

Columbus day picnic for foreign students

My dearly beloved, good evening...bon soir messieurs-dams, guten abend, Herren u. Damen, buona sera signori e signore, namaste, sat sri akal, shalom, salaam wali-kum, ohio.

We are gathered to celebrate the 486th anniversary of one of the most signif events in human history. It was Columbs discovery of the new world on Oct 12, 1492. Other discoverers there were, even other Europs who came to the Amer continent, but none produced so great a change in things as they were than did Columbus. His voyage marked the beginning of what we call Amer Hist; it is also the beginning of what hists call the modern era in Europ & world hist. It also set in motion a new spirit of optimism and intell activ that lifted men out of despair. Most people in Eur in 1492 were gloomy and dispirited. For over a cen there had been no important advance in sci knowl, instits were decaying, many were becoming disillusioned and desperate, the Xr Ch reached its lowest point when a Borgia became pope Alex VI in 1492. In secular affairs, too there was much to discourage and little to praise. On the continent the HRE was headed by incompetent and unimagin men, and in Engl the wars of the roses had ended but few expected the house to Tudor to survive for long. The attit of many people was expressed in a book publ in Nuremberg in 1493, a ~~handwritten~~ folio that contained all the important things that had happened "from the beginning of the world to the calamity of our time." The authors decl that the world had entered its last phase and time would very soon run out. So they left 6 blank pages at the end so readers could fill in for themselves all the important events from the date of publicat to the anticip day of Judgmt. Only 6 pages! There is the best evid of the prevailing mood of pessimism. Yet even as the authors of that book were completing work on it a small Span boat named Nina came into port at Lisbon w/news that was to give tired old Europe another chance. Within a very few yrs an entirely new spirit arose. Martin Luther began to work on a new theol interpr in 1505, a mvmt which in half-a-cen purged the old Ch of its errors, new ideas appeared in medicine and physics, in astronomy and chemistry, in biology. Shakespeare put one of his plays in the new world, and Sir Thomas More wrote Utopia about the possibil of perfection in a new land. With unknown goods availabl in Europe--potatoes and cotton, quinine and spices--a quickening of commerce could begin. All this and more followed upon the voyage of Columbus to an obscure island in the caribbean sea, where he sighted land at 2 a.m. on the morning of October 12.

Columbus was born in Genoa sometime in 1451, son of a wool-draper. Early he went to sea, and wherever he went he questioned ancient mariners about the waters to the west of Europe. He was evolving the idea of reaching Japan and China and India by sailing westward as the shortest and cheapest trade route to the rich and profitable goods the East could provide. He knew the earth was a globe; in 1590 all educated people--both of them--and all univs, taught that geography. What was uncertain was the size of that globe. If one could but know the distance of one degree of circumference it is a simple matter to multiply that by 360 degrees. But estimates of the length of one degree varied widely. The earliest estimate was from the Grk mathematician Eratosthenes, who measur the length of the shadow of a stick at noon in Alexandria and then again in a measured distance south of Alex. He estim degree at 59.5 nautical miles, only 1/2 mile off from present measuremts. Sticks not as accurate then. But other estimates differed. Columbus himself greatly underestim the distance. Taking Marco Polo's reports and measuremts, he would put Japan in the midst of the carib sea, he misjudged the circumference of earth by 25%, he argued that a voyage of only a few wks would get him to the orient. So, over years, he convinced enough people to finance his experiment. The Ports would not help him, but the Span monarchs Ferdinand & Isabella would, in part at least to celebrate their final victory over the Moors. So Col rounded up volunteers, got some prisoners out of jail--Amer has always been a land of opport for jail-birds--and got three small ships, and on Aug 3/92 they sailed out of the Span port of Palos. Either by luck or good sense, Col steered first for the Canary Isls, 660 miles S & W from Spain, But more important, at 28 degrees N latitude. That put him exactly within the zone of trade winds which in summer always blow from E to W. Blown by these winds the 3 ships made remarkable speed, so much so that the crews begame mutinous. Not because they feared they would get to the edge of the world and fall over, but because they could see no hope of ever getting back home again against those strong winds. But, according to the poem, onward, sail onward the admiral commanded, and they went. Each day he kept real figures of their distance to himself, & published greatly reduced figures to keep the men from worry--but it later turned out that the de-reduced figures were closer to the reality. At last, after 33 days of rapid movemt across the waters the watch in the crow's nest saw land, and on the morning of Oct 12 1492 the ships made landfall.

For three months the Spans explored the islands of the caribbean, and on 16 Jan 1493 they started back, taking some carib natives and leaving some Spans in the isls. They did face strong head winds, ~~xxx~~ against which they beat to the north, beyond the 35th latitude, where the trade winds blow steadily from W to E. Thus they made it back to Sp on the 45th day after leaving Hispaniola.

He did not know where he was going when he left; he did not know where he was when he got there, did not know where he'd been when he got back--and did it all on publ money. good politics

My dearly beloved, we are gathered here today to engage in an exercise of remembering. Next to life itself, memory is the greatest gift of the Creator, for it is one of those traits that set mankind apart from other animals. Without memory we would not know who we are, or how we got here, or what there is for us to do. And yet how difficult it is to remember. How easy it is to forget, to turn to other interests, to let the drama and the emotion and the greatness of the past fade away with the years. And so, to help us, people have always provided aids and reminders to jog our memories, to keep the past fresh among us.

Monuments, altars of piled stones, regularly repeated ritual events have all been used to keep memory alive. The prophet Samuel, we read, took a stone and set it up at Mizpah and called it Ebenezer, which means stone of help, so that people would not forget that to this point the Lord had helped them. We are met here today to raise our Ebenezers of memory, for we need stones of help, lest we forget, lest we forget.

And what is it that we remember? The actions of men of courage and valor and gallantry and loyalty and endurance. In one of his stories the Virginia writer Thomas Nelson Page told of the first Confederate memorial. Based upon an actual event, it was the story of an artillery battery that had fought through the entire war with the Army of Northern Virginia and had been in the thick of many battles. Now, in mid-April, 1865, they knew that Lee had surrendered and the war was over. But their orders were not to let their guns fall into enemy hands, guns named for the four evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and two others named Eagle, because of its scream, and the Cat because it got hot when fired rapidly and jumped like a cat. And they could not disobey their orders even in defeat.

So they talked it over and decided to line the guns along the riverbank, fire them one last time in tribute, and then roll them into the deep water of the river. But a Sgt came up to the Capt and asked permission to put a list of the names of their dead into the gun barrels before they were buried in the stream. "It's just a little list we made out among us," he said, "so's if anyone ever hauls 'em out they'll find it there to tell what the old battery was, and if they don't, it'll be in one of 'em down there 'til judgment, an' it'll sort of ease our minds a bit."

So they wrote out the list of the dead, and added a few lines to it: "We fought the best we could in 119 battles in four years and never lost a gun. Now we're going home. We ain't surrendered; just disbanded, and we pledge ourselves to teach our children to love the South and General Lee; and to come when we're called anywhere and any time."

And the guns were fired one last time, and then buried in the river to keep them from being captured. And that event marked the very first Confederate memorial. They wanted to remember what they had been through, and those who had fallen along the way, so they made a memorial in the guns they buried in their final act of loyalty. And it eased their minds a bit. Can we do any less than to remember, on this day, ~~we set aside as~~ our stone of remembrance, what they suffered and what they sacrificed? And how with heads held high, and hot tears flowing down their cheeks, they could go home proud of their part in a Cause that was lost? Let us not forget, for memory is the greatest gift of the Creator, memories of our ancestors, of their constancy and patriotism; fellow Americans, heroes.

Theodore O'Hara, a veteran of that family war, wrote in moving words of the importance of remembering.

The muffled drum's sad roll has beat
The soldier's last tattoo;
No more on Life's parade shall meet
That brave and fallen few.
On Fame's eternal camping ground
Their silent tents are spread,
And Glory guards, with solemn round,
The bivouac of the dead.

....

Their shivered swords are red with rust;
Their plumed heads are bowed;
Their mighty banner, trailed in dust,
Is now their martial shroud.
And plenteous funeral tears have washed
The red stains from each brow,
And the proud forms, by battle gashed,
Are free from anguish now.

....

Rest on, embalmed and saluted dead!

Dear as the blood ye gave,
No impious footsteps here shall tread
The herbage of your grave;
Nor shall your story be forgot,
While Fame her record keeps,
Or Honor points the hallowed spot
Where Valor proudly sleeps.

Let not their story be forgot, let not their memory ever dim within us, those whose acts of love and courage are sealed in the record books of Fame, where Honor guards the spot where sleep the brave.

It may have been best said on the monument, the stone of help for lagging memories, erected to the Confederate dead of South Carolina, words that apply to all who participated. They were written by historian and diplomat Wm Henry Trescott. So appropriate is the inscription for all heroes that Pres. Woodrow Wilson, in Paris at the peace conference in 1919, cabled an urgent request for a copy of it. It goes like this:

This monument perpetuates the memory of those who, true to the instincts of their birth, faithful to the teaching of their fathers, constant in their love for the state, died in the performance of their duty; who have glorified a fallen cause by the simple manhood of their lives, The patient endurance of suffering, and the heroism of death, and who, in the dark hours of imprisonment, and the hopelessness of the hospital, in the short, sharp agony of the field, found support and consolation in the belief that at home they would not be forgotten.

Let the stranger who may in future times read this inscription x recognized that these were men whom power could not corrupt, whom death could not terrify, whom defeat could not dishonor. And let their virtue plead for just judgment of the cause in which they perished; let the South Carolinian of another generation remember that the state taught them how to live and how to die, and that from her broken fortunes she has preserved for her children the priceless treasures of their memories; teaching all who may claim the same birthright, that truth, courage, and patriotism endureth forever.

The priceless treasure of their memories. In the belief that at home they would not be forgotten. That is what we celebrate and what we remember. Let us keep bright our stones of remembrance for those who endured, who glorified a fallen cause by the simple manhood of their lives, who were made heroes by birth and by tradition, who enlarged by their deeds the pride we feel for our country.

A
Alumni, Durham, Feb 7/78.

My dearly beloved, ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, I am happy to be a part of this gathering, altho I cannot begin my remarks as has been my custom in the past. For many years, when I was asked to speak to WF alumni I always began with the same words. They went like this: you honor me with the opportunity to break bread with so many people who are so much better educated than I. It is a condition I have envied, and strived for, but to no avail. I do not have the advantages of a WF education. But since last Nov I am unable to begin that way, for the Alumni Council and its presid Dee Hughes LeRoy made me an honorary alumnus, with all the rights, privileges, and annual giving solicitations of that high honor. Now there are two schools that ~~have~~ are embarrassed to have me on their alumni rolls. ~~Like many high school students in the country today, perhaps even like many of you, I have the diploma but not the education.~~ All I can say in my own defense is that, given the deficiencies of another school's miseducation, I have had the best of all possible worlds to live in--28 years on the WF campus, working w/WF students, some of whom are present here among us. It is a truism in this profession that if you live long enough your mistakes will catch up with you.

Tonight I want to talk about how we've gotten along since you left us, how we've managed to survive without you. While you've been making successes of yourselves in businesses and professions WF has been rocking along, as young as it ever was, often in trouble but never in fear, keeping faith with its tradition of making changes slowly but with meaning, trying to shock unsuspecting students into doing a little thinking and extending the limits of their lives. This week, with 6-wk exams springing up everywhere thru the snow, some of them are probably wishing they'd done a bit more of that.

Other than that, some of you have been away long enough to be surprised that there is now a co-ed dorm on campus, something unheard of when I was a student. And nothing that has happened has made me so painfully aware that I was born 30 years too soon. You would also notice the new fine arts building with its odd shape and strange angles, fortunately sited low in a valley. It is the first building not to conform to the modif Georgian pattern of the campus, to some a welcome relief, to others a graceless eyesore. There is also a graduate school of business, some new additions to the law school building, and a highly publicised addition to the biology dept that ~~has~~ angered our Baptist friends. You would also notice that a number of your profs are no longer with us. The number of us who taught on the old campus gets smaller with each year. And in their places are a great number of new people, and you would have trouble trying to get the students' advice on them--who is easy, who is any good. In the past four gtudent generations the faculty has nearly doubled in size, and the pct of PhDs interested in research as well as teaching is much higher. There has been a considerable publicat of those research projects. [In such diverse subjects as Shakespeare and Chaucer, the work of a 14th Cen French economist, modern Iddia; all along-side physics research in lasers and transistors and atomic bonding w/approval & grants from the Oak Ridge labs, biolog study of tiny living things from the Yadkin River and from the bottom of the Indian ocean that I do not even believe in. And there are significant chemical studies, math so easy that only a child can understand it--meaning that it is far beyond me; and music recitals and lab plays in the new theatre and art exhibits of student work. The psychols have a research lab filled with white mice and students in long smocks, or mice in white smocks, I forget which. And they study such fascinating things as whether a thirsty male mouse prefers a drink of water or a short visit to an interesting young lady mouse. I'm told there is a law of behavior involved in all that that has some application to the human dilemma, but I'm not right sure what it is. Or are the mice studying us? And students get called upon to take part in such goings-on--I mean as research assts.] One result of all this is that you would notice a strong commitment to one's professional discipline, to maintain and extend the body of knowl. Library stacks are open to students, the familiar pick-up point to some of you, but at whatever hour one goes into the stacks the study tables are always in full use. Also the new libr cataloging system, taken from the Libr Congr, makes it easier for librarians to hide books. Some of you would have trouble finding your way around. The stadium is now a decade old, so it may be no stranger to you, but there is ~~new~~ ~~ing~~ ~~completing~~ ~~red~~ a new field house near the gym, a tennis house for winter practice, and an exciting basketball season. Football we say little about, tho a new coach may ~~yet~~ make a difference; I don't know what happened to baseball, which was the country's best when I first came to WF. Maybe they lost the ball. And who can say enough about the golf team? Some yrs back, speaking on campus of N.C. state, student asked me about WF sports. I told him we would only talk about small balls, not big ones. Now we can also talk about some larger balls and other sports. And there is swimming and rugby and ice hockey and track and cross-country, and a major change has been in women's sports. Some of the lady Deacs are really demons on the count as they are in courting. @ Bells.

All this, and more, you would note if you came back as a student. But perhaps the biggest change in my yrs at WF has been in the nature of the students. The students I faced a qr-cen ago needed to know a great variety of rather elementary facts and responded to the kind of teaching that included them. Some of them stayed around long enough to become students emeriti; others

are long and warmly remembered for their pranks. The greatest clown among them was Bill Shepherd, may he rest in peace. Brassiere in chapel, his fraternity Signa Phi Nothing.

But now, as tuition has steadily incr and stds for admission have gone up, we have a differ type of student--I could not be accepted as a freshman. They are on the whole much better prepared and want much from their courses. It has meant agonizing reappraisal of old lecture notes, new thinking about the old courses. These more mature students run many actives on campus--the prize-winning movies series, lab play direction, college union events of all kinds, the experimental college, the challenge program every 2 yrs. For the new type student there are honors courses for enriching the curriculum, and an open curriculum for a small pct who are not required to take the required courses. There is also an international flavor on campus, with WF now based in London and Venice, and overseas programs in France and Spain as well as other travel courses.

But for all the changes, some things remain constant. WF is still one of the best places around to grow up in. Last term I had a freshman in one of my courses--usually the Admin does not trust me with them--and altho she had gone to a fine HS in Phila she came to me after two weeks with eyes shining to report that her four courses had opened her eyes and excited her so that she could not sleep well. There is still a strong dedication to the liberal arts and the commitment to humanity is more than just a motto. The recognition of man's spiritual dimension is still respected. WF continues to offer the advantages of a major university within the framework of a small community that embraces the widest extent of man's learning, where studees are not likely to be folded, spindled, punched or mutilated in a large faceless student body. And if the wine is not the same vintages as it was when you supped the good ruddy Rhenish of the fight song, the wineskin is the same. It can still hold the heady mixture that is the Deacon of 1978.

*we can't get along w/o you,
we need your support, interest, students*

Scouts. Dec 8/78. Reminiscences of a life-long tenderfoot

My dearly beloved, I thank you for the invitat to share with you this occasion, which has brot back memories I had long forgotten. I find as I grow older--and I am approaching senility--I spend more time remembering the past than I do living in the present or planning for the future. And your invitat set me to thinking about my experiences in the Boy Scouts, way back when the century was younger and life was simpler and less affluent. Somewhere, filed away in the ancient records of the Scouts, I'm sure there is a record that I joined and passed whatever tests were necessary to get to be a tenderfoot. ~~So~~ learned the salute and the handclasp and the pledges and the laws. But at that point my record came to an end. I never passed the requiremts to become a second-class scout, so there I have stayed, all my life, a tenderfoot. And even that is something I have been proud of all my life. For it meant something to me at the time, and has ever since, that I stood on the fringes of scouting, even if I never cracked the big time. So I want to recount the reminiscences of a life-long tenderfoot, or scouting as I remember it from nearly a half-century ago, for there were lessons in it for me, and perhaps there may also be lessons in it for some of you.

My first contact with the scouts came when I was 10, ~~you~~ young to join a troop--and there were then no cub scout dens in the area--but not too young to go to scout camp. In the depths of the depression the camp operators would take anybody for a week who had \$5 to pay for it, and my dad provided the money and took a group of boys 60 miles to the camp. When he left I confronted a hostile gang--the people from my town who were in my cabin. Almost as soon as we were getting settled there came a request for one person from each cabin to help in the dining hall for supper. My cabin mates, all older and much more cunning in this world's lore, promptly assigned me the task. They needed somebody to set the table and serve the food for the people in the cabin. And as I was leaving, one of them told me that I should be sure to get 10 plates. But what I heard was tin plates, not china ones. So when I got to the kitchen building I told the cook I wanted tin plates for our babin's table. He said he did not have many tin plates, but there were plenty of china plates. No, I said, I had my orders. So while the other KP's were setting out nice shiny china plates the cook and I ransacked the kitchen and found enough tin plates to set the table. And how proud I was that I had carried out my orders just like a big boy. But when the bugle sounded and everyone trooped in to the dining hall our table was the laughingstock of the camp. And the boy who had given me the orders came to me, angry. Why did you put out tin plates for us, he demanded. Because that's what you told me to put out, I replied. And then both he and I understood how I had misunderstood. I was given no further KP duty that week. And after dinner we sang. I still remember, oh my darling Clementine was one of them--I thought it was sad and used it as an excuse to get rid of some homesickness tears. We played a game of O Wah Ta Goos I am, and I was among the last to keep saying it.

After that things went much better. In the swimming pond I swam around the kick-log, which was the requiremt for being released from bondage among those who could not yet swim, to go out into the deeps. We had the buddy system, and several times the whistle blew and I could not get quickly enough to my buddy and we had to come out for a penalty time. There was a steep hill above the pond, up which we trudged slowly the first day and ran up in a few seconds at the end of the week. We did the things people do in camp--archery and hiking and pottery and crafts, canoeing and campfires, runny scrambled eggs at breakfast that I could not eat--they were raw to me--always hungry but always excited. I had a new flashlight for going to the latrine at night, but the batteries gave out from over-use in trying to push back the terrors of the dark. I met people from over half the state, all of them older and more experienced than I, all ~~new~~ forgotten soon after that week.

hand down In another two years I joined a scout troop and became a tenderfoot. *Next moment repeating oath* ~~ing up the ranks, but the things began~~ None of us had a complete uniform in those days, but as we could we got the shirt and the proper emblems to sew on them. Most of us also had the neckerchief in the proper color so we could be indentified, some had a hat, a few had a canteen or a compass. At the weekly meetings the patrols studied to pass one or the other test to move up, or to win a merit badge, and we played rather rough games of snatch the bacon, and tag. The troop met in the empty top floor of the tallest building in town--five stories, and some of the boys ran up and down the stairs of the building, while others leaned dangerously out the windows or threatened the smaller kids with being thrown out. The scoutmaster did the best he could, but he was often late in arriving and sometimes did not get there at all. While he was present, things were orderly and profitable, but my memories of scout meetings are not all pleasant. Still, I had high hopes of moving up the ranks, and getting beyond the embarrassmt of the beginners' class, but then things began to fall apart for me. I studied hard to learn the handbook requiremts for 2d class; I learned the semaphore code and first aid and boxing the compass, ~~and~~ slowly I got my card *in those days* signed by an older boy or by the scoutmaster. But the master was hard to find and most of the older boys in the troop lived on the other side of the town. It was not easy to get someone to test me and sign my card. And twice, just as I had all but one or two tests passed, I lost that valuable card. After the second lost card I began to lose heart and interest. It seemed pointless, and hopeless, to do the work

Running a mile in 12 minutes by scout's pace

and go to all the trouble to pass the test before a qualified examiner and then to lose it all and have to start all over again. That is why you see before you a life-long tenderfoot. Other than those problems, of often riotous meetings, of hazing by the older boys, and of diffcils in moving up, it was a good troop. We scored well in the two jamborees I ^{attended} ~~remember~~; I was the only scout in the troop who could tie a clove hitch onto the board used in the knot ^{face}. The others could tie one, but only over a post, or from behind. And the troop regularly won the artificial respiration contest, though I do not know why; I do not remember that we ever practiced it. But I do remember the most delicious stew I ever ate at one of those jamborees. Nothing tastes quite so good as a dish cooked in the open, over an open fire, bubbling and boiling away for several hours, its aroma watering mouths and sharpening tastes. It was about five gallons of beef stew, and it was heavenly.

But when a young one does not move up he moves out. Gradually I dropped out because no one seemed to care, and I was too young to buck the apathy and get ahead on my own. Had someone older taken an interest and given me a tiny bit of help and enouragemt I might well have pulled out of the beginner's ranks, but no one did. I got a paper route, and found other interests, and time moved along. When the war came I found many of my meager scout skills of great use, in keeping clean and sleeping well in the field, in loyalty and patriotism and service, and obedience to commands, in a proper attitude to stay out of trouble. But then and later I thought about my scout experience and what it meant, and now I am glad of the opportunity to share my reactions with you. I have no illusions of telling you what you do not know, but perhaps I can emphasize what you do know.

First, we must never forget how young these people are. My christmas on the plantat lecture. Even college seniors retain a strong streak of adolescence. And as for youngsters of 10 or 12, they may be eager and enthusiastic, willing and able, but we must not forget that they are still young. They need protection from the older boys, and they need help and encouragement. It should not take but a few hours a week to look over the list, see who needs a hand, who needs a visit, who should be encouraged to study for another test. And a definite date and place for passing the test with a dependable, helpful adult would have helped me. Second, we should have had more outings. Today there are state parks and woodlands within easy reach; in my day there were riverbanks and open forests. But that one week in camp is all that I had of that sort of experience. It would have increased my interest, and added to the romance of scouting, had we gone out at regular intervals, building fires and cooking, actually sending semaphore messages from one hill to the next--I never saw any practical value in learning that--finding one's way with compass, trailing someone by finding the signs. What made scouting popular was the field experience of city people at a time when they were losing the skills of the pioneers on the frontier, and we should not lose that. It is a part of the American experience that we should keep alive.

And that is why it is so important that you people have volunteered to help. Kids today need guidance and instruction and help just as I did so long ago, and I commend you for accepting the responsibility. It is an obligation and it is a significant one. With your friendship and support many boys might make it to responsible maturity who would otherwise have gotten into trouble, or misused their talents.

So I implore you to remember the romance of scouting, to remember the youth and weaknesses of those you direct, to hold out the helping hand and the warm heart. For you are working with our country's most precious natural resource, the adult leaders of tomorrow. And in that we must not fail.