

READER'S COMPANION TO
F. Scott Fitzgerald's
Tender Is the Night

Matthew J. Bruccoli
with Judith S. Baughman



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA PRESS

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藏书章



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA PRESS

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Still for Scottie
When the saint passes, the feast is over.

Contents

| | |
|---|-----|
| Acknowledgments | ix |
| Introduction | 1 |
| 1. Composition | 1 |
| 2. Editing and Publication | 24 |
| 3. Reception | 28 |
| 4. "The Author's Final Version" | 37 |
| Explanatory Notes | 49 |
| Editorial Rationale | 152 |
| Emendations | 159 |
| Time Scheme | 186 |
| Chronology | 190 |
| Appendices | 197 |
| A. Dust-Jacket Illustration | 197 |
| B. Revisions in Fitzgerald's Marked Copy for "The Author's Final Version" | 198 |
| C. Material Deleted between Magazine Serialization and Book Publication | 201 |
| D. F. Scott Fitzgerald's Use of Story Strippings in <i>Tender Is the Night</i> , by George Anderson | 213 |
| Bibliography | 263 |

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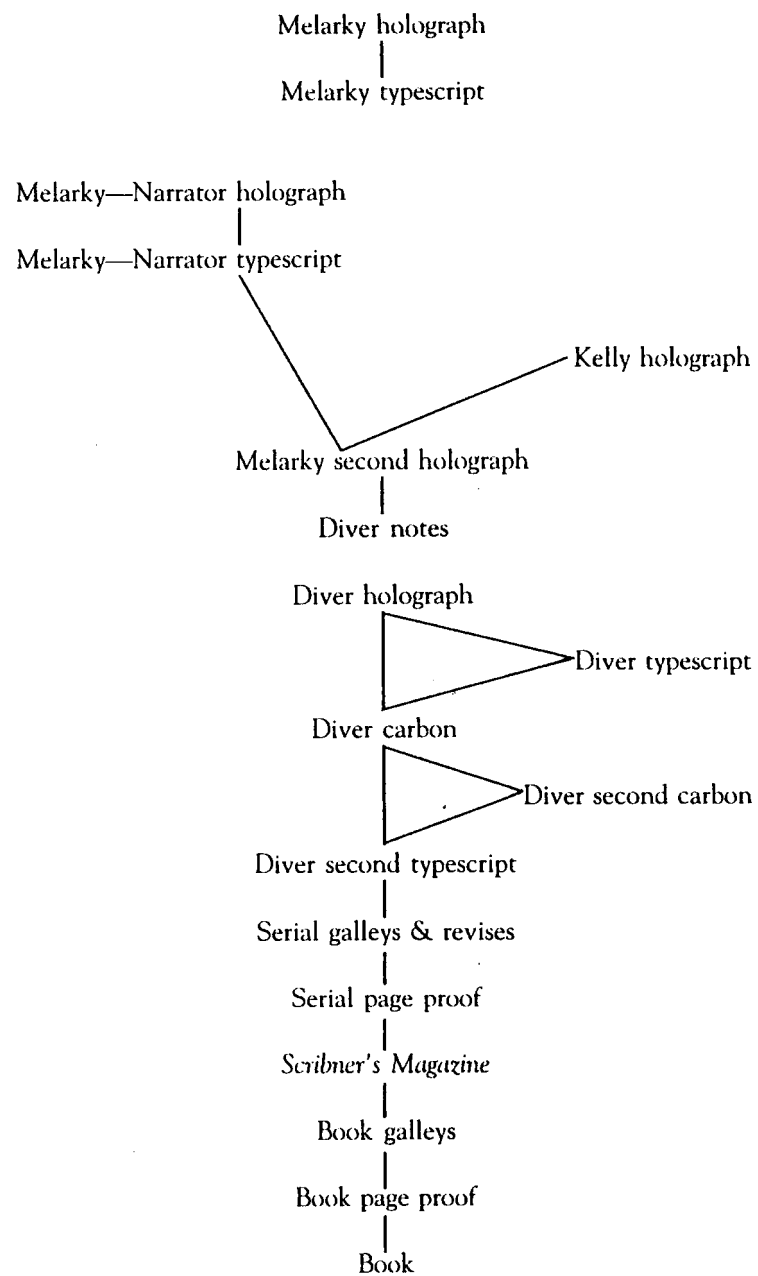
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See the dedication.

Diagram of the Development of *Tender Is the Night*



Reader's Companion to F. Scott Fitzgerald's
Tender Is the Night

Introduction

1944 This volume is not a critical study: it does not analyze the putative meanings of *Tender Is the Night*.¹ The functions of this vade mecum are to encourage useful reading of the novel by explaining or identifying the references that F. Scott Fitzgerald expected fit readers to recognize, and to correct the errors—especially in the time scheme—that distract readers and damage the work. Competent fiction writers know what they are doing—or trying to do. Otherwise reading fiction would be a waste of time.

1. Composition

On 1 May 1925, three weeks after publication of *The Great Gatsby*, F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote to Scribners editor Maxwell Perkins: "The happiest thought I have is of my new novel—it is something really NEW in form, idea, structure—the model for the age that Joyce and Stien are searching for, that Conrad didn't find."²

By late April 1926 Fitzgerald informed Harold Ober, his agent: "The novel is about one fourth done and will be delivered for possible serialization about January 1st. It will be about 75,000 words long, divided into 12 chapters, concerning tho this is absolutely confidential such a case as that girl who shot her mother on the Pacific coast last year."³

The novel was to be about Francis Melarky, an American in his twenties who murders his domineering mother while they are traveling in Europe. The matricide version occupied Fitzgerald, with many interruptions, from 1925 to 1930. There were five drafts—

three in third-person and two with a narrator—but no draft progressed beyond four chapters. Francis Melarky and his mother arrive on the Riviera; he is taken up by attractive American expatriates Seth and Dinah Piper (Roreback) and the alcoholic Abe Grant (Herkimer); Francis, a movie technician, visits a Riviera movie studio, and he acts as a second in a duel; then Melarky, the Grants, and the Pipers go to Paris. There is a flashback opening chapter in which Melarky is beaten by the police in Rome. Many of these incidents are recognizable in *Tender Is the Night*.

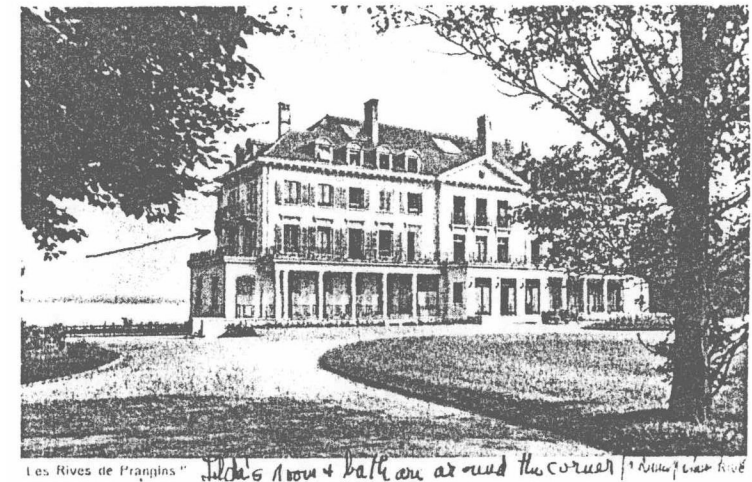
The character of Francis Melarky was loosely based on Theodore Chanler, a young expatriate American composer—who was not involved in a violent crime. The Pipers are recognizable as Sara and Gerald Murphy (see Explanatory Notes, Dedication), the Fitzgeralds' close friends at Cap d'Antibes and later. Abe Grant is a portrait of Ring Lardner (see Explanatory Notes, 12.1). The Pipers and Grant were developed into the Divers and Abe North in the published novel.

Trans-Atlantic travel and the effects of Europe on Americans were the subjects of Fitzgerald short stories during the time he was working on the novel. As George Anderson demonstrates (see Appendix D), themes, descriptions, and phrases were transplanted from the novel drafts to stories or from stories to the novel. In June 1929 Fitzgerald reported to Perkins: "I am working night + day on novel from new angle that I think will solve previous difficulties."⁴ This "new angle" was a plot utilizing movie director Lew Kelly and his wife Nicole, who are going to Europe for an extended vacation. Fitzgerald wrote two manuscript chapters set on shipboard. Also aboard the ship is a young actress named Rosemary who hopes to impress Kelly. No transcript survives for the Kelly chapters, which indicates that Fitzgerald abandoned the angle. There is evidence that Fitzgerald returned to the Melarky material early in 1930, assembling 127 typescript pages from the previous drafts.

Zelda Fitzgerald's collapse and hospitalization in Switzerland, commencing in April 1930, interrupted work on the novel; and it provided Fitzgerald with material about which he felt strongly, superseding the unfelt Melarky plot. A signal to Fitzgerald's new concerns is provided by "One Trip Abroad," a story written in August 1930, while Zelda was at Les Rives de Prangins clinic on

Lake Geneva, Switzerland. This story published in *The Saturday Evening Post* in October is a forecast of *Tender*. An attractive young American couple, Nicole and Nelson Kelly, go to France intending to study music and painting; but they are caught up in dissipation and become patients in a Swiss clinic.

The Fitzgeralds returned to America in September 1931. In January 1932 Fitzgerald reported to Perkins: "At last for the first time in two years + 1/2 I am going to spend five consecutive months on my novel. I am actually six thousand dollars ahead Am replanning it to include what's good in what I have, adding 41,000 new words + publishing. Don't tell Ernest or anyone—let them think what they want—you're the only one whose ever consistently felt faith in me anyhow."⁵ Work was interrupted by Zelda Fitzgerald's February relapse and hospitalization at the Phipps Psychiatric Clinic of Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. Fitzgerald's plot outline ("Sketch"), chronologies, and character sketches were prepared in Montgomery, Alabama, early in the year or at "La Paix," the house he rented in May 1932 at Towson, Maryland, near Baltimore. In August 1932 he made this entry in his *Ledger*: "The Novel now plotted + planned, never more to be permanently interrupted."⁶



Fitzgerald's note on the Swiss clinic where Zelda Fitzgerald was treated (Brucoli Collection, University of South Carolina).

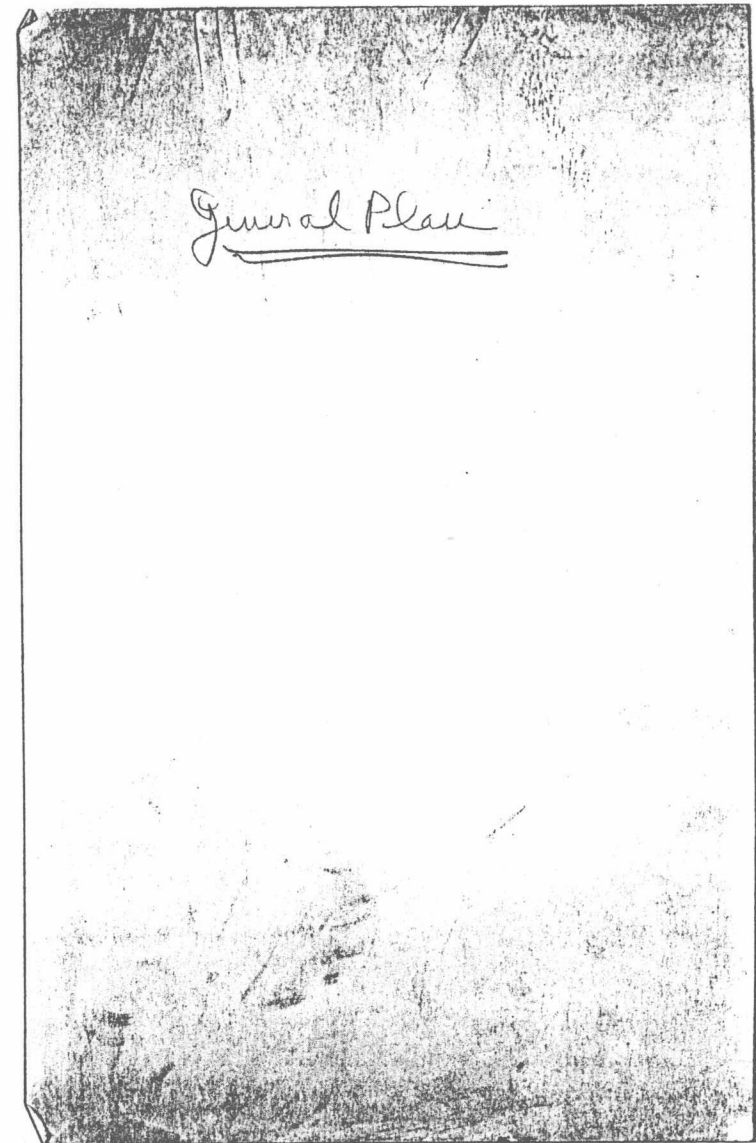
His wife's illness determined Fitzgerald's final approach to the novel. The details of Nicole Diver's illness were based on Zelda Fitzgerald's illness, as shown by the chart comparing the two case histories, although the incest factor in Nicole's collapse was apparently invention. Zelda Fitzgerald's illness supplied more than factual background for *Tender*: it provided the emotional focus of the novel. Diver's response to Nicole's illness derives from Fitzgerald's feelings about his wife's collapse and relapses.

In the published novel the major departures from the "Sketch" have to do with the nature of Nicole's insanity and Diver's political ideas. She does not manifest a homicidal mania in *Tender*, nor does she commit a murder that Diver conceals. Diver is not a communist in the novel; he is apolitical. Nothing in the surviving drafts indicates that Fitzgerald tried to develop these ideas.

The criticism has been made that Dick Diver is not a convincing figure as a psychiatrist. It is true that he is not surrounded with medical details, but *Tender* is not about psychiatry. Fitzgerald's note under "Method of Dealing with Sickness Material" indicates that the paucity of medical details was deliberate: "Only suggest from the most remote facts. Not like doctor's stories."

Fitzgerald's memo on the three-part structure establishes that the point-of-view shifts in the novel were planned from the inception of work. Book I shows the Divers through Rosemary's adoring eyes. It is brilliant surface, with hints of the corruption beneath the facade Diver maintains. "From outside mostly" provides the rationale for the introductory flashback. Although Fitzgerald reconsidered the flashback structure after the book was published, the plans and drafts show that he did not alter the structural plan during the writing of *Tender*. In Book II the reader is taken behind the barricade of charm to learn Nicole's case history as Diver did. Book III provides Diver's attempts to work out his destiny—to break the bond with Nicole, to cure her, and to save himself.

The preliminary planning material supports the conclusion that *Tender* is not just the result of work Fitzgerald began in 1932; the published novel is the product of a cumulative process, salvaging the seemingly wasted work on the Melarky drafts. The dominant theme—the deterioration of a personality under the distractions and dissipations of expatriate life in its most attractive form—endured throughout the process of composition.



Pp. 5-21: Notes for the Third Version of *Tender Is the Night*, working title "Dick Diver" (Princeton University Library).

(1)

Sketch

The novel should do this. Show a man who is a natural idealist, ^{a spoiled priest,} giving in for various causes to the ideas of the haute Bourgeois, and in his rise to the top of the social world losing his idealism, his talent and turning to drink and dissipation. Background one in which the leisure class is at their truly most brilliant & glamorous such as Murphys.

The hero, ^{born in 1891} is a man like myself brought up in a family sunk from haute bourgeoisie to petit bourgeoisie, ~~but~~ yet exceptionally educated. He has all the gifts, ~~and at~~ and twenty-three ~~he seems to have~~ goes through Yale almost succeeding but not quite but getting a Rhodes scholarship which he caps with a degree from Hopkins, & with a legacy goes abroad to study ^{psychology} in Zurich. At the age of 26 all seems bright. Then he falls in love with one of his patients who has a curious homicidal mania toward men caused by an event of her youth. Aside from this she is the legendary promiscuous

(2)

in love with her
entirely consumed
to completing the cure

woman. He "transfers" to himself & she falls in love with him, a love he returns.

After a year of non-a true ^{in reality} ~~sovereign~~ war he returns and marries her. She is an aristocrat of half American, half European parentage, young, mysterious & lovely, a new character. He has cured her by pretending to a stability & belief in the current order which he does not have, being in fact a communist-liberal-idealist, ^{a mystic in revolt}. But the years ~~have~~ of living under patronage eat & among the bourgeoisie have seriously spoiled him and he takes up the marriage as a man divided ~~in~~ himself. During the war he has taken to drink a little & it continues as secret drinking after his marriage. The difficulty of taking care of her is more than he has imagined and he goes more and more to pieces, always keeping up a wonderful face.

At the point when he is socially the most charming and inwardly ~~the most~~ corrupt he meets a young actress on the

3) during which he is in Rome with the actress having
a disappointing love affair, ^{the} today he is beaten
up by the police ^{in return} to find that instead of taking
him ^{up} ^{the} ^{most} ^{sure} ^{she} ^{was} ^{with}

Rinorra who falls in love with him. ~~But~~ considerably
difficultly he contains himself out of fear
of all it would entail since his formal
goodness is all that is holding his
disintegration together. ~~But~~ He knows
too that he does not love her as he has
loved his wife. Nevertheless the effect ^{of the}
^{repression is} to throw him toward all women during
~~the~~ his secret drinking when he has
another life of his own which his wife does
not suspect, or at least ~~the~~ he thinks she
doesn't. ~~His~~ ~~one~~ ~~of~~ ~~his~~ ~~abuses~~
~~he~~ committed a murder and in a revolution
of spirit he tries to conceal it and succeeds.
It shows him however that the game is ~~about~~
up and he will have to perform some violent
& Pygmalion act to save her for he is losing
his hold on ~~her~~ & himself.

Rimorra who falls in love with him. ~~at~~ considerably
difficultly he contains himself out of fear
of all it would entail since his formal
goodness is all that is holding his
disintegration together. ~~But~~ He knows
too that he does not love her as he has
loved his wife. Nevertheless the effect ^{is} the
^{repression is} to throw him toward all women during
~~the~~ his secret drinking when he has
another life of his own which his wife does
not suspect, or at least ~~that~~ he thinks she
doesn't know. In one of his abuses
~~she~~ committed a murder and in a revolution
of spirit he tries to conceal it and succeeds.
It shows him however that the game is ~~about~~
up and he will have to perform some violent
& Byronic act to save her for he is losing
his hold on her & himself.

(4)
agony that it has succeeded he departs
knowing that he has cured her. He sends
^{his neglected son}
~~his son~~ into Soviet Russia to educate him
as a and comes back to America to be a
quack thus having accomplished both
his bourgeois sentimental idea in the
case of his wife and his idealism in
the case of his son, + now being only
a shell to which nothing matters but
survival + ~~death with~~ ^{himself} as long as
possible with the old order.

~~What have~~
(9) ~~The hero, treated not entirely from without~~
~~and then entirely from within~~

~~The Photostat is complete to the following parts.~~

(Further sketch)

5.

Approach

The Dunkard's Holiday will be a novel of our time showing the break up of a fine personality. Unlike The Beautiful and Damned the break-up will be caused not by flabbiness but really tragic forces such as the inner conflicts of the idealist and ~~the~~ the compromises forced upon him by circumstances.

The novel will be a little over a hundred thousand words long, composed of fourteen chapters, each 7,500 words long, five chapters each in the first and second part, four in the third — one chapter or its equivalent to be composed of retrospect.

(9)

most actresses by being

The actress was born in 1908. Her career is like Lois or Mary Hay — that is, she ^{differs from} is a lady, simply seeking joviality, health, sensuality. Rather gross as compared to the heroine, or rather will be gross for at present her youth covers it. Mimi-Lupe Veley.

We see her first at the very beginning of her career. She's already made one big picture.

We follow her from age 17 to age 22

(10)

The Friend was born in 1896. He is a wild man. He looks like Tanti and like that dark communist at the meeting. He is half Italian ^{or French} & half American. He is a type who hates all sham & pretense. (See the Lung type who was like Foss Wilson) He is one who would lead tribesmen or communists - utterly aristocratic, ^{ambitious} King or nothing. He fought three years ~~against~~ in the French Foreign Legion in the war and then paroled a little and then fought the Red. He is just back from there on his first appearance in the novel and seeking a new outlet. He has money & that French training - otherwise ^{he} would be a revolutionist. He is a few type, useful or destructive but his mind is not quite as good as the hero's. Touch of Percy Bysshe, Denny Holden also

We see him from age 24 to age 33

11,000

Summary of Part III (1st half)

The Divers, as a marriage and the end of their misadventure. Medically Nicole is nearly cured but Dick has given out & is sinking toward alcoholism and discouragement. It seems as if the completion of his ruin will be the fact that cures her - almost mystically. However this is merely hinted at. Dick is still in control of the situation and thinks of the matter practically. They must separate for both their sakes. He will tell her he thinks of one tragic idea but controls himself and manages a sane one instead.

His hold is broken, the transference is broken. He goes away. He has been used by the rich family and cast aside.

Part III is as much as possible seen through Nicole's eyes. All Dick's stories such as are absolutely necessary: Edward, father, auto catastrophe (child's eyes perhaps), strapper quarrel?, girls on Riviera, must be told without pulling in his machine or feelings. How does he know this mystery man, at least Nicole with her guessing at the mystery?

Dick

The hero was born in 1891. He is a well-formed rather athletic and fine looking fellow. Also he is very intelligent, widely read — in fact he has all the talents, including especially great personal charm. This is all planted in the beginning. He is a superman in possibilities, that is, he appears to be at first sight from a bourgeois point of view. However he lacks that kind of strength — none of the ruggedness of Brancusi, Teger, Picasso. For his external qualities are anything of Gerald, Ernest, Ben Hur, Archie McLean, Charley W. Arthur or myself. He looks, though, like me.

The faults — the weakness such as the social-climbing, the drinking, the desperate clinging to one woman, finally the neurosis, only come out gradually.

We follow him from age 34 to age 39

Actual Age of the People

DICK

| | |
|----------------|---|
| September 1891 | Born |
| " 1908 | Entered Yale |
| June 1912 | Graduated Yale aged 20 |
| June 1916 | Graduated Hopkins. Left for Vienna (8 mo. there) |
| June 1917 | Was in Zurich after 1 year and other work. Age 26 |
| June 1918 | Degree at Zurich. Aged 26 |
| June 1919 | Back in Zurich. Aged 27 |
| September 1919 | Married--aged 28 (after his refusing fellowship at University in neurology and pathologist to the clinic. Of does he accept?) |
| July 1925 | After 5 years and 10 months of marriage is aged almost 34 |

Story starts

| | |
|-----------|--|
| July 1929 | After 9 years and 10 months of marriage is aged almost 38. |
|-----------|--|

Nicole's Age

Always one year younger than century.

Born July 1901

courtship for two and one half years before that, since she was 13.

Catastrophe June 1917 Age almost 16

Clinic. Feb. 1918 Age 17

To middle October bad period
After armistice good period

He returns in April or May 1919

She discharged in June 1, 1919. Almost 18

Married September 1919. Aged 18

Child born August 1920

Child born June 1922

End Pousse almost immediately to October 1922 and thereafter

Frenchman (or what have you in summer of 1923 after almost 4 years of marriage.

In July 1925 when the story opens she is just 24

(One child almost 5 (Scotty in Juan les Pins)

One child 3 (Scotty in Pincio)

In July 1929 when the story ends she is just 28

^{Quora}
The heroine was born in 1901. She is beautiful on the order of Marlene Dietrich or better still the Norah-Kiki Allen girl with those peculiar eyes. She is American with a streak of some foreign blood. At fifteen she was raped by her own father under peculiar circumstances--work out. She collapses, goes to the clinic and there at sixteen meets the young doctor hero who is ten years older. Only her transference to him saves her--when it is not working she reverts to homicidal mania and tries to kill ~~xxxxxx~~ men. She is an innocent, widely read but with no experience and no orientation except what he supplies her. Portrait of Zelda--that is, a part of Zelda.

We follow her from age 24 to age 29

Method of Dealing with Sickness Material

- (1) Read books and decide the general type of case
- (2) Prepare a clinical report covering the years 1916-1920
- (3) Now examine the different classes of material selecting not too many things for copying.
 - (1) From the sort of letter under E
 - (2) " " " " " " F
 - (3) (In this case using no factual stuff)
- (3) From the other headings for atmosphere, accuracy and material being careful not to reveal basic ignorance of psychiatric and medical training yet not being glib. Only suggest from the most remote facts. Not like doctor's stories.

Must avoid Faulkner attitude and not end with a novelized Kraft-Ebing--better Ophelia and her flowers.

Classification of the Material on Sickness

- A. Accounts
- B. Baltimore
- C. Clinics and clipping
- D. Dancing and 1st Diagnoses
- E. Early Prangins--to February 1931
- F. From Forel (include Bleuler Consultation)
- H. Hollywood
- L. Late Prangins
- M. My own letters and comments
- R. Rosalind and Sayre Family
- S. Squires and Schedule
- V. Varia

