush garden of buttercups . . .

seeds sown by the south wind long ago,  
which had waited, like I have waited  
for ten years to pass, standing proudly  
and wondering if the woman of long skirts . . .

who stood a distance away, opposite me,  
wondered too if the garden of buttercups  
grew differently than it looked, from there—  
my tall clover nestled in flowery embrace,  
nurtured with love's tender murmurings . . .

I strolled across fields, to the garden,  
and asked if I might give kisses to fields  
and nose the small petals . . .  
Instead I knelt, and lowered my face  
to the ground, and brushed lightly my cheeks  
along the yellow flowers and green . . .

*stephen proper*

## FLIGHT

To my wife,  
Melissa

Your ghostly motions in darkness made me glad  
that love has brought you to the warmth I left  
To curl about my absence in dreams about my shape,  
Though I lean here upon the window ledge  
And dream a landscape of ice.

I press my nose against the glass and  
Fall into a deeper cell of grief.

The pedestal on the lawn that drew the birds  
Not two months past lies now an antique wreck,  
Catching the moon and bits of snow upon its glaze.

Melissa,  
If you waken beside an unwakable man,  
Do not prize the freight he left behind  
Nor wipe the cobwebs from his eyes  
When most you grieve . . .

The light around the bedstead chills your form  
And shades your widowed face from glare,  
Though you huddle still about that spot,  
The shadow of a bird.

Darling, Friend,  
I would rather lie nameless in your dream  
Than slip into cold shoes to learn of other stuff.

*john sparrow*

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Reprinted from *The Poetry of the Natural World: The Ecology of Human Feelings*, Clarence Lumber (editor), Cincinnati (Williams & Williams, Stereotypers), 1963. Mr. Sparrow is a former student at Kalamazoo, class of 1951.

Eyes in the Mirror

(Angel Heurtebise) . . .  
On your diamond skates, scratch  
The mirror of the sick.  
The walls  
The walls  
Have ears  
And mirrors  
Eyes of a lover.      from Cocteau  
No. VI of "Angel Heurtebise"

I gave you my best glass eye  
and you weren't satisfied.  
You wanted more than cold ceramics  
and a life-like paint job.  
You wanted the real eye,  
the tearducts,  
the blue night of the iris,  
the attention of the pupil,  
the soft crystalline lens,  
the movements and visions.

How can I tell you of the place in the back  
of each eye the doctors call—the blind spot?  
That I stand in this place each night  
waiting for you?  
How can I tell you  
when my voice is in braille  
and your fingers are too afraid and deaf  
to reach into blind spots?

Selfishly I keep my real eye and  
wait for you to look inside the blind spot,  
but you cannot see beyond  
those stainless-steel contacts  
you wear on your own eyes.

You tell me that you wear them only  
because you kept seeing the wrong lovers  
and the mistakes were costly.  
And now you see fine,  
the view is somewhat near-sighted  
and blank, but will change  
when the right lover comes  
and gives you a far-sighted real eye;  
certainly not a glass one.

True we are on opposite sides  
of the looking glass;  
you cannot see through the  
dull metal back of this mirror  
and I see only myself—

But when the mirror is scratched  
will we recognize each other?

*roland grybauskas*

a letter to harry

from sunday

to friday

in d. c.

we dressed on

mommy's high heels

and daddy's blazer

playing conference

official delegates registered genuine

from nine to five

concerned with the plight of

children

and the general chairman

encountered with

monopoly money

dangling from a briefcase

and from nine until

we played

in the largeness of

our garments

mixed drinks abandoned

for upturned bottles

we played games of house

till we woke and wandered

through alcoholic memory

and soon the clothes fit

altered by nine to five jewish tailors

adults threadbare and ragged

we felt awkward

parading

as children the first day of school

i tired of

the old maid dealt

me too often

and you weary

of soldier boy

but the card

said move

and not back to start

and we moved

each a marker

of a color we

hadn't chosen

*stephaine parrish*

The weight I've gained  
Has not been in knowledge  
But in French fries.  
Once in a while  
I've gotten a bone,  
But the good stuff's  
Already been chewed off  
By the guys at the  
Next table.  
If I could just get a  
Lick,  
A taste of the juice  
That once ran through  
The bone.  
If I could just get  
More juice and  
Less French fries.  
But I'm always  
Too late.  
And that's  
All they have left.

*anne hickok*

a yellow bomb  
lands in my arms  
a slanted eye

*michael krival*

Sitting on the Corner of an Orange

field work  
at the corner of Kalamazoo  
and Catherine  
and the sun  
walking in brown  
legs and  
gypsies      sucking  
grapes      books  
in long bags  
bare feet and  
this mourning  
came and went  
and i did two

*al wilke*

i fold my arms to you  
who have taken the mountains of the map  
to outline the miracles of time and space  
i need only to know that on sunday  
you fell asleep at the planetarium  
and i sat beside you and captured the names  
of three galaxies  
and when you woke from your snoring  
and peaceful rest  
i forgot them.

*jan golden*

