

Colby



Colby Quarterly

Volume 7
Issue 7 *September*

Article 7

September 1966

Epilogue

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.colby.edu/cq>

Recommended Citation

Colby Library Quarterly, series 7, no.7, September 1966

This Back Matter is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ Colby. It has been accepted for inclusion in Colby Quarterly by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ Colby.

Colby Library Quarterly 339

MANNA—or, more properly, *Mannana*—a scintillation of data concerning Thomas Mann:

As an elementary student, Mann loathed the Prussian academic regimen and was frequently in disfavor with his preceptors for wasting time over the composition of verses and romances. His first signed published work (in 1893) was a poem in his school magazine.

Although Nietzsche was Mann's favored philosopher, he derogated his concept of the superlative "blond beast."

In 1933 Mann went into voluntary exile. He publicly arraigned the Nazis as enemies of Christianity, of Occidental morality, and of civilization itself. For this he was deprived of his German citizenship, his honorary doctorate from the University of Bonn was revoked, and his books were removed from the libraries of the Third Reich.

His creative writing was done in the mornings; afternoons he dictated correspondence to his wife and two secretaries, one German, one English.

An inveterate concert-goer and addict of his battered gramophone, Mann loved best the music of Wagner, Brahms, and Stravinsky.

A measure of Mann may be taken from this basal statement made in 1942: "The problems of the conflict between Life and Art, between the world of form and the world of men, have concerned me early and late, and much as I have been called to Art, not to say condemned to it, I have not wished to consume myself in it, but to be, as far as I could, a human being."

G. A. Borgese, the University of Chicago historian-philosopher and Mann's son-in-law, saw him as a curious combination that inspired awe and love, most often lost in "the pure orbit of meditation," yet addressed by his children as Herr Papale, roughly translatable as Mister Daddy.

Inversely to the host of stage comedians who dream of playing Hamlet, Mann declared in 1951: "I feel myself to be primarily a humorist."

340 ◆ *Editor's Epilogue* ◆

Who's Who: John Eastman, Jr.'s surpassing interest is in the representative arts, as his position (Director of the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture) and his extended quotation from Thomas Mann ("Art is the magic . . .") attest. He still has both eyes peeled for exceptional Mann materials, and is still contributing them to Colby, to our everlasting gratitude.

Robert Nathan, no stranger to the palette himself, finds it "rather frustrating" that most people know him for *Portrait of Jenny*, which is but one among a score of his superb novels that blend pity, irony, and fantasy with low-key sentiment. Of Maine, he writes: "As a boy, I used to go to camp at Androscoggin. I knew the Rangeleys, and Mooslookmeguntic, and Livermore; and even ranged as far as . . . damn! I've forgotten the name."

Lloyd Frankenberg — poet, critic, and editor — is, in his turn, best known for *Pleasure Dome*, a volume of modern poetry which was converted into "An Audible Anthology" and has found its way into the record collections of many literate listeners.

Mann About Town: Jack Eastman's repertoire of Mann anecdotes runs to humor as well as to homage. One he tells on himself, with a twinkle, concerns the time Erika Mann wrote him that her father was to give a lecture at Hunter College, to be followed by a reception, and she hoped that Jack could attend. Since the family was to leave the United States and settle in Switzerland soon thereafter, he promptly accepted the invitation.

"Dr. Mann and his family had become disenchanted with the McCarthyism so prevalent at that time and sadly concluded that they had to live in a different atmosphere, one without intellectual curbs or political blacklists.

"Erika had asked me to meet them backstage. After the lecture, I started to go there, only to find the hall blocked by people. I could not get through, so I stood to one side. As they came out, on their way to the reception, Mrs. Mann caught sight of me. In a voice loud enough for all to hear, she said to Dr. Mann and Erika, "Oh, there's Jack!" — and headed my way. As all those people fell back to let them pass, how they must have wondered: *'Who the hell is Jack?'* And I felt like a celebrity."