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COLLEGE LITERARY SOCIETIES IN VIRGINIA

IN MAKING this brief study of the college literary societies in Virginia my object has been to find out the fundamental working plan of each society and to compile the data so that anyone interested in literary societies could find at a glance the facts he wished.

Of the twenty-one colleges in Virginia four have no literary societies. These are Fredericksburg State Teachers College, Hollins College, Randolph-Macon Woman's College, and Westhampton College.

The societies that responded were:

Bridgewater College

Victorian Literary Society

Virginia Lee Literary Society

East Radford State Teachers College

Ingles Literary Society

Pocahontas Literary Society

Emory and Henry College

Calliopean Literary Society

Hermesian Literary Society

Farmville State Teachers College

Argus Literary Society

Athenian Literary Society

Cunningham Literary Society

Jefferson Literary Society

Pierian Literary Society

Ruffner Literary Society

Hampden-Sidney College

Philanthropic Literary Society

Union Literary Society

Harrisonburg State Teachers College

Alpha Literary Society

Lanier Literary Society

Lee Literary Society

Page Literary Society

Lynchburg College

Platonian Literary Society

Urania Literary Society

Victorian Literary Society

Virginian Literary Society

Randolph-Macon College

Washington Literary Society

Roanoke College

Demosthenian Literary Society

Sweet Briar College

Tau Phi

University of Richmond

Mu Sigma Rho

Philologian Literary Society

University of Virginia

Jefferson Literary Society

Washington Literary Society

Virginia Intermont College

Eoline Literary Society

Virginia Military Institute

Jackson Literary Society

Virginia Polytechnic Institute

Lee Literary Society

Maury Literary Society

Washington and Lee University

Graham-Lee Literary Society

College of William and Mary

Philomathean Literary Society

Phoenix Literary Society

Answers were received from all except five of the forty-five questionnaires sent out. Every questionnaire did not have every question answered, but listed below are the questions asked and a summary of the various answers received.

I. How are members selected?

Twenty-three of the societies have the candidates apply for membership, eleven

select them by bids, while two use both methods.

2. *How many votes defeat a candidate?*

In six societies a majority vote defeats a candidate, in six other societies the vote must be unanimous for the candidate before he is elected to membership, while in six other societies there is no voting on the candidate. In four societies one-third of the members can keep out a candidate, in three societies one-fourth of the members, in one society three-fourths, in another any marked opposition, and in two societies each, one-third of the votes cast, two votes, and one-fifth of the members on roll.

In the Virginia Lee Society, Bridgewater College, one vote defeats an honorary application and two votes defeat an active membership application.

In the Graham-Lee Literary Society, Washington and Lee University, the candidate must be passed on by the judiciary board and then passed by a majority vote of the society.

In the Jackson Literary Society, Virginia Military Institute, the open forum method is used. The membership is not limited since the society is for the good of all interested men.

3. *Why do you prefer this method?*

A. Those that select members by bids.

Two societies consider it the best means of selecting the most capable and interested people. Two more claim that it upholds the standards of the society. One society thinks it fair, another thinks it keeps up interest and puts more life in the society, and another that it is a process of eliminating undesirables. In one society the bid method is used because it is the custom of the society.

B. Those that select members by application.

Seven societies claim it is the most democratic method of obtaining members, two that it keeps out uninterested people, one uses it because it is fair and simple, and two

because the best results are obtained this way.

C. Those that select members by both bids and applications.

One society claims this to be the most democratic method, while another holds that the most satisfactory results are obtained by this means.

Hampden-Sidney College and Randolph-Macon College each requires of each applicant for a bachelor's degree at least one year's training in literary society work.

At Harrisonburg State Teachers College the Alpha Literary Society was established for the purpose of training girls who were sufficiently interested to make application for membership. At least one quarter's work in the Alpha Literary Society is required of a girl before she is eligible for membership in any of the other three literary societies on the campus.

4. *What are other qualifications for membership?*

In sixteen societies any student of good standing who is enrolled in college is eligible for membership, while two societies put only the limitation that the applicant must not have been a member of any other society on the campus.

A. Grades.

Three societies demand only college requirements, six require an average of C, two require an average of C with nothing below C on English, one asks that the student have nothing below C, and another will not accept a student who is on probation.

B. Previous training in college.

To one society only Juniors and Seniors are admitted. One society requires that the student be in college at least twenty-eight days and another society that he be in college one term.

The Lee, Lanier, and Page Literary Societies of Harrisonburg State Teachers College require at least one quarter's training in the Alpha Literary Society before a girl is eligible for membership.

C. Age.

The only requirement in age is the college requirement.

D. Social standing.

The only specific requirement along this line is at Sweet Briar College. Here they ask that a girl take some prominent part in college activities before she becomes a member of the literary society.

5. *Is attendance at meetings compulsory?*

Twenty-three societies compel the members to attend meetings. This is usually done with the reservation that the members may be excused by the president, when they offer a satisfactory excuse. Ten societies do not require regular attendance at meetings.

At Hampden-Sidney College two-thirds

of the meetings must be attended for three years to receive credit on a degree.

In the Maury Literary Society at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute it is required that members attend fifty per cent of the meetings.

6. *Is there a fine for non-attendance?*

Twenty-two societies charge a fine and eleven do not.

7. *How much is the fine?*

The fines range from ten cents to fifty cents, but the average fine is around twenty-five cents. For variation in fines see Table I.

In the Hermesian Literary Society at Emory and Henry College the fine is twenty-five cents a roll call. The roll is called at the opening and close of each meeting?

TABLE I—FINES AND DUES IN VIRGINIA COLLEGE LITERARY SOCIETIES

<i>Name of Society</i>	<i>Dues</i>	<i>Fine for Non-Attendance</i>
BRIDGEWATER		
Victorian	No dues	25 cents (a)
Virginia Lee	\$1 on membership	
	\$1 each year	15 cents (b)
EAST RADFORD		
Ingles	\$1.50 a year	10 cents (a)
Pocahontas	\$1.50 new members	
	\$1 old members	
EMORY AND HENRY		
Calliopean	\$5 initiation fee	
	\$2 every five months	25 cents
Hermesian	\$5 initiation fee	
	\$3 each year	25 cents (c)
FARMVILLE		
Argus	\$1	25 cents
Athenian	\$1 entrance	
	10 cents a month	10 cents
Cunningham	90 cents a year	10 cents
Jefferson	90 cents nine months	
Pierian	\$1 initiation	
	30 cents a term	
Ruffner	\$1.25 new members	
	75 cents old members	25 cents
HAMPDEN-SIDNEY		
Philanthropic	\$3 initiation	
	\$3 a year	
Union	\$3 initiation	
	\$3 a year	

HARRISONBURG

Alpha	75 cents a year	25 cents (a)
Lanier	75 cents a year	25 cents (a)
Lee	75 cents a year	25 cents (a)
Page	75 cents a year	25 cents (a)

LYNCHBURG

Platonian	\$1.50 per nine months	10-50 cts. (usually 25 cts.)
Urania	20 cents a month	
Victorian	\$1.35 a year	25 cents
Virginian	\$2 initiation	
	10 cents a month	25 cts. (50 cts if on prog'm)

RANDOLPH-MACON

Washington	\$4 a year	10-50 cents
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RICHMOND

Mu Sigma Rho	\$2 a year	
Philologian	\$2.75 a year	50 cents

ROANOKE

Demosthenian	50 cents per semester	
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SWEET BRIAR

Tau Phi	\$1 initiation	
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UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

Jefferson	\$2 initiation	
	\$3 a year	\$1 for four meetings
Washington	\$2 initiation	
	\$3 a year	

VIRGINIA INTERMONT

Eoline	\$1.50	25 cents
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V. P. I.

Lee	\$2.50 a year	25 cents
Maury	50 cents initiation	
	\$1.50 a year	

WASHINGTON AND LEE

Graham-Lee	\$2 a year	25 cents
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WILLIAM AND MARY

Philomathean	\$4 a year	
Phoenix	\$1 a year	

NOTES:

- (a) If not excused by the president.
- (b) When not on program.
- (c) For each roll call. The roll is called at the opening and close of each meeting.

8. *How much are dues?*

The initiation fee runs from fifty cents to five dollars and the regular dues per year range from seventy-five cents to four dollars, while two societies have no dues at all. For specific dues see Table I.

9. *What are the dues used for?*

The dues are generally used for the general upkeep of the society. Other things for which they are used are support of college paper, support of college membership in Virginia Oratorical Association, to help send

delegates to Blue Ridge Conference, representation in college annual, and dues to Intercollegiate Debate Council.

10. *Is there a course of study made out for the entire year?*

Only seven societies have courses of study made out for the entire year and only three have them made out for one quarter.

11. *Is there a general theme running through the programs for the entire year?*

Eleven societies have their programs planned in this way. Two societies have general themes for one quarter. One society is striving for this, but as yet has not been able to establish it as a custom.

12. *How do members respond to programs? (Check one.)*

Enthusiastically—Twenty.

Indifferently—Seven.

Poorly—One.

Eight presidents added the note that their members responded half way between enthusiastically and indifferently.

13. *How do visitors respond to programs? (Check one.)*

Enthusiastically—Eighteen.

Indifferently—Seven.

Poorly—One.

No visitors are allowed to attend the meetings of four societies.

14. *May I have a copy of a typical program?*

See Table II, which follows:

TABLE II

TYPICAL PROGRAMS OF THE LITERARY SOCIETIES OF
THE COLLEGES OF VIRGINIA

BRIDGEWATER COLLEGE

Victorian

I

Story
Current events
Essay
Reading
Music

II

(Musical Program)

Song by Society

Piano solo

Violin solo

Orchestra

Duet

III

A debate once a month on some present day question.

Virginia Lee

Orchestra—two selections

Origin of Valentine

Pantomime—"Annie Laurie"

Declamation

Vocal solo

EAST RADFORD STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE

Pocahontas

I

"Red Skin Maid"

Devotionals

"Indian Love Song"

Piano duet

"Hiawatha's Melody of Love"

(dramatization)

Pocahontas reviews work of society

Talk—"Our Vision"

War dance

II

Society song

Devotionals

Discussion of the work of the State Legislature

Duet

Reading

Piano solo

Debate

Dance—the minuet

EMORY AND HENRY COLLEGE

Calliopean

Extemporaneous speech

Declamation

First oration

Debate

Final oration

Hermesian

Reading

Declamation

Debate

Oration

FARMVILLE STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE

Cunningham

Pledge service

Valentine story

Valentine poem
 "The Origin of St. Valentine's Day"

HAMPDEN-SIDNEY COLLEGE

Philanthropic

Declamations
 Debate
 Essays
 (Sometimes an open forum is held)

Union

Declamations
 Essays
 Debate

HARRISONBURG STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE

Alpha

Study of children's literature
 Brief summary of the high spots in the life
 of Joel Chandler Harris
 Dramatization of:
 "How Mr. Rabbit Was Too Sharp For
 Mr. Fox"
 "Mr. Rabbit Nibbles Up The Butter"
 "Mr. Rabbit Finds His Match at Last"

Lanier

Book review
 Vocal solo
 Play review
 Piano solo
 Book review
 Open forum

Lee

Review of Mary Johnston's Life
 Piano solo
 Characteristics of Mary Johnston's works
 Review of "To Have And To Hold"
 Extemporaneous speech: "The Charm Of
 Mary Johnston As A Novelist"

Page

The humorous side of Thomas Nelson Page
 Reading: "The Proposal"
 Dramatization of "The 1926 Version Of
 Lochinvar"
 Page Song

LYNCHBURG COLLEGE

Platonian

Biography of Robert Frost
 Selections from Robert Frost
 Estimate of Frost
 "The Mind In The Making"—James Har-
 vey Robinson
 Extemporaneous numbers

Urania

Scottish literature
 A Scottish reading

"Coming Through The Rye"
 Burns as a poet
 A Scottish ballad
 "Annie Laurie"
 A Scottish dialogue
 The Scottish poem

RANDOLPH-MACON COLLEGE

Washington

Oration
 Essay
 Declamation
 Debate

ROANOKE COLLEGE

Demosthenean

Reading
 Declamation
 Current events
 Extemporaneous speech
 Oration
 Debate
 Essay

UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND

Mu Sigma Rho

Current events
 Declamation
 Reading
 Debate

Philologist

Reading
 Declamation
 Oration
 Debate

UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

Jefferson

(Centennial Celebration Program)
 Organ prelude
 Invocation—Rev. W. K. Smith
 The President of the society—Mr. Fred H.
 Quarles, Jr.
 Organ selection
 The President of the University—Dr. Ed-
 win A. Alderman
 Organ selection
 The Guest of Honor—Senator Oscar W.
 Underwood
 Organ postlude
 Prof. Harry Rogers Pratt at the organ.

Washington

Cleopatra
 "The Intimate Papers of Colonel House"
 Debate

VIRGINIA INTERMONT COLLEGE

Eoline

Vocal solo
Reading
Piano or violin solo
Debate

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

Lee

Debate
Reading
Short talk
Impromptu speech

Maury

Reading
Jokes
Debate
Current events
Declamation or oration
Extemporaneous speech or talk by faculty member

WASHINGTON AND LEE UNIVERSITY

Graham-Lee

Current events
Declamation or extemporaneous talk
Debate

COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY

Philomathean

Lecture—Prof. Babcock
Typical poems of Browning
Impersonation
"How to Make a Million on the Stock Market"
"Interesting Journeys Into the Atom"

15. *Is the critic a student or faculty advisor?*

Thirty-three societies have student critics, one has a faculty critic, another has both student and faculty critics, and one has no critic at all.

In one instance the critic is the out-going president, in another he is either a Junior or a Senior, in another he is a Senior, and in another he is a post-graduate student.

16. *Do members seem to profit by this criticism?*

Thirty-one presidents think that the members profit by this criticism a great deal, and four others think that they profit by it to some extent.

17. *What is the big aim of the society?*

Here the greatest variation in any answer was shown. I am quoting some of the outstanding aims.

"The big aim of our literary society is to train in efficient writing and public speaking." Philologian Society, University of Richmond.

"The big aim of the society is the end of personal improvement and mutual benefit through development of mental, moral, and social faculties." Virginia Lee Society, Bridgewater College.

"The big aim of the society is to develop leadership that will help our girls make successful leaders in whatever phase of life they undertake." Ingles Society, East Radford State Teachers College.

"The big aim of the society is to give its members an opportunity for training along literary lines. It tries to supply the needs in a college girl's life that are not met otherwise. It gives the members an opportunity to express themselves and encourages them in the development of originality." Pocahontas Society, East Radford State Teachers College.

"The chief aim of the society is to develop within the student the powers of thought, reason, or imagination he may possess; it is to develop within him the latent fires of oratory and eloquence, to give him free scope in debating, to develop within him the art of public speaking that he may be able to think and express himself clearly on his feet before an audience." Hermesian Society, Emory and Henry College.

"The big aim of the society is intellectual improvement, social enjoyment, and a knowledge of parliamentary usages." Argus Society, Farmville State Teachers College.

"The aim of this society is to foster interest in current literary topics and to give each member an opportunity for self-expression." Athenian Society, Farmville State Teachers College.

"The aim of our society is to foster interest in and an appreciation of the best literature, to encourage initiative and leadership among the students." Cunningham Society, Farmville State Teachers College.

"1. To prepare teachers to organize literary societies.

"2. To make a study of literary types." Jefferson Society, Farmville State Teachers College.

"The big aim is to encourage and promote literary excellence among the members of this society." Pierian Society, Farmville State Teachers College.

"The big aims are to develop leadership, a taste for literature, public speaking, and foster school spirit." Ruffner Society, Farmville State Teachers College.

"For a B. S. or B. A. degree, the college requires each student to take an active part in at least one year's literary work. If working only for this credit the student may either declaim, debate, do essay work, or orate. If, however, he desires to work for two hours' credit on his degree, he must take part in three year's work in the literary society. This means he must declaim, debate, and do essay work in his freshman, sophomore, and junior years, respectively. Or, if he starts work his sophomore year he may debate, do essay work, and orate." Philanthropic Society, Hampden-Sidney College.

"The aim of the society is to train girls who will later become members of the other literary societies on the campus." Alpha Society, Harrisonburg State Teachers College.

"The aim of the society is to further literary standards of the school." Lanier Society, Harrisonburg State Teachers College.

"For the promotion of general interests in literary culture, and for our mutual advancement in practical literary work." Lee Society, Harrisonburg State Teachers College.

"The big aim of the society is to train its members in public speaking and to create

sportsmanship of a high standard." Page Society, Harrisonburg State Teachers College.

" believing that the future of our country depends largely upon her young men, and believing that the training afforded by a literary society can have much to do with equipping them for citizenship, we do band ourselves together " Platonian Society, Lynchburg College.

"The aim of the society is to help cultivate our intellects, and improve our talents in such a manner that we may meet the requirements of society, grasp the opportunities of life, develop character and manhood, secure happiness, and promote the general welfare of man by becoming proficient in reading, debating, composing, declaiming, public speaking, and oratory." Virginian Society, Lynchburg College.

"Individuality, originality, promptness, loyalty, and sincerity are the things which Victoria tries to give to each member." Victoria Society, Lynchburg College.

"The aim is to promote interest in art, literature, and science and encourage achievement in each." Tau Phi, Sweet Briar College.

"The aim of the society is to try to stimulate an intellectual curiosity among the students and give the men a chance to attain the necessary obliteration of ego—so requisite to the development of the real speaker." Jacksonian Society, Virginia Military Institute.

"We do declare ourselves an association for the mutual improvement in elocution, composition, and in debate, and for enlarging our general information, in the pursuit of which objects, we desire to maintain a due consideration for the opinion and feelings of others, to maintain a perfect command of temper in our intercourse, and to seek for truth in all our exercises." Maury Society, Virginia Polytechnic Institute.

It is evident that the aims of the societies meet the needs of the special groups of stu-

dents at each type of college. The outstanding difference seems to be between the men's and the women's societies. The chief aim of the men's literary societies seems to be to train the students for public speaking, while the chief aim of the women's literary societies seems to be to keep the students in touch with the current trend of literature.

In making this brief survey of the college literary societies of Virginia, I have noticed some interesting facts, which are listed below:

In only five colleges are the members of the literary societies selected by bids, and three of these are girls' colleges. It is also true, as a rule, that the girls' societies defeat a candidate much more easily than the boys' societies.

Some of the societies that select members by application use this method because they think the fraternities have a sufficient monopoly on the bid method.

The most striking contrast between the boys have won, but if pleasure is the aim, in the programs. The boys' programs consisted mostly of debates, orations, essays, readings, and declamations, while the girls' programs were made up of songs, dances, instrumental and vocal solos, book reviews, current events, dramatizations, and the lives of living men and women. In fact, the boys are still sticking to the old-fashioned literary society program, while the girls have strayed so far that they hold a typical women's club meeting in place of the original literary society program. If good public speaking is the aim of literary societies, the boys have won, but if pleasure is the aim, the girls are far ahead.

KATHARYN SEBRELL

More than 1,500 students in the University of Wisconsin have taken work in journalism since the introduction in 1905 of the journalistic course.

A STUDY OF ANNUALS IN VIRGINIA COLLEGES FOR WOMEN

TO NINE Virginia colleges for women the following questionnaire regarding their 1925 annuals was sent:

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name of your annual
Name of college
2. By what college organization is your annual published?
(Class, society, fraternity, student body)
3. How many members in all are there on your annual staff?
4. Designate the division of the staff according to kind of editors and business managers
5. How is the staff elected?
6. Give the names of the various books or divisions of your annual
7. Which book is usually given the most space?
8. What did the engravings for last year's annual cost?
9. Who was your engraver?
10. What did the printing and binding cost?
11. Who was your printer?
12. What price did you charge an individual for an annual?
13. Did clubs and classes pay for representation?
How much did they pay per page?
14. How many pages of advertisements did you have?
15. What price do you charge your advertisers?
1 page ½ page
¼ page ⅛ page
card
16. Do you present any programs during the year to raise money?
If so, what?
17. Does the annual staff have regular meetings?
If so, when?
18. What part does the faculty take in your annual?
19. Do you have an adviser?
20. At what time did last year's annual go to press?
21. When did you distribute them to the students?
22. Does the editor receive academic credit for work on the annual?
If so, what credit?
23. Do you consider the annual a worth-while activity?

The number was restricted in order that