
Frank R. Reade Papers – Folder 1: Nabokov, Vladimir.
1942, 1947

UA-2-1-3 Series 5, Box 28, Folder 1

1942, 1947

**Nabokov's Visit: Clippings, Letters, and
Photographs from Frank Robertson
Reade's Collection (1942, 1947)**

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December 16, 1942

Mr. Vladimir Nabokov
8 Craigie Circle
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Dear Nabokov:

Our treasurer tells me that the check for \$50.00 which I handed you before you left us many weeks ago has never come through. It may be, of course, that you have had your mind on higher things, and have never cashed the check!

If you have cashed the check, please let me know when and where.

We are all hoping that you can pay us a little visit sometime in the near future and you must try to bring your wife with you. I wish there were time for me to write you a real letter, but this is our last day before the Christmas holidays, and there are many interruptions.

With all good wishes for the Christmas season, I am

Sincerely yours,

FRR/ar

October 20, 1942

Mr. Vladimir Nabokov
C/o Vice-Chancellor Alex Guerry
University of the South
Sewanee, Tennessee

Dear Mr. McNab:

I am enclosing a picture post card of you and me as of yesterday morning. Just why I stood sideways to the camera is more than I now can tell!

All of us here, as you undoubtedly gathered, were delighted that you could come to see us and that you could stay on for several days. You must come again, whenever you can, and for as long as your sponsors will permit.

Perhaps you can get down to our Virginia mountains next summer and do some collecting.

When the spirit moves me, I shall write you a better letter. To-day, I don't like myself very much.

Sincerely yours,

P. S. In case you still want to know, --- the blond girl in green who stood near you for the picture is named Mary Ellen Compton. Why don't you name a butterfly for her? O,yah, yah, yah. yah, yah.

PRR/ar

October 24, 1942

Mrs. Vladimir Nabokov
8 Craigie Circle
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Dear Mrs. Nabokov:

May I take the liberty of telling you that everyone here thinks you have a most charming husband! When he gets back home, you must persuade him to pay us another visit this spring, and to bring you with him.

I don't mean to imply that Mr. Nabokov needs to be chaperoned but simply to tell you that we would like to know you also.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

FRI/ar

25 Years Ago Today

Taken from the Times of
Oct. 15-16, 1942:

Vladimir Nobokov, internationally known Russian author, was spending a few days at Georgia State Womans College.

Eighteen young Valdostans left for induction into the U. S. Army at Ft. McPherson.

Valdosta High School Wildcats are prepared to meet Fitzgerald on Cleveland Field.



Butterfly, Signature Are Collector's Items

By VIRGINIA CULPEPPER

When Jean (Mrs. Frank) Reade was glancing through the Feb. 11 issue of The Saturday Evening Post, she came across the picture of a man who looked familiar—especially since he had butterflies reflected in the lenses of his glasses.

And it's no wonder because Vladimir Nabokov had been the guest of the Reades many years ago when the late Dr. Frank Reade was president of Valdosta State College.

And he hunted butterflies while he was here, found one and sketched it off, gave it to Jean and signed his name. If you don't think this was unusual — read the article. The author states Nabokov is so opposed to giving his auto-

graph to anybody that he doesn't even answer letters of his closest friends — he has his wife to do it to keep from signing his name.

Mrs. Reade also has a snapshot of Nabokov and her husband taken in front of the Reade home.

The author of the much discussed "Lolita" is an avid butterfly collector and Mrs. Reade thinks that was the topic of his lecture at VSC.

"I remember when we drove in the yard when he came to lunch with us, a big swarm of yellow butterflies flew up out of the grass," she said.

"Nabokov hardly waited until the car stopped. He grabbed his net and was off, flying after them.

"He went on a field trip looking for butterflies with (the late Beatrice) Dr. Nevins. Later, while he and Frank were having a cup of coffee he sketched off an unusual butterfly he had found, signed his name to it and gave it to me," she said.

Now Nabokov's signature is even rarer than the butterfly!

penters are the parents of a two - months old daughter.

Mrs. Carpenter's picture and biographical sketch will appear in the 1966 issue of Outstanding Young Women of America.

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Vladimir Nabokov

To Arrive Oct. 13

During the week of October 13-16 there is to be on campus the first of the International Artists, Writers and Speakers. He is the noted author and lecturer Mr. Vladimir Nabokov who comes to us through the Institute of International Education.

At the present time he is a visiting professor at Harvard College and is also lecturing throughout the country. Some of his lecture subjects are: A Century of Exile, The Strange Fate of Russian Literature, The Artist and Common Sense, and The Art of Writing. Also among his subjects are talks on the four greatest Russian writers of the past: Pushkin, Lermontov, Gogol and Tolstoy.

During the past decade Mr. Nabokov has become a figure of prominence in the literary world. Between 1930 and 1940 Mr. Nabokov lectured on different aspects of literature in Russian, French, and English throughout the continent of Europe. While carrying on this work, as well as before this time, Mr. Nabokov produced literary works of such merit that he is now acclaimed by many as the greatest

Continued on page four

VLADIMIR NABOKOV—

Continued from page one
Russian novelist writing today and
contains promise of even greater
achievement.

Mr. Nabokov is the author of
eight novels and two plays. Among
his novels are "Machenka"; "King,
Queen, Knave"; "Despair"; "Invi-
tation To a Beheading"; and "The
Gift".





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VALDOSTA, GA.



Oeneis incognita Nabokov

18-X-42 Valdosta

del. Vladimir Nabokov

BIO



gift when he left for America in 1940 to lecture at Stanford. The war burst behind him.

Though his first novel written in English, *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight*, in 1941, went almost unnoticed, and his next, *Bend Sinister*, made minor ripples, the stunning *Speak, Memory*, an autobiography of his lost youth, attracted respectful attention. It was during the last part of 10 years at Cornell that he cruised the American West during the summers in a 1952 Buick, looking for butterflies, his wife driving and Nabokov beside her making notes as they journeyed through Wyoming, Utah, Arizona, the motels, the drugstores, the small towns. The result was *Lolita*, which at first was rejected everywhere, like many classics, and had to be published by the Olympia Press in Paris (Nabokov later quarreled with and abandoned his publisher, Maurice Girodias). A tremendous success and later a film directed by Stanley Kubrick, the book made the writer famous. Na-

Véra and Vladimir Nabokov look forward to celebrating their golden wedding anniversary this year on April 15.

bokov coquettishly demurs. "I am not a famous writer," he says, "Lolita was a famous little girl. You know what it is to be a famous writer in Montreux? An American woman comes up on the street and cries out, 'Mr. Malamud! I'd know you anywhere.'"

He is a man of celebrated prejudices. He abhors student activists, hippies, confessions, heart-to-heart talks. He never gives autographs. On his list of detested writers are some of the most brilliant who have ever lived: Cervantes, Dostoevsky, Faulkner and Henry James. His opinions are probably the most conservative, among important writers, of any since Evelyn Waugh's. "You will die in dreadful pain and complete isolation," his fellow exile, the Nobel Prize winner Ivan Bunin, told him. Far from pain these days and beyond isolation, Nabokov is frequently mentioned for that same award. "After all, you're the secret pride of Russia," he has written of someone unmistakably like himself.

He is far from being cold or uncaring. Outraged at the arrest last year of the writer Maramzin, he sent this as yet unpublished cable to the Soviet writers' union: "Am appalled to learn that yet another writer martyred just for being a writer. Maramzin's immediate release indispensable to prevent an atrocious new crime." The answer was silence.

Last year Nabokov published *Look at the Harlequins!*, his 37th book. It is the chronicle of a Russian émigré writer named Vadim Vadimych whose life, though he had four devastating wives, has many aspects that fascinate by their clear similarity to the life of Vladimir Vladimirovich. The typical Nabokovian fare is here in abundance, clever games of words, sly jokes, lofty knowledge, all as written by a "scornful and austere author, whose homework in Paris had never received its due." It is probably one of the final steps toward a goal that so many lesser writers have striven to achieve:

CONTINUED



CONTINUED

Nabokov has joined the current of history not by rushing to take part in political actions or appearing in the news but by quietly working for decades, a lifetime, until his voice seems as loud as the detested Stalin's, almost as loud as the lies. Deprived of his own land, of his language, he has conquered something greater. As his aunt in *Harlequins!* told young Vadim, "Play! Invent the world! Invent reality!"

Nabokov has done that. He has won.

"I get up at 6 o'clock," he says. He dabs at his eyes. "I work until 9. Then we have breakfast together. Then I take a bath. Perhaps an hour's work afterward. A walk, and then a delicious siesta for about two-and-a-half hours. And then three hours of work in the afternoon. In the summer we hunt butterflies." They have a cook who comes to their apartment, or Véra does the cooking. "We do not attach too much importance to food or wine." His favorite dish is bacon and eggs. They see no movies. They own no TV.

They have very few friends in Montreux, he admits. They prefer it that way. They never entertain. He doesn't need friends who read books; rather, he likes bright people, "people who understand jokes." Véra doesn't laugh, he says resignedly. "She is married to one of the great clowns of all time, but she never laughs."

The light is fading, there is no one else in the room or the room beyond. The hotel has many mirrors, some of them on doors, so it is like a house of illusion, part vision, part reflection, and rich with dreams.

JAMES SALTER

AN OLD MAGICIAN NAMED NABOKOV WRITES AND LIVES IN SPLENDID EXILE

© PHILIPPE HALSMAN

The Montreux Palace Hotel was built in an age when it was thought that things would last. It is on the very shores of Switzerland's Lake Geneva, its balconies and iron railings look across the water, its yellow-ocher awnings are a touch of color in the winter light. It is like a great sanitarium or museum. There are Bechstein pianos in the public rooms, a private silver collection, a Salon de Bridge. This is the hotel where the novelist Vladimir Vladimirovich Nabokov and his wife, Véra, live. They have been here for 14 years. One imagines his large and brooding reflection in the polished glass of bookcases near the reception desk where there are bound volumes of the *Illustrated London News* from the year 1849 to 1887, copies of *Great Expectations*, *The Chess Games of Greco* and a book called *Things Past*, by the Duchess of Sermoneta.

Though old, the hotel is marvelously kept up and, in certain portions, even modernized. Its business now is mainly conventions and, in the summer, tours, but there is still a thin migration of old clients, ancient couples and remnants of families who ask for certain rooms when they come and sometimes certain maids. For Nabokov, a man who rode as a child on the great European express trains, who had private tutors, estates, and inherited millions which disappeared in the Russian revolution, this is a return to his sources. It is a place to retire to, with Visconti's Mahler and the long-dead figures of *La Belle Epoque*, Edward VII, d'Annunzio, the munitions kings, where all stroll by the lake and play miniature golf, home at last.

Nabokov, the Wizard of Montreux,

Quizzical, reclusive and certain of his position as a master, Nabokov nonetheless greets a visitor with wit and courtesy.



Perhaps the most famous of contemporary lepidopterists, Nabokov seeks the rare 'Erebia christi' in their Alpine habitat.

the Russian émigré whom critics have called "our only living genius" and "the greatest living American novelist," submits unwillingly to interviews. He prefers to conduct such exchanges on paper, writing and rewriting the answers "and some of the questions," as he wryly says. From time to time, though, there is a visitor. "My husband does not ad lib," Mrs. Nabokov warns on the telephone. She is his companion, guardian and acolyte. "He is very busy," she adds.

His newest book, *Tyrants Destroyed*, has just been published, a collection of 13 stories. All but one were written

in Russian between 1924 and 1939 and have been translated by Nabokov and his son, Dmitri. It is the penultimate work from a famous writer who seems busy bricking up any remaining chinks in the wall of his reputation. These recent books are not cornerstones, but they are, as always, beautifully written and call for frequent trips to the dictionary.

Nabokov deals in painterly colors, in marvelous details and tones. "... the last time I went swimming," he writes in one story, "was not at Hungerburg but in the river Luga. Muzhiks came running out of the water, frog-legged,

hands crossed over their private parts: pudor agrestis. Their teeth chattered as they pulled on their shirts over their wet bodies. Nice to go bathing in the river toward evening, especially under a warm rain that makes silent circles, each spreading and encroaching upon the next . . ." He is a visual, sensual writer calling forever upon the past.

Whereas American entertainers such as Truman Capote or Gore Vidal, taking advantage of their fluency and known charm, appear freely on television and give us a more or less close look at the splendors of literary life, Nabokov is a more elusive figure. It is not that he is less attractive, and his English is impeccable. But he is aloof by nature, a compulsive revisionist, and he feels for some reason insecure with nothing between himself and an audience except unrehearsed speech. When he gave his lectures on modern fiction at Cornell, he read them from cards typed by his wife. "My husband," Véra Nabokov finally agrees, "will meet you at 4 o'clock in the green room next to the bar."

The great chandeliers hang silent. The tables in the vast dining room overlooking the lake are spread with white cloth and silver as if for dinners before the war. At a little after 4, into the green room with the slow walk of aged people, the Nabokovs come. He wears a navy blue cardigan, a blue-checked shirt, gray slacks and a tie. His shoes have crepe soles. He is balding, with a fringe of gray hair. His hazel-green eyes are watering, oysterous, as he says. He is 75, born on the same day as Shakespeare, April 23. He is at the end of a great career, a career half-carved out of a language not his own. Only Conrad comes to mind as someone comparable (although Beckett, going the other way, has chosen to write in French), but Conrad, a native Pole, was a duffer in English compared to Nabokov's prodigious command of an adopted tongue.

Véra has blue eyes and a birdlike profile. Her hair is completely white. They are soon to celebrate a wedding anniversary, "our golden," Nabokov says. They met in Berlin and married there in 1925, but they might as easily have met in Leningrad. "We went to the same dancing class, didn't we?" he asks. It has not been an unhappy marriage then? "That is the understatement of the century," Nabokov smiles.

He is currently at work on the French



At age 7, Vladimir Vladimirovich posed with his father, Vladimir Dmitrievich Nabokov, 35, in St. Petersburg.

published in 1969. It is the memoir of a philosopher, Van Veen, who fell in love when he was 14 with his cousin, Ada, then 12, who turns out to be his sister, and on and off their lives are entwined into old age, until he is 97 and she 95. "My fattest and most complex book," he says. It is also his preferred masterpiece, although the public still chooses *Lolita*. This translation has already taken five years. Véra says that her husband is going over it line by line. "You see some terrible boobos," he moans. Nabokov knows French and German perfectly and, with his revisions, is content about the translations in these languages. His son, Dmitri, was unfortunately too busy to check the Italian edition; the horrors of the Turkish and Japanese Nabokov does not like to imagine.

He regards himself as an American novelist, and from the comfort of Switzerland professes great love and nostalgia for the United States, where he spent 18 years, from 1940 to 1958. He prizes his U.S. passport, but here he remains, in the artistic vaults where rest such other international treasures as Chaplin and, when he was alive, Noel Coward, not to mention lesser pieces of bric-a-brac. He sips a gin and tonic. "It's only an accident that we're here," he explains. His wife had been here in 1914 with her family, and when the two of them passed through in 1961, she said, why not stay for a while? They have been here ever since. "I introduced kidding into Montreux," he says.



In 1920, at Cambridge, Nabokov was unorthodox as an undergraduate who preferred rowing to punting on the Cam.



While teaching Russian literature at Wellesley in 1947, Nabokov studied butterflies seriously at Harvard.

reigns. It is remarkable to think of Nabokov's first book, a collection of love poems, appearing in his native Russia in 1914. Soon after, he and his family were forced to flee as a result of the Bolshevik uprising and the civil war. He took a degree at Cambridge and then settled in the émigré colony in Berlin. He wrote nine novels in Russian, beginning with *Mary*, in 1926, and including *Glory*, *The Defense*, and *Laughter in the Dark*. He had a cer-

Versatile Mr. Nabokov Speaks Of Writing And Science And Politics

Vladimir Nabokov, who first claimed the attention of G.S.W.C. students with his brilliant metaphors in a speech at the assembly hour on Wednesday, has spoken to numerous groups on campus since his arrival Tuesday night. Mr. Nabokov, first of the International artist, writers, and speakers coming to this campus through the Institute of International Education, has recently attracted the attention of the American reading public with his short stories which have appeared in Atlantic Monthly.

Speaking at a meeting of the Math-Science Club last night in Converse Hall, Mr. Nabokov revealed his interest in science. "Entomology is a hobby of mine," he told students.

A large group of students attended a forum led by Sara Catherine Martin, president of the Stu-
(Continued on page four)

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Head of Informational Services
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Nabokov's Butterfly Sketch
Turns Her Calendar to '42

VALDOSTA, Ga. -- The chance purchase of a magazine featuring her favorite TV actor, Alan Alda, has turned Jean Reade's calendar back to 1942. For an article about "Lolita" author Vladimir Nabokov in the same issue evokes vivid memories of the day she and her late husband, Valdosta State College President Frank R. Reade, entertained the famous novelist at lunch. And that recollection triggers memories of other celebrities she's entertained.

"The writer of this article calls Nabokov 'the most famous of contemporary lepidopterists,' which reminded me of the sketch of a rare butterfly he did for me," said soft-spoken Mrs. Reade, riffling through a sheaf of yellowing papers. "And it also says 'He never gives autographs,' but he signed this for me that day!"

Nabokov was in Valdosta because he had been invited to speak at Valdosta State by Dr. Reade, who "was interested in anything to do with the liberal arts," Mrs. Reade recalls.

"We played tennis one of the mornings while he was here," she said. "When we drove into the yard, a swarm of yellow butterflies appeared, and Nabokov jumped out of the car and went after them with a net he had with him."

She treasures a snapshot of Dr. Reade and Nabokov. On the back is written, "Oct. 15-16, 1942--Vladimir Nabokov, internationally-known Russian writer."

"I remember Marge Carter had lunch with us," said Mrs. Reade, referring to the beloved biology professor who taught at VSC from 1935 until her death in 1968.

"She started talking about the Okefenokee Swamp, and Nabokov wanted to go. A group of students went with them, and he was delighted."

Mrs. Reade's undoubtedly valuable Nabokov butterfly is sketched on stationery headed "Roosevelt Restaurant, Valdosta, Georgia," a long defunct eatery. But the heading opens another memory floodgate for her.

Powell Hall since a new library has been built), and Frank and I thought she was wonderful," said Mrs. Reade, her eyes dancing.

"But I nearly had a fit when I heard she wanted to stay at our house. Horace Caldwell had offered her his suite at the Daniel Ashley Hotel, and we told her she could also stay at the guest room at the college.

"We explained we had just one room and bath for her at our house, but she chose to stay with us anyway. It almost finished me."

Friends sent so many flowers the house "looked like a funeral home," Mrs. Reade remembers with a grin. But a few long-overdue repairs were made to the house when the landlord heard Mrs. FDR was to be a guest, she adds with a wry smile.

When it was time to go to the college for the dedication, Mrs. Roosevelt was given another choice---this time, of vehicles--and, again, her decision almost discombobulated Mrs. Reade.

"We told her she could ride with Frank in his old convertible or in a newer car," she said. "Mrs. Roosevelt was quite an outdoors person, you know. Of course, she chose the open car, so they rattled up to the very formal ceremonies in the old car."

Cornelia Otis Skinner, the actress, visited VSC several times, and the Reads found her charming. And though they were equally charmed by explorer-lecturer Richard Halliburton and world traveler Lucius Beebe, they found them more difficult.

"Halliburton was given a big dinner at the college before his speech," Mrs. Reade said. "When Frank asked him to say a few words, he talked so long that nobody had any need to hear his speech later and very few tickets were sold!"

In the case of Beebe, his manager had warned the Reads the lecturer had laryngitis, would have to save his voice and would not want to be entertained. Instead, he extended his visit, was the life of the party everywhere they went.

"He danced and danced at the country club," Mrs. Reade laughed, remembering. "He even did magic tricks at an impromptu party at our house."

Noted Author To Arrive Tues.

Vladimir Nabokov, Russian author and lecturer, who is to be the first of the International Artists, writers and speakers coming to G.S.W.C. campus through the Institute of International Education, will arrive Tuesday and remain for several days.

Mr. Nabokov was born in St. Petersburg, Russia. As a boy he attended the Tinishev School in St. Petersburg. After emigrating from Russia to England in 1919, he went to Cambridge University, Trinity College, where at the age of twenty-three he obtained a first-class degree in Foreign Languages.

The following fifteen years were spent in Berlin teaching languages to private pupils. Some eight-five years passed, but this work came to an end in 1937 when he found it necessary to leave Germany.

Between 1930 and 1940 Mr. Nabokov lectured on different aspects of literature in Russian, English, and French at clubs and societies in France, England, Germany, Belgium and Czechoslovakia.

In March, 1941, the English Department of Wellesley College arranged for Mr. Nabokov to lecture for two weeks, and was later appointed professor for the current academic year. 1941-42.

Mr. Nabokov translated "Alice in Wonderland," by Rupert Brooks into Russian in 1923. Between 1923 and 1939 he published eight novels, two collections of short stories, and two plays.

Mr. Nabokov will speak at assembly on Wednesday, October 15. In addition to this he will speak at several club forums. His lecture will be announced later.

Nabokov arrived at Coker College, sprinted through a bath, found his cuffs too starched for cuff links to fit, then in his hurry lost one on the floor. He had to roll up his shirtsleeves under his tuxedo, but as soon as he went down to dinner he disentangled himself from this series of Pninian mishaps by confessing his plight. That relaxed his tension and everybody else's, some cuff links were produced, and from that point on Nabokov's three days at Coker passed without a hitch.

Lodged in comfort in the Coker family mansion, he was introduced to Southern society through the family and its connections. But Nabokov was at least as interested in the region's insect population as its human one. After his lecture that first night, he caught moths in a tumbler on the brightly lit columns of the mansion's colonnade. During the daytime he chased butterflies on his own in the garden of the estate, and with a biology teacher and another lepidopterist out in the countryside. He played tennis with the best player in the college, he went canoeing in a labyrinthine creek winding through cypresses and cedars, he donned dinner jackets three nights in a row, and he received a hundred dollars for his time.⁴²

When war conditions caused one engagement to fall through he was diverted to Spelman College, a black women's college in Atlanta, where he arrived on October 7. Depressed by the Uncle Tomism he had already witnessed in the South, he was delighted to spend five days in this "black Wellesley." In his lecture on Pushkin he stressed the poet's Abyssinian grandfather, his immense pride in his African ancestry, his laughing white teeth between negroid lips. "Incidentally," he added, "Pushkin provides a most striking example of mankind at its very best when human races are able to freely mix." The lecture was received with wild enthusiasm.

Apart from his Pushkin lecture, Nabokov also read his own poems and lectured on literature and lepidoptera. He chased insects one afternoon with another biology teacher and a very intense group of young black women. He mingled easily with the students, and hit it off particularly well with the college president, Florence Read, a vibrant, astute older woman who surrounded him with every attention and would become a long-term friend of the Nabokov family. He breakfasted with her every day, discussing everything from the Negro problem to telepathy. She told him he would have to go to chapel at 9:00 A.M., but he protested he was a heretic and hated music and singing. "You'll love ours," she insisted, and led him off. Every evening she invited black leaders for her guest to meet over dinner.⁴³

His next stop, on October 13, was at Georgia State College for Women at Valdosta, almost on the Florida border. Here he lectured

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on "Art and Common Sense," on war novels, and on mimicry, and read "Mademoiselle O" and some of his translations of Russian verse. At a very funny and very vulgar women's group—perhaps a forerunner of Charlotte Haze's clubs—he recited his verse only to have the chairwoman tell him afterward with a lyrical leer: "What I loved best was the broken English." He played tennis with Valdosta's president, Frank Reade, and found him as charming and brilliant as Spelman's Florence Read, as irrational as Wilson, as egocentric as himself.* A biology teacher took him for four hours on the chase—and his best day's butterfly catch—in palmetto wilds and pine forests in the Okefenokee swamp. He tried to write a little of his Gogol book and his novel, but everywhere he went people tried to please him from morning until night. His "having a good time," he knew, meant wasting his time.⁴⁴

On the way back from Valdosta he had to stop overnight again in Atlanta. When he called on Florence Read, she presented him with a huge reproduction of a detail of some butterflies in an Egyptian fresco. Nabokov realized at once that since butterfly speciation is singularly rapid and diverse and since butterflies are so well represented in art, millennia-old paintings might have recorded evolution in action. The next day he wrote to Véra that he would write something about it.⁴⁵ More than twenty years later, he would indeed begin research for a book on butterflies in art.

X

Though delighted by all the attention he had received, Nabokov was tired, and after one more lecture stop, at the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee, he headed back to Boston at the end of October. In Cambridge for ten days, he had time to fall ill, recover, and put in some hard work at the M.C.Z., where—since he had become de facto curator of lepidoptera—Véra in his absence had filled in for him, repinning butterflies from tray to tray. On November 5 he set off reluctantly for the second stage of his tour, knowing that at this time of year the Midwest would offer no butterflies to compensate for the dislocations of travel. Still, he had a superb first day at the Field Museum in Chicago, where he found his *Neonymphas* and showed the staff how to reclassify them and arrange them in their tray.⁴⁶

At Macalester College in St. Paul, Nabokov found that he did not

* Years later he would place Reade undisguised in *Prin*.

March 17, 1975 • 40¢

People

weekly

Mayor Daley:
soft side of
a tough boss

**Richard
Boone has
students,
will teach**

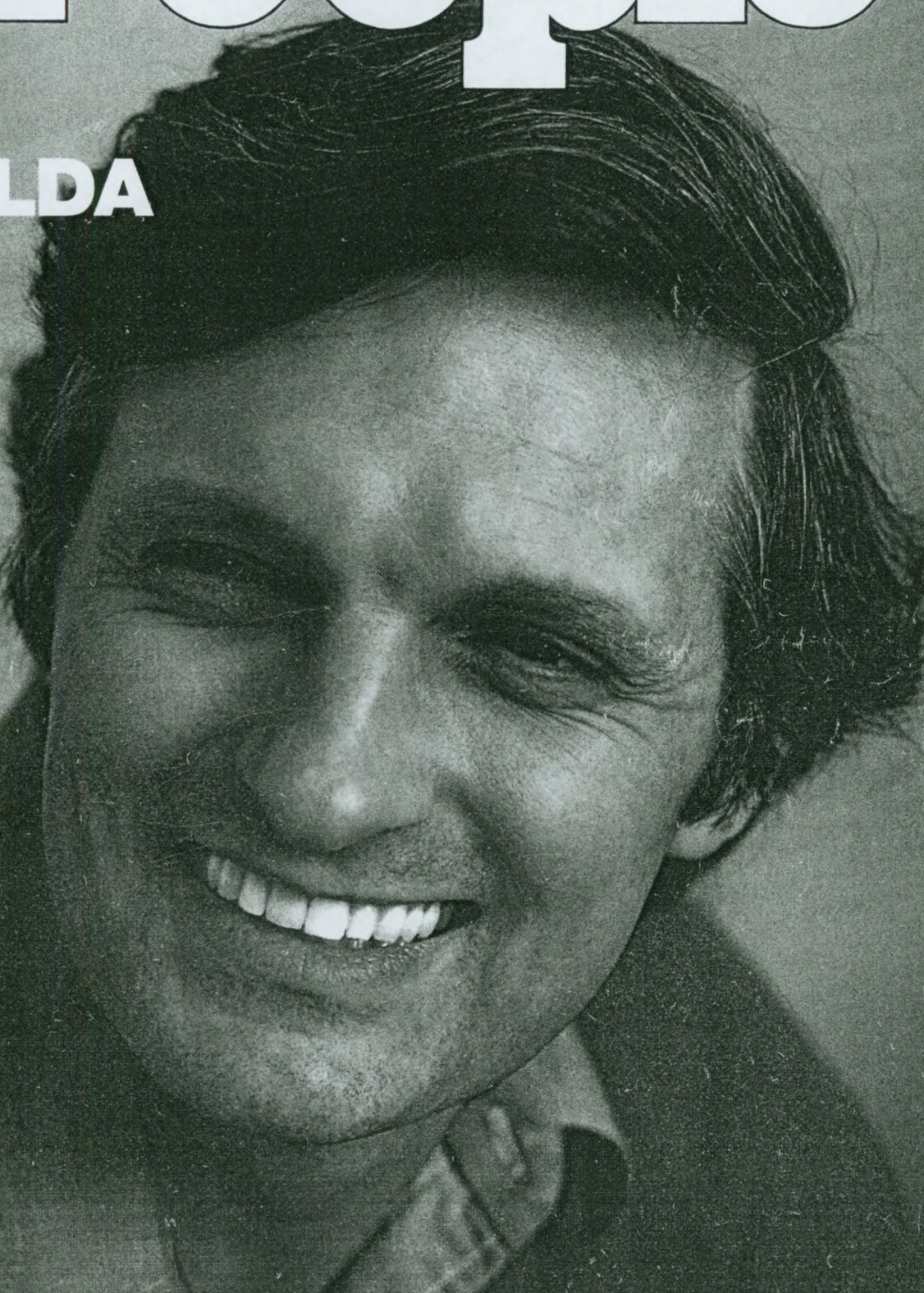
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Nabokov

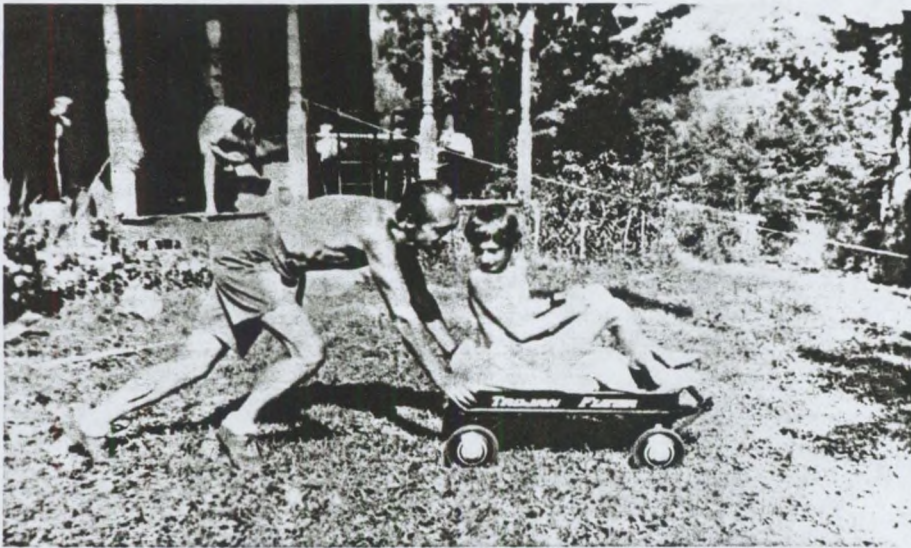
ALAN ALDA

M*A*S*H is Art
—his new TV
series is Life

Euthanasia:
an advocate's
plea for death
with dignity

**Quincy Jones &
Peggy Lipton:**
a musical,
marital
Mod Squad





Nabokov with eight-year-old Dmitri, at the Karpovich farm, West Wardsboro, Vermont, summer 1942. He and his family had also spent the summer of 1940, their first in America, with the Karpoviches.



Above: Edmund Wilson and Mary McCarthy, 1941-1942. (Sylvia Salmi.)

Right: Nabokov on his lecture tour, October 1942, showing a tray of mounted butterflies to President Frank Reade of Georgia State College for Women, Valdosta. Reade rates a mention by name in *Pnin*.



Vladimir, Dmitri, and Véra Nabokov the summer at New Directions pub Utah.



8 Craigie Circle, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1942 to 1948. Nabokov uses the view (row in this picture) at the beginning

ARTISTS SERIES



NABOKOV



DODD—CHARLOT



Vladimir Nobokov Russian Lecturer **Oct.** Speaks Here **14**

Vladimir Nobokov, Russian author and lecturer, who arrived yesterday to be guest of the Georgia State Womans College has a full schedule of speaking engagements.

At the College assembly this morning he spoke on the subject, "The Artist and Common Sense."

He was guest speaker at the Rotary Club at their meeting today, and he will speak this evening at the dinner given by the American Association of University Professors at 7 o'clock in the Student Activities House.

Mr. Nobckov will conduct a forum tomorrow afternoon at 4:15 in the Student Activities House, and Valdostans who wish to hear Mr. Nobokov are invited to attend.

On Friday he will be guest speaker at the meeting of the Readers Forum meeting at the Daniel Ashley.

Oct. 15 VT

Professor Nabovok, Russian Lecturer, Guest Speaker At Wymodausis Club

Professor Vladimir Nobokov, internationally known Russian author and lecturer, who is spending a few days in the city at the Georgia State Womans College, was guest of the Wymodausis Club at the first Fall meeting of the Club Wednesday afternoon.

The beautiful building was unusually lovely on this occasion. Goldenrod was banked in the fireplace and red pyracantha berries used in lavish profusion on the mantel created a charming picture. Large Mexican daisies were placed on the occasional tables.

In the assembly room, punch tables were in the corners near the doors, the bowls being embedded in coral vine and fern. On the piano was an arrangement of red pyracantha, and a lovely arrangement of mixed Fall flowers was on the president's table.

Mrs. J. C. Jackson, president, called the meeting to order, and a verse of America was sung, with Mrs. C. C. Clark at the piano. Mrs. R. Walter Bennett led the salute to the Flag and club Collect.

Mrs. Jackson greeted new members and visitors, who were asked to stand and introduce themselves.

All business was dispensed with, and Mrs. Jackson brought a timely greeting to the Club, stressing the responsibilities and opportunities facing the members in this time of unrest and war, and pledging cooperation in aiding the fight for Democracy.

Mrs. John Odum graciously introduced the speaker, Prof. Nobovok, who read a group of poems from Russian authors of the last century, which he had translated into English. He closed by reading two of his own poems. His interpretation of these poems delighted the audience.

During the social period following the program, punch, sandwiches and cookies were served by the hostesses, members of the executive board.

The punch tables were presided over by Mrs. J. A. Durrenberger and Mrs. H. S. Gulliver, Mrs. John Sineath and Mrs. Geo. Shelton, Sr.

Those serving were Mesdames E. W. Tullis, Paul Lilly, Ewell Brown, E. E. Dekle, T. Baron Gibson, A. Griffin, L. A. Harrell, J. C. Jackson, C. J. Lewis, E. W. Phelan, O. K. Prewitte, A. C. Pyle, W. L. Redles, H. C. Van Horn and Lamar Wilson.

Russian Writer Will Be Here *Oct 12* For Few Days *1942*

Vladimir Nabokov, Russian author and lecturer, who is the first of the international artists, writers and speakers coming to the G. S. W. C. campus through the Institute of International Education, will arrive Tuesday to remain for several days.

Mr. Nabokov will speak at the college assembly on Wednesday morning at 10:30 o'clock. In addition to this lecture he will speak at several club forums, the dates and time of these meetings to be announced later. Valdostans are cordially invited to attend the lecture on Wednesday morning and the forums to be held on the campus later in the week.

Oct. 16, 1942

Genial Russian Delights Students of Womans College

A visitor on the G. S. W. C. campus yesterday afternoon would have noticed the group of students gathered around a tall, animated young man seated on the lawn of Senior Hall. Quite a usual sight, one would think at first glance — but on looking a second time one would see that the students were listening and speaking with uncommon interest, for at the center of the group was Vladimir Nabokov, the genial Russian author who in his three days at G. S. W. C. has been both inspiration and delight to all who have heard him.

The gathering on the lawn was only one of numerous meetings held on the campus this week, for Mr. Nabokov has been in constant demand for almost every club at the college as well as in Valdosta. And generously, untiringly, and with the happy spontaneousness which never fails to leave his audience refreshed, he has granted the many requests of students and townspeople.

With the students of speech he discussed the Russian Theater. At chapel yesterday he read one of his own charmingly imaginative stories. At a forum yesterday afternoon he gave pointers on the art of writing to a roomful of eager students, and read the poems, full of humorous whimsy, which were published in the New Yorker recently.

Not only is Mr. Nabokov an internationally famous author, and a translator and lecturer largely responsible for the increasing interest in international literature, but he is also a scientist, and is at present a visiting professor in the science department of Harvard University.

His chief scientific interest is

has spent several of his free hours in the parks and fields in and around Valdosta collecting insects common to south Georgia.

Members of the Math-Science Club and the Sociology Club last night enjoyed his talk on butterflies, his favorite hobby. Other interests of the versatile Russian visitor include tennis, boxing, and chess.

Last year Mr. Nabokov was visiting professor at Wellesley College where he gave courses in the art of writing. During the past summer he taught at Stanford University in California.

Mr. Nabokov is considered to be the greatest Russian author writing today. He has written eight books, and according to literary critics, his writing shows promise of even greater literary worth.

Among the numerous short stories published in the Atlantic Monthly are "Cloud, Castle, Lake," in the June 1941 issue and "Aurelian," in the Nov. 1941 issue.

His poems appear frequently in The Atlantic Monthly and in the New Yorker. "The Art of Translation" appeared in the August 4, 1941 issue of The New Republic.

Mr. Nabokov leaves the Georgia State Womans College on Saturday. He expects to visit the Okefenokee Swamp before going to Suwannee College in Tennessee for his next series of lectures.

Shaw and Braggiotti played last night.

To describe the masterful effects created by the two artists, the technical facility they exhibited, and the enthusiasm with which the audience responded to their music, would require free use of superlatives which would seem all of a sudden inadequate.

To say that the audience was delighted with the performance is in itself an understatement. At the clear opening notes of the "Organ Toccata" by Bach, the audience sensed the pleasurable hour and a half to follow, and happily gave itself to the enjoyment of the melody, harmony, and rhythm flooding from two instruments made one by the artistry and team-work of Braggiotti and Shaw.

The highlight of the more serious part of the program was the first movements of the "Piano Concerto in A Minor" by Greig. With the fine sensitivity which accompanies true musicianship, the artists interpreted this composition with its plaintive pianissimos, its steady surge of harmony, its dramatic crescendos, and its glorious climax.

The March from the satirical opera, "The Love of Three Oranges," by Prokofieff, was the third number on the program and was played with a bright precision which accentuated the humorous style of the composer.

In the "Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun," one was struck with the exquisite phrasing, the delicate whisps of tone, and the oneness of interpretation achieved by the artists. Skillfully they brought out all the veil-like loveliness of Debussy's lyric masterpiece.

The Blue Danube Waltz was the colorful ending of the first half of the program.

The second half of the performance began with the Rhapsody In Blue. Always a favorite because of its irresistible melodies and impertinent rhythms, the Gershwin number evoked a burst of enthusiasm from the audience which remained at high pitch during the rest of the program. The virtuosity of Braggiotti and Shaw as well as their uncannily exact and cooperative teamwork was strikingly apparent in this number.

The fancy-tickling Braggiotti arrangement of the "Animal Suite" followed, as one by one "The Cuckoo" (by Dacquin), "The Swan," "The Kangaroo" (by Saint-Saens), "The Bumblebee" (by Rimsky-Korsakov), appeared in turn, delighted the audience, and passed on.

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Already amused to the point of laughter, the audience burst into spontaneous cheers at the playing of "The Jitterbug" which was the last number on the program.

In response to almost uncontrolled applause, Braggiotti and Shaw played Ravel's "Bolero," "Yankee Doodle," humorously arranged by Braggiotti in the styles of Beethoven, Handel, Chopin, and Gershwin, and the first movement of the popular Tchaikowsky Piano Concerto. The singing of the G. S. W. C. Alma Mater and "The Star Spangled Banner" closed the performance.

After the concert a reception in honor of Mr. Braggiotti, Mr. Shaw, and Mr. Vladimir Nobokov was held in Ashley Hall.

Georgia State Womans College

VALDOSTA, Ga., Oct. 10.—Dr. Frank R. Reade, president of the Georgia State Womans College in Valdosta, has announced the coming of three internationally known figures to the college next week.

Vladimir Nabokov, noted Russian author and lecturer, will be the first of a group of international artists,

writers, and speakers to visit the G. S. W. C. campus. Mr. Nabokov, who comes to the college through the Institute of International Education in New York, is at the present time a visiting professor at Harvard University. Between 1930 and 1940, Mr. Nabokov has lectured throughout Europe on subjects pertaining to Russian literature and the art of writing. In this country he has given a series of lectures on the four greatest Russian writers, Pushkin, Lermontov, Gogol, and Tolstoy.

Jacques Fray and Mario Braggiotti, considered to be the world's leading duo-pianists are being brought back to the college on October 16 for a return engagement because of the unusual popularity of their brilliant performance last year.

The lever was probably man's first machine, his initial step in moving loads exceeding the limitations of his own muscles.

Genial Russian Delights

Students of Womans College

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His chief scientific interest is entomology, and Mr. Nabokov

has spent several of his free hours in the parks and fields in and around Valdosta collecting insects common to south Georgia.

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GSWC STUDENTS ENJOY SPEECH

Russian Lecturer Brings Highly Entertaining Message On Artist And Common Sense to College

To a group of students, faculty members, and townspeople whose imaginations were sharpened and refreshed by his unusual and idea-provoking address, Vladimir Nobokov spoke yesterday on the subject of "The Artist and Common Sense".

Mr. Nobokov's lecture bore out the thought that the unimaginative public often tries make the artist conform to smug conventionalities, and that peoples through a false conception of "common sense" often trample upon expressions of genius which do not fit into their circumscribed patterns of life and thought.

In the world of tormoil today, we too easily see only the immediate chaos about us, the lecturer pointed out. An artist is the person who can see beyond the seeming futility and drabness of existing things, to envision the goodness and harmony which is in the past, the present and the future.

Mr. Nobakov continued by saying that a person whose mind is free enough to throw off the shackles of "false common sense" finds that the goodness of man is a solid and iridescent truth. Then godness becomes a central and tangibe part of one's world, not withstanding those pessimists who cry that it is illogical to applaud the supremacy of good at a time when the world seems to be crashing about us.

Those who are able to rise above the grimness of our common sense world, the Russian writer said, will find a lovely and lovable world which quietly persists, and will find fellow-dreamers, thousands of whom roam the earth still holding to the standards of beauty and goodness during the darkest and most dazzling hours of physical danger, pain, dust, and death. "These standards mean the supremacy of the detail over the general, of the part that is more alive than the whole, of the little thing which a man observes and greets with a friendly nod of the spirit while the crowd around him is being driven by some common impulse to some common goal."

Mr. Nabokov spoke of the joy which comes from awareness to the beauty of countless little things which to the unimaginative seem commonplace. "This capacity to wonder at trifles no matter the imminent peril, these asides of the spirit, these footnotes in the volume of life are the highest forms of consciousness, and it is in this chidishly speculative state of mind, so distant from common sense and its logic, that we know the world to be good."

In delightfully whimsical manner Mr. Nabokov spoke of the

Vladimir Nobokov, Russian Writer, Speaks At First Forum Meeting

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Vladimir Nobokov, wellknown Russian author and lecturer, who has been the guest of the Georgia State Womans College for several days, and who is visiting Professor at Harvard since coming to make his home in our country, was speaker at the Readers Forum yesterday at the Daniel Ashley hotel.

Everything combined to make the meeting one of the most delightful affairs since the beginning of the Forum. Inspired by the beautiful weather, the tables were arranged on the terrace. Each was centered by a bowl of exquisite red Radiance roses, and at the speakers table the place cards, bordered by the National colors, held ships, denoting both the friend-ship of our country and the convoys going to her aid. Mrs. W. M. Oliver and Mrs. Geo. Feagle were responsible for the timely idea.

Mrs. John Odum presided, and Miss Annie P. Hopper, Dean of Wcmen, of the College, asked the blessing.

At the close of the luncheon, Mrs. Odum, in a few gracious words, greeted the visitors, and especially welcomed Mrs. C. R. Hawk, "mother of the Forum," who was the inspiration of the organization, which, with the meeting yesterday, began the ninth year of activity.

Assembling in the Pine Room, Dr. Frank Reade, president of the Womans College, introduced the speaker in his witty manner. He said that "people usually look like what they are, but our guest did not have a long beard or long hair, nor did he wear high boots, but neverthe-

less, he is still a Russian."

To say that Professor Nobovck charmed his audience, would be stating it mildly. He held them spellbound, as he spoke of the famous Russian poet, Pushkin, writer of the eighteenth century.

He gave a colorful and vivid account of the life of the great poet, with such a wonderful flow of words, as only an author, writer of plays and poet, as he himself is, could muster to his command.

The speaker pointed out that the writers and poets of Russia are all more or less in exile—if not in real physical exile, they are in mental, set apart from others by the very nature of their writings.

Pushkin, not writing in accord with the trend of the government was exiled by the Czar, but was pardoned by the successive ruler and permitted to write only after the Czar read each of his poems. On a mere technecality, he was sentenced to fight a duel in which he was killed.

Professor Nobckov, who has written several plays, gave a most dramatic and feeling description of the duel, climaxing his biography of the poet by reading the poem, Mozart and Salieri, which the speaker had translated into English, telling of the poisoning of the great musician Mozart by his friend, Salieri.

It was announced that the November meeting of the Forum will be held on Nov. 18 at which time Mrs. Odum will review "in This Our Life," by Ellen Glasgow.

Russian Lecturer Appears at GSWC

Special to THE CONSTITUTION.

VALDOSTA, Ga., Oct. 19.—

Vladimir Nabokov, internationally known Russian writer, translator and lecturer, is the guest of the Georgia State Woman's College in Valdosta, where he has been conducting a series of lectures and forums.

"The Artist and Common Sense" was the subject of his main address to the G. S. C. W. students last week.

He was guest speaker at a dinner given by the American Association of University Professors and also addressed the Valdosta Rotary club at their last meeting.

Mr. Nabokov expects to see the Okefenokee Swamp before going to Suwannee College in Tennessee for his next series of lectures.

Russian Author Visited South

Sketch Brings Memories

VALDOSTA — The chance purchase of a magazine featuring her favorite television actor, Alan Alda, has turned Jean Reade's calendar back to 1942. For an article about "Lolita," author Vladimir Nabokov in the same issue evokes vivid memories of the day she and her late husband, Valdosta State College President Frank R. Reade, entertained the famous novelist at lunch. And that recollection triggers memories of other celebrities she's entertained.

"The writer of this article calls Nabokov 'the most famous of contemporary lepidopterists,' which reminded me of the sketch of a rare butterfly he did for me," said soft-spoken Mrs. Reade, rippling through a sheaf of yellowing papers. "and it also says 'he never gives autographs,' but he signed this for me that day!"

Nabokov was in Valdosta because he had been invited to speak at Valdosta State by Dr. Reade, who "was interested in anything to do with the liberal arts," Mrs. Reade recalls.

"We played tennis one of the mornings while he was here," she said. "When we drove into the yard, a swarm of yellow butterflies appeared, and Nabokov jumped out of the car and went after them with a net he had with him."

She treasures a snapshot of Dr. Reade and Nabokov. On the back is written, "Oct. 15-16, 1942 — Vladimir Nabokov, internationally known Russian writer."

"I remember Marge Carter had lunch with us," said Mrs. Reade, referring to the beloved biology professor who taught at VSC from 1935 until her death in 1968.

"She started talking about the Okefenokee Swamp, and Nabokov wanted to go. A group of students went with them, and he was delighted."

Mrs. Reade's undoubtedly



MRS. READE
Remembers Nabokov

valuable Nabokov butterfly is sketched on stationery headed "Roosevelt Restaurant, Valdosta, Georgia," a long-defunct eatery. But the heading opens another memory floodgate for her.

"Eleanor Roosevelt was here in April, 1941, to dedicate the VSC Library (now called Powell Hall since a new library has been built), and Frank and I thought she was wonderful," said Mrs. Reade, her eyes dancing.

"But I nearly had a fit when I heard she wanted to stay at our house. Horace Caldwell had offered her his suite at the Daniel Ashley Hotel, and we told her she could also stay at the guest room at the college.

"We explained we had just one room and bath for her at our house, but she chose to stay with us anyway. It almost finished me."

Friends sent so many flowers the house "looked like a funeral home," Mrs. Reade remembers with a grin. But a few long-overdue repairs were made to the house when the landlord heard Mrs. FDR was to be a guest, she adds with a

wry smile.

When it was time to go to the college for the dedication, Mrs. Roosevelt was given another choice — this time of vehicles — and, again, her decision almost discombobulated Mrs. Reade.

"We told her she could ride with Frank in his old convertible or a newer car," she said. "Mrs. Roosevelt was quite an outdoors person, you know. Of course, she chose the open car, so they rattled up to the very formal ceremonies in the old car."

Cornelia Otis Skinner, the actress, visited VSC several times, and the Reades found her charming. And though they were equally charmed by explorer-lecturer Richard Halliburton and world traveler Lucius Beebe, they found them more difficult.

"Halliburton was given a big dinner at the college before his speech," Mrs. Reade said. "When Frank asked him to say a few words, he talked so long that nobody had any need to hear his speech later and very few tickets were sold!"

In the case of Beebe, his manager had warned the Reades the lecturer had laryngitis, would have to save his voice and would not want to be entertained. Instead, he extended his visit — was the life of the party everywhere they went.

"He danced and danced at the country club," Mrs. Reade laughed, remembering. "He even did magic tricks at an impromptu party at our house."

A native of Savannah, Mrs. Reade is the former Jean Cunningham.

NABOKOV'S SKETCH TURNS V.S.C. CALENDAR TO '42

Special to The Times-Union
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—TIMES-UNION SPECIAL PHOTO

Mrs. Reade Treasures Russian Novelist's Butterfly, Autograph

The Florida Times-Union, Jacksonville
April 7, 1975 pg B-1

dent Government Association, and Dr. Nabokov at the House-in-the-Woods Thursday afternoon. He spoke at the assembly period Thursday morning also.

The author was the guest of the Valdosta chapter of the American Association of University Professors at its dinner meeting which was held Wednesday evening.

In his address Wednesday morning, which was attended by the entire student body, Mr. Nabokov discussed creative writing, berating false common sense as a pitfall of the average author.

Nabokov was born in St. Petersburg, Russia, and was educated there and at Cambridge University in England, lived for fifteen years in Berlin, and came to America in 1937.

VLADIMIR NABOKOV
~~FRANKLIN SQUARE~~
~~SAVING EDGE CEMETERY~~
~~YORKLAND, N.Y.~~
802 E. Seneca St.
Ithaca, N.Y.

Dear Reade,

It was so nice to hear from you! I wish we could join you for a visit in your Virginian hills but alas there is no thought of a leave for me in the near future: I have been just appointed Associate Prof. of Russ. Literature at Cornell and am very busy getting started.

I like Cornell very much. We too have some hills around here, as you probably know, but the climate seems roughish.

Last year I did some wonderful collecting in the high Rockies, above Estes Park, Colorado. Gorgeous country, gorgeous fauna.

I am sorry to hear about your ailments. I do hope that a good rest will help you get rid of them. If you plan more travelling during this year, why not plan a grand tour of New York State leading right through this ancient historical center? You would enjoy its castles and cathedrals, and we would enjoy your company.

With my best regards to you and Mrs. Reade,

Sincerely yours,

Vladimir Nabokov

Yes diana is a wonderful butterfly - one of the most remarkable representatives of the nearctic fauna - a relic from a glorious past, found only in the S.E. states, which are not rich in endemic butterflies

The Spectator



Jean Reade Recalls Fond Memories

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When it was time to go to the college for the dedication, Mrs. Roosevelt was given another choice--this time, of vehicles--and, again, her decision almost discom-bobulated Mrs. Reade.

"We told her she could ride with Frank in his old convertible or in a new car," she said. "Mrs. Roosevelt was quite an outdoors person, you know. Of course, she chose the open car, so they rattled up to the very formal ceremonies in the old car."

Cornelia Otis Skinner, the actress, visited VSC several times, and the Reades found her charming. And though they were equally charmed by explorer-lecturer Richard Halliburton and world traveler Lucius Beebe, they found them more difficult.

"Halliburton was given a big dinner at the college before his speech," Mrs. Reade said. "When Frank asked him to say a few words, he talked so long that nobody had any need to hear his speech later and very few tickets were sold!"

In the case of Beebe, his manager had warned the Reades the lecturer had

World Famous Artists Brought to Students on Campus

Authors, musicians, dancers, actresses—we see and hear 'em all at GSWC! The Artist Series Committee brings us a number of these attractions every year.

This year, even with the heavy war and transportation problems, has found such people on campus as **Mario Braggiotti** and **Walter Shaw**, duo-pianists who captivated the music lovers' hearts; **Ruth Draper**, internationally famous for her solo-dramas; and **Edwin Strawbridge** and **Lisa Parnova** and their company of ballet dancers.

Along the same line but to stimulate the good neighbor policy, some of the assembly exercises have been filled with foreign speakers coming to us through the Institute of International Education in New York City. Some of them have been **Vladimir Nabokov**, Russian lecture, and author; **Dr. Herman Tavares De Sa**, a distinguished International Student from Brazil; and **Valentina Ray Mitz**, fascinating librainian lecturer and friendly counselor, who has taught us many things about the personality of our friends to the north in Europe and Asia.

Here are some of the few who have been here in years past and who will probably return in the future: **Ted Shawn and his Men**—a dancing company; **Ruth Bryan Owen Rhode**, gifted speaker; **James Melton**—Metropolitan tenor; **Minna Van De Vere**—Soprano; **Checkov Players**—renowned Shakespearean players; **Roth String Quartet** — musicians of importance in chamber music; **Cornelia Otis Skinner**, noted radio, magazine, and stage personality; **Rubinoff**, noted violinist, and others just as important.

These featured artists do not take into consideration any of the glee clubs that have visited on campus or the artists sponsored by **Hugh Hodgson** and his Music Appreciation programs.
