



# No Spirit at Dalhousie?

by DENIS STAIRS

Awhile ago, a gang of rampaging Engineers attacked the goal posts, automobiles and other outside accessories of Kings College. They were met by an equally wild group of Kings Freshmen, still goey and sore from a rough initiation, who defended their "alma mater" with a pride equal to that of any 3-year veteran. An onlooker remarked on the valiant defense. "I've never seen such college spirit", he said.

Even more recently two sophomores ambled into the Gazette Office with an idea for a feature column. The idea was rejected, but the editor who had studied their work said, "Please don't stop trying. This is the sort of thing we need. The Dal campus is dead".

Both commentators were right. Kings has good spirit and Dal is dead. Why? Surely this elusive quality of campus spirit is not produced only by a systematic maltreatment of all Frosh. Admittedly a feeling of belonging is produced at the end of such an ordeal, but the apathy at Dalhousie must have deeper roots than in her notoriously gentle initiation.

But what is spirit? Most will answer that it is a loyalty for one's university personified in support of college teams and in participation in the many activities about the campus. If this is so, then why is it that Frosh feel like idiots when

they are ordered to yell their heads off at football matches during Freshman Week? Because nobody else is yelling. And why is it that they don't turn up in droves to the activities that are at their disposal? Because after one week of attention at the beginning of the year, they are ignored and are expected to react enthusiastically to a batch of dull notices pinned on even duller notice boards around the halls and residences on the campus.

This policy is not the one that is carried out at Kings. The Freshman or Sophomore, or the Junior for that matter, isn't allowed to sit back and read notices without doing something about what he reads. He is approached personally by the committeemen of the activities and is urged to join in. Everybody does so because it is made clear to them that it is a duty, and once they join in, they enjoy what they are doing.

The objection might here be raised by committee members at Dal that they are not interested in people who must be forced into doing things. They may say that they are not interested in the student who lacks enthusiasm. Rubbish. Everyone likes to become a member of the gang. Everyone likes to feel that he is doing something for the university. Everyone likes to see their name in print, even if it be only in the Dal Gazette. In short, everyone likes to be just a little bit of a hero. Students are not

apathetic. They may be just a little shy, or perhaps modest would be a better word.

The fact is, students are interested in going into activities. But just because a chap who has had a bit of experience in year-book work at high school feels that he would be being a little too pushy if he strode into the Pharos office and said to the editor, "I worked on a high school annual. I know a few of the ropes. Can I give you a hand?", doesn't mean that he has no interest in working for Pharos or that he has no spirit. On the contrary, he just lacks self-confidence. You cannot expect every Frosh to worm his way into an activity or activities on his own when he is from out of town, especially if he finds it hard to meet people. Most people are, after all, reasonably pleasant, and they like to mix, but some have to be asked a little more personally than through a stenciled notice.

Maybe the lack of spirit on this campus is not, as many of the wheels claim, the fault of the general student body. Maybe these individuals could show a little more interest in the student body as a group of pleasant individuals rather than applying themselves to the expansion of the diameters of their own particular wheels.

Dalhousie students do not lack spirit, but it could easily be that they do lack leadership.



Give us a D----  
Whooping it up all alone?

## McSporran Gives Paper

# PHOENIX CLUB FORMED

The English Club, defunct for the past two years, was recently revived, and the first meeting was held last Tuesday evening at Alexandra Hall. Dr. Kinghorn presided over the organizational part of the meeting.

It was suggested by Dr. Kinghorn that the club should bear a more imposing name. He thought that "The Phoenix Club" would be a good name as it would symbolize the new birth of the club risen from the ashes of intellectual decay. One dissenting voice—complained that Phoenix was difficult to spell. Although nobody denied the legitimacy of the complaint, it was agreed that the difficulty could be

circumvented if members promised never to write the word, and confine its use to conversation.

The election of officers followed. A president was felt to be unnecessary, but a secretary was elected: Mr. Charles Fanning, and also a treasurer, Miss Diane Scott.

The main business of the meeting was the paper given by Mr. Archibald McSporran, entitled Poets and Critics, in which he charted an approach to poetry between the Scylla and Charybdis of the "new" criticism, and enthusiastic amateurism. He felt that a proper attitude to poetry analysis and feeling, with the latter ingredient preponderating. The acute perception and ready wit of Mr. McSporran are too

well known to need elaboration. Let it merely be said that these qualities were notably demonstrated in this paper. It was well thought out, ingeniously arranged, and presented with his own inimitable flair.

After the reading of the paper, Miss Scott undertook the serving of refreshments.

The meeting then was opened to discussion, the length and liveliness of which attested to the stimulating nature of Mr. McSporran's paper. Shortly after eleven the meeting concluded, the members deciding to meet again on Wednesday, November 26, at the same place. A welcome is extended to all those of literary interests.

# DGDS STAGE "THE HIDDEN RIVER"

by Charles Fanning

by Dave Hilton

On Thursday, November 6, the Dalhousie Glee and Dramatic Society presented "The Hidden River", a play by Ruth and Augustus Goetz, adapted from the novel by Storm Jameson. The audience was a small one and this might be charitably attributed to the inclement weather. The play began with the failure of the sound system to produce more than the first four notes of the National Anthem. "Failure" is perhaps the kindest word to describe the play. Those who have read Storm Jameson's novel will agree that its only merit lies in how well it keeps its secret. One never suspects how it will end. The play does not depart from the novel to conform to theatrical conventions. However, in this review, "The play's not the thing!" it is rather how it was presented by the worthies of the Dramatic Society.

One must begin on a note of approbation. The set, although a simple one to construct, and requiring no changes, was well done. The acting, however, was something else altogether. Julia Gosling, the director and guiding spirit behind the whole production, also played a major role—that of Marie Regnier, a woman broken by grief at the death of her son. Miss Gosling has the reputation of a good actress, and it is deserved reputation. She walks superbly, but a little too well; she can turn on any emotion, at any time, magnificently, but a little too magnificently; her carriage and gestures are always eminently suitable; but again a little too suitable. She succeeded in playing the part of the great actress marvellously. It is a pity she had not similar success in playing the part of Marie Regnier. Her portrayal is almost never convincing, although she has, her moments, especially in that scene at the end of Act 2 where Francis stands accused of Robert Regnier's death.

The most annoying performance of the evening was given by Norm Rebin, playing the part of Francis Monnerie, the betrayer. M. Rebin's acting was one long tedious series of emotional cliches. He can be angry when required, but it is a general anger, and not a specific anger with relation to the play. So, too can he run through the whole gamut of emotions, but in the same hazy, generalized way. If anyone could be chosen to lead the list for

destroying the dynamic potentialities of the play, he would be the one.

The entrance of John Chambers at the end of Act 1, (in the role of Dainel Monnerie, just released from prison for collaboration with the Nazis) was hilariously funny, although it should have been full of the pathetic. Supported by two others, he exactly resembled a drunken teen-ager carried home by two pals from an adolescent saunter. What is even worse, he persisted in giving this same impression to the bitter end. One simply could not imagine him as a sick, disillusioned old man, and one felt rather relieved at his death at the end of Act 2.

Little need be said of Penelope Stanbury, as Elizabeth Regnier, or of Ken Clarke, as Adam Hartley. Miss Stanbury is obviously a neophyte to this game and one can forgive her for having stage fright, and she did provide some amusement by tripping on and off stage like a fairy in a Grade Four theatrical. Ken Clarke's achievement consisted more in a feat of memorization, than in a job of acting.

Towering over the mediocrity, ineptitude, and plain badness of most of the others was the magnificent piece of acting done by Don Aitken, as Jean Monnerie. He alone managed to get into his part, and he alone had the acting skill to make Jean Monnerie a living, believable person. Like a diamond among dross, he shone all the more brightly by contrast, yet I think he could hold his own with even the best of amateur groups.

Something must also be said of the bit parts. Leon Cole, as Father Baussan, did a reasonably competent job of speaking his lines, (but his obviously bald pate, fringed with obviously false straggling curls, made him appear as a hideous caricature of Harpo Marx). One could feel no sympathy at his plight at the hands of the Nazis. One rather felt it was a pity that they stopped at breaking his legs. Margaret Robbins, as Amelie, the servant, is required to say little more than "Yes, Madame" but the grotesque movements which accompanied this would instantly send any employer in real life to the classified pages in search of new

help. Otto Haenlein was obviously cast as General von Kettler on account of his accent and military bearing. However, in the short flash-back in which he appeared, he showed an acting ability far above his natural suitability for the part. His portrayal of the humanistic general carried refreshing conviction. Mitch Levine, as Doctor Montalti, also showed competence, though the part made little demands on him.

One must admit that the play got better as it went along. However, keeping the good wine till last makes one unable to savour its goodness. To sum up, one cannot help wondering, after being subjected to an evening of "entertainment" such as this, if there is not a real case for student apathy after all.

Perhaps the poorest part of last Thursday night's opening performance of "The Hidden River" was the fact that, up until about five minutes before curtain time, it looked as if the company was going to outnumber the audience. While the play wasn't perfect or the performance faultless, it merited an audience far larger than the few who managed to find their way to the Dal gym.

An adaptation by Ruth and August Goetz of Storm Jameson's novel, "The Hidden River" only claim to dramatic distinction is that it was one of the less notable flops of the 1957 Broadway season.

A melodrama set in post-war France, the professional failings became quite obvious in Thursday's staging. The basically good story of a proud French family still trying to find the reason of war is fouled up with inept writing and thin characterizations. Because of this the best has to be made of any dramatic opportunities the script gives and the college group failed to do this on too many occasions. The play opens as the Monnerie freres, older brother Jean and younger Francis, try to quell their aunt's objections to the release from prison of their uncle Daniel, who had served a sentence for collaborating with the Nazis.

The Aunt suspects that her former lover is the man responsible for the death of her son Robert, who lost his life when caught in the Resistance movement.

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The success of the play is very much dependent on the acting of the two brothers and the aunt.

Julia Gosling playing the aunt Marie Regnier, gave a strong, at times too strong, performance. But Miss Gosling perhaps can be excused, for her drive at many times gave a pace to the place which helped it over rough spots where some of the more inexperienced members of the cast tended to get lost.

Don Aitken, as Jean, was by far the best actor on the stage. He spoke his lines in a fine resounding voice with depth and understanding. In the second scene of the first act he noticeably drifted upstage a couple of times swinging the conversation rather awkwardly; but on the whole he moved well and at times saved the entire performance.

The younger brother Francis was played by Norm Rebin. Unfortunately Mr. Rebin seemed to miss the one characterization which the authors had taken time to carefully draw. Mr. Rebin, who is quite adept at debating, perhaps got his nights twisted by his reading was much closer to public speaking than acting. He registered various phases of emotion solely by the volume of the voice, and this became a terrible downfall in the first act when he is trying to explain to his fiancee his reasons for leaving the family home. He moved many times with hands to wave and nothing to wave them for.

Playing opposite Rebin as his fiancée—Lizette Regnier—was Penelope Sanbury. I thought the character should be more of the ingenu; she is supposed to be somewhat younger than the worldly Francis, but at times Miss Stanbury seemed to be one step ahead of the man.

I thought the characterization of Ken Clarke as Jean's wartime British Intelligence contact was excellent. His transformation from the "pip-pip, all that sort of rot" chap to the man of determination and vengeance was believable. His accent had the ring of phony authenticity that a well educated Englishman gives.

As the erudite, philosophical uncle, John Chambers managed well considering the difficulty of the part for a young person. His voice had a rather monotonous pitch, but in the flashback scene with his German general drinking companion played by Otto Haenlein, he showed that he was capable of bringing depth to his acting.

Haenlein played down his bit very effectively in what could have been a rather inane scene.

Margaret Robbins and Mitch Levine, as the maid and the doctor, did well in their small parts. Leon Cole as the parish priest, not at all helped with a rather worn out bald plate, didn't really meet the potentialities of his part.

Technically the set was excellent; it was pleasant to see that the curtains worked and the prop manager had taken time to put French mag-



## October 11

Up betimes, and didst early betake me to the College-by-the-Sea. There not a soul to be met with, and very few bodies. Upon inquiry, (for methought it dangerously unhealthy for our population so suddenly to decline) informed that all had gone to the Battlefield. Did ask where, but only reply was the twenty-fourth letter of the Alphabet, whereby I assumed the place to be secret.

## October 23

Did rise late. Did wend my feeble way to Fleet Street. Eagerly snatched up a copy of the Spectator, the which to employ as a napkin in the Coffee House. Herein the usual scurrilous crew. Did speak to Miss Volkswagen, who has recently been abroad. Was informed that the annual portrait mania was upon us, many having their likenesses done by the renowned artist Grave Promise, and thus being preserved for posterity. Did speak to one Rooms, also an artist, who gave me to understand that the Abbey Crew was intending a quick Return to Nature.

Extraordinary news from the field—that we had beaten the Navy. This so astonished me, it required two cups of Caughee to restore my senses. News also abroad that the Dainty Grabbers, headed by one of the celebrated Sin Twins, were that night to hold revels in the Jam Palace. The continuance of this ancient dishonourable organization is rapidly becoming a subject of public dispute, now that the question had the ring of phony authenticity that a well educated Englishman gives.

## October 25

Fleet Street in confusion, as Goody and the Spectators endeavored to assemble and publish great stories of legal history, hence to be revealed in the disreputable publication. Many did speak with enthusiasm of the Legal Rites of the previous evening. Miss Englishtoo crowned thereat; many did witness to her beauty, including some who were good Judges.

## October 29

A Public Holiday declared with much rejoicing. Crowds of both common and the learned did flock to the James, there to see and hear great dignitaries.

azines on the desk, and that the wine bottles were the real McCoy and not discarded empties from the Lord Nelson pub.

Inspired by much oratory, did quit the James, and all congregated in the Kings Square, there to witness an inspiring ceremony. All went well, except that at the last moment, it was discovered that a piece of stone chosen for our purpose was not strong enough; the situation was remedied by strengthening it, filling it in with an old copy of the Spectator. The Mason being absent, a Great Lady of the Land stepped forward and pressed the wedge of common stone into place with a silver cake-knife, which she fortunately had on hand. Much public felicitations and gratification.

As I did rise, did fall to musing that this was the day of Guy Fawkes. Went forth expecting to see much celebration. St. James Street in great confusion; many were rushing about with various household articles and all was in disarray. Precious Duckling marshalling her chicks. The Players about to put forth a great Tragedy, at which it is expected the Court will attend. Among this rabid crew did glimpse several notorious characters, ashamed to be seen in such low company did take my leave.

On walking down the Strand, was met by an astonishing sight. Spectre-like figures, clad in grey, walked among a prostrate populace, causing blood to flow freely. A most disgusting mass orgy. After stepping over the prostrate bodies of those ecstatic meditators upon the life force, did make further inquiries. Informed gravely that this was an annual Bloodletting to reduce the Sanguine element in our city. Invited to join corporeal revels. Being informed that there was no expense, did so, undergoing the ordeal with usual calm and good-humor, and left the red and rude affray with nonchalance—though 'twas a bloody business.

After having undergone this purgative, did think no harm to take a slight restorative. The Coffee-House prodigious crowded. Lawyers leaving the Inns of Court and came flocking to the Bar. Noised abroad that a great trial was taking place in the Bailey. Did take my place among the common spectators thereat. Chief Justice McRock presided, assisted by one Candid Digsworth, also Judge Toupee, a noted judge in Chambers. Woolly McFrenzy, Soup McFinish, and Hurray Dazer were the appellants. They orated long and valiantly, but after an extraordinary long sitting, were defeated by the repellants, the learned counsels Hacheston, Fall Specter, and Blossoming Symbol. Left the Bailey late, exhausted by their flow of forensic fury.

The lighting could at times have been in sharper contrast, especially in the flashback scene, which was played in a rather low key.

## From the leaves of the Dalhousie Gazette

New Type of Initiation: No physical indignities will be imposed, and no absurd, stupid, and childish dress will have to be worn. Courtesy and respect for, not subservience to, their seniors is asked. In an endeavour to give the freshmen a practical example of what it does and can do, the Glee Club

opened its season with a number of song features, a skit, and the usual after-show dance. Characteristic of first nights, the program opened with a few Dal yells and songs. Mr. Morty Goldberg then sang "Learn to Croon" and an encore. He was followed by Miss Ruth Crandall, who showed the freshmen the proper technique for singing "I gotta sing a Torch Song" and "The Blue

Prelude". She was particularly well received. The traditions of years were shattered when the "trade school" down the road, namely, the Law School, was beaten, not once, but twice, by an invading Inter-fac debating team. The giant killers were the representatives of Delta Gamma.