



# Caxtonian

Journal of The Caxton Club of Chicago

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## Clarence Darrow — Legendary Lawyer of American History

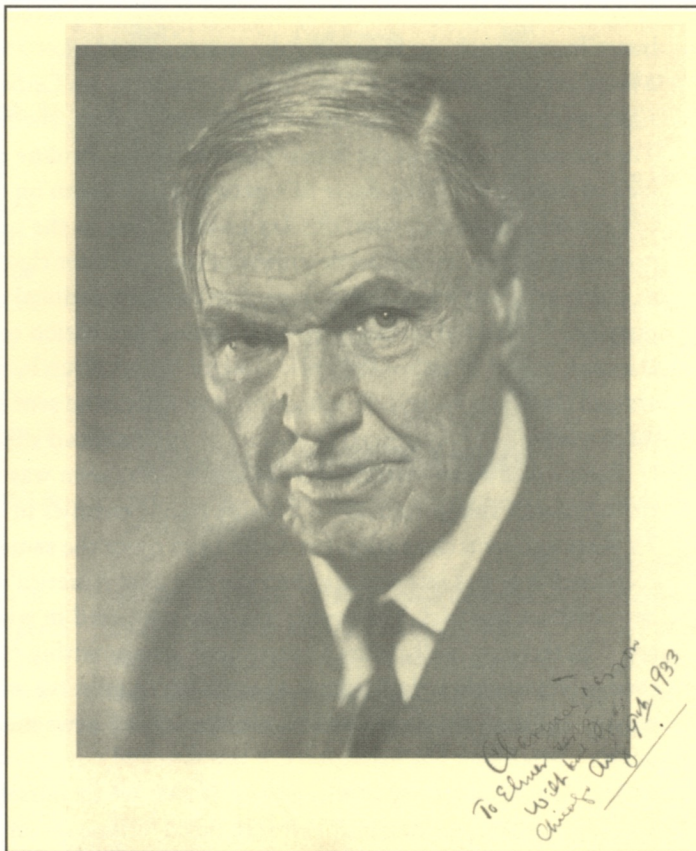
It is likely that America has produced more lawyers than the combined total of all the rest of the world. We have had many thousands of lawyers, some famous for a season, such as Louis Nizer and Alan Dershowitz; some for a single case, such as F. Lee Bailey and Johnnie Cochran. But only one American lawyer has had enduring fame for decades: he is Clarence Darrow. His name is known to almost all Americans, even if they cannot spell out the details of his long life.

I may be one of the few surviving lawyers who knew Darrow personally. I sometimes proclaim with pride that I am a footnote to

his illustrious career. I inherited, so to speak, his most famous case, the remains of the Nathan Leopold and Richard Loeb case. Leopold told me that Darrow gave him his existence when he saved him from hanging for the killing of Bobbie Franks in the famous 1924 case, but that I gave him his life when I got him out of prison in 1958. It is, indeed, something memorable to be part of the Darrow tradition.

The defining event in Darrow's life came early in his career. He had been corporation counsel of the City of Chicago, almost by happenstance, and then attorney for the powerful Chicago and Northwestern Railroad. He appeared to be well on his way to position and influence in his adopted city, a real feat for an almost unschooled boy from the small town of Kinsman, OH.

A railroad strike arose out of the wretched



*Signed portrait of Clarence Darrow from the collection of Caxtonian Elmer Gertz.*

conditions in the company town of Pullman. The strikers were led by Eugene Victor Debs, at the beginning of what was to be a great career of championing the underprivileged. In 1894, after satisfying himself of the rightness of the strikers' cause, Darrow resigned as the railroad attorney and became the lawyer for Debs and the strikers. That meant the end of Darrow's conventional career as a respectable advocate of big interests and the beginning of his truly fabulous career as an advocate of labor and many lost causes.

The low point of Darrow's life came at the time of the fatal bombing of the Los Angeles Times Building. Indeed, it almost ended his legal career as well as

nearly resulted in his imprisonment. The publisher of the *Los Angeles Times* was a notorious enemy of organized labor. Some felt that his activities led to the disastrous bombing of his building. The two McNamara brothers were charged with the bombing and placed on trial for their lives. Organized labor insisted upon Darrow's undertaking their defense. Darrow was reluctant to undergo the task. He became convinced that his clients would be convicted and pay with their lives. To Darrow, the implacable foe of the death penalty, this was unbearable. He persuaded his clients to plead guilty in exchange for a penalty less than death. Notwithstanding this triumph for the forces of law and order, they pursued Darrow himself savagely. He was charged with jury tampering and, after two trials,

narrowly escaped conviction. His career was in shambles. Organized labor deserted him for good. Although he had done so much for them, they no longer hired him. Other clients, too, deserted him. It was not until years later and the case of the boy-killers of Bobbie Franks in 1924 that his reputation was restored.

Darrow was unalterably opposed to capital punishment, whoever the criminal, whatever the details of the crime. He would represent anyone and everyone facing death, irrespective of the ability to pay a fee. Only one of his clients was executed — Pendergast, a zealot who was the assassin of Chicago Mayor Carter Harrison. It was Darrow's first murder case, and it arose in a period much like that of the Haymarket

*(See DARROW, Page Four)*



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# Musings...

On a sunny July Sunday in 1997, I visited the Rhea County Court House, Dayton, TN, nestled in the beautiful Cumberland mountains 40 miles north of Chattanooga. In the courtroom at the center of this sleepy town, two American titans, William Jennings Bryan and Clarence Darrow, squared off in July 1925 for what many consider the most important and the *first* "trial of the century." Here John Thomas Scopes, a local high school teacher, was tried for teaching, in violation of a lately-passed state law, that man descended from a lower order of animals. At that time so many years ago, hundreds jammed this courtroom to hear what Bryan said would be a "duel to death" between "Bible Christianity and infidelity."

As I walked the streets of Dayton that Sunday, I passed many well-dressed folks going home from church, including a stern matron on Market St. carrying a purse on her arm and a large Bible against her breast. Two blocks away on Cedar St., I met Pauline Greer and her sister, Marie Conner. Their father was Virgil Wilkey, the town barber in 1925. "The Scopes Trial began as a joke in our father's barber shop," Pauline told me. "The men then took the idea to Robinson's Drug Store as a plan to put Dayton on the map." Tom Davis, a Bryan College administrator, who, the day I visited, was in the courtroom with some of his staff preparing for the annual reenactment of the trial later that afternoon, said, "It wasn't a joke as much as it was a public relations ploy to bring national attention to Dayton for economic purposes." The trial certainly brought national attention to Dayton: H.L. Mencken covered the trial, as did Westbrook Pegler, Joseph Wood Krutch, nearly 200 other reporters from around the country, and 65 telegraph operators, who sent reports overseas. Chicago's WGN radio made the first national broadcast of an American trial from here.

Science and Faith — each life-sustaining in its own way and both integral to balance in the scheme of things human — became public enemies in this courtroom that fateful week 73 years ago, and the nation has never been quite the same. The fact that Scopes was convicted is of less importance than the fact that America's social differences were enunciated here with such vitriol. The events in Dayton ushered in what I call the "age of evangelicalism." In this age, well-defined constituent groups within the democratic society, determining themselves unable as individuals to establish or preserve what they consider "right," go to the public, enlisting the courts and an always-willing news media, for assistance to achieve their goals.

The danger to society in this process is that we fix ourselves forever within small groups — philosophical, theological, cultural, racial, ethnic — and we then operate from an intellectual bias as if only *one* viewpoint represents reality. We are thus perpetually polarized as a people, and our democratic institutions are diminished by constant conflicts. The process inhibits a natural progress that could come from the rigorous, disciplined, and open education of *demos*. It distracts us from an advance toward a collective, universal wisdom emanating from lives devoted to books and learning. What I envision is a lifelong education for all, commensurate with our scientific achievements as a nation and culminating in our identity as "a people" — in all our diversities. Such a vision is appropriate, I believe, for citizens of the world's oldest and greatest democracy.

However, looking across the contemporary American socioscope, I see now a society that seems frozen in time — circa 1925. Emerson's observation in his final great work, *The Conduct of Life*, comes to mind: "There are two things," said Mahomet, "which I abhor, the learned in his infidelities and the fool in his devotion." What we need, it seems to me, is a Millennial Renaissance. I see subtle evidences of its beginnings. Perhaps it will be known as the *Chicago* Renaissance.

Robert Cotner  
Editor

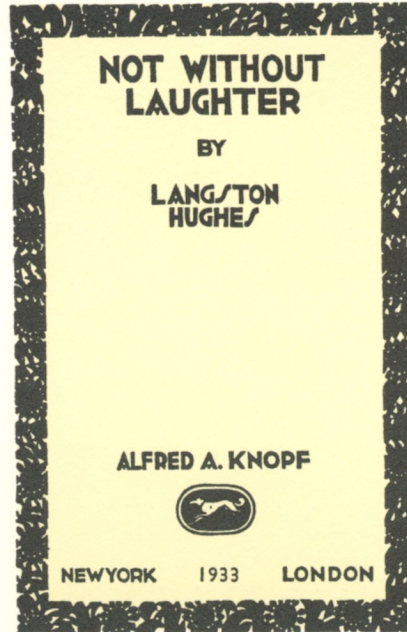
# Harlem Renaissance — Offering a New Literary Dimension in America

(Part II)

The Harlem Renaissance, emanating from New York City in the 1920s, was the initial emergence of gifted black writers into the mainstream of American intelligentsia. Renaissance art was about black people and their American experiences, and the themes of the Harlem Renaissance run the spectrum of human emotions and conditions. As early as 1903 W.E.B. DuBois, in his important *Souls of Black Folk*, foresaw identity as a major 20th century dilemma for Black Americans. He decried the fact that America permitted Negroes no “true self-consciousness...” and allowed them to see themselves only as revealed by the “other world.” He wrote: “It is a peculiar sensation, this double consciousness, ... One forever feels his twoness, — an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.”

The question of identity was apparent in the debate over Carl VanVechten’s *Nigger Heaven*. The debate raged over the validity of the novel’s depiction of black life. White objectors could not believe that well-to-do Negroes lived in Harlem on the cultural level as described in the book. Black critics claimed that the book libeled the race by describing non-existent, amoral black lives and depraved characters. According to James Weldon Johnson, both groups were wrong. Blacks resented white people revealing the incorrigibles in Harlem to a white public. They did not, wrote Johnson, protest Claude McKay’s *Home to Harlem*, which dealt in its entirety with Harlem’s “low levels of life” without looking at any “brighter sides.” Johnson liked VanVechten’s book and said the author was the first well-known American novelist to include a story about a cultured Negro class without making it burlesque or without implying reservations and apologies. “From the first,” Johnson said, “my belief was held that *Nigger Heaven* is a fine novel.” He was joined in his approval by Charles Johnson, George S. Schuyler, Walter White, E. Franklin Frazier, and Langston Hughes.

Other members of the black intelligentsia



Title page, *Not Without Laughter*, 1933. Courtesy of the Newberry Library.

disliked the book. DuBois, Jessie Redmon Fauset, Alain Locke, and Countee Cullen were peeved, not so much with the novel, but with its message that the Talented Tenth’s preoccupation with cultural improvement was misguided and would cost the race its vitality. Frazier approved of the book but criticized the cultural movement for its narrow view. In his scathing essay, “La Bourgeoisie Noire,” he called it a nationalistic movement without a program of economic reconstruction. Ordinary Harlemites took issue with the title and burned VanVechten in effigy at 135th St. and Lennox Ave.

In spite of Johnson’s claim that blacks did not protest *Home to Harlem*, McKay said, his book was resented by the black intelligentsia. When invited by Johnson to return to Harlem after a stay in France, McKay wrote, “...resentment of the Negro intelligentsia against *Home to Harlem* was so general, bitter, and violent that I was hesitant about returning to the great Black belt.”

The definition and purpose of black art was another widely discussed topic. The black intelligentsia viewed black art as the vehicle for affirming black people’s equal

status with whites. They, through their publications and contacts, helped make the Renaissance possible. At the same time, they were accused of attempting to define black art and of telling the artists how to produce it. DuBois declared that, “all art is propaganda and ever must be, despite the wailing of the purist.” He did not “care a damn” about art for any other purpose.

Alain Locke said that three objectives of the Harlem Renaissance were to: (1) encourage black artist; (2) develop black art; and (3) promote the Negro theme and subject as a vital phase of the artistic expression of American life. He concluded that it must be of universal value. “But no art idiom,” he declared, “however universal, grows in a cultural vacuum; each, however great, always has some rootage and flavor of a particular soil and personality.” So it must be with black art, he concluded.

McKay thought Locke acted “high-handedly” when, after asking him to submit a poem for inclusion in his *Anthology of the New Negro*, the editors changed the title of the submission from “The White House” to “White Houses.” Locke explained that it was a political move, since he didn’t want readers to think the title referred to the President’s White House.

George C. Schuyler, a member of the black intelligentsia, questioned the very existence of black art. In a hard-hitting article, “The Negro-Art Hokum,” he wrote that Negro art “made in America” is non-existent and “self-evident foolishness.” He likened the idea of a fundamental black art to the stance of former slaveholders, many scientists, and the Klu Klux Klan, who believed that blacks are different and, therefore, inferior. This thinking, he declared, should be “rejected with a loud guffaw by intelligent people.”

*The New Republic* published Schuyler’s article. A month later it published Langston Hughes’ response. Hughes was sorry for a young black poet who longed to write like white poets. The young man, Hughes predicted, would never become a great poet because no one who runs away from his/her spiritual being can reach full

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## Darrow

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case, when there was an insatiable lust for the blood of killers. The case taught Darrow to be on guard against prejudice of all kinds, exemplified best in his tireless defense of the Sweets, blacks who killed when they were beset by a white mob when they moved into a white neighborhood in Detroit.

Unlike some, Darrow believed that even the rich, Leopold and Loeb, for examples, were entitled to valiant defenses.

Darrow said that he fought against the sin and never the sinner. This was brilliantly illustrated in the memorable play by John Logan, *Never the Sinner*. I have special reason for cherishing this prize-winning play because it was based upon my huge collection of material about Darrow and Leopold, now housed at Northwestern University.

Another play and subsequently a motion picture, *Inherit the Wind*, was based upon Darrow's battle against the anti-evolution law in Tennessee. This illustrates Darrow's hatred of all religious bigotry. Darrow had admired William Jennings Bryan because of his defense of the little man in politics. But when Bryan, the attorney for the anti-evolutionists in Dayton, TN, became a zealot in championing the Bible from cover to cover, Darrow was relentless in pursuit of him. His examination of Bryan as to his religious beliefs was so devastating that some believed Bryan's death five days after the Scopes trial was caused by it.

One of Darrow's great attributes as a trial lawyer was his skill in destroying hostile witnesses. Another great skill was in the selection of jurors who were likely to become sympathetic to his clients. But undoubtedly, his greatest ability was in closing arguments, whether in his famous defense of himself when he was charged with jury tampering or in his closing appeal in the Leopold-Loeb case. His closing arguments always had a great theme. In the case of the Franks killers, it was the trackless jungle through which all youth travel.



Darrow, the "Great Defender," addresses the jury at the Scopes trial, July 1925. (Photo provided through the courtesy of Bryan College Archives.)

### The Skeletons of Dreams

*He found giants  
in the earth: Mastodon,  
Mylodon, thigh bones  
like tree trunks, Megatherium, skulls  
big as boulders — once,  
in this savage country, treetops  
trembled at their passing.  
But their passing was silent as snails,  
silent as rabbits; nothing at all recorded  
the day when the last of them came  
crashing through creepers and ferns,  
shaking the earth a final time,  
leaving behind them crickets,  
monkeys, and mice.  
For think: at last it is nothing  
to be a giant — the dream  
of an ending haunts tortoise and  
Toxodon,  
troubles the sleep of the woodchuck  
and the bear.*

*Back home in his English garden,  
Darwin paused in his pacing,  
writing it down in italics  
in the book at the back of his mind:  
When a species has vanished  
from the face of the earth,  
the same form never reappears...  
So after our millions of years  
of inventing a thumb and a cortex,  
and after the long pain  
of writing our clumsy epic,  
we know we are mortal as mammoths,  
we know the last lines of our poem.  
And somewhere in curving space  
beyond our constellations,  
nebulae burn in their universal law:  
nothing out there ever knew  
that on one sky-blue planet  
we dreamed that terrible dream.  
Blazing along through black nothing  
to nowhere at all, Mastodons of heaven,  
the stars do not need our small ruin.*

Philip Appleman

From *New and Selected Poems, 1956-1996* (University of Arkansas Press, 1996). With permission of the author.

Why did Darrow have such a hold on people during his lifetime and afterward? I learned part of the answer for myself.

Just before the celebration of the Darrow centennial in 1957, a Parsee, who was the manager of the Singer Sewing

Machine Co. in Bombay, inquired of *Time* magazine with whom he might correspond regarding the American lawyer for whom he had developed a tremendous admiration. *Time* referred him to me. Until his death, some years later, we communicated regularly.

While sailing on the *Rotterdam*, I met the talented actor, Richard Dreyfus. I accompanied him while he was wheeling his baby around the deck. He then told me that, in his youth, he had memorized all of Darrow's closing arguments.

Our friends, Arthur and Lila Weinberg, were not lawyers, but they devoted their lives to writing books about Darrow.

I could give many other instances of Darrow's appeal to young and old, lawyers and laymen. Was it the apparent simplicity of the man or the actual complexities in his make-up? Most people think of the courtroom figure, fingering his gilluses or expressing views to delight or outrage conventional people. He did not have a booming voice, except when it was required in a case.

All of Darrow's principal cases were very widely publicized. The staid *New Republic* published an article at the time of the Leopold-Loeb case declaring that more was written about that case than any case in history. There is a lengthy book listing many but not all of the references to Darrow. I don't know of any other attorney who is the subject of such bibliography.

Every one of Darrow's cases — the Haywood-Moyer-Pettibone case, the Los Angeles Times bombing, the Debs and Pullman strike, the Leopold-Loeb case, the Scopes trial, the Sweet case, the Massie

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## William Jennings Bryan: 'Keeping the Faith' — From Chicago to Eternity

Born in Salem, IL, William Jennings Bryan began his legal career at Chicago's Union College of Law, from which he graduated in 1883. Heeding Horace Greeley's advice, "Go West, young man," Bryan moved to Lincoln, NE, established a law practice, and served two terms as U.S. Representative to Congress from Nebraska. In 1896 Bryan returned to Chicago for the National Democratic Convention, gave his famous "Cross of Gold" speech, and was nominated at the age of 36 for President, the youngest man ever to run representing a major national party. With the backing of Illinois governor John Peter Altgeld and an important convention delegate, Clarence Seward Darrow, Bryan led a hard-fought campaign against William McKinley. Although Bryan officially received 47 percent of the vote and won in more states and territories than McKinley, widespread voting fraud took six states from Bryan and resulted in his loss of the election.

The Democrats chose Bryan as their presidential candidate in 1900 and 1908. He lost both races largely because of his advocacy of economic reforms to aid the common worker and his far-sighted progressivism. This progressivism was years ahead of the times in championing such measures as woman suffrage, curtailment of trusts, government control of currency and banking, anti-imperialism, support of education, and defense of minority rights. In 1912 Bryan shifted his influence to Woodrow Wilson. Upon his election, Wilson named Bryan his Secretary of State. Bryan used the position to enact national reforms and promote international arbitration treaties.

During this period of his life, Bryan had numerous reasons to return to Chicago. He was a leader of a four-day Chicago Anti-Trust Conference in 1899. His daughter Ruth worked at Jane Addams' Hull House. (Considered America's first woman diplomat, Ruth Bryan Owen Rohde (1885-1954) was U.S. Minister to Denmark, 1933-36.) And his speaking engagements on the political, Chautauqua, and lyceum circuits often drew him back to the city that was his forensic father and the crossroads of his beloved Midwest.

In 1925 the Scopes Trial brought Bryan and Chicago lawyer Clarence Darrow together once again, but this time on opposite sides of the platform. Because of biased press coverage and the unhistorical slant of the popular play and motion picture, *Inherit the Wind*, it is not generally known that the Scopes trial was essentially a publicity stunt generated by the people of Dayton, TN, that Scopes never taught evolution in the classroom, and that Bryan was not against the teaching of evolution if

"Selected Chronology of Books by William Jennings Bryan" is representative of his broad interests.

Richard M. Cornelius  
Chair, English Department  
Bryan College

*Editor's note: This article was written especially for the Caxtonian by Dr. Cornelius, one of the country's leading specialists on the Scopes Evolution Trial and William Jennings Bryan. A special thanks is extended to him for his contribution. A note of appreciation is given as well to Pauline Greer, who graciously assisted in arranging for important portions of this issue.*



Looking tired, Bryan, the "Great Commoner" addresses the court at the Scopes trial, July 1925. (Photo provided through the courtesy of Bryan College Archives.)

it were taught as a theory and if the Bible was not attacked and misrepresented. After helping the prosecution to win the case in Dayton, Bryan died five days later. Bryan College was founded in Dayton as a memorial to the "Great Commoner," who was buried in Arlington National Cemetery beneath the inscription, "He kept the faith."

William Jennings Bryan's political and oratorical exploits have tended to overshadow his literary endeavors. For 23 years he edited *The Commoner*, a weekly national newspaper of 16 or more pages with a circulation of 140,000. Bryan's Sunday School lessons were syndicated in more than 100 newspapers with an estimated readership of 15 million. In addition, Bryan wrote or edited more than 48 books and booklets (almost half of them issued by Chicago publishers) and numerous magazine and newspaper articles. The

### Selected Chronology of Books by William Jennings Bryan 'The Great Commoner' 1860-1925

*The First Battle: Story of the Campaign of 1896*, W.B. Conkey, 1896.

*The World's Famous Orations*, 10 vols.

Editor, Funk & Wagnalls, 1906.

*Speeches of William Jennings Bryan*, 2 vols., Funk & Wagnalls, 1909.

*In His Image*, Fleming H. Revell, 1922.

*Shall Christianity Remain Christian?*

Fleming H. Revell, 1924.

*Christ and His Companions: Famous Figures of the New Testament*, Fleming H. Revell, 1925.

*The Memoirs of William Jennings Bryan* (with Mary Baird Bryan), John C. Winston, 1925.

*The Last Message of Williams Jennings Bryan*, Fleming H. Revell, 1925.

## Harlem

(Continued from Page Three)

potential. He concluded: "We younger Negro artists who create now intend to express our individual dark-skinned selves without fear or shame. If white people are pleased we are glad. If they are not, it doesn't matter.... If colored people are pleased we are glad. If they are not, their displeasure doesn't matter either. We build our temples for tomorrow, strong as we know how, and we stand on top of the mountain, free within ourselves."

Renaissance writers covered all aspects of black life and explored the entire range of human emotions. White critics accused them of being too parochial, since they failed to write of universal themes. Human emotions, however, are universal, whether experienced by the prince or the pauper. Renaissance writers wrote with and about emotions.

Anger was a constant theme. McKay's "If We Must Die" was an angry response to the 1919 Red Summer of urban unrest across the country. It reads, in part:

*If we must die, let it not be like hogs  
Hunted and penned in an inglorious spot,  
....*

*Like men we'll face the murderous, cowardly pack,  
Pressed to the wall, dying, but fighting back!*

Langston Hughes wrote about a boy's hatred for his white father in two poems he called "Mulatto." The first ended with the following lines:

*Because I am my cruel father's child,  
My love of justice stirs me up to hate,  
A warring Ishmaelite, unreconciled,  
When falls the hour I shall not hesitate  
Into my father's heart to plunge the knife  
To gain the utmost freedom that is life.*

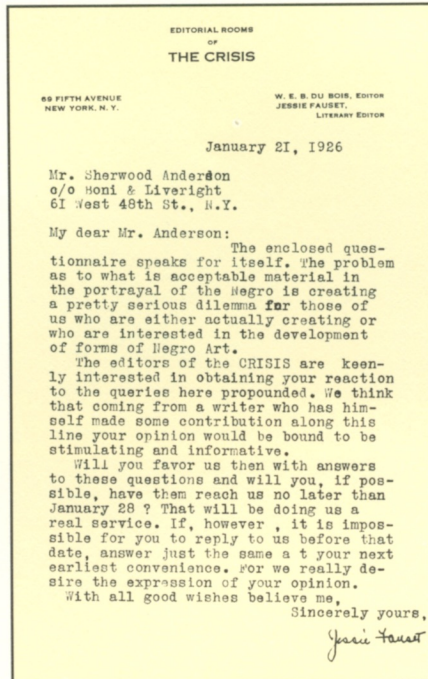
The second, equally bitter, ends:

*I am your son, white man  
A little yellow  
Bastard boy.*

His hatred had lessened, I suppose, by the time he wrote "Cross" after the Renaissance. In it his character speaks of the mixed feelings he has for his black mother and white father. Mostly, however, he wonders about his own fate:

*My old man died in a fine big house.  
My ma died in a shack.  
I wonder where I'm gonna die,  
Being neither white nor black?*

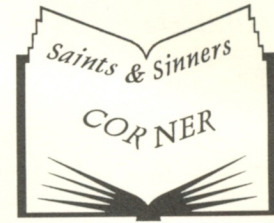
Identity was an issue. Jessie Fauset's 1929 novel, *Plum Bun: A Novel without a Moral*,



Letter from Jessie Fauset to novelist, Sherwood Anderson. Courtesy of the Newberry Library.

relates to the pain and shame encountered by those attempting to "pass" for white. One day while she and her almost-white daughter were "passing," they came close to encountering her husband and their dark-skinned daughter. Once out of danger of recognition, the daughter accompanying her says, "It's a good thing Papa didn't see us, you'd have had to speak to him, wouldn't you?" She made no reply. That night, however, she spoke of her shame to her husband, who assured her that her passing meant nothing to him. Not quite satisfied, she explained: "...it isn't you, dear, who makes me feel guilty. I really am ashamed to think that I let Virginia pass without a word. I think I should feel very badly if she were to know it. I don't believe I'll ever let myself be quite as silly as that again."

In another section of the novel, Fauset tells of Angela, a young student artist, who had been befriended by her instructor and his wife. A class model became upset when she recognized Angela, a former classmate, painting her nude body. Outraged, she spoke vindictively, "I haven't gotten to the point yet where I'm going to lower myself to pose for a coloured girl." Initially, the instructor did not believe that Angela was coloured. Not wanting to ask her prematurely, he followed her home to a black community.



**Caxtonian Gwendolyn Brooks** was the Guestship Speaker for the 6th Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Guestship at Elmhurst College, February 25. She spoke on "Carl Sandburg Remembered: Poet of the People."

### Future Caxton Dinner Programs

include the following: April - Earl Stanley will speak on Rockwell Kent in a program to be held at the Gaylord Donnelley Library; May - Art Historian Richard H. Love's talk, "Carl W. Peters: On the Road to Publication," will trace the publication process of his most recent book, *Carl W. Peters: American Scene Painter from Rochester to Rockport*; June - Actor, writer, and director John Astin (Gomez on the TV series, "The Addams Family") will give us a "Bloomsday Celebration," recognizing the great Irish author, James Joyce, whose *Ulysses* Astin first produced with Burgess Merideth in New York in 1957.

The flabbergasted teacher discussed the matter with his wife, who vowed that Angela, an occasional visitor, would never be allowed to enter their home again. Confronting Angela at the next class session, the teacher blurted out miserably, "But, Miss Murray, you never told me that you are coloured." Angela calmly replied, "Coloured! Of course I never told you that I was coloured. Why should I?" Passing for white was tough enough; looking white and acting like an intelligent human being also created problems.

And so, the literature of the Harlem Renaissance opened broad vistas, through which both black and white Americans could view the full range of issues confronting black Americans in the efforts to transform their experience into a meaningful literature, as Hughes said, "without fear or shame."

(To be continued)

Sherman Beverly, Jr.

## Darrow

(Continued from Page Four)

case, and many others were each in turn the "case of the century." And why not? When you have a client like Nathan Leopold, a young Jew of very good family, of great wealth, with an IQ at 60 points above the genius level, with a knowledge of 27 languages, professional skill as an ornithologist, and much else, who, with his friend, kidnaps and kills a young boy, how can it be anything but a sensational case? How can you explain such a person? Darrow tried to understand him, as did I years later, but neither of us truly reached understanding. Perhaps he was, as Eleanor Roosevelt said to me, a "sick boy who grew well."

A number of great actors, among them Orson Welles, Spencer Tracy, Henry Fonda, Paul Muni, and Melvyn Douglas, have portrayed Darrow in motion pictures, plays, documentaries, and one-man shows. All are different in detail but convey the unforgettable impression of an apparently artless and simple man who was vastly gifted in speech and overwhelming in motivation and heart.

Lawyers seem to have an itch for writing, chiefly about their own cases. Darrow had exciting cases to write about, and he did so in books, pamphlets, and innumerable articles in a vast variety of magazines and newspapers. And he spoke endlessly. He loved to debate his favorite themes before live audiences anywhere. I heard him many times.

Unlike most lawyer-writers, Darrow's interests went far beyond the law. He loved literature, particularly poetry. He wove poetry into his closing arguments. When I was assembling Darrow material in connection with the observance of his centennial, I learned forcibly the ambivalent relations between Darrow and his one-time law partner, Edgar Lee Masters, author of *The Spoon River Anthology*. Masters wrote that Bryan and Darrow were the two worst demagogues. But I found two poems that Masters had written about Darrow. In one of them he lauded



Old colleagues and longtime friends, Clarence Darrow, left, and William Jennings Bryan, converse during the hot summer days of the John Scopes trial in Dayton, TN, 1925. Bryan died five days after the trial. (AP/Wide World Photo; used with permission.)

Darrow as if he were a saint; in the other he treated him as if he were a scamp. We probably learn more about Masters than Darrow in these performances.

Darrow had much better relations with other authors—H.G. Wells, for one, and A.E. Housman, for another. Darrow had quoted from Housman's *A Shropshire Lad* in his classic summation in the Leopold-Loeb case. Housman later claimed, half-seriously, that he had helped save the lives of two young murderers. In the Leopold parole hearing, I read the very passage from the Housman poem that Darrow had recited in the 1924 criminal trial—from the very book that belonged to Darrow.

At the time of the parole hearing, Leopold gave me the letters that he had received from Darrow during his imprisonment. They were all handwritten and very encouraging, telling him that one day he would be freed and have the opportunity to make something of himself. I myself received several letters from Darrow, generally in his own hand. I recall particularly one long letter in which the great lawyer analyzed the legal aspects of Frank Harris' *My Life and Loves* with much particularity. I recall, too, one letter that Darrow wrote to me when he was about to embark on a trip to Europe. He wanted to know the address of Harris. After Harris' death, I learned, to my astonishment, that Darrow did not admire Harris, despite his efforts to assist him. I am sure that Darrow had no great love for others whom he defended.

Darrow died on March 13, 1938, exactly 20 years before the release of his famous client,

Nathan Leopold. As I led Leopold from Stateville Prison, I was much aware of the striking coincidence. Darrow was cremated and his ashes spread from what is now known as the Darrow Bridge in Chicago's Jackson Park.

Each year a group of us assemble at the bridge to pay homage to him; then we meet at the Museum of Science and Industry to hear talks on themes that would have interested the great lawyer, such as capital punishment. Half-seriously, he had said that he would reappear at the site if there was anything to the claims of spiritualists, which he strongly doubted. He would have been greatly pleased that 60 years after his death he was still being remembered. He might have said that there are better things to be done than honoring the ashes of any man. There are battles to be fought for the causes in which he believed.

Elmer Gertz

## Chronology of Books by Clarence Darrow 'The Great Defender' 1857-1938

- A Persian Pearl and Other Essays*, C.L. Ricketts, 1902 and 1904.  
*Resist Not Evil*, C.H. Kerr, 1902.  
*Farmington* (novel), A.C. McClurg & Co., 1904.  
*An Eye for an Eye* (novel), Fox, Duffield, 1905.  
*The Story of My Life*, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932 and 1934.  
*Verdicts Out of Court*. Edited with an introduction by Arthur and Lila Weinberg, Quadrangle Books, 1963. (A collection of Darrow's essays, debates and lectures demonstrating Darrow's wide-ranging interests and intellect).

Compiled by Russell Fee

*Editor's note:* In July 1996, Caxtonian Russell Fee, an attorney and a Darrow collector, and his father, guests for the annual reenactment of the Scopes trial in Dayton, were selected as jurors for the trial that year. "The script for the reenactment," Fee says, "is better than *Inherit the Wind*—it is historically more accurate and it has greater natural humor." The text of the trial, *The World's Most Famous Court Trial: Tennessee Evolution Case, a 442-page reprint of the 1925 stenographic transcript of the trial is available for \$30, from Dr. Richard Cornelius, Department of English, Bryan College, Dayton, TN 37321-7000.*

# Book Marks

## Luncheon Programs

*Your Special Luncheon Invitation. . .*

**Date:** March 13, 1998  
**Place:** Mid-Day Club  
**Speaker:** C. Frederick Kittle

Our own Dr. Kittle, one of the world's great Arthur Conan Doyle collectors, will speak on the topic, "The Other Side of Doyle." He will focus on the versatility, the energy, and the achievements of Sir Arthur in the social, political, sports, and literary arenas. Kittle will trace Doyle's important contributions through a biographical account from events and experiences of his early life in one of Europe's most creatively productive families.

Caxtonians will remember the March 1997 *Caxtonian*, which featured Kittle's extensive Doyle collection. This collection, which has been bequeathed to the Newberry Library, is one of the world's finest book and manuscript collections and may well be the finest Doyle collection anywhere. Kittle will draw from this collection in his talk.

Besides containing nearly all of Doyle's first editions, the collection includes seven manuscripts among which is the 531-page manuscript of *The White Company*, more than 60 letters by Doyle, scores of letters from friends and family members, and major items from the literary and artistic productions of four generations of the Doyle family.

This luncheon will be a perfect time to meet friends and fellow Caxtonians. You will find it difficult to distinguish Kittle from Doyle from Holmes — and that's all part of the mystery of books and their collectors!

Edward Quattrocchi  
Leonard Freedman  
Co-Chairs

*All luncheon and dinner meetings, unless otherwise noted, are held in the Mid-Day Club, 56th floor of the First National Bank of Chicago, Madison & Clark, Chicago. Luncheon and discussion, 12:30 p.m. Dinner meetings begin with spirits, 5 p.m., dinner 6 p.m., lecture, 7 p.m. The First National Bank of Chicago's parking garage, 40 S. Clark Street, offers a special parking rate after 5 p.m. to guests of the Mid-Day Club. When you leave, please tell the parking attendant you were at the Mid-Day Club, and your parking fee will be \$5.25. Members planning to attend luncheons or dinners must make advance reservations by phoning the Caxton number, 312/255-3710. Luncheon for members and guests, \$20. Dinner, for members and guests, \$35.*

Internet users may visit The Caxton Club at the following address: <http://www.caxtonclub.org>

## Dinner Programs

*Your Special Dinner Invitation. . .*

**Date:** March 18, 1998  
**Place:** Mid-Day Club  
**Speaker:** Jon L. Lellenberg

A native of Kansas City, Jon L. Lellenberg will speak on "Sherlock Holmes, Vincent Starrett, and Literary Memory." A graduate of University of Southern California in International Relations, he has worked most of his professional life as a strategic planner for the U.S. government at the Pentagon in Washington, DC. For the last 25 years or so, Lellenberg has devoted his life to the study of Arthur Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes — natural companions, it would seem, for a person working at the Pentagon.

In his Doyle studies, he has edited *Baker Street Miscellanea*, a quarterly journal on Sherlockian matters. He is the author of *The Quest for Sir Arthur Conan Doyle*, one of the best biographies on the creator of Sherlock Holmes. In addition, he has written *Nova 57 Minor* and completed a four-volume history of the Baker Street Irregulars, a society founded in 1943 by Caxtonian Vincent Starrett. He is currently working on the fifth volume of this history.

Lellenberg was for years the literary agent for the Dame Jean Conan Doyle, the last surviving daughter of Sir Arthur. With her death in 1997, he continues as the American literary agent for her estate. He has, as well, recently helped in the formation of the Wodehouse Society, which we may hear more about during his visit with us in March.

Lellenberg's talk will focus on the Chicago influence on Doyle and Holmes. Vincent Starrett and Chicago have played significant roles in the understanding and appreciation of Sherlock Holmes as a literary figure. At least eight Baker Street Irregular groups meet in the Chicago area at the present time. This promises to be an evening of great delight, one that all Caxtonians will want to share. We invite you and your friends to welcome Jon Lellenberg to The Caxton Club.

C. Fred Kittle  
Vice President and  
Program Chair