CHAPTER VII

Bard, Independent and Progressive

On July 1, 1944, Bard became independent of Columbia University, and in September 1944 it admitted its first class of women students. It is well to pause at this point and look at the College carefully, for it is entering a new era of its history.

The College had at last acquired the capacity to grow: it was to double in the next four years, from 137 students in 1944 to 293 in 1947. And, although the numbers were to seesaw during the decade of the 1950's, the College was to be consistently larger thereafter by at least 100 students than it ever had been before the advent of coeducation.

The College had become more self-consciously and more militantly "progressive." Dr. Tewksbury, as we have seen, did not particularly label the college of his day as being part of that movement, but students increasingly so identified it. With the coming of Dr. Leigh and Dr. Gray from Bennington, and Bard's increasing number of activities with Bennington and Sarah Lawrence (symposia, conferences, musical evenings), Bard in its own mind and in the public consciousness, was increasingly grouped with the progressive colleges. And students — the student government and the student newspaper — militantly defended progressive educational policy, and charged any who held contrary views with subverting the faith. For example, this editorial, signed by Stanley L. Falk, editor, in the *Bardian* of November 6, 1944, just five months after the disassociation from Columbia:

> An Open Letter to . . . Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler:
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> The progressive education movement is for us who participate in it, and for all who are eventually to benefit from it, the most important such movement in contemporary times. Its task as you should well know is to drive from our educational system such vestiges as still remain, of an obviously outmoded era . . . . You, Dr. Butler, have missed the point completely. In recent years you have gone out of your way . . . to attack the progressive method . . .

In keeping with progressive college philosophy, a larger share of institutional

governance and educational policy was lodged in student and community government. The advent of coeducation necessitated the establishment of some sort of dormitory standards and controls. This issue was to torment (and sometimes almost paralyze) the Bard campus for the next twenty years.

Another factor affecting the life of the College from its very first coeducational days, was the quality of the women students. Looking back from twenty or thirty years later, people have wondered how a tiny men's college that decided in April to "go coeducational" that fall, was able to get any women students at all. And one is the more surprised to find that these relatively late enrollees included a high proportion of the most outstanding students in the College's modern history. How were these students found at all, and how were they such good students? The answer seems to be twofold: the College's educational program, with its dual emphasis on the creative and performing arts and the traditional liberal arts, appealed to women of both intellectual and artistic interest. There was a growing number of such young women, and there were few colleges offering them such a program. And the high quality of Bard entering classes of women, right from the first, was the result.

The first months, even the first two years, of coeducation were occupied with the necessary growth of the institution, attempts to build "a community," to develop the machinery of campus governance, and the holding of panels, symposia, and conferences on the progressive educational philosophy and its implementation.

A Bard work program was proposed (assigned task for everyone) instead of the College's hiring students who needed the money to do certain jobs.[1] The effect of "larger classes" on the Bard education was discussed (there were 138 students in the College!). "Bard College, whether or not we recognize the fact, is a great educational experiment. We must remember that it is different from any other school or community in the country."[2] "We can lose interest in the experiment of progressive education, because of the general attitude of disinterest in work and community life . . . . It is my opinion that during the first week of orientation for new students, more emphasis should be put on the academic aspects of Bard. Dr. Gray might speak on education and perhaps assign some appropriate reading . . . ."[3]

In November, 1945, a Bard delegation visited Sarah Lawrence for a conference "on progressive education and self-governance in college." 'Is a common core of knowledge necessary to the college student?" was the chief topic faced.

While the student community was organizing its educational philosophy,

administration and trustees were giving attention to meeting the enlarging needs of the changing college.

In March 1946, returning from a four-weeks' rest, Dr. Gray addressed the College, covering a wide range of topics. He announced a $25,000 gift from Ward Melville, "which in addition to his many other gifts and services has made him one of the most loyal supporters of Bard and one of those outstandingly responsible for the success of our school."[4]

The intensifying problem of "open hours in the dormitories" took centerstage in both the *Bardian* and Convocation.

> "It is the desire of the *Bardian* to support this movement, because we feel that first of all, social room space on campus is too limited. . . . Many will feel that this so-called 'inter-visitation' is a moral question. This is wrong. With limited intervisitation, many of the existing problems on campus will be eliminated. The need for proctors will lesson, since the social rooms will not be as crowded, and the desire to stay on and on will disappear. The editors of the *Bardian* do not desire complete open hours, but rather would suggest certain periods of time during the day, for instance one to five in the afternoon and seven to eleven at night. . . ."

With returning veterans seeking in these years to complete their education, there was a demand for "year round" schooling, and Bard ran summer sessions — for example that in 1946 had 80 students and made a profit of $7,000.

In the fall of 1946, enrollment "skyrocketed" to 268 — almost double the highest of up to three years before. The College contracted for government-surplus barracks-type housing, but it was Christmas before these structures were ready for occupancy, and until then the gym had to be used as barracks for 50 men. Dr. Gray told the trustees: "The men have adapted themselves in a sympathetic and patient manner to the discomforts of living in barracks again."

Meanwhile, more substantial plans were being made for the necesary increase of space. There was a nucleus of new young trustees who were beginning to "think big." For a time it seemed that they might "take the ball and run with it." In October Mrs. Beekman H. Pool, chairman of the Bard College planning committee, announced that

> ". . .the new formal entrance will be on state highway 9-G. Preliminary work has already been done to the extent of draining a pond which is in the way of the new buildings; the new lake to be constructed in its place will be used for winter sports. At the north end of this lake will be new faculty houses. Along the road which will lead towards the main campus from the entrance plaza, will be an art building and a drama and music building. The art building will have studios for painting, sculpturing, photography, industrial design, and architecture. The new drama and music building is to be built around a theatre seating 500. There will be auxiliary stage design and construction lofts, music practice and classrooms and faculty offices. . .Two new

> dormitories will be built on the bluffs near faculty circle. . . . Replacing the present gym will be a complete athletic center on the west side of the football field. . . . The Bard Convocation has voted to devote student efforts to raising funds for a community center. The building is to be erected on the site of the present gym and will contain a dining hall seating 300, a large lounge for dances, a new college store, and several smaller lounges.
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> "The first step in actual student participation in their project will be the formation of a large choral group. A heavy program has been planned, including a performance in New York in late winter, a nation-wide radio broadcast from Holy Innocents Chapel at the College, and several performances in the East. A prominent alumnus, Justin W. Rand, a professional organist and choirmaster, has volunteered to direct the group. . . . Mr. Rand will be at the College Sunday to begin formation of the group. . . . The building plans are only half the drive, however. Equally important. . . is the million dollar endowment fund to provide scholarships, additional faculty members, and aid in equipping various college departments. . . ."[5]

Dr. Gray was very tired. He had been president of the College for six-and-a-half tumultuous years, which had included a carefully planned growth in student body, the unplanned depletion of that student body by war, its replacement with a military program, the sudden loss of that group when it was called to combat — and then the rebuilding of a new student body, constituted largely at first of women.

On September 2, 1946, President Gray wrote to the board of trustees:

> ". . .I wish to resign as president of Bard College, my resignation to take effect at the earliest moment when it may be convenient for the board.
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> "In spite of the long vacation which I took this summer I find that my energy for the problems is too low and that I cannot with any pleasure, effectiveness, or safety to my health, go on. This is not something sudden. I have been driving to this job for the past two or three years. I looked forward to the time when I could get out. Now that there is a nucleus of new talent in the board with new hopes for the College, it seems fair enough for me to leave the new era to them. The College enrollment is the highest ever and prospects of solvency are to be seen. The plant, as you saw, is in the best possible condition. What is urgently needed is someone to take charge who is not so weary of the job of college president as I am. Bard needs a strong and imaginative leader in this new period. I have shot my little bolt in the past six-and-one-half years and have nothing more to give.
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> "You will doubtless suspect, and rightly, that there is an "occasion" for this action. I have discovered that it is believed by certain trustees, faculty, alumni and students that the College is getting into disrepute because of the way our students' social life is conducted. It is part of the educational program that makes Bard distinctive that students should participate in the making of the rules and the enforcement of them, and participate with a good deal of power. I have believed that it is good social and political education for them to take a good deal of responsibility. . . . The criticisms of the social life, well-founded as some of them are, and silly as others are, should not be allowed to dim the recognition by all of us, that in education this College stands for something generally distinctive. Bard does something for the students who come here, something which no other college does. The board should know more about the positive results. Out of the knowledge will come the kind of faith which Mrs. Pool so enthusiastically holds and propagates. I want to leave the enterprise to people who truly believe in it. . . . The fundamental reason for my resignation

is. . .my sincere desire to allow you to select a more able administrator and promoter for the tasks of development which lie ahead. . . .

"I thank the board of trustees for honoring me with their confidence during my administration and for giving me the pleasure of their friendship. It has been a pleasure of sorts to fight through the uncertainties of the war years, and it is a pleasure to see the College now at such a promising moment in its career. I believe in Bard College and give it all my best wishes."

Fearing adverse effects on campus morale, the trustees withheld announcement of Dr. Gray's resignation until a successor could be secured, and then announced both the Gray resignation and the election as president of Dr. Edward C. Fuller, professor of chemistry and member of the College faculty since 1935.

Leaving Bard, Dr. Gray went to Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy as head of the English Department. In 1954 he became director of the division of humanistic studies at Juilliard School in New York. He died of a heart attack in May, 1959.

Edward C. Fuller was a 39-year-old native of Montana, a graduate of Montana State College in Bozeman, with a Ph.D. in chemistry from Columbia University. He was married, with a six-year old son and a three-year old daughter, was an active member of the Episcopal Church, and a fine tenor singer. He had served as Secretary of the College; was an active and energetic "organization man;" and had done a good deal of work for the College in publications and admissions. During Dean Gray's tenure, he had often been Gray's "no. two man," especially when Gray was away.

During the war, Dr. Fuller had been on leave of absence to the Manhattan project, based at Columbia. Within days after the surrender of Japan in 1945, President Gray received a letter from Dr. Harold Urey of Columbia University, one of the project's top scientists:

"The recent use of the atomic bomb and subsequent publications regarding the work of this project now make it possible to reveal Dr. Fuller's connection with it. . . . You are now at liberty to reveal publicly the fact that Dr. Fuller. . .has made an outstanding contribution to the work of this project. . . ."[6]

When President Gray resigned on October 18, 1946, the science faculty were having a meeting in Hegeman. There was a phone call for Dr. Fuller. It was John Steinway, chairman of the board of trustees and a 1939 Bard alumnus, (the average age of the board at that point was under 30) saying that President Gray had resigned, and asking Dr. Fuller: "Will you take it?" Fuller asked for a few days to think it over, and then he accepted. Dr. Gray's resignation and Dr. Fuller's acceptance of the presidency were announced shortly thereafter.

Dr. Fuller's inauguration a year later, in October, 1947, centered on several

discussions of issues in progressive education, led by such leaders in the movement as Presidents Taylor of Sarah Lawrence, Burkart of Bennington, Henderson of Antioch, Pitkin of Goddard, Thayer of the Ethical Culture Schools in New York City, and Tibbetts of the Hessian Hills School. Ex-Governor Lehman was the speaker at the inaugural ceremony.

The principal academic innovation of the Fuller years was the development of an integrated course in the sciences. He presented a paper on this at the symposium held in connection with the inauguration of Dr. Sachar as President of Brandeis University:

"I feel honored that the faculty of Brandeis University should wish to hear about the pioneering work done by the faculty of our college. . . . The outstanding difference between science teaching at Bard and that at American colleges as they are traditionally organized, is that we approach the basic sciences of biology, chemistry, mathematics and physics as a unified field of study, not as separate departments of learning."

Bard developed what is thought to be the first introductory combined course in chemistry and physics in the country. Widely written up at the time in professional journals, the program was said to have these advantages:

"Certain factual information and theoretical concepts employed to interpret these facts (which are traditionally taught both in elementary chemistry and in elementary physics from somewhat different viewpoints and with different techniques) are taught once with the two approaches combined; and the integration of chemistry and physics (which has been so fruitful in research) is brought out more clearly in the one course than is customary when two separate courses are given. . . "[7]

Meanwhile, in the College's general academic program, there was reaffirmation of Bard's dedication to progressive education: "We are afraid that Bard is becoming known as a rich man's school and as a place to go to have a good time," the *Bardian* worrisomely observed.

"This attitude was one of the chief reasons for the progressive revolt against academic education in the twenties, and we should not like to see Bard swing around and accept it as standard acting procedure in the fifties. The faculty is not exempt from our criticism. We think that some of them do not fully understand the practical manifestations of progressive education. . . . We cannot accept the distance that exists between faculty and students. . . ."[8]

And President Fuller himself wrote in *School and Society:*

". . .Our entire program is constructed on the premise so clearly stated by William H. Kilpatrick, the premise that education is that which one accepts to act upon. . . . If . . .education for action is indeed the essential and distinctive flavor of the progressive movement, then I am proud indeed to be known as the president of a progressive college."[9]

And the work of the institution, and the important occasions in its life went on. Lyford Edwards, faculty member since 1920, retired in 1947 and

was given the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity at a special convocation of the College.

Various campus organizations and activities rose and flourished, some lasting for years, some only seemingly important at the time and quickly disappearing.

Organized in 1942 by George Blackstone, the Bard fire department originally had only seven members and hand-carried equipment. After the war, in 1946, the department was reorganized and acquired motorized equipment, and by the fall of 1948 it had two trucks and $8,000 worth of equipment. In many ways, for better or worse, the fire department was more than a fire department, — it was in many people's thinking, almost a fraternity, and invitations to join were not to be taken lightly. (Some years later when the College was plagued with a series of probably incendiary fires, there was some feeling that the cult-like status of the Bard fire department may have been an unhealthy influence.)

There was considerable interest in a campus radio station in 1947 and 1948, with Council authorizing funds for equipment, and expectations expressed of the station's becoming a member of the inter-collegiate broadcasting system. In March 1948, the station announced its intention "to maintain a professional operating technique, at the same time eliminating much of the crassness of commercial radio."[10]

One of the events that students of these years recall with the greatest pride is the 1948 poetry conference, which brought to the campus such noted poets as William Carlos Williams, Louise Bogan, Jean Garrigue, Lloyd Frankenberg, Elizabeth Bishop, Richard Wilbur, Richard Eberhart, Kenneth Rexroth, and Robert Lowell. Not surprisingly, this event "packed Bard Hall."[11]

Beginning in 1947, the international students' conferences were held at Bard each spring, with the special interest and often the personal participation of Mrs. Roosevelt. (Mrs. Roosevelt was often on the campus in those, her "pre-U.N." days.) Thirty or so students from other countries would join a Bard delegation for a week-end of panels and discussions, and usually a visit to the home and library of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the laying of a wreath on his grave.[12]

A summer school of drama was organized for 1947. The gym was converted into a theatre for the summer, with a large stage erected at the east end, and seats for over 300 persons attached to a series of raised platforms. This venture, the president reported, "did more to make our neighbors feel that the College had an interest in the local community, than any other activity we

have ever undertaken. . . . Financial losses of the enterprise precluded its continuation in subsequent years."

Through the interest of trustee J. K. Lasser, and with the support of the Kingston Chamber of Commerce and the Federal Department of Commerce, a school for small business was held in March and April, 1948.

Meanwhile, in these and following years, there was almost constant discussion of "open house," "intervisitation," and other aspects of dormitory life. The same controversy disturbed most American colleges at one time or another in the 1950's and 1960's, the years of the most acute tension in each institution varying according to the timetable on which that college or university liberalized its previously quite conservative dormitory rules.

In response to pressure from some parents, Dr. Fuller held a meeting with the members of South Hall to discuss the question of a freshman dormitory and a women's adviser.

In the spring of 1948 the campus became very excited about whether Bard should be a member of the National Student Association, and whether that body was a bona fide voice of American student opinion, or a front for State Department or United Nations propaganda. Letters pro and con occupied the *Bardian* for a few weeks, and then other issues took over.

Financially, the four years of Dr. Fuller's presidency were an improvement over the College's recent experience. Returning veterans and coeducation pushed enrollment up to 268 in 1946, 293 in 1947, and in 1948 to an all-time high of 301, double that of only four years earlier, and a figure that would not again be equalled until the 1960's. The College overall fee was raised in 1948 from $1,550 to $1,800, and the increase in both enrollment and tuition resulted in operations being "in the black" for 1946-47 for the first time in many years. But then the two factors of inflation and a dropping back in enrollment to 234 in 1950 resulted in mounting deficits after the single heartening year of 1946-47. In two of President Fuller's years there was an across-the-board salary increase for all faculty members, and in two years an extensive program of merit raises. All of this resulted in the top faculty salary going from $4,800 in 1946 to $6,000 in 1950. But deficits had grown again to the point where no raise was possible for 1950-51.

Dr. Fuller said some years later that for his first two years he found the presidency challenging and exciting, "But then I found that I was spending all my energies making it possible for others to teach — and what *I* wanted to do was to teach!"[13]

And also the pressures and burdens of administration were wearing him down. At the end of October 1949, he announced to the campus community:

"My physician has told me that I must have a rest from my administrative duties until the first of the year, in order to replenish my store of energy. During this time, Dean Casady will act for me in all matters pertaining to the administration of the College. Dr. Robinson will continue to develop plans which I have already outlined with the trustees to increase public support of the Bard program."

In February 1950 Dr. Fuller resigned, and the trustees reconstituted his previous position as tenured professor of chemistry.

But that June he went to Champlain College in Plattsburg, New York as professor of chemistry and head of the department. After three years there he moved to Beloit College where he had a very satisfying and fruitful career as professor of chemistry. Though technically retired, he is still teaching there at the time of this writing.

Some of the College's strongest faculty came to Bard during the Gray and Fuller years, and the early years of the latter's successor, James H. Case, Jr.

Dorothy Dulles Bourne arrived in 1949 to teach sociology and was an increasingly important part of the Bard scene until her retirement in 1962. A member of the nationally prominent Dulles family, she was a cousin of John Foster Dulles, President Eisenhower's Secretary of State, but was herself an ardent Democrat. Mrs. Bourne was an alumna of Smith College with graduate training in social work, and had held staff positions with the national YWCA and the government of Puerto Rico, and had been Director of the school of social work of the University of Puerto Rico. After a few years on the Bard faculty she became, successively, student counsellor, dean of students, and Dean — meanwhile continuing her teaching of sociology. She was Acting President of the College during President Case's leave of absence for illness in the fall of 1958.

A dedicated liberal, Mrs. Bourne had a continually self-renewing faith in community government. Her gentleness of manner belied a vast internal strength, and in her teaching, in faculty councils, and as an administrator she did much to shape the College's course in the 1950's.

A Barnard graduate with experience at the New School and Sarah Lawrence, Irma Brandeis came in 1944 and with a couple of retirements and returns to duty along the way, was an active faculty member for the next 35 years. She is an important Dante scholar and the author of *The Ladder of Vision*, one of the most respected works in this field.

Coming in 1949 from the College of Wooster and a Yale doctorate, Fred A. Crane was the shaper and foundation of the Bard history department for the next 30 years, developing also a strong program in American Studies. He has been outstanding for his life-long keeping in touch with former students and advisees. His wife, Curtmarie, has also been a major force in the life of

the College, working for years in the admission's department, the bookstore, and as a departmental secretary, as well as in many volunteer roles and as an indefatigable dispenser of warm and gracious hospitality.

Gerard DeGre succeeded Lyford Edwards in sociology in 1947, and continued teaching at Bard for 19 years. Over the years he was the holder of several Fulbrights, a prolific writer in scholarly journals, a fine chess player, and an ardent sports car enthusiast. His wife, Muriel, held several campus positions over the years, and was a constant center of leadership and energy in faculty wives' projects and other campus activities. For some years after her death in 1972 the Muriel DeGre Center was carried on in her memory in the Blithewood gatehouse, and the Muriel DeGre scholarship awarded annually from the proceeds of the Bard Craft Show, of which she was the principal founder.

Bard's interest in creative writing and literature received strong support from Theodore Weiss, teacher of English for 21 years beginning in 1948, and felt by many to be the most distinguished faculty member of his period. A published poet of note (*Outlanders* and *The Medium*) Weiss also edited the *Quarterly Review* and based it at Bard during his years at the College.

Heinz Bertelsmann and William Lensing, in international relations and philosophy respectively, came in 1948 for long periods of service on the faculty. Frederick Shafer, a 1938 Bard graduate, entered upon the position of Chaplain and professor of religion in 1944, and except for a 10-year absence for teaching at Sewanee and Claremont, continues to hold the post at the time of this writing. Widely admired and justly respected for the integrity and sophistication with which he embodied the College's ecclesiastical, artistic, and intellectual traditions, he was a strong candidate for the Bard presidency in 1960, following Mr. Case's resignation.

In the later years of the Obreshkove-Sottery partnership in the Bard science program, a third member of this team was Charles Tremblay, teacher of mathematics from 1948 until his death 20 years later. A most effective teacher, he maintained the strong foundation in mathematics which is so necessary for work in biology, physics and chemistry. Also, rather miraculously, he was a sophisticated connoisseur of music, painting, and the dance. This wide range of interest made him a particularly important voice in faculty and curricular policy.

Andrews Wanning began a 28-year stint as teacher of English in 1951. A Yale alumnus with a Cambridge doctorate and six years of Harvard teaching behind him, "Andy" brought to his work a cultural richness and range and depth of background far beyond what is usually found in small college

faculties. His students and the Bard English department were beneficiaries of this bounty. Also arriving in 1951 was Robert J. Koblitz, professor of government. A strong teacher and an able scholar with a Harvard Ph.D., Dr. Koblitz maintains a special interest in students planning to continue on to law school, and promotes a vigorous engagement of himself and his students with current political and social issues.

In addition to such teachers as the foregoing, who came to Bard from the usual academic sources, the College was also able to draw upon a special source of fine teaching talent, the emigre intellectuals. Beginning in the early 1930's the repressions in Europe, especially in Nazi Germany, had forced many scientists, teachers, artists, and writers to leave their homelands and seek a new life in the new world. Often they had to struggle slowly and painfully through several European countries, with perhaps then a long sojourn in Mexico, before finally reaching the United States and making their way, via a succession of menial jobs and English language programs, to the point where they could get a foothold on the American academic ladder. Here what was a tragic loss to European institutions and culture proved to be a great boon to American colleges and universities, for they were able to add to their staffs refugee professors of an ability and distinction that otherwise would have been beyond the reach of any but the most important and affluent institutions. The New School in New York, Bennington, Sarah Lawrence, Black Mountain, and Bard especially gained from such new faculty members.

Bard's emigres included Heinrich Bleucher, Felix Hirsch and Stefan Hirsch, Adolf Sturmthal (teacher of economics 1940-1955), Emil Hauser, and Werner and Kate Wolff, among others.

Felix Hirsch was an important Berlin editor when, in 1935, he was suddenly dismissed from his post by the Nazis. Coming to the United States he started his way up in the American academic world by working for a degree in library science at Columbia. Dean Tewksbury, needing a librarian for Bard, appointed him to the position here in 1936. Dr. Hirsch "took over with vigor," bringing order out of the collection, updating the holdings, and greatly strengthening the reference resources — in short making the library the heart of the College's academic program. A man of unlimited energy, Hirsch soon joined the teaching staff (continuing meanwhile as Librarian) and was shortly offering courses on German history and culture. He was a prolific scholarly writer, especially on the work of Gustav Stresemann, German statesman of the 1920's, and in 1978 published a book on Stresemann in German. Hirsch became a leader in faculty governance and was an active

member of the committee that brought James H. Case, Jr. to Bard as president. Hirsch went in 1955 to New Jersey State College in Trenton. His valedictory letter to President Case was eloquent:

> "I shall always think back with deep satisfaction of the happy life which my family and I were leading on the campus, of the cordial friendships with faculty members, past and present, and of the close relationships with many promising students. I am very grateful for the freedom which I enjoyed both as a librarian and as a teacher. This freedom enabled me to develop the library according to my own ideals of scholarship and as the intellectual center of the College community, and to make it known all over the country as a model small college library . . . . At the moment of parting . . . however . . . I would be less than frank if I did not register at least, my utter dismay about the complete absence of appreciation . . . for the unceasing efforts I made, far beyond the call of duty, to promote the general welfare of the College throughout these eighteen years and especially during the recent crisis. But in spite of all bitter disappointments, my fondest thoughts and affectionate good wishes will always belong to Bard College and its community."[13A]

Stefan Hirsch (no relation to the foregoing) came to Bard in 1943 from three years at Bennington College, where he and his wife Elsa Rogo had established that institution's art department. An important post-impressionist painter, Hirsch pioneered in the development of college art programs, emphasizing the need to combine personal creativity and scholarly learning in the student's learning experience. He was one of Bard's most effective and beloved teachers.

Werner Wolff was a Berlin psychologist who came to America by way of Mexico and taught at Vassar before joining the Bard faculty in 1943. The author of twelve books in the field of psychology, anthropology, graphology, and religion, Dr. Wolff was also a leading figure in the national and international learned societies in the field of psychology. His wife, Kate, served on the Bard music faculty, and has been a beloved campus figure for nearly 40 years.

In many ways, the most colorful of Bard's distinguished European emigres was Emil Hauser. A native of Budapest and a superbly trained violinist, Hauser founded the famed Budapest String Quartet during World War I. He came to the United States in 1939, and, after teaching at Juilliard, the New School, and Columbia, joined the Bard faculty in 1951. His rich sense of both performance and theory made his music teaching a lifelong inspiration to students of his Bard years. On the personal side he is still remembered as a great charmer of the ladies, and the most horrendous automobile driver ever seen in Dutchess County.

Another special enrichment of the College's teaching resources in the decade and a half following World War II came in the form of the professional and publishing authors who joined the English department, mostly on

part-time assignments, but some on full-time appointments. Among them were the later Nobel laureate, Saul Bellow (*Herzog*, and *Mr. Sammler's Planet*); Ralph Ellison (*The Invisible Man* and *Shadow and Act*); William Humphrey (*The Ordways* and *Home from the Hill*); Mary McCarthy (*The Groves of Academe* and *The Group*); and Anthony Hecht, a Bard alumnus on a regular teaching appointment, who became a literary celebrity along the way (*The Hard Hours* and *A Summoning of Stones*), and a winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry.

Practicing artists and writers are a special inspiration to students. A man or woman who can not only talk about the craft, but also "do it" — who is professionally creative — evokes the special attention and admiration of students. "What they said" in their classes had a more than usual impact, because of "what they did" professionally.

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The College faced the decade of the 1950's more completely "on its own" than it had ever been before. Always up to then there had been a source of outside backing. First, the Episcopal Church which, from 1860 to 1928, had given St. Stephen's up to half its annual income in support of the education of pre-ministerial students; next Columbia University, which had given the College much increased visibility and had assumed its recurrent year-end deficits until the total of these reached $350,000; and lastly the Federal Government which since the war had been underwriting the education of veterans, so that the College had been able to draw upon a greatly increased pool of potential students, almost all of whom had the money to go to college if they wished.

But now the historic relationships were receding into the past, the new crop of high school graduates had no veterans' subsidies, and the College must make its own way, almost completely alone in the new civilian society.

But if there were any doubts or lack of confidence in the College and its future, these were dispelled by the sight of Bard's 12th president, James H. Case, Jr. Even after the passage of nearly 30 years, one can still sense the enthusiasm and excitement which surrounded his coming. The expectations were unlimited. Here was a man from the "big time," the successful and sophisticated world, the brother of a college president, the son of a chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank, a Princeton graduate. He had been an officer of two other colleges and a college president. He knew his business. He moved among the right people. He and his Vassar-educated wife were (to use a phrase which has since become widely current) of "the beautiful people."

There was about Jim Case a grace and urbanity the College had not known before. The picture in the *College Newsletter* of "President and Mrs. Case at the formal dance held in their honor on September 30 in the Memorial Gymnasium" seemed to say to all who saw it that Bard was not going to have to be poor or discouraged again.

Jim Case had been president of Washington and Jefferson College for three years. As *Newsweek Magazine* put it, "he had ideas about the Presbyterian-controlled college that didn't jibe with the church's rather rigid control." In 1947 the Presbyterian Board of Christian Education stipulated that only members in good standing in an Evangelical Christian Church be hired as faculty members. "Case had announced that he was taking a year's sabbatical to study the small independent college. The story leaked out that he would not return."[14]

Miss Sarah Blanding, president of Vassar, had written to Felix Hirsch, faculty representative on the Bard presidential selection committee, that

> "Mr. Case is a young man of fine intellectual caliber, vigorous, and devoted to the liberal arts principle at the same time that he is enthusiastic about experimentation through the curriculum . . . Mr. Case is a good money raiser . . . and I am convinced from my conversations with him that he is a firm believer in the democratic principle of administration. In addition to these qualities, he has a delightful wife (a Vassar graduate, no less), and it seems to me that you might be wise to investigate his qualifications for the Bard presidency. I do know that Reed College has him under very serious consideration for that presidency. . . ."[15]

Dr. Hirsch wrote to Mr. Case about Bard and what he felt the College needed at that point: "Educationally speaking, the College is in very good shape . . . . The real problem is to fortify our financial position . . . What is needed is not merely a fund-raising campaign, but a constant effort to improve our public relations, in the widest sense of the word. While the new president would not have to do this job alone, he should be the directing influence, the man who would stimulate new ideas and new methods of attracting the interest of influential individuals, foundations, etc. . . . ."

Mr. Case was offered the presidency, accepted it, and wrote back Professor Hirsch: ". . . I approach the responsibilities of my office with admiration for what you have achieved at Bard and an impelling sense of mission for the future."[16]

Mr. Case took up his new duties in early July, 1950, meeting with administrative officers, faculty, and students, getting generally acquainted with the program of the College. His family joined him in late August, and they were able to move into the considerably renovated president's house just before College opened.

"Live for what you believe in," President Case urged in an address at the academic convocation at Bard September 13, the *Bardian* reported:

> "...President Case presented to our Community both a forceful program for the College and a forceful personality that would become the guiding spirit of that program. In a straight from the shoulder, off the cuff talk, Mr. Case won the admiration of the Convocation..."[17]

At the September 29 Trustees' meeting, President Case said that when he had been considering the Bard presidency the preceding June, he had been told that the deficit for the coming year would be $42,000, but that events since then (chiefly a fall enrollment 35 below projections) had increased the estimated deficit to $100,000. "I am naturally disturbed to be faced with a problem of this dimension on coming to this office," he told the board. "Although disturbed, I am not completely discouraged...."

The ten years of Mr. Case's presidency (1950-1960) were perhaps the stormiest decade in Bard's history, being marked by an agonizing contrast of notable advances and painful crises in the life of the College. On the positive side were three major gifts, the construction of a new government-financed dormitory, and the development of significant academic programs. On the negative side were continued financial instability and bitterly exacerbated relationships between administration and faculty, and between administration and students.

There was a subtle irony in the gifts that came to Bard during the 1950's. For though President Case and his associates worked very hard trying to obtain gifts to the College, the three big gifts of his years came almost "out of the blue" from sources where little or no work had been done.

The first surprise of this sort was the Zabriskie gift, probably the largest benefaction the College had received up to then. The Zabriskie family were the College's nearest neighbors, living on the Blithewood estate (the former John Bard property) which almost surrounded the College and extended nearly to Red Hook, and all the way down to the Hudson. Relationships between the Zabriskies and the College had been erratic. From time to time students would be guilty of some trespass or real or fancied damage or pranksterism, and the College community would be forbidden to set foot on the Blithewood property. Then some good turn or gift by the one party or the other would create a change of climate, and permission would be given for students to use the pool, to walk on the property, or to use the Zabriskie-owned meadow behind the gym for a playing field. When the College carried out the major expansions of the 1920's, including a much enlarged sewage plant, the discharge from the plant flowed down the brook across the

Zabriskie property to the Hudson, creating a highly objectionable situation. Clearly the remedy would be to pipe the sewage north along the road to Ward Manor gate-house, and thence down Cruger's Island road to the river. But the $15,000 cost of such a project was beyond the College's means. Both sides went to court and an unpleasant litigation seemed in prospect, when Mrs. Zabriskie broke the deadlock by advancing the College the necessary $15,000 cost for the sewage line, to be repaid at the rate of $1,000 per year.

Christian Zabriskie received legal title to the property from his mother in 1936, in exchange for a $10 check. He was a retiring man, interested in fine and rare books and in military history. He made gifts from time to time to the Bard library, including a leaf from the 42-line Guttenberg Bible, and manuscripts and first editions of English authors, especially Walter Scott, Dickens, and Thomas Hardy. Mrs. Zabriskie was devoted to the home which her husband had built for her as a bride 50 years before. But her son, Christian, did not like country living and felt that he was stuck off in a dull and unsophisticated neighborhood, far from the cultured society which was his proper environment. He also was very resentful of the increasing taxes which the neighborhood officials were levying upon his property in support of local services (especially schools) which the estate owners neither utilized nor had approved. Gift of the estate to a tax-exempt institution would put it out of the tax-collectors' reach, and make it possible for him to move to the city and take up the life of a clubman and bibliophile.

Mrs. Zabriskie died in September 1951. Mr. Case wrote Mr. Zabriskie a note of condolence on her death. Two weeks later came a telegram from Mr. Zabriskie: "If you are at Bard next week, may I call upon you sometime?" Twenty-five days later Mr. Case announced Mr. Zabriskie's gift to the College of his entire 825-acre estate, including the Blithewood mansion, three large barns, two garages, seven tenant houses, a tennis court and a swimming pool. At the time of the gift, the property was valued at a third of a million dollars. "Mr. Zabriskie's magnificent action in deeding his estate to Bard," Mr. Case announced,

> "...marks the turning point in the history of the College. We now have...the opportunity to enlarge our student body, to provide adequate faculty housing and to expand our instructional facilities. Bard College has won wide recognition for its individualized and progressive plan of education, even though handicapped throughout its history by lack of many facilities that other colleges regard as essential. At long last we shall have the things we really need to make our program permanent and effective."[18]

Not only did the College acquire room for expansion by the Zabriskie gift,

but also land related to its own history. For this tract included the original estate of John Bard, from which to found the College in 1860 he had given the central part of the main campus, and the Chapel and Bard Hall. An announcement by the College summarized the history of the estate:

> "The Bard estate was originally included in a vast tract of land purchased in 1660 from the Indians by Colonel Peter Schuyler. One of its previous owners had been John C. Stephens (1805-52) of New York City, a noted yachtsman and sportsman of his day. He was the first to develop the property, and in addition to large racing stables had also a race course, the upper curve of which was the point on which the Chapel now stands. . . . Mr. Bard when he moved up from Hyde Park purchased the estate from Robert Donaldson of North Carolina who had done much to improve and beautify the estate and who apparently was the first to call it "Blithewood." At that time it was widely known as one of the most beautiful estates on the Hudson River. A. J. Downing, the great landscape architect, in a treatise published in 1849 described it as follows:
>
> " 'Blithewood,' the seat of R. Donaldson, Esq. near Barrytown on the Hudson, is one of the most charming villa residences in the Union. The natural scenery here is nowhere surpassed in its enchanting union of softness and dignity, — the river being four miles wide, its placid bosom broken only by islands and gleaming sails, and the horizon grandly closing in with the tall blue summit of the distant Catskills. . . . The smiling gently varied lawn is studded with groups and masses of fine forest and ornamental trees . . . a fine bold stream fringed with rocky banks and dashing over rocky cascades, thirty or forty feet in height and falling altogether a hundred feet in half a mile. . . . In short we can recall no place of moderate extent, where nature and tasteful art are so harmoniously combined to express grace and elegance.
>
> "The estate was renamed 'Annandale' by John Bard in honor of the town in Scotland from which his first wife's ancestors had come. Mr. Zabriskie preferred the name of 'Blithewood' but Annandale continues as the name of the village in which the College is situated.
>
> "It has been said that it had been Mr. Bard's hope to pass on his estate to the College for which he had done so much, but by 1897 his personal financial situation required that the 130 to 140-acre estate be put up for foreclosure sale. The trustees of the College purchased it for an investment. . . . In 1899 . . . they . . . sold the entire property to Andrew C. Zabriskie . . . Mr. Zabriskie's gift includes not only the John Bard estate but the Bartlett estate, the Sands estate and others which Mr. Zabriskie had purchased in his desire to extend his holdings from the Hudson River to the village of Red Hook.
>
> "A good measure of the history of the present estate revolves around the personality of Captain Andrew C. Zabriskie (1853-1916), father of the donor. Born in New York City of an old and well-known family . . . he was for many years an active member of the Seventh Regiment and the 71st Regiment New York National Guard. . . . He was the author of numerous articles on antiquarian and numismatic subjects, and from 1895 to 1905 served as president of the American Numismatic and Archaeological Society. . . . It was Captain Zabriskie who renamed the estate 'Blithewood' as it had been known prior to 1850; who built the large mansion and added barns, carriage houses and greenhouses; who extended the property east of the main highway towards Red Hook, with a winding private road towards the village with stone bridges at the points where it crosses the Sawkill. He is also remembered for the Blithewood light infantry which he organized in 1900, and which was composed of a small group of Red Hook and Rhinebeck men who met on the estate to drill and march. . . . After his death the estate was maintained by his widow, the late Frances Hunter Zabriskie. . . ."[19]

When the Blithewood estate came into the College's possession in 1951, President Case announced that "because of Bard's tradition of democratic community organization, plans for the use and development of the property will offer an unusual opportunity for concerted actions by trustees, faculty, students, parents and alumni. Committees are now being formed through which representatives of all these groups will participate in helping to determine the educational uses to which the land and buildings can most effectively be put."

In the next few years, some of the furniture from Blithewood was sold through the Parke-Bernet galleries in New York. Professor Fite was given the right to sell the blinds from the main house, and to put the money in a fund to purchase mirrors for the sculpture studio. The main house was used for various summer and special programs, and for a nursery school. President Case was entirely correct in anticipating the usefulness of the Zabriskie land for College expansion. The 400 acres lying east of Route 9-G were sold in 1955 for $100,000, but the rest was retained for College needs. Serious development of the property by the College began with the conversion in 1954 — largely by student labor — of the coach house into a theatre and dance studio (destroyed by fire in 1973). The Blithewood mansion became a dormitory for 60 students and in 1958 the Zabriskie meadows became the site of the new 90-student HHFA dormitory (now known as Tewksbury). And in the years since, five studio buildings and eight other dormitories housing 84 students have been built on the land, as well as tennis courts, and water and sewage plants.

Like the Zabriskie gift, Bard's other great philanthropy of the 1950's, the Ford Foundation Grant, came pretty much "out of the blue." Like most other private colleges and universities, Bard over the years had from time to time been making appeals to the Ford Foundation. But these proposals had borne little fruit. Then in 1955, the Ford Foundation announced grants totalling $500 million to all 615 regionally accredited private colleges and universities in the United States.[20] The grants were in support of increase in faculty salaries, and were in two categories: (1) A "basic grant" going to each of the 615 regionally accredited private colleges and universities in the United States, and equaling 90% of the total paid to full-time teachers in 1954-55; and (2) an "accomplishment grant" awarded to only 120 institutions on the first list. The basic grant was to be kept as an endowment fund for at least 10 years and the income used solely in support of an improved salary scale. The accomplishment grant could be used as the institution wished. Bard originally expected to receive $162,000 from the Ford grants, but the

total came finally to $270,000. The Bard board promptly adopted a new faculty salary scale ranging from $3,000 to $8,000 with each full-time faculty member receiving an increase of up to $500.[21]

The third major gift of these years was $100,000 from the estate of John L. Given, Jr., grandson of H. J. Heinz of the Pittsburgh food processing company. Mr. Given's will had included provision for a certain number of philanthropic gifts. Henry L. Scott of Rhinebeck, a concert pianist and private investor, and a Bard trustee, had successfully persuaded the executors of the Given estate to include Bard among the institutions to receive grants under the will. This was one of the largest gifts received up to that time by the College through the efforts of a single trustee.[22]

If the Zabriskie, Ford, and Given grants "came easily," the other great addition to the College's resources in the Case years — the construction of the "New Dorm" — was achieved only with very great effort and difficulty.

The College's enrollment in these years was averaging 225, and 300 was considered about the minimum size for academic and economic viability. An additional dormitory of 90 student capacity was necessary if the College were to have 300 students. And so in 1955, Peter Paul Muller '40, and Sidney Shelov '37, were appointed architects, and application was made to the Housing and Home Finance Agency (HHFA) for a $416,000 loan for the project.

The project was finally brought to fruition four years later, with occupancy of the dormitory by its student residents in February 1959, but in the four-year interval the College encountered every problem that could possibly be experienced in such a project. The bids ran $100,000 above what had been expected, and then the low bidder informed the architect that he had inadvertently left out of his proposal the entire electrical contract, a $40,000 item; when excavations for the building were under way, it was found that the site was deep clay, with a high water table, and that the ground would not support the three-story walls of the proposed building. After considering changing the location of the building or abandoning the project altogether, the trustees decided to go ahead, setting the building on more than 40 wooden piles and increasing the HHFA loan to $600,000. After seemingly endless negotiations among government officials, the banks, the builders, architects, and trustees, the building was finally occupied in February, 1959 (one semester later than planned), but even then it was not completely finished. The College held back its final payment to the contractor until numerous defects were remedied, and litigation over the matter continued for another two years. In the end, though, the effort was worth it, for a year-and-a-half after the dormitory's completion, the College had grown to its full

housing capacity, and even with the addition of further dormitories, there was hardly a vacant room on the campus for the next ten years.

Two other substantial projects of the 1950's — both in the academic area — were the development of the Common Course and the Four Quarter Program.

The Common Course was President Case's most significant piece of academic statesmanship. Conceived and implemented in his early years at Bard, it was proposed while the new president's glamour was still untarnished, while his abilities to perform miracles had just been exemplified in the Zabriskie gift.

Mr. Case chose an impressive forum in which to launch his proposal — the two-day Bard symposium of February, 1952, which was planned as "an examination of the Bard educational program to determine whether there were some things that might be done to increase its effectiveness."[23]

Before a distinguished panel, including Dean Esther Raushenbush of Sarah Lawrence, Dr. T. M. Greene, professor of philosophy at Yale, and Fred M. Hechinger, education editor of the *New York Herald Tribune*, President Case made five proposals:

1. Freeing the trial major conference from the burden of carrying a specific course, and sharpening its responsibility for personal counselling.
2. Promotion to the upper college as soon after two semesters as the student can demonstrate his readiness.
3. A third hour for lower college courses meeting in a single two-hour seminar.
4. Five courses instead of four for students in lower college.
5. A Common Course for all freshmen — a course that would open with the formulation, partly by the students and partly by the faculty, of a whole series of questions dealing with major issues in man's varied activities and interests, — that is, his political, economic and social aims, and the institutions he had devised to further those aims; his artistic, intellectual, religious and moral concerns. No holds are to be barred, nothing would be exempt from inquiry. . . . The course would then plunge into readings dealing . . . with the various areas under scrutiny. From time to time the same questions would be re-examined, and the student would be asked to restate their original answers. . . .[24]

The first four proposals were adopted after lengthy debates in faculty meetings running from March through June. The Common Course proposal proved more difficult. The faculty policy committee had appointed a subcommittee chaired by Theodore Weiss "to report on some immediate steps to be taken." "Mr. Weiss suggested special faculty meetings to suggest topics, meeting in six sessions this semester, divided into two groups, . . . and to use the books of *Job* and Plato's *Republic* . . . . Who would chair these two groups was undetermined . . . ." The faculty did not want for animated discussion on and around these suggestions.

A suggestion that the Common Course for freshmen looks so unpromising that it should be abandoned was lost by unanimous vote. It was then voted that the faculty be divided into two roughly equal groups for six sessions, in which the first session deals with questions and picks out readings for the next session.

Two weeks later it was proposed: "that we should attempt a Common Course, addressed to a treatment of ultimate questions for which we know no ultimate answers."

In a special meeting the next day the faculty voted that

> "The report of the committee on a Common Course for freshmen be tabled until a committee appointed by the president obtain the material . . . and construct a course directed to student interest."[25]

The general plan for the Common Course called for a full-time director, three faculty moderators, and six "faculty-students." It became apparent that this project depended in large part on the abilities and philosophy of the director, and that the course really could not be launched until the director was found.

By fall, a director had been found in the person of Heinrich Bluecher who was appointed professor of philosophy, full time. He was not available until the spring semester of 1953, but did manage to come to Bard two days a week in the fall to meet with faculty and students and to do preparatory work for the launching of the Common Course on an experimental basis in February, 1953.

Heinrich Bluecher (1899-1970) was to be a major force in the intellectual life of the College for the next 17 years. Educated in Berlin and Munich, he had been a consultant in psychological warfare for the U.S. Army and a lecturer at Princeton and the New School. He was married to the distinguished social philosopher, Hannah Arendt.

"Professor Bluecher," President Case wrote in the fall of 1952, "is working quietly and steadily with members of the faculty, exchanging views, trying to anticipate and iron out difficulties, and above all, developing in his own mind and theirs a full and challenging conception . . . of the Common Course . . . . It is now, quite properly, no longer my brainchild, but the growing child of Professor Bluecher and the college faculty."[26]

At the end of his first semester on campus, Professor Bluecher set forth his concept of the Common Course:

> "The first definite concrete content of the Course will be education itself as a problem of self-education of man. The second concrete content will be for each student his own personality, the analysis and evaluation of his own experiences, expectations, inclinations and abilities. The third content of the course will be the teachers. By this I do not mean ourselves, because we shall only play the role of mediators between the students and those whom one might rightly call the teachers of mankind. As such we shall recognize a limited number of 'great men.' Nine such 'great men' have been chosen . . . . They are the original sources of human creative power . . ."[27]

At the end of the first trial semester of the Common Course (Spring of 1953), Mr. Bluecher reported that though "it is still too early to judge the success or failure of the Course, he does feel that there are several indications of some degree of success! There are many discussions in the sections, between 'believers' and 'non-believers,' which have established fields of cooperation out of the differences. In several cases, students have been able to find their own 'constellation' through acquiring a better understanding of the interrelations of the fields of knowledge . . . . Several non-Common Course instructors have reported that Common Course students have improved in their classes due to the stimulus they received from the Common Course."[28]

Beginning in the fall of 1953 the Common Course was a full-year course. For the next ten to fifteen years it was, for many students, the most significant intellectual experience of their college years. The Course built up a "mystique" of its own, so that even in Professor Bluecher's later years, when his powers had begun to dim, students still were sure they were experiencing all that the "legend" had told them was there.

Professor Bluecher and his colleagues continued to offer the Common Course until his retirement in 1967. He died in 1970, and his wife, at her death in 1975, bequeathed to the College their joint library of 5,000 volumes, an outstanding collection in the field of social philosophy and the humanities.

The other major academic enterprise of the administration and faculty in the 1950's was the Four Quarter Program, a plan for operating the College year-round with four terms or "quarters," with one segment of the student body being engaged in independent study or other off-campus activity in every quarter. Such programs would seem to offer a college the chance to enroll 25% more students than its physical capacity, since a quarter or so of the students are off-campus in any given term.

At the March 7, 1958, trustees' meeting, President Case, after noting that the College was currently running annual deficits of $150,000 to $200,000, proposed a three-point program to meet the situation:

> First, a campaign to raise $200,000 by May 1;
>
> Second, moving as fast as possible toward the adoption of the Four Quarter Plan;
>
> Third, securing an underwriting of our operations from some strong dependable source, — eg. affiliation with the State University or New York University.

He made the same proposals to the College faculty five days later, and after some discussion the faculty unanimously voted:

> The faculty of Bard Collge, in accordance with a belief in experimentation, enthusiastically endorses a study of the four quarter program. If from the study it seems feasible, the faculty will put into effect in the next college year a pilot study, incorporating the significant features of the four quarter system, with the hope that this exploration will lead to the assumption of such a program.[29]

The program was much discussed in subsequent faculty meetings. Consideration was given to the length of the quarters (four of twelve weeks each); the teaching loads of faculty members; and the advisability of accelerated schedules (students to graduate after two years and nine months residence instead of the traditional three years and nine months). The faculty then voted to introduce a pilot operation of the salient features of the four quarter program in September 1958 and, if that proved satisfactory, to follow with a general College-wide four quarter program in September 1960.[30]

The College had applied to the Ford Foundation for a grant of $25,000 to underwrite the pilot operation of the four quarter program, and at the June 20 trustees meeting, two days after the faculty's action, Mr. Case interrupted the discussion to report that the Foundation had granted half the amount asked for — $13,000, covering the cost of visiting educational consultants to evaluate the pilot program, and the salaries of faculty who would do extra work, but not the cost of a placement office for jobs for the students in their off-campus semesters.

The pilot operation was launched in September, 1958. There was student opposition. The campus newspaper, *The Bardian* (revived after a lapse of two years) led the attack:

> "As the unrealistic aspects of the present Pilot Program are becoming clear, it is increasingly obvious that the proposed Four Quarter Program, if adopted, will eliminate from this campus the exceptional academic and non-academic features that have been the reason for many students having come to Bard. What will result is a factory system where much learning will occur in a traditional manner that will emphasize coverage rather than discussion and creativity. While the administration has 'assured' us that a primary consideration will be the maintenance of the positive attributes of Bard, it is apparent that little more than financial incentive is pervading the experiments and plans now in progress. And it may well be that the Four Quarter device may improve the economic state of the College. But the result academically will be to establish on this campus a new college, as different from the present Bard as the latter differs from St. Stephen's. Indeed it is difficult if not impossible to conceive of the academic community with self-governance functioning under such a system as is proposed. The continuity of campus life will certainly be destroyed, as a transient student body and faculty will have little interest in maintaining a Council, an Educational Policies Committee, or club cultural programs . . ."[31]

The evaluators appointed for the pilot operation were Alonzo F. Myers,

Chairman of the Department of Higher Education at N.Y.U., and W. Boyd Alexander, Vice-President of Antioch College. They made several visits to Bard in the fall of 1958, and at the May 1959 faculty meeting presented their evaluation of the pilot program fall and winter "quarters." On the basis of the evaluators' report and their own further discussion, the faculty at their May 9 meeting voted for a new plan with two rather conventional fifteen-week semesters in spring and fall, and two seven-week semesters in summer and mid-winter. The latter program was launched in February 1960 and the summer program the following July. The mid-winter sessions continued for three years.

The tensions surrounding the last year of Mr. Case's presidency, and leading to his resignation, prevented the four quarter program from having the careful implementation and fair trial that it deserved. It was a highly intelligent and promising approach to many problems being faced by American colleges and universities. The scheme was more difficult than it looked, and its problems proved almost insurmountable even to some of the strongest institutions that tried it, e.g. the Universities of Pittsburgh and Beloit. But though little came of it in the end, Bard's engagement with the program was not wasted effort. The project brought Bard into serious confrontation with some of the basic problems of higher education, such as the nature of the academic year, relationship of on-campus and off-campus learning, and the time span of the total college course and of the individual learning unit. It was a good learning experience for the College and its staff — time and energy well spent.

The most successful special program of the nineteen fifties burst upon the College suddenly, was launched with minimal preparation time, and was over before many people knew it had begun. This was the Hungarian student program of 1956-57. Probably nothing else the College ever did elicited such total cooperation and approval, or left the College and its surrounding community with such genuine self-respect for having risen nobly and effectively to a great human need.

In the fall of 1956, the people of Hungary rebelled against Russian domination of their country, and the rebellion was speedily suppressed by Soviet power. Soon thereafter refugee Hungarian students began to arrive in this country. Responding to a November 27 letter sent by international educational bodies to American colleges and universities, asking for scholarships for Hungarian students, President Case — after consulting with the faculty — offered Bard's facilities and staff for a mid-winter orientation program for Hungarian students. Bard's special advantage was that it had a plant and staff

that were normally unused during the field period, and the College had had years of experience with foreign student programs.

The Bard offer was promptly taken up, with the result that Hungarian students began arriving on the Bard campus December 22 and continued coming until their number totalled 325. This was a situation that tugged at people's heartstrings and the response was like nothing else the College had ever experienced. Financial support was almost instantly secured from the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. A 20-booth speech laboratory was installed on the campus in a week by a New York firm. And in another week a team from Columbia had come to Bard and prepared tapes and drill exercises for English sounds that were particulary troublesome for Hungarians. Local hospitals and doctors came through with health and dental care.

"Unknown to us," the project report states, "a Mr. and Mrs. William Walsh of Poughkeepsie canvassed the shoe stores of that city and brought to the campus a sizeable shipment of new footwear. A truck from Manhattan College delivered over half a ton of second-hand clothing . . . bundles and gift packages of clothing of every description began to arrive . . . we received a shipment of new slacks and underwear from Macy's . . . . The president of the Great A & P Tea Company . . . gave an order to our nearest A & P store to supply us with 200 cartons of cigarettes . . . . Our Catholic Chaplain, Father Killian . . . asked for a truck and a few helpers and proceeded to Kingston where he bought $300 worth of suitcases, footlockers and duffle bags. On the day of departure, each student was equipped with at least one decent piece of luggage . . . ."

The Hungarian group was 85% male, ranging in age from 16 to 39. Some had not completed the equivalent of an American high school, and there were others with professional degrees in law, medicine, engineering, and the like. The primary objective of the Bard program was to teach English. A staff of nearly 40 persons was assembled, mostly Bard people, and a program organized of daily lectures on the English language, two daily 10-student intensive drill sessions in English, three speech lab periods per week, along with lectures on American life, movies, field trips, and evening social affairs.

> ". . . we arranged for a party in the gymnasium which was festively decorated with two big Christmas trees and candle lights. The entire College community participated. Each student received gifts of chocolates and cigarettes, and refreshments were served. The high point of the evening was the arrival of Santa Claus, who greeted each student individually and presented him with a gift envelope containing $5 . . . Santa Claus then led the American community in singing Christmas carols, and the Hungarians sang their native Christmas songs. It was moving to see how spontaneously and

> fervently they entered into the spirit of the occasion, though many students were under evident emotional strain. When they discovered that Santa Claus was no less a personage than the President of the College, they hoisted him on their shoulders and carried him amidst cheers throughout the gymnasium . . . . At the conclusion of the party we were told that the students also had a gift for us. They rose and in somewhat halting voices, sang the first verse of the Star Spangled Banner. They had spent hours in memorizing the difficult lines and melody. It was an emotion-packed moment which none of those present will ever forget . . . .
>
> ". . . the last evening of the program, the students expressed their deep and lasting appreciation and gratitude with a thrilling torch-light procession to the homes of the president, the director and staff members. Amidst songs, speeches and vivas, they presented us with a beautiful hand-painted scroll which reads:
>
> "We three hundred freedom-loving Hungarian students who have become refugees and have found generous hospitality at Bard College from December 22, 1956 until February 25, 1957, wish to express our most sincere appreciation for the tremendous efforts exerted by the Bard community in order to orient themselves to us Hungarian students; furthermore, for learning our language, and for having shown an understanding for us beyond the call of duty during the entire Hungarian Student Orientation Program.
>
> "In recognition thereof, and acting by the authority vested in us by ourselves, we confer the title of
>
> HONORARY HUNGARIAN RECTOR MAGNIFICUS
>
> on
>
> President James H. Case, Jr.
>
> and on
>
> Director William Frauenfelder
>
> Furthermore, the title of
>
> HONORARY HUNGARIAN COLLEGE DEAN
>
> on
>
> Athletic Director William M. Asip
>
> and on
>
> Professor Robert Koblitz
>
> Last but not least we confer the title of
>
> HONORARY HUNGARIAN COLLEGE PROFESSOR
>
> on all Bard teachers and instructors who thought that they could teach us the English Language.
>
> February 27, 1957"

If the acquisition of adjacent land and the receipt of major gifts and grants and the carrying-through of academic and foreign student programs strengthened the College, it must also be said that at the time counter forces pulled in the opposite direction.

Chief among these was the College's continuing financial precariousness all through the 1950's. Annual operating deficits tended to run around $150,000 or more. (It was both ironical and symptomatic that President Case

at his first meeting as president with the board found that the deficit which he had been told was $40,000, was actually nearer $100,00, and that he at that point had the board convert the endowment fund's securities into cash.)

The heart of the College's trouble in these years was that it was too small in size for the program it was trying to offer. In the face of the steadily rising costs of the post-war years, and the additions that had been made to the College's program, enrollment for the Case years averaged about 50 less than in the four years of his predecessor. With deficits running about $150,000 per year on a $600,000 budget, there was a continual cash-flow problem, so that no matter for what purpose money was raised or given, it always had to go to plug holes in the operating account.

An atmosphere of hopelessness resulted, a feeling that the College might not be here much longer, that nothing mattered because there was no tomorrow, no future anyway — *Gotterdammerung*. This atmosphere made careful planning and long-range thinking almost impossible and produced a climate of sickness. One manifestation was the nearly pathological obsession with social regulations which occupied an almost inexcusable portion of the time and energies of the administration and the student governing bodies. Another manifestation was the wearing down of the president, who was frequently sick in the last half of his term, and away from his work, and replaced by an acting president for most of a semester in 1958.

The year 1959 saw what was almost "an all-time low" in campus morale. A factor here was a series of fires, almost certainly incendiary and culminating in a spectacular blaze which totally destroyed Orient Hall in hardly more than minutes. Fortunately it was at dinner time (5:55 p.m.) and there were only two students in the building, both of whom managed to escape. One was a partially paralyzed student who usually got around in a wheel-chair. Not having his wheel-chair that afternoon, he had to drag himself across the floor to get out. Since the main college heating plant was in Orient basement, it was necessary to close the College for the few days remaining before Spring vacation, during which temporary heating facilities were gotten into operation. But the community was very jittery, and for some weeks faculty patrolled the campus at night in volunteer fire-watch details.

But President Case's most serious problem was that of exacerbated personal relations, especially with the faculty. This led to one filing of formal charges by the faculty against the president, one vote of censure, and the final vote of no-confidence in 1959, which led to President Case's resignation.

The formal charges, 11 in number, were filed in connection with the

financial crisis of 1954. They centered on the accusation that the president was responsible for the recent financial crisis, through his over-optimism in budgeting, his unwillingness to cut the budget, and his poor financial judgment — for example, in liquidating the endowment fund. He was charged with too little regard for Bard as it is, with changes undertaken without consultation with the faculty, and with not enough cultivation of social relations with the faculty.[32]

After two meetings for discussion, the faculty voted that a faculty-trustee committee be set up to examine the whole matter.

The committee — consisting of Miss Andrus, Mrs. Chapman, and Mr. Reese from the trustees; and Dean Bourne and Professors Sottery and Tremblay from the faculty, with William G. Avirett, a former teacher and administrator (subsequently appointed chairman) — held three full meetings, and more of a sub-committee, and issued a twelve-page report. The report called for membership of faculty on the board, consideration of the appointment of a dean of the faculty and an assistant to the president, and more effective use of existing machinery for administration-faculty consultation. After studying this report, the faculty on March 15, 1955 gave the president a vote of confidence by a vote of 16 to 2 with three abstentions.

The censure case in 1956 concerned a leave of absence which Professor Fite took with the president's approval, the leave originally to be for the first three weeks of the spring 1956 semester. Mr. Fite did not return until May 1, after an absence of ten weeks. Holding that Professor Fite and the president should have notified the division when Mr. Fite received a grant that would extend his absence beyond the original three weeks, and that the president should have made arrangements to employ a replacement, the faculty voted a censure of both the president and Professor Fite.[33]

The third faculty-administration crisis was the most serious. In the fall of 1959, the AAUP made three requests of the president: an increase in the College's contribution to TIAA from 5% to 10%, retroactive to July 1, 1959; a 10% salary increase beginning January 1, 1960; and the institution of a sabbatical plan by June 1, 1960.

President Case replied:

> "For the last three years I have been convinced that our hope lay in exploiting our hundredth anniversary and mounting a capital campaign . . . How rapidly we can obtain substantial funds is difficult to estimate . . . but until we have obtained the necessary funds to assure the successful operation of the College through the academic year 1960-61, I cannot recommend any additional benefits to the board of trustees."[34]

The AAUP continued to press the matter, and Dr. Carman, chairman of

the Board of Trustees, sent William Walsh, a local trustee, to represent the board at the December 2 faculty meeting,[35] at which a motion of no-confidence in the president was expected. After introducing Mr. Walsh, President Case left the meeting, and Professor Crane, as chairman of the faculty committee on academic policy, took the chair. Mr. Walsh, Mr. Gummere (director of admissions), and Mr. Woodruff (newly appointed vice-president and director of development) spoke at length on the difficulties the president had been facing and the complexity of the problems before him.

But it was too late. Ever since 1956 Mr. Case had been speaking of the Centennial Year, in which the College would seize the initiative of the anniversary, and triumphantly put its case before the world.

The Centennial Year was now 29 days away, and as one of the College's consultants had put it:

> "no money has been raised
> no committee has been created
> no motion has been made."[36]

Following discussion, the faculty voted no-confidence in the president 32 to 9.

On motion by Professor Tremblay, the faculty then voted:

> "... that the faculty realizes that the simple record of a vote, such as that taken today on the question of no-confidence in President Case, is a grossly inadequate representation of a complex situation, and therefore wishes to add the following considerations to that record:
>
> "The actions that led to the present vote grew spontaneously from a consensus of opinions on the general state of the College, that were in most cases, long and seriously considered. The actions of the faculty were deemed necessary in its considered judgement, for the best interests of the College, and have never been in intent, actions against President Case. Every effort has been made to proceed openly, and to protect President Case and the College from publicity which could only have been harmful. It is in this spirit that we have twice instructed delegates to urge that the situation could best be met by the President's resignation, effective at a time determined after due consideration of his welfare and that of the College, and we here reiterate that opinion.
>
> "The faculty clearly recognizes President Case's devotion to the College, and his many valuable contributions to it. In insisting that the College needs new leadership we recognize that this may well be chiefly due to the fact that the problems of the College during President Case's administration were too great to be faced successfully by the same man. The faculty most strongly urges that in the event of President Case's resignation, the board of trustees grant him at least a year of severance pay, and that this should be looked upon as a partial discharge of the College's obligations for his long and devoted service. . . ."

Mr. Case resigned effective January 15, 1960. Mr. Woodruff was appointed Acting President. Mr. Case and his family moved shortly after Christmas to New York City where he took a position as Director-General of the English Speaking Union. Following his resignation as president of Bard,

he was elected a trustee of the College, but resigned that position four months later. He received an honorary doctorate at Bard's 1960 Commencement.

Dr. Case subsequently served as Executive Director of the President's Committee on the Need for Publicly Supported Higher Education in the District of Columbia.

He died July 11, 1965.

James Case was highly intelligent. He was eloquent, lucid, and persuasive, both as a speaker and as a writer. He was a gifted phrase-maker, for example his "A little college is a dangerous thing" — by which he summed up the creative and destructive dynamics of the small institution; — or his apt characterization of Bard as an "uncommon college." He understood colleges, and had strong experience in administration, teaching, and finance.

But he did not always recognize the necessity that a broad intellectualized concept be implemented by day-by-day practical steps. He was therefore continually disappointing the college community by announcing things that never came to pass, by calling out the troops for wars that were never fought.

Yet the College's situation was improved through the decade of his presidency. In a way, the 1950's were the turning point in its hundred-year history, and when he left, Bard had had 15 years of experience operating as a fully independent coeducational college; through the Zabriskie gift and the construction of the New Dorm it had increased its student capacity by 150, and had acquired the land for all foreseeable future expansion and needs.

Now at last the way was open before it for the College to develop in the directions of its own choice.

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In 1960 the College had completed 100 years of life. In fulfillment of the purpose of its founding, it had over that first century given college training to 650 men who had gone on to become ordained clergy of the Episcopal Church. And in accordance with the widened purposes adopted two years after its opening it had also, in that first century, educated a growing proportion of students who went on to roles in life other than the ministry: it had had a significance and impact out of all proportion to its size.

In the 1920's and 1930's, especially through the writings and speaking of B. I. Bell, the College effectively proclaimed to the whole world that education must deal with ultimate values. Those institutions that settle for less, thundered B. I., are guilty of "taking able youth, capable of high adventure, and turning out mental and ethical jellyfish."[37]

Then under the guidance of Donald Tewksbury and in association with Columbia University, and with a growing experimental and progressive emphasis, and in company with half a dozen like institutions, Bard seized upon the current new insights into the learning process, and upon them built new strategies of college education.

And in the 40 years leading up to 1960, Bard was one of a tiny group of colleges and universities which led the way in giving full curricular status to the creative and performing arts.

A factor in all of this was the presence of the Episcopal Church, which had founded and sustained the College and obtained for it its land and buildings. Much of the time the Church was taken for granted, often ignored, occasionally resented, sometimes grudgingly respected, now and then honored. But with all the changes of climate in this relationship over the years, a major religious communion made an important contribution to the work of higher education through this college.

And all the while, amidst these changes, the College was serving not just its own institutional interests, nor just the educational interests of its students, but the larger interests of all colleges everywhere, and the whole society.

Indeed, by its very diversity the College had learned to be flexible, to accept change, whether in curriculum or social mores. These were qualities which enabled it to survive and grow.

And these were qualities that would serve it well in the turbulent decades to follow, when "education for the common good" took on new meanings.