

## **Before Black Mountain**

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## **Before Black Mountain**

David Silver

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Without Nan Chapin, Black Mountain College never happens.<sup>1</sup> Born in 1913, Anne “Nan” Howard Chapin grew up in Stafford Springs, Connecticut, the youngest of six children raised by her mother, Anne, an impoverished widow. When Nan was fifteen, her mother married wealthy Colonel Arthur S. Dwight, and moved her family to Dwight’s home in Great Neck, Long Island. With a deep interest in progressive education, Anne persuaded Nan to attend the School of Organic Education in Fairhope, Alabama, for two winters. Founded by Marietta Johnson, a leader in the progressive education movement, the school eliminated tests and grades and integrated crafts and folk dancing. “I don’t suppose I learned much at Fairhope academically,” Nan recalled, “but I got quite interested in the whole business of so-called progressive education and experimental education. So, when I was ready to apply to college, Rollins seemed to be the place that looked most interesting.”<sup>2</sup>

Rollins College was indeed interesting in 1930. Five years earlier, Hamilton Holt, former magazine editor and publisher, and master of generating publicity, transformed the Winter Park, Florida liberal arts college, after becoming its president. Through endless fundraising, Holt rebuilt the campus in a Mediterranean style, dominated by white stucco and orange tile roofs, and secured commissions to build a new chapel, theater, and dormitory. He established new interdisciplinary professorships with provocative (and publicity attracting) titles like “Professor of Books,” “Professor of Evil,” and “Professor of Leisure,” which he filled with what he referred to as “golden personalities” who would, ideally, ignite engagement among students. Further, Holt curbed traditional lectures and classroom recitations, replacing them with small group discussions and one-on-one meetings between student and professor. Students were granted near-freedom to pursue electives related to their individual interests.<sup>3</sup>

During her three years at Rollins, Nan participated in practically everything. In addition to earning excellent grades, she was a member of Gamma Phi Beta sorority, where she became best friends with Elizabeth “Betty” Young and Sara “Sally” Sylvester.

Nan was also a member of the Glee Club, the Student Association, the International Relations Club, Le Cercle Francais, Rollins Literary Society, and the Cosmopolitan Club. She was especially active in the Rollins Theatre Workshop, where she worked closely with drama professor Robert “Bob” Wunsch. Nan often accompanied Wunsch to the Black section of Winter Park where a young Zora Neale Hurston was writing, rehearsing, and directing a community play that would become *From Sun to Sun*. “We used to go over and see the rehearsals night after night,” recalled Nan, braving local Ku Klux Klan members who would “follow us slowly in cars” and tell her, Wunsch, and others to stay where they belonged. Nan continued attending the rehearsals as well as the actual play (“a perfect delight”) and worked with Wunsch to stage *From Sun to Sun* at Rollins, albeit to a whites-only audience as per Holt’s demand.<sup>4</sup>



Figure 1.1. Nan Chapin, seated, second from left, and the rest of the Rollins College Student Association, 1932. *The Tomokan Yearbook*, published by Rollins College. Courtesy Rollins Archives and Special Collections, [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#).

While Nan enjoyed theater, her favorite class at Rollins was whatever class John Andrew Rice was teaching. Like Nan, John Andrew Rice arrived at Rollins in September

1930. He was one of Holt's "golden personalities," hired to teach classics. As a Rhodes Scholar already forced out of three schools (the Webb School, the University of Nebraska, and the New Jersey College for Women), Rice arrived with a reputation as a campus gadfly, burner of bridges, and phenomenal teacher. A master of Socratic dialogue, he would enter a classroom, light his pipe, ask a few questions, and let the conversation take over. Nan Chapin remembered Rice as "a genius as a teacher, just superb." She especially enjoyed his Athenian Civilization class, conducted entirely by the Socratic method, in which students would consider what constituted an "ideal college" and how such considerations could and should apply to Rollins. Rice was relentless in encouraging students to explore deeply both ideas and their preconceived notions of those ideas. Some class discussions examined a single idea or debate and lasted for weeks. "His Greek Civilization course basically had no content," Betty Young recalled. "It was Socratic dialogue all the time." Oftentimes, the class discussions were so stimulating that after class, students walked a few blocks from the classroom to Rice's rented house and continued the discussion on his front patio. Many of Rice's neighbors, including Theodore "Ted" Dreier, faculty of physics, and his wife Bobbie, joined the lively conversations. "Rollins was sort of rocking," Bobbie Dreier recalled. "Rice made a there, there."<sup>5</sup>

Rice was also a bully. In class, he regularly taunted and teased intellectually weaker students, often bringing them to tears. "He didn't suffer fools gladly," remembered Bobbie. "He got a kick out of hurting them, almost. He got a kick out of putting people down when they were stupid." Rice even bullied students during advising appointments. "If you are too damn dumb to make out a schedule," he scolded one of his advisees, "why did you come here?" Students were not Rice's only targets. He was known to aim his wrath at fellow faculty and guest speakers, especially female guests.<sup>6</sup>

Rice also leveled honest but harsh critiques about Rollins and its architecture, most notably Holt's beloved Knowles Memorial Chapel. Once, after a Christmas service at the chapel, where attention and praise were showered upon attending donors, Rice publicly declared the service "obscene." As Betty Young explained, "What he meant by that was that they were glorifying the participants not God." However, all that Holt, the board of trustees, and donors heard, was the word "obscene" describing what they

imagined to be their crowning jewel. Further, Rice disparaged the small-town conservatism of Winter Park and its affluent residents, who Holt had painstakingly cultivated into a generous and reliable donor class. The donors, “the white-haired fat cats of Winter Park [who] had been culturally and financially dominating Rollins,” were peeved. As Lewis Shelley wrote, “His agnostic beliefs, his frank manner of expression, and his occasionally immodest dress had caused him to be condemned by a small segment of people in the conservative community.” Rice’s colleague and friend Ted Dreier put it simply: “He antagonized the donors.”<sup>7</sup>

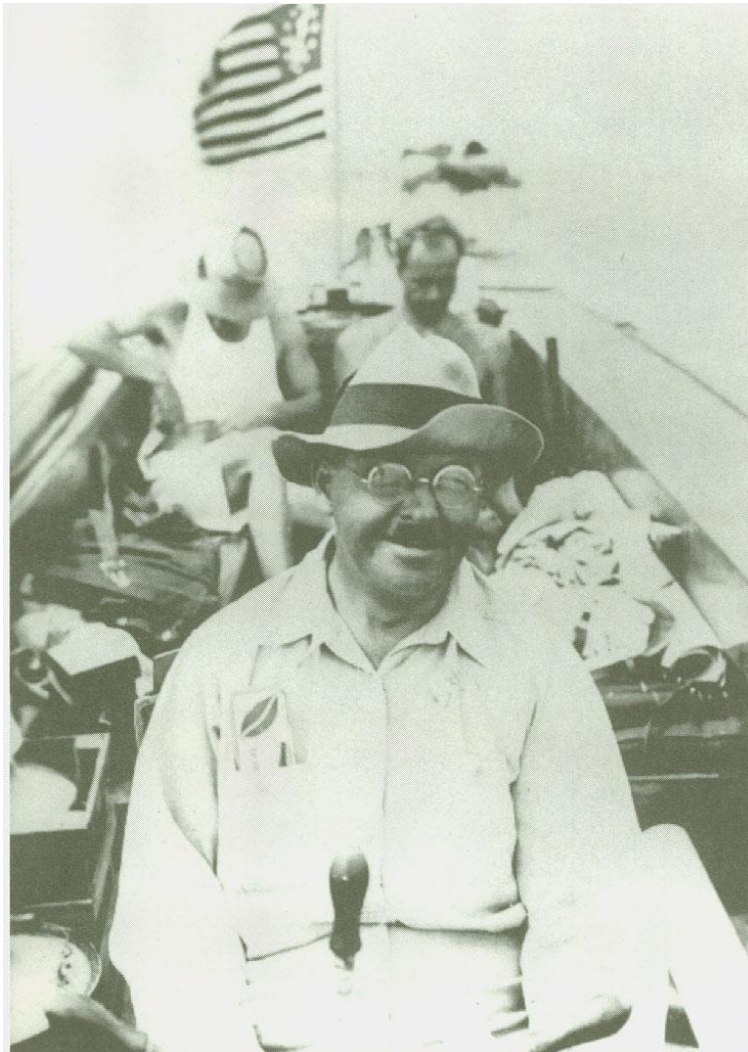


Figure 1.2. John Andrew Rice, with Rollins professors Ted Dreier (right rear) and Cecil Oldham (left rear) in the Marlin on the Indian River near New Smyrna Beach, Florida, 1932. Courtesy Frank A. Rice.

To make matters worse, Rice chaired or was a member of nearly every faculty committee that directly challenged some of President Holt's most cherished initiatives and accomplishments. In spring 1932, for example, he chaired a faculty committee on the role of Rollins's fraternities and sororities. The committee's report recommended abolishing both fraternities and sororities, claiming they "effectively precluded participation of middle- or lower-income students and fostered class distinctions and petty cliques." Holt, as well as some alumni and donors, considered the report a personal attack. Then, in fall 1932, Rice served on a committee formed to examine Holt's deep cuts in faculty salaries, a decision that Holt argued was born out of the Great Depression. The committee's report, written by Rice, reached an entirely different conclusion, namely that the source of the college's deficit was Holt's building spree. Finally, Rice served on a committee that tried to make sense of Holt's two beloved curriculum models, the New Curriculum Plan and the Eight-Hour Day (too complicated and inconsequential to explain in further detail here). When the committee report suggested that one of the models be eliminated, Holt was livid. The upshot of all of this was that within three short years, Rice had managed to offend a large number of Rollins's students, faculty, administrators, and donors.<sup>8</sup>

What followed, in spring 1933, was a beast of a semester. As Katherine Chaddock Reynolds details so well in her book, *Visions and Vanities: John Andrew Rice of Black Mountain College*, it began with Holt firing Rice, a tenured professor, for being "very, very indiscreet, and worse than that, quite intolerant, and worse than that, insulting." By the end of the semester, representatives from the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) were called to campus to convene a public hearing on the matter. The hearing took a full ten days and consisted mostly of Hamilton Holt personally reading fifty-two affidavits against Rice, ranging primarily from petty to amusing, but also containing multiple accusations of bullying. By June 1933, a few days after the public hearing and graduation, Holt fired five additional professors, including Frederick Georgia (chemistry) and Ralph Lounsbury (political science), citing their "pernicious activity in the Rice case." In response, two professors resigned: Ted Dreier, followed later that summer by Bob Wunsch. By mid-June, the purge was complete: nine

out of forty-five Rollins professors were fired, forced to resign, or resigned out of protest.<sup>9</sup>

Nan was distraught and furious, and quickly rallied her friends and fellow students into action. Together with Nathaniel “Nat” French, Rollins’s student body president, and George Barber, editor of the student newspaper, she led a student delegation that met directly with Holt to proclaim their unwavering support for Professor Rice. When that didn’t work, Nan and others organized a campus protest. When that didn’t work, Nat and George invited the local press to campus; in front of reporters, they made the dramatic announcement that they would “sever their connection with the college.” When the departure of the student body president and student newspaper editor didn’t work, Nan organized the final action: She and over a dozen Rollins students dropped out. Dejected, Nan returned to her family home in Great Neck, Long Island, in early June.<sup>10</sup>

After a month of stewing about the events that led to her departure, Nan Chapin invited John Andrew Rice to dinner at her family’s home on Long Island. At this point, through letters and telegrams, she was well aware that Rice, Dreier, and Wunsch had traveled twice to Swarthmore, Pennsylvania to meet with Frank Aydelotte, Rice’s brother-in-law and president of Swarthmore College. The purpose? To discuss the possibility of starting a new college. Nan also knew that Rice and Frederick Georgia had traveled to North Carolina to visit a site that Wunsch believed could serve as an ideal campus. Nan was eager for updates. She was also eager, I speculate, to introduce Rice to her affluent stepfather, Arthur S. Dwight, often referred to as “the Colonel.” A former chief engineer for the Northern Pacific Railway, Dwight’s fortune came through inventing and patenting new methods in process metallurgy. With help from a half dozen sources, I imagine the dinner going like this.<sup>11</sup>

Rice arrived both bitter and excited. Still stinging from what went down that spring, he railed against Hamilton Holt and Rollins College. While puffing on his pipe, he ranted about provincial Winter Park and its conservative residents. Tapping into his previous tumultuous experiences at the University of Nebraska and the New Jersey College for Women, Rice questioned his future as an educator and seethed at all boards of trustees. “The center of control in American education,” Rice fumed to Nan,



Anne, and the Colonel, “has shifted from those who really know something about education, the teachers, to those who in most cases really know nothing about it, the trustees.”<sup>12</sup>

Rice’s anger transformed into excitement when he spoke of his recent visit to the Blue Ridge Assembly. A few weeks earlier, he and Georgia had traveled to western North Carolina, near Asheville, just outside the town of Black Mountain, to visit the Blue Ridge Assembly of the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA). Spanning 1,619 acres, the property was dramatically and beautifully nestled into the Blue Ridge Mountains, producing breathtaking views from nearly every angle. It consisted of about two dozen buildings, including Robert E. Lee Hall, a massive three-story structure that could be used for student dormitories, faculty apartments, classrooms, administrative offices, and community meetings. Because the site was used for religious conferences over summers, it was a fully functional and stocked campus. “Blue Ridge was perfect,” Rice would later write in his memoir, *I Came Out of the Eighteenth Century*. He quite possibly said the same that night at Nan’s. “Set halfway up in the bend of a mountain, it looked out over an endless chain of peaks. Here was peace. Here was also central heating against the cold of winter, blankets, sheets, dishes, flatware, enough for a dozen colleges, all at a moderate rental.” Perhaps most importantly, it was available. Left vacant from September through May, Blue Ridge Assembly could be leased for \$4,500 a year. As if anticipating his hosts’ disbelief, Rice shared photographs and color lithographs he had purchased. The dream, it seemed, was becoming more real.<sup>13</sup>





Figure 1.3. Robert E. Lee Hall, Blue Ridge Assembly, date unknown, color photo-offset postcard. Courtesy Buncombe County Special Collections, Pack Memorial Library, Asheville, North Carolina.

Rice further noted that while at Blue Ridge, he and Georgia had gathered numbers regarding rent, staff, and food costs, and sent them on to Dreier, who produced a first-year budget of \$30,000. To manage this, Ted suggested and Rice agreed, they needed to raise \$15,000 in gifts and donations and find fifteen students willing to pay \$1,000 in tuition. This was a whopping sum in 1933, the bottom of the Depression, and especially high for a college that did not yet exist. Regarding tuition, Rice said they would be flexible and work around students' families' budgets, as long as they raised a total of \$15,000.<sup>14</sup>

"Black Mountain College is not just another college," Rice pronounced as he, Nan, Anne, and the Colonel sat down for dinner. "It is a new college." And with that began an exhilarating conversation, led by Rice, who shared the college-to-be's five main educational innovations. First, the college would be owned by faculty and run by faculty and students. No non-teaching administrators would exist—no deans, no provosts, no presidents, and certainly no board of trustees. Second, students would be

in charge of their own learning destinies—no required general education classes, no required classes for their major, no prerequisites whatsoever. Borrowing from Rice's experience as a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University, and from teaching at Rollins, BMC students would spend about two years in "Junior Division," taking general classes across the disciplines, and about two years in "Senior Division," pursuing a faculty-approved question or topic fueled by the student's unwavering interest. Third, certainly on a roll now, Rice remarked that within American higher education, "the dividing line is always the neck." On this, he elaborated, "American colleges can be divided into those that are interested in what happens above the neck and those that are concerned with what happens below the neck." Our new college, Rice explained, would develop students' intellect *and* feeling: "We are concerned for the whole human being." Fourth, to help achieve this, the college would be a platform of democratic living, a total education, an education for democracy—three different ways of saying the college would be communal, with students, faculty, and faculty families learning, living, and working together. Finally, Rice shared his unbaked idea that the arts—fine arts, drama, music—should and would occupy the center of the curriculum.<sup>15</sup>

For Nan, the conversation was familiar. After all, she *had* taken three years' worth of Rice's classes at Rollins, including Athenian Civilization, the class where Rice led students through a semester-long conversation about what the ideal college would look like. She loved this kind of conversation, so was no doubt an active participant in it. For Nan's mom Anne, it had to have been exhilarating. With a serious interest in progressive education and a significant knowledge of John Dewey, Anne was witnessing, over the course of dinner, nothing short of a new vision of what progressive higher education could be. For the Colonel, it must have been both moving and convincing, since near the end of dinner and to everyone's delight, he pledged \$1,000 to start the new college. Upon hearing that the Rice family—John, wife Nell, son Frank (sixteen years old), and daughter Mary (age thirteen)—were "between homes," Anne offered her house in Stafford Springs, Connecticut, as a summer base. Later that evening, Dwight invited his friend William S. Barstow to stop by. Barstow, an electrical engineer who had made a small fortune in public utility investment banking, listened to Rice's pitch, witnessed Dwight's excitement, and declared: "Why sure, if the Colonel's

going to put up a thousand dollars, I will, too!" Still later that evening it became clear that Nan would be attending the new school. Was it because the Colonel, committing, had pledged Nan's tuition for a year? Or was it because Anne, projecting, demanded her daughter attend? Perhaps it was that Nan, amidst of all of the excitement, simply and boldly declared that she *would* be attending the new college. Regardless of how it came about, Nan became the school's first declared student. As the night at Nan's came to an end, Rice departed with \$2,000 in seed money, one committed full-paying student, a summer home for his family, and a base from which to build a new college.<sup>16</sup>

The very next day, Nan Chapin hit the ground running, taking charge of student recruitment. First, she contacted a number of "Rollins rebels," shared the idea for a new college, and asked if they could and would commit as students at \$1,000 a year. Her friends from the Student Association, Nat French and George Barber, were early and enthusiastic commits. So was Nan's best friend and former sorority sister, Betty Young, who was shocked when her conservative parents approved. "The main puzzle of my life," Betty later recalled, "has always been why on Earth my parents would let me go." Nan's friend from Glee Club, John Applegate, was a definite maybe, who needed more information: "I hope you will let me know when you have more detailed plans, because my father is conservative, to say the least, and probably will think the plan too radical."<sup>17</sup>

Next, Nan assigned geographic regions to the early commits so they could seek, meet with, and recruit prospective students. While Ed Jenks canvased Philadelphia, Nat French covered the Boston/Cambridge area, including Harvard Square, where one day he had a long talk about the new college with a Harvard dropout, Dave Bailey. Nan took the tri-state area of New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, meeting with fellow Glee Club member Mary Trowbridge, International Relations Club member Everett "Ev" Dwight, and a fellow named Norm Weston who Nan had met her last year at Rollins. Together, Nan, Nat, and Ed kept Rice and others abreast through periodic telegrams.<sup>18</sup>

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ARE NOW GOOD PROSPECTS STOP JENKS SEEING COONEY WHITE LAW  
AND SPAULDING IN IMMEDIATE FUTURE ADVISE LOOKING UP PAUL  
DYKES TWO FIFTY TWO HIGH STREET GERMANTOWN PENNSYLVANIA  
BEING DEFINITELY OUT WE STRONGLY ADVISE IMMEDIATE  
ANNOUNCEMENT BELIEVING IT WILL TURN TIDE TO ALMOST CERTAIN  
SUCCESS=  
JENKS AND FRENCH.  
THE QUICKEST, SUREST AND SAFEST 740A. SEND MONEY IS BY TELEGRAPH OR CABLE

Figure 1.4. Telegram from Ed Jenks and Nat French to John Andrew Rice, with an update on student recruitment, August 13, 1933. Courtesy Western Regional Archives, State Archives of North Carolina.

Nan's smartest move was to organize a gathering of committed students in New York City. At least seven students showed up, including Nat French, Ed Jenks, and Betty Young. The students caught up, shared "living at home" stories, and railed against Rollins. Next, they got down to business, discussing the new college and brainstorming ideas for recruiting new students. "I think we were frightfully impractical," recalled Nan, "but it was so exciting and interesting!" Ultimately, they decided to write a collective letter announcing the new college, sharing their excitement about this "cooperative educational enterprise," and inviting the recipients (other Rollins dropouts and Rollins students who were on the fence about leaving) to join. The letter read:

We, the undersigned students, who have participated in the organization of Black Mountain College, join with the members of the faculty in presenting for your consideration the enclosed announcement of the college.

We feel that you would appreciate the opportunity to participate with a congenial group in a thoroughly cooperative educational enterprise. We are confident that the things that were talked about at Rollins can be realized in the new environment and that other important advances can and will be made.

This letter and the enclosed announcements are being sent only to such students as have been selected by a committee of faculty and students. It should not be construed as an attempt to persuade you to leave Rollins if you have reached a definite decision to return.

Nan Chapin  
Everett Dwight  
Nat French  
Ed Jenks  
Chan Johnson  
Mary Trowbridge  
Betty Young

It worked. As a result of the letter and talking with Nan or one of the other early commits, five would-be seniors at Rollins—Sydney Carter, Laura Belle Fisher, Marcella Martin, Alice Lee Swan, and Sally Sylvester—committed to the new college. As August came to an end, the college had over fifteen committed students. And not just any students. “Top flight,” Rice later recalled of them, “not a second-rater in the lot.”<sup>19</sup>

With Nan leading the charge on student recruitment, Rice and Dreier focused their efforts on fundraising. From the beginning, Dreier was the money guy, the one Frank Aydelotte encouraged to come up with a first-year budget for the college. Perhaps this was because Dreier came from money. Dreier was born in 1902 in

Brooklyn Heights, New York, into a family that had inherited a fortune through the iron trade. His extended family, especially the women, were active leaders in social reform and the arts. Ted's mother, Ethel Eyre Dreier, was president of the Women's City Club of New York and head of the Women's Suffrage Party of Brooklyn. His aunt, Margaret Dreier Robins, was president of the National Women's Trade Union League and, among other things, a trustee at Rollins College, who had resigned in protest of Holt's firing of Rice. Another of Ted's aunts, Katherine Dreier, was a painter who, along with Marcel Duchamp and Man Ray, founded the *Société Anonyme*, one of the earliest and finest collections of contemporary art in the United States.

In 1921, while enrolled at Harvard, first to study geology and later electrical engineering, Ted became a roommate and best friend of Malcolm "Mac" Forbes. Upon graduating, Dreier married Barbara "Bobbie" Loines, who came from an equally wealthy and social reformed-minded family. After working five years as an engineer at General Electric, the course of his life would change in late summer 1930, when the head of Rollins's physics department was killed in a car accident. With a recommendation from Mac Forbes, who by then was teaching psychology at Rollins, Hamilton Holt interviewed and hired Ted Dreier as an assistant professor of physics. For three years, Dreier did nothing to distinguish himself at Rollins except near the end, when he resigned to protest the firing of Rice.<sup>20</sup>

Ted began his fundraising efforts for the new college close to home. His parents, Edward and Ethel, got things started with a \$2,000 contribution. Next, Ted hit the road to tap into his and wife Bobbie's extensive family networks. Oftentimes, Ted and Bobbie brought Nan Chapin along, who charmed potential donors with her bright insights into what progressive education could and should be. With Nan's help, Ted and Bobbie secured \$500 from family friends.<sup>21</sup>

A more reluctant—and ultimately more successful—fundraiser was Rice. He managed to secure meetings with important people at both the Carnegie and Rockefeller Foundations. Yet each time someone asked him for something concrete—a vision statement, learning goals, a plan—Rice refused and bullied himself out of funding. In mid-August, however, Mac Forbes invited Rice to his family's affluent estate on Naushon Island, Massachusetts. Through multiple visits with Ted and Bobbie Dreier,



Mac and his wife Ethel had followed the planning for a new college and were ready to hear more from Rice. Although Forbes greatly respected Rice as a teacher, he found him as a person to be “abrupt and arrogant,” someone who “told people off too readily.” Forbes must have listened with growing interest as Rice, an exceptional teacher, shared his exceptional vision of a whole new kind of college. Although Forbes was a less than inspiring teacher, he recognized the plan's uniqueness and innovation. Perhaps out of respect for the vision or maybe out of kindness for his good friend Ted Dreier, Forbes agreed to give \$5,000 to the new college on the condition that the donor remain anonymous. As the visit wound down and Mac escorted Rice to the door, Ethel came bounding out of the kitchen and pledged an additional \$5,000.<sup>22</sup>

By late August, Rice and Dreier had secured \$30,000 through tuition and underwriting. With these funds, they rented Blue Ridge Assembly for a year and retained three staff members: Jack and Rubye Lipsey as chef and assistant chef, and Bascombe “Bas” Allen to fire the furnaces. They were also able to “hire”—for room and board but with no salary—ten faculty members, including Rice, Dreier, Georgia, and Lounsbury, as well as Helen Boyden (economics), John Evarts (music), William “Bill” Hinkley (psychology), Hilda “Peggy” Loram (English), Joseph Martin (English), and Emmy Zastrow (German). As Katherine C. Reynolds wrote, “in six weeks, less time than it now takes to decide who should speak at a college commencement, a small band of men had started a small college.”<sup>23</sup>





Figure 1.5. Front: Joseph Martin, Helen Boyden, Hilda “Peggy” Loram, Elizabeth Vogler (registrar), and John Andrew Rice. Back: John Evarts, Ted Dreier, Frederick Georgia, Ralph Lounsbury, and William Hinckley. Courtesy Western Regional Archives, State Archives of North Carolina.

Yes, but, “a small band of men”? What about Nan Chapin? Working with Nat French and others, it was Nan who organized Rollins students after Rice’s firing and identified a small but significant student body willing to take chances for an education they believed in. It was Nan who arranged the dinner that resulted in seed money for the college and a summer base for Rice’s operations. Along the way, it was Nan who became the first committed student. And finally, working solo and with others, it was Nan who contacted, connected with, and cajoled sixteen students to commit to and pay for a college that did not yet exist (See Appendix). Indeed, to repeat this article’s first sentence, without Nan Chapin, Black Mountain College never happens.

This re-centering of actors at Black Mountain College is both a main theme and goal of my forthcoming book, *The Farm at Black Mountain College*. Over the last fifty years, and especially within the last decade, Black Mountain College has attracted significant and international attention. Overwhelmingly, however, when scholars study Black Mountain College, they study the luminaries who taught and studied there. As a result, too often the inspiring, acrimonious, experimental, massively participatory, sometimes dysfunctional, and extremely complicated liberal arts college and community is reduced to what a single famous artist or poet experienced or produced at Black Mountain College. As we witnessed in this brief article, by re-centering our approach to the college—through the actions of students like Nan Chapin—an entirely new story featuring a new cast of characters emerges.

In mid-September, Nan and her parents traveled in a Packard limousine from Great Neck to Penn Station. There, Norm Weston picked up her, Ed Jenks, and English professor Peggy Loram, and drove about 700 miles south, just outside the town of Black Mountain, North Carolina, to attend and start a new college.<sup>24</sup>

## **Appendix**

### *Original students at Black Mountain College, fall 1933*

John C. Applegate *	Edward N. Jenks *
John T. Bagwell	Chandler W. Johnson *
David W. Bailey	Marcella E. Martin *
Sydney H. Carter *	John G. McGraw
Anne “Nan” H. Chapin *	Robert Orr *
Doughten Cramer	Frank A. Rice
E. Everett Dwight *	Elizabeth Spaulding
Margaret Dwight	Alice Lee Swan *
Laura Belle Fisher *	Sarah Sylvester *
Nathaniel “Nat” S. French *	Norman B. Weston *
Margaret C. Hinckley	Mary Elizabeth “Betty” Young *

\* Student from Rollins College

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<sup>1</sup> Portions of this chapter first appeared as “The Founding of the Farm at Black Mountain College,” in the 2017-18 special issue of *Appalachian Journal*, edited by Joseph Bathanti. The author extends a warm thank you to Bruce Johansen for his editing assistance and Heather South for her archival expertise.

<sup>2</sup> Katherine Chaddock Reynolds, *Visions and Vanities: John Andrew Rice of Black Mountain College* (Louisiana State University Press, 1998), p. 96; Anne “Nan” Howard Chapin interview with Mary Emma Harris, Birmingham, Michigan, October 26, 1971, p. 2, Black Mountain College Collection, Western Regional Archives.

<sup>3</sup> Reynolds, *Visions and Vanities*, pp. 65-68; Martin Duberman, *Black Mountain: An Exploration in Community* (Northwestern University Press, 1972), pp. 6-7.

<sup>4</sup> Details regarding Nan Chapin’s campus activities were gleaned from the 1931, 1932, and 1933 editions of *The Tomokan Yearbook*, published by Rollins College and available online at <https://archive.org/details/tomokan1931roll>; <https://archive.org/details/tomokan1932roll>; and <https://archive.org/details/tomokan1933roll>. Chapin interview with Harris, p. 14-15.

<sup>5</sup> Chapin interview with Harris, p. 1, 3; Elizabeth Young Williams interview with Katherine Chaddock Reynolds, May 10, 1993; Ted and Barbara Dreier interview with Kathleen Chaddock Reynolds, April 5, 1993.

<sup>6</sup> Reynolds, *Visions and Vanities*, p. 79, 85-86; Duberman, *Black Mountain*, p. 4; Dreiers interview with Reynolds.

<sup>7</sup> Williams interview with Reynolds; J. C. Furnas, *Stormy Weather: Crosslights on the Nineteen Thirties, an Informal Social History of the United States, 1929-41* (New York: Putnam, 1977), p. 520; Lewis Shelley, “The Founding of the College,” *Form 4* (April 15, 1967): p. 4-5; Dreiers interview with Reynolds.

<sup>8</sup> Reynolds, *Visions and Vanities*, p. 77-78; Duberman, *Black Mountain*, p. 7-8; Warren F. Kuehl, *Hamilton Holt: Journalist, Internationalist, Educator* (University of Florida Press, 1960), pp. 225-227; Randy Noles and Ed Gfeller, “Talent for Tumult,” *Winter Park Magazine* (Summer 2016), pp. 14-29; Lewis Shelley, “The Founding of the College,” *Form 4* (April 15, 1967): p. 4-5.

<sup>9</sup> Reynolds, *Visions and Vanities*, pp. 87-88; Katherine C. Reynolds, “Socrates & Serendipity: Ungainly Beginnings of an Improbable College,” *North Carolina Literary Review* 11:2 (1995): p. 35; and Shelley, “The Founding of the College,” p. 5.

<sup>10</sup> Reynolds, *Visions and Vanities*, pp. 95-96; “Rollins Students Will Quit College,” *Orlando Reporter Star*, June 7, 1933, p. 3.

<sup>11</sup> Ted Dreier, *From Dream to Reality in Six Months* (Unpublished manuscript), p. 32, Black Mountain College Collection, Western Regional Archives; Reynolds, *Visions and Vanities*, p. 96; Mary Emma Harris, *The Arts at Black Mountain College* (MIT Press, 1987), p. 4. To help me reconstruct the night at Nan’s I turned to six sources: Louis Adamic, “Black Mountain: An Experiment in Education,” *My America, 1928 - 1938* (Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1938), pp. 612-645; Duberman, *Black Mountain*; Harris, *The Arts at Black Mountain College*; Katherine C. Reynolds, “Socrates & Serendipity”; Katherine C. Reynolds, “Progressive Ideals and Experimental Higher Education: The Example of John Dewey and Black Mountain College,” *Education and Culture* Vol. 14, No. 1 (Spring, 1997), pp. 1-9; and Roger Wicker, “Black Mountain College,” *Red Clay Reader* 6 (1969), pp. 11-17.

<sup>12</sup> Wicker, “Black Mountain College,” p. 11.

<sup>13</sup> Harris, *The Arts at Black Mountain College*, p. 4, 47; Duberman, *Black Mountain*, pp. 14-15; Reynolds, *Visions and Vanities*, pp. 97-98; Theodore Dreier interview with Mary Emma Harris, May 6, 1971, p. 10; Shelley, “The Founding of the College,” pp. 5-6; John Andrew Rice, *I Came Out of the Eighteenth Century* (Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1942), p. 318. For more on the history of the Blue Ridge Assembly, see Estelle Rizk, “A Treetop Dream: Blue Ridge Assembly,” *The Arts Journal* (April 1978), pp. 8-9.

<sup>14</sup> Theodore Dreier interview with Mary Emma Harris, May 6, 1971, Brooklyn, New York, p. 10, Black Mountain College Collection, Western Regional Archives; Reynolds, "Socrates & Serendipity," p. 40; Dreiers interview with Reynolds.

<sup>15</sup> Martin, "Black Mountain College," p. 9; Wicker, "Black Mountain College," p. 11, 12; Reynolds, *Visions and Vanities*, pp. 100-105.

<sup>16</sup> Dreier, *From Dream to Reality in Six Months*, p. 32; Weston, "June Letter," p. 3; Dreier interview with Harris, p. 11; Reynolds, *Visions and Vanities*, p. 96; Harris, *The Arts at Black Mountain College*, p. 4.

<sup>17</sup> Williams interview with Reynolds; John Applegate letter to John Andrew Rice, July 11, 1933, Black Mountain College Faculty Files, John Andrew Rice, Black Mountain College Collection, Western Regional Archives, Asheville, NC.

<sup>18</sup> Williams interview with Reynolds; John Applegate letter to John Andrew Rice, July 11, 1933, Black Mountain College Faculty Files, John Andrew Rice, Black Mountain College Collection, Western Regional Archives, Asheville, NC.

<sup>19</sup> Shelley, "The Founding of the College," p. 6; Landy Sparr, *Black Mountain College: An Experiment in Education* (MA Thesis), 1973, Black Mountain College Collection, Western Regional Archives, Asheville, NC, p. 28; Williams interview with Reynolds; Anne Howard Chapin, "We, the undersigned students," Black Mountain College Collection, Western Regional Archives, Asheville, NC; Chapin interview with Harris, p. 2; Duberman, *Black Mountain*, p. 12.

<sup>20</sup> Harris, *The Arts at Black Mountain College*, p. 13-14; Reynolds, *Visions and Vanities*, p. 94; Dreiers interview with Kathleen Chaddock Reynolds.

<sup>21</sup> Dreier, *From Dream to Reality in Six Months*, p. 32; Mary Emma Harris, *The Arts at Black Mountain College*, p. 4.

<sup>22</sup> Reynolds, *Visions and Vanities*, pp. 121-2; Duberman, *Black Mountain*, p. 15-16; Ted and Barbara Dreier interview with Kathleen Chaddock Reynolds.

<sup>23</sup> Ted and Barbara Dreier interview with Kathleen Chaddock Reynolds; Reynolds, "Socrates & Serendipity," p. 43.

<sup>24</sup> Weston, "June Letter," p. 4; Norman Weston, "Draft of possible 'Personal Account' to be delivered at Black Mountain College Reunion, March 7, 1992," December 5, 1991, p. 1.

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