

Oddments



"Your wooden arm you hold outstretched to shake with passers-by."

CATCH THAT BTU: At the main entrance to the Science Center, an appeal in large type reads: "To Conserve Energy Please Use Revolving Door. Average heat transfer per use of swing door, 78 Watt hours = 1.3 hours of light from a desk lamp."



SHACK: The late David Roy Shackleton Bailey, the Pope professor of Latin language and literature until his retirement in 1988, was born in England in 1917 and read Latin, Greek, Sanskrit, and Pali at Cambridge. During World War II he worked in military intelligence, translating messages in Dutch and Turkish. He returned to Cambridge as University lecturer in Tibetan and was rumored to have taught the exiled Dalai Lama rare forms of solitaire.

"Shack," as his friends and colleagues called him, became chair of Latin at the University of Michigan in 1968. He had just married Hilary Amis, former spouse of the novelist Kingsley Amis. She opened a fish-and-chips shop in Ann Arbor called Lucky Jim's, where Shack, behind an ample and snowy chef's apron, worked the cash register or tended tables. Four of his Harvard colleagues, in a memorial salute to him at a meeting of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences in May, noted that he was unsuited to domestic life, that the

marriage did not last, and that his stepson, Martin Amis [in his 2000 memoir, *Experience*], found him "a laconic, unsmiling, dumpty-shaped tightwad."

Shackleton Bailey, who came to Harvard in 1976, was a prodigious scholar (and the Loeb Classical Library's most prolific author). His colleagues praised those achievements and cherished him for his nature. He was, they wrote, "a type unlikely to make it past the first search committee interview in the current orthodoxy. An eccentric by most standards—his regular attire was a grey suit and colorful sneakers long before the latter became part of the academic's uniform—but mainly in the true and joyous sense of the word: quirky, difficult, cultured in profound and complex ways, endowed with a rare and keen sense of humor now cutting, now playful, a critic of human foibles and a man whose dedication to logic, reason, judgment, and the primacy of intelligence made those in his presence careful of their thoughts and words...He was a great lover of cats; his greatest affection was for the first, the white cat Donum, to whom he dedicated the first volume of his edition of Cicero's letters, 'more intelligent than most people I have encountered,' as he once somewhat disconcertingly remarked."



WARNINGS: Affixed to the door of the office of professor of economics Andrei Shleifer on the second floor of Littauer Center is a news clipping headlined "Brain aging found to start at 40." The piece reports on the work of Bruce Yankner, professor of pathology and neurology at Harvard Medical School, who is

investigating how human brains change between ages 26 and 106. "If you are more than 40 years old," it reads, "the news may not be good." An immediately adjacent drinking fountain has this notice above it: "Please do not use this fountain or put any liquids down the drain. The water is cloudy and in some instances there is no drain pipe." The Littauer Center building is in its seventies, of course.



FRIENDLY FIRE: "You publish a book and no one in your department notices," a faculty member complained to Roger Stoddard, former curator of rare books in the Harvard College Library, agreeing with something Stoddard said in farewell remarks at a reception marking his retirement from that post. These remarks and other oddments have now been published in a privately printed booklet, *A Long Goodbye to Library Service* (2008).

"Harvard is a rough place to work in," said Stoddard in his valedictory. "I've watched comrades stumble or fall on active duty, wounded by friendly fire. Does it have to be that way: excellence attracting fear, anger feeding on achievement? Why don't we take pride in the accomplishments of our colleagues? If you don't love learning, then you don't belong here; but, you cannot love learning if you don't love people, your brothers and your sisters. If you don't love people, then you love something else, and it's *not* learning... It is our colleagues who sustain us with their love, our students who inspire us with their eagerness, and our benefactors who encourage us with their support, both material and spiritual, from the real world beyond the gates of the Yard." ~PRIMUS V