

## Newsletter: Education

Hubbard claimed in many lectures that Snake Thompson was his friend and mentor. He said that Thompson was interested in him mainly as a personality. They became acquainted in late 1923. Thompson was present and active in Hubbard's life also in the 1929 period.

When Hubbard failed the entrance exam to Annapolis Naval Academy, his father enrolled him at Swavely for the school year 1929/1930. Swavely "ran a special course for Annapolis candidates" (BFM , below) and then Woodward School for Boys, a YMCA "crammer" in Washington DC. The goal was to qualify for GWU.

Hubbard's parents then lived in Oakcrest, Virginia, (BFM) about 9 miles southwest of Washington DC. Woodward School for Boys was located in the old downtown YMCA on "G" Street two blocks west of the White House between 17th and 18th streets. Swavely is 32 miles west of Oakcrest in Manassas, VA. This Google map of Annapolis shows the naval base. Annapolis is 33 miles east of Washington, DC. The Library of Congress, where Hubbard claimed he received tutoring from Thompson, is 3.4 miles from GWU. Google map of George Washington University.

Hubbard's father was then the Disbursing Officer at the Naval Hospital in Washington DC. (BFM ) This was presumably St. Elizabeths, 10.9 miles northeast of their residence, near the Anacostia Naval station in DC. Snake Thompson's history with St. Elizabeth's goes back to as early as summer of 1918, when and where he met Clara Mabel Thompson.

Hubbard's accounts and characterizations about his relationship with Thompson may have certain parallels to Aleister Crowley's mentoring system of the A.:A.:

In 1920, Hubbard's "very good friend" Aleister Crowley took an interest in a boy named Cecil Fredrick Russell, aka "Godwin," having established contact with him initially when Russell was an attendant at a navy hospital in Annapolis.

There is a small naval hospital at the Naval Academy in Annapolis.

[http://www.mde.state.md.us/assets/document/brownfields/US\\_Naval\\_Academy.pdf](http://www.mde.state.md.us/assets/document/brownfields/US_Naval_Academy.pdf)

<http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf...>

Russell was then supposedly in charge of administering to flu patients. In order to get out of the navy, he intentionally injected himself with a life-threatening dose of cocaine. As a consequence, Russell was booted out of the navy, whereupon he flew to meet Crowley in New York, where Crowley got him a job at the Lafayette as a waiter.

He was surly, mulish and bitterly rebellious. He raved against the injustice of being punished for breaking the regulations of the navy.

(confessions p. 871)

Crowley described in confessions the moral qualities he was looking for in his magical students, and made a clear record of Godwin's mental state and personality. By the end of his stay with Crowley, Godwin's "conscience was crushed." Also see:

Still another Crowleian organization (that was not regarded as orthodox by the official OTO) was "The Great Brotherhood Of God", and occult fraternity which owed its existence to the activities of C.F. Russel, an ex-naval officer who had once resided at Crowley's Thelema Abbey in Cefalu, Italy. This group had originally begun as the Coronzon Club, a society whose advertisements had begun to appear in the occult press as early as the 1930s.

Source: <http://www.esoterra.org/process.htm>

Hubbard had a history of malingering as well, but during WWII. (See Ron the Malingerer) He also mentioned Bethesda Naval Hospital (in Annapolis) several times in lectures, but these experiences occurred ca. autumn of 1949. In a lecture given in 1951, Hubbard described being at Bethesda and feeling like he was going mad. In other accounts of the same time period, he talked of his time there as research.

There seem to be parallels between Crowley's one-on-one tutoring and a type of school Hubbard described in a 1956 lecture from the Power of Simplicity lecture series. Hubbard was clearly describing his own boyhood schooling prior to GWU. Scientology uses that lecture to promote Mojave Academy ranch school for kids who "aren't ready for a course room." ([www.mojaveacademy.com](http://www.mojaveacademy.com))

Therefore a time for revolution in the field of education is definitely at hand.

Now, I have known, been very fortunate to know in my life, quite a few real geniuses<sup>1</sup>, chaps that really wrote their names fairly large in the world of literature and science, and I consider myself very fortunate because they are very rare. What made them so rare? I found something very peculiar about these fellows; they were for the most part taught in peculiar schools; they were taught in some YMCA school<sup>2</sup>, or they were taught by some Englishman<sup>3</sup> that ran a little college that wasn't very big, for difficult children up the street up there. They were all taught, it seems, in some kind of an off-breed school. This is real peculiar. And because the school existed to a large measure to take care of people who were slop-overs from the usual educational system and so forth, there wasn't much "education" involved.

Well, now this becomes important to us today because we live in a complicated society which requires many skills.

&mdash; L. Ron Hubbard

Lecture 30 October 1956: Education

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Crowley called his magicians geniuses.

<sup>2</sup> Woodward School for Boys was a YMCA school

3 Crowley was an Englishman.

From Russell Miller's Barefaced Messiah:

At the age of eighteen, Ron was a pink-faced, lanky youth with a cowlick of red hair and a spotty complexion, but he was writing as if he was a well-travelled man of the world, a carefree, two-fisted, knockabout adventurer with a zest for life. It was an image he was able to create by using the slender experience of his brief travels in the East to provide a gloss of verisimilitude on the overheated combustion of his imagination.

In this way, he felt able to philosophize about 'the untrustworthy, lying, cruel, changeable, satirical Lady Luck', as if he had suffered more than once from her capriciousness: 'This humorist of humorists, this demon of demons has dragged men from their places in the sun into the slime of oblivion; has made beggars kings; has, with a whisper, made and crushed thousands; has laughed at the beings who supposed they ruled our destinies; and has killed enough men to patch hell's highway its blistering length.'

Only when dealing, gingerly, with the opposite sex did the pubescent man of the world lose his assurance. The story that began so tortuously with 'The sun is hot . . .' was about a male nurse in the Navy who fell for his native assistant. 'She took the chair with a sly glance at the boy and folded her slim brown hands in her lap. The Corpsman was suddenly aware that she was beautiful. He swam for a moment in the depths of her clear brown eyes and then seated himself quickly upon the grass. He was somewhat startled by his discovery and told himself fiercely that she was native, native, native.'

When, inevitably, they fell into each other's arms ('Dimly he saw Marie on the porch and in a moment he felt her in his arms . . .') Ron seemed unsure how to proceed with the story. He scored through the next four lines so heavily as to make them illegible, then abandoned it.

As his attention was so diverted by his fantastic excursions into his imagination, it was perhaps no surprise that Ron failed the entrance examination to the Naval Academy at Annapolis. Mathematics, which he detested, let him down.[2] His father was disappointed but still convinced that Ron could get through the examination. Lieutenant Hubbard's tour of duty in Guam was soon coming to an end and he knew that his next posting would be to Washington DC, where he was to be Disbursing Officer at the Naval Hospital. He discovered that Swavely Preparatory School in Manassas, Virginia - which was within the Washington DC metropolitan area - ran a special course for Annapolis candidates and after a lengthy exchange of telegrams between Guam and Manassas, he managed to enrol Ron for the 1929-30

school year.

The Hubbards returned to the United States at the end of August 1929 and went straight to Helena, Montana, for a happy family reunion. (Their return was not prompted by the death of Ron's 'wealthy grandfather', as suggested in 'official' biographies, since Lafayette Waterbury was still very much alive. He died, aged sixty-seven, on 18 August 1931.) May, who had sometimes found the tropical climate in Guam exhausting, was particularly pleased to be home, filling her lungs with the sweet mountain air of Montana, and she decided to stay on for a while when the time came for Hub to take Ron to Washington.

On 30 September Ron started back at school in the leafy environs of Manassas. In Helena, May sat down to write her son a loving, but gently chiding, letter on the family's rickety typewriter:

Dearest Ronald,

Am thinking a lot about this, your first day at school. Do hope you like it and that you study every lesson thoroughly. Remember you are paying for the information and so do not hesitate to ask a teacher again and again about anything that is not clear. I want you to hold to just this one job - getting through school and passing examinations at the top. Don't write anything outside your school stuff. Don't read anything outside of school requirements. When you are through with lessons, get outdoors for your health. If you stick to this rule you will win through.

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2. L. R. Hubbard Service Record Book, US Marine Corps

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I am feeling worlds better in this mountain air. It is a wonderful change from the tropics. It is too bad that dad could not also have had it instead of going so early on the job. He did it for you so when you feel like slacking, I want you to remember dad gave up his hard earned leave to put you where you are. There is only one way you can pay dad and that is by making good. Your success is our biggest goal in life . . .

May went on to tell her son about the weather, a two-day fishing trip and the trout she had caught, and Toillie being mad because he had not written her any letters. He was to let her know if he wanted his hiking boots. 'I am on my toes to hear all about your school . . .' she concluded. 'With love and best wishes. Mother.'

Lieutenant Hubbard's heartfelt hope that his son would follow him into the US Navy through the Naval Academy was soon to be dashed. During his first semester at Swavely, Ron went to a doctor complaining of eye-strain and was sent to the Naval Hospital for tests. These revealed him to be so short-sighted that he stood no chance of passing the medical requirements for entry to Annapolis. May, meanwhile, had arrived from Helena and moved into a small house in Oakcrest, Virginia, which Hub had rented for them. Many evenings she would sit with her husband fretting about Ron: Hub's gloom about what the future held for his son was greatly exacerbated by the Wall Street Crash, which seemed as if it would engulf the country in catastrophe.

Ron himself exhibited little regret that a career in the Navy was no longer an option. At Swavely he was made an associate editor of the school's monthly newspaper, the Swavely Sentinel, and he was also busy rehearsing for his part as Anatol in Episode, a one-act comedy which was to launch the Swavely Players' season on 13 December. In truth, being an editor or an actor was a sight more alluring to him than being in the Navy, although he would never have admitted it to his father.

While Ron was happily immersed in school life at Swavely, his father was in frequent contact with the Registrar at George Washington University to try and find a way of getting his son accepted as an undergraduate. Lieutenant Hubbard was advised that if Ron could earn sufficient credits at a recognized school - Woodward School for Boys, a YMCA 'crammer' in Washington DC, was mentioned - he would not be required to sit the College Entrance Examination for the university.

Accordingly, Ron was enrolled at Woodward in February 1930. At the beginning of May he took time off from his studies to enlist as a Private in the US Marine Corps Reserve, adding two years to his age and giving his occupation, for some reason, as 'photographer'. It seems he was unconcerned by such piffling mendacity, even on official

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documents, for his bold signature appears at the bottom of his Service Record, confirming both the errors and his physical description height 5'10½", weight 165lb, eyes grey, hair red, complexion ruddy. Six weeks later he was inexplicably promoted to First Sergeant, a leap in rank that was astonishing even by his own standards of self-regard.[3]

Ron's lack of concern for literal truth was exemplified by the persistence with which he claimed he had once been the youngest eagle scout. Even when he won the Woodward school finals in the National Oratorical Contest, with a speech on 'The Constitution; a Guarantee of the Liberty of the Individual', the school newspaper did not fail to mention that he was 'at one time the youngest eagle scout in America', although it was not immediately apparent what this had to do with oratory.[4]

To the intense pleasure of his parents, Ron graduated in June. In a letter to another university (Lieutenant Hubbard was clearly determined to keep his son's options open), his father wrote proudly: 'Ronald worked day and night to prepare for the several examinations and was successful in passing all of them. In my own opinion he has covered considerably more ground than is usual in any high school course and the fact that with all the handicaps he has encountered he has succeeded, he is therefore the best possible subject for university and college work.'[5]

On 24 September 1930, Ron was admitted as a freshman to the School of Engineering at George Washington University, with a major in civil engineering - a discipline suggested by his father. He was photographed for The Cherry Tree, the university year book, standing in the back row of the student chapter of the American Society of Civil Engineers in a smart suit and spotted tie, staring solemnly at the camera, hair smarmed back and instantly identifiable by his curiously protuberant lips, which often gave him an unfortunately sullen demeanour.

The GW Campus, in the heart of Washington DC, was a lively place to be at the start of the 'thirties, despite Prohibition and the worst depression in American history. Even though the newspapers were full of stories about children scavenging for food in garbage cans and pictures of gaunt faces waiting in bread lines, civil engineering students seemed to face a bright future, for people were already beginning to talk about the new era of technocracy, the absolute domination of technology, and the 'Great Engineer' - Herbert Hoover - occupied the White House, just a few blocks from the campus. In New York, the Empire State Building, the tallest building in the world, was nearing completion, testimony to the vision, brilliance and the bright prospects of American civil engineers.

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3. Ibid.

4. Unidentified newspaper clipping

5. Letter from H. R. Hubbard to South Eastern University, 1930

&mdash; Russell Miller

Barefaced Messiah