



Dr. Neihardt in library of his farm home.

Neihardt gives library

Dr. John G. Neihardt, lecturer in English at the University and one of America's major poets, has made a gift to the University of his entire personal library of some 5,000 volumes, together with his personal papers and the manuscripts of a number of his books and poems.

The library includes rare historical works relating to the settling of the West, many rare first editions of outstanding books, and other collectors' items. It will be kept intact in a special section of the University General Library as "The John G. Neihardt Memorial Library." The manuscripts and papers will be preserved, as a valuable source of historical and literary research material, in the Library's Western Historical Manuscript Collection, which already has an appreciable collection of Neihardt papers, letters, tape recordings and other material.

Many of the rare first editions are presentation copies inscribed by their authors. There are some fine "press" books, and also rare limited editions finely bound, such as the Libramatores Edition of the "English Men of Letters" in three-fourths Levant; the Ayot St. Lawrence edition of George Bernard Shaw's complete works; and the Cabinet edition of the complete works of Victor Hugo.

There are in the collection volumes of curious interest. One is the complete works of Shakespeare in the Stockdale edition of 1784, which is the earliest modern edition in one volume subsequently to the fourth folio, and is the first octavo one-volume edition ever issued. This book, while of interest as a Shakespeare item, is especially valuable to Dr. Neihardt for having belonged to the library of Kenneth MacKenzie, factor of Fort Union at the mouth of the Yellowstone River in the 1830's and known as the "King of the Upper Missouri." MacKenzie's signature is on the flyleaf.

A tribute to a poet

By Mrs. Bower Aly

John G. Neihardt has distinguished himself in not one but four enterprises. As author, he has created an enduring monument in his *Cycle*, his lyrics and his prose works; as literary editor of several leading newspapers, he produced a considerable and impressive body of critical writing; as lecturer-reader he has moved and inspired countless listeners; and in recent years as teacher here among us he has enriched the lives of students and colleagues alike. I could fill the allotted time—and more—just by enumerating the honors that have come to him. I could describe the gold medals, the honorary degrees, the poetry prizes, the ceremonial occasions, the tributes of one sort or another. But for this audience such a reiview would scarcely be necessary. Each of these tributes rep-

The Neihardt collection includes various sixteenth and seventeenth century books of peculiar interest. One is the first printed edition of Homer's "Battle of the Frogs and Mice," published by Johan Froben at Basel, Switzerland, in 1519. It is especially noteworthy as it contains a woodcut by Hans Holbein. Another item is the work by Lilius Gregorius Gyraldus, upon which the Gregorian calendar is based. It was printed in 1541 at Basel, Switzerland.

The poet recalls that his first book was a paper-bound copy of Tennyson's "Idylls of the King" given him by his sisters, who obtained it as a premium on soap wrappers. "No. 1" in the collection and so marked on the flyleaf, was a cheap three-volume edition of Macauley's "History of England," a Christmas gift in 1912. Both books are still in the library.

There are also several interesting seventeenth century publications by the famous publishing house of Elzevir, notably the complete works of Cicero in one volume, bound in pigskin. This edition was noted by the bibliographer, DeBure, as being "beautifully and correctly printed and held in high esteem."

The collection given to the University also includes copies of various editions of all of Dr. Neihardt's writings.

Dr. Ralph H. Parker, the University Librarian, said "it is quite fitting that Missouri, the Mother of the West, should be the location of Dr. Neihardt's library, which is so rich in the literature of the region. We hope that this gift will become the nucleus of an ever-growing collection of materials."

Dr. Lewis Atherton said the Neihardt manuscripts and papers are considered one of the major contributions to the Western Manuscripts Collection of the University because they offer so important a basis of study of the writers on the American West. Dr. Atherton is director of the Collection and secretary of the Friends of the Library. He said it is especially fitting and significant that they should be here as Missouri was so directly on the route and associated

with the opening of the West.

"Dr. Neihardt is recognized as the outstanding epic poet of the American West," Dr. Atherton said. "During his long and varied career he knew, lived with and corresponded with Indians, pioneers, literary artists, and academic people in various parts of the country. His personal papers will therefore be of great value to scholars in history, literature, and the field of American writing as a whole."

Dr. Neihardt, who has been on the University of Missouri faculty since 1948, is a widely-known author, epic, and lyric poet, and lecturer. His major single contribution to American literature is his five epic "Songs," first published singly and later in sequence as one volume under the title "A Cycle of the West." However, his total works, in number more than 20 volumes, include collections of lyrics, short stories, novels, and other writings.

The 80-year-old poet, who lives on a farm north of Columbia, has received numerous literary awards and holds honorary degrees of Litt. D. from the University of Nebraska, Creighton University, and M. U.

In recognition of the gift to the University, Dr. Neihardt was guest of honor at the second annual dinner of the Friends of the University Library, April 22. He was also the principal speaker. Preceding the dinner Dr. Neihardt was honored at a reception by President and Mrs. Ellis at the President's House.

As an additional tribute to Dr. Neihardt, the Friends of the University Library is raising "The John G. Neihardt Fund" from among the poet's friends and admirers. The fund is to provide for the casting in bronze a bust of Dr. Neihardt made by his wife, the late Mona Martinsen Neihardt, an accomplished sculptress and one-time student of Rodin. The bronze bust will be presented to the University Library for display near the book collection. Contributions to the fund may be made out to the University of Missouri and mailed to Dr. Lewis Atherton, 4C11 General Library Building.

resented an expression of appreciation for Mr. Neihardt's achievements, but I would like to say a word about another type of achievement, for which we are even more deeply indebted.

This is the kind of achievement made possible because Mr. Neihardt is one of the rare men who has really lived his philosophy. He believes in the old Platonic ideal—the life of reason—as we all do. We would all attain that ideal if we could. Mr. Neihardt has been able to do it; he set his goal and ordered his life to attain it—not without effort and sacrifice; but he did it. His example has given us, to use his own words, "illuminating patterns of abiding reality" to inspire us to greater wisdom.

What are the patterns he has given us? First of all, he has shown us that life must have a purpose. Dedicating ourselves to a worthy enterprise is the way to find meaning in life. If we whole-heartedly devote ourselves to something that contributes to the world,

we can increase the sum total of understanding, decrease the total of suffering and cruelty and fear. We cannot expect this to be easy, but we know now that it is possible, and we know that the rewards can be great.

A second pattern is the principle of standing on our own feet and asking no favors. In Neihardt's vigorous philosophy, the world owes no man a living, perhaps especially not a poet, for greater gifts bring greater obligations. He always thought the debt on his side; he has said from the first that a poet who has not had to make his way in the world as other men must do had nothing to tell us. In the nearly thirty years it took him to complete the *Cycle* he was never subsidized; he had nothing he did not earn by his own efforts, and yet he produced a masterpiece. The pattern is clear: we do not have to give way to despair at the enormity of our problems;

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Faurot in hall of fame

On May 23 it was announced that Missouri Athletic Director Don Faurot had been selected for one of the coveted positions in football's national Hall of Fame.

Faurot, who came to Missouri in 1935 after a highly successful stint at Kirksville, brought Missouri 101 football victories, three conference victories and four major bowl appearances during his long stay. He also developed the most original, significant, and widely copied offensive formation of his era, the split T. Several All Americans, including Paul Christman, Bob Steuber, Darold Jenkins and Harold Burnine and many other stars were developed by Faurot before he retired as head coach in 1956.

Because of these tangible contributions to the game and, more important, for his high ethical principles and for his role in the development of the strong athletic program which has characterized the University of Missouri for the past 25 years, Don Faurot richly deserves this latest in a series of honors that have come to him in his career.

Blackmore is re-elected

Rounding out a year as national president of the University Alumni Association, J. Gordon Blackmore of Trenton, Mo., has been re-elected for another term. Blackmore has put in a productive year in behalf of Association activities, and has addressed gatherings of alumni in Missouri and several other states.

Three vice-presidents elected are Bradford Brett of Mexico, Edward W. Sowers of Rolla, and Hartley G. Banks of Columbia who also continues as treasurer.

G. H. (Bus) Entsminger was elected executive secretary and Jean J. Madden secretary.

Alumnus is co-author

Johnson D. Hill, A.B. '09, LL.B. '11, chairman of the board, Atlas Life Insurance Company, Tulsa, Okla., is the co-author of "Philosophy and the American Heritage," published by Philosophical Library, Inc., 15 East 40th Street, New York 40, N. Y. Co-author is Dr. W. E. Stuermann of the University of Tulsa.

Mr. Hill, who returned to the University campus for the class reunions early in June, said the book contains extensive references and is useful for course studies in schools and adult education classes.

The authors, recognizing the lack of an articulate American public philosophy and the threatening countenance of a cultural crisis, advance the chief outlines of the philosophic content of the American heritage. They also believe colleges and universities should coordinate their courses to present the whole picture of American philosophy.

In her syndicated column, Mrs. Walter Ferguson calls the book "a contribution to the best literature of our time."

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we do not have to be intimidated by the obstacles that seem to block our path. We can gather our strength, and meet our problems with our own self-reliant forces.

The third illuminating pattern is in the example of Neihardt's invincible kindness in all his human relationships. He has never been too busy to help anyone who needed him. He could always find time to write an encouraging letter to another writer, to press a publisher to bring out someone's else's worthy book. He could interrupt a busy schedule to write a long letter to an aspiring young poet—not only write it but carefully revise and edit it so that he might give real advice and yet protect the feelings of the young man. He has spent himself lavishly for anyone who claimed his attention. In my work with him I have found him reluctant even to think unkindly of anyone; for he believes that there is already too much pain in the world, and we ought not to add to it thoughtlessly.

Perhaps most of all we can be grateful to Mr. Neihardt for a fourth pattern, which is his constant faith in the essential nobility of the human spirit. A friend once wrote of him, "I am glad John Neihardt is in the world. He makes so many things seem possible." In these troubled times, when so much of our literature tells us that we are hollow men—that life is ugly and brutal and absurd—we can be doubly grateful to a poet who reminds of the heights to which the human spirit can attain, who insists that the age of heroes is not necessarily dead, that we can all stand tall if we will.

Anyone who studies Mr. Neihardt's life and work is likely to find himself agreeing with the critics who have predicted that his place in literature will be permanent, that if our culture survives our great-grandchildren may well know him as the great poet of our times. I think I would take that a step farther. I think I would say that if our culture survives it will be because the spirit that moves and breathes through Neihardt's life and work is strong in us. That is the true Americanism—the spirit that takes courage as the indispensable virtue, that believes in understanding, that looks to our own self-reliant efforts to meet our problems, and approaches life with the firm conviction that the struggle is worth while. Neihardt's life and work can hearten us for the perils that lie ahead and deepen in us the faith and the will to survive.

It is always a privilege to know a great man. I am sure I speak for all of us here tonight, as well as many of us who are not here, when I express appreciation to Mr. Neihardt for what he has written, and for what he is.

(Mrs. Aly, 1138 22nd, East, Eugene, Ore., gave the preceding address at the Friends of the University Library banquet on April 22. She received her bachelor's degree and Ph.D. from the University, and her husband, Dr. Bower Aly, now with the University of Oregon, for years was a member of the faculty here.)