

## EDWARD A. RUMELY: HOOSIER PUBLICIST

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EDWARD A. RUMLEY was born in LaPorte, Indiana on February 27, 1882. He died at the age of seventy-two on November 26, 1964. During his life, he was engaged in various activities of a public, educational, business, medical, national and international nature. In many respects, he personified those qualities of the American public-spirited businessman epitomised by Benjamin Franklin and carried on to our own day. In the political arena alone, he spanned the political spectrum from a 'Bull Mooser' supporter of Theodore Roosevelt, to the National Committee to Uphold the Constitution, where he was a gadfly to Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the New Deal. He took to heart the motto of his grandfather, Meinrad Rumely, a German immigrant to this country and refugee from the 1848 uprisings: "If you are convinced that you are right, never be afraid of what other people think."

Edward Rumely accumulated a large collection of personal papers and biographical writings which record his involvement in a wide variety of business and public affairs. Today, Rumely is scarcely remembered by the general public, but at one time he was an extremely controversial man denounced on both floors of the United States Congress. The little that is recalled about Edward Rumely is associated with his highly publicized anti-New Deal and anti-Fair Deal activities; very little is remembered of his passionate involvement with Theo-

dore Roosevelt and the progressive movement in the first decade of this century. In many respects, he is typical of the progressives Otis Graham discussed in his seminal study, *Encore for Reform*. Graham studied the reaction of a large number of 'progressives' to the New Deal and found that most of them turned against F.D.R. He demonstrated, among other things, the inadequacy of the interpretation that only 'conservatives' opposed Roosevelt's New Deal.

In addition to affording valuable insight into the political developments of the United States from 1912 to 1959, the Rumely archive shed interesting light on cultural, economic and educational matters during the same period. While a graduate student in Germany, Rumely became involved with the New School Movement and founded such a school on his return to the United States in 1907. He also took over the management of the family agricultural implement business and became deeply involved in the formative years of the agricultural machinery industry. At the same time and again in the 1920s, he actively promoted the establishment of special credit arrangements for farmers to enable them to mechanize as rapidly as possible. In addition to all of these professional activities Rumely had time to become acquainted with a number of important and interesting people. His friends ranged from Henry Ford, to Amos Pinchot, and Gutzon Borglum, the creator of the Black Hills monument. During his lifetime, Rumely carried on an extensive correspondence with his friends in America and throughout the world. Both his letters to his friends and their letters to him offer a wealth of material relating to affairs in the first half of this century. This essay is an attempt to indicate both the scope of the Rumely papers

in the Lilly Library and to suggest their potential importance to scholars.

Edward Rumely's childhood and family background had an enormous influence upon his development. He was not only encouraged to achieve academically, but was urged, by his grandfather, to tinker around the machine shops of the Rumely tractor factory. From this environment emerged a young man with a progressive spirit, a tremendous desire for knowledge and a keen desire to blend the aesthetic and the utilitarian. The young Rumely also developed a deep sensitivity and love for things German. In his autobiography (manuscript), Rumely described his childhood and adolescence in LaPorte, Indiana of the eighteen eighties and nineties. He also wrote about the influence which his grandfather had upon his life. Meinrad Rumely, his grandfather, had come to LaPorte after fleeing Germany in 1849 following the abortive uprisings of the previous year. He had set up a blacksmith's shop in that Northern Indiana town, which had grown in the eighties to a large steam threshing machine business.

While still a youngster, Rumely once asked his grandfather why he had started making threshing machines. In his autobiography he related that:

we were driving with his stallion and little buggy out of LaPorte to look at his farm. 'Wait, you foolish boy,' he said. We drove up to the barn where the sheaves of wheat were stacked outside. 'Run up into the top of the barn and bring me a *flgel*.' 'What's that?' I asked (though) I knew that it was German for flail. He said: 'That's a long stick and another one like one of your baseball bats tied to it.' When I found the flail and brought it down, he told me to whip the straw with it. I hit my knuckles and skinned them, but Grandfather forced me to keep on, beating time by whistling. I got tired. The flail was heavy to swing, but Grandfather said,



‘Keep on; keep on!’ Finally when I was completely tuckered out, he said, ‘Now if you had to do that all winter, as farmers used to do; you’d think of making a machine to do it for you, wouldn’t you?’ Then he took me outside of the barnyard and said, pointing to the great opening prairies, ‘If you saw all of this land and knew that it could be planted in wheat, and yet at harvest time there were not enough men to gather and flail the grain, wouldn’t you think of making a machine to do it for you?’

At the age of fourteen, Edward entered the local high school in LaPorte, Indiana, where he became fascinated with scientific speculation and theory. He became very interested in the evolutionary theories of Charles Darwin and the social theories of Herbert Spencer. When he discovered that the local library lacked books on these subjects he approached his grandfather who told him to order the books he wanted; the only stipulation was that he had to read them. Rumely related what happened when the books arrived at his family home. His father was horrified at the bill for \$480.00, but even more appalled at the book titles. Edward Rumely wrote in his autobiography that among the first books his father picked was one entitled, *The Evolution of the Idea of God*. To soothe his father’s feelings, the young man went through his small library and turned wrong end to or sideways those books which he thought his father would find most objectionable, hoping they would be less noticeable.

His parents wanted him to enter the priesthood, but his grandfather felt certain that Edward’s place was in the factory, rather than in the Church. He was sent to St. Joseph’s Academy, now St. Joseph’s College in Rennselaer, Indiana to begin preparation for the priesthood. He became ill, returned home for a short time and was



sent off again, this time to study with his mother's cousin, a priest in Wisconsin. Following his return from Wisconsin, Edward decided, against his father's desire, to enter Notre Dame University and to begin his college education and the formal preparation for the priesthood.

Upon entering Notre Dame, Edward Rumely immediately became the center of a group of young radicals interested in studying the ideas of Darwin, Herbert Spencer, and Henry George. Henry George was the originator of the idea of a 'single tax' on unearned income and unused land; this idea, an early forerunner of income re-distribution was then sweeping the country and held great attraction for young radicals of the late nineties. Rumely formed a 'single tax' debating society and published a Henry George newspaper. These activities incurred the disapproval of the conservative university administration. He was urged by a lay teacher to leave the university before he was expelled. Edward had already had a very unproductive interview with Father Morrissey, the President of Notre Dame. Rumely related how Father Morrissey used "his big round belly like a bull dozer, pushed me against a hot radiator and laid down the law. 'You are a very stubborn young man,' he said."

Rumely's grandfather intervened and told Edward that he would pay for his education in Europe, if he wished to go. His parents were opposed but gave in reluctantly, when they saw how intent he was on going. In 1900, Edward left for England, accompanied by his friend Alexander Lattimore. Their mutual friend, Louis Post, the middlewestern Henry Georgite and journalist, had urged Rumely to enter Ruskin Hall, Oxford, which he did, with Lattimore. Ruskin Hall was then, and is now, a workingman's college at Oxford. It had been founded by an American interested in the cooperative movement

who wanted the young men of the British labor and cooperative movements to have the opportunity to study at Oxford. The institution was run by the students themselves. Rumely described, in his autobiography, some of his experiences there, pointing out that students had to do all the work necessary for the running of the college.

While at Oxford, an event of great importance occurred to Rumely. Years later he wrote about that experience:

One day I saw in a book shop window, a paper covered book with a German title, *Meine Beichte*. It arrested my attention and I bought it. It was Tolstoy's *My Confession*, an account of the author's spiritual development. Brought up in an orthodox church, Tolstoy had found the message of Jesus overlaid with dogma. I, too, had been brought up in traditional doctrine and Tolstoy made an immediate impression upon me.

Then I encountered the following passage:

'Do These Things for Your Children

Let them do all they can for themselves; carry their own water. Fill their own jugs, wash up, arrange their own rooms, clean their boots and clothes, lay the table. Believe me, that unimportant as these things may seem, they are a hundred times more important for your children's happiness, than a knowledge of French, or of History. These things train your children to simplicity, to work and to independence. If you can add work on the land, if it be but a kitchen garden, that will be good.

Believe me, that without that condition, there is no possibility of a moral education, a Christian education, or a consciousness of the fact that men are not naturally divided into classes of masters and slaves, but that they are all brothers and equals.'

Rumely found expressed in these words what he had been groping for in his previously unformed desire to found a school for boys. In his autobiography he wrote that:

this passage crystallized both my thinking and my determination of my future. I read the book and reread it. Then I began to read all of Tolstoy's writings. For about eight weeks, I read day and night. Here I found a philosophy of human brotherhood which gave point to the gentle practice of my mother, who never spoke or thought ill of anyone. Here was a program for simple living which I so admired in the Franciscan monks. Here was a simple practice free of traditional dogma, of the Sermon on the Mount. Tolstoy's viewpoint clarified what had been vague and disjointed in my own experience and outlook life. . . I corresponded with Alymer Mause, Tolstoy's English translator, and exchanged one or two letters with Tolstoy himself, who persuaded me to adopt vegetarianism. This I did (Later) at Heidelberg. For five years I avoided meats, milks, butter and other animal products and lived practically on a vegetarian diet.

Growing dissatisfied with the lack of interest in science and technology at Oxford, Rumely decided in 1901 to go to Germany and begin the study of medicine. He went first to Heidelberg and later to Freiburg. In addition to working intensively on his studies, he became deeply involved in all aspects of German life both in and out of the university. His autobiography and letters home are filled with anecdotes which are very revealing of Germany in the first decade of this century. Two incidents, in particular, reveal much about the attitudes then common among many upperclass German university students. Rumely related that once his friend Lattimore had boarded a street car on which some members of a university dueling society were riding. He continued:

A woman got on, and the student where she was standing did not get up and offer her his seat. Further down in the car, Lattimore got up, and motioned to the woman to take



his seat. The student made some remark, whereupon Lattimore exclaimed: 'You boor!'

A few days later, the head of the corps and a few fraternity brothers wearing their uniform caps with ribboned sashes hanging from their shoulders walked into our rooms. They were formally polite, but icy eyed. 'You have given a public affront to our corps,' their leader said to Lattimore, 'and we challenge you to a duel.'

'Very well,' replied Lattimore, 'name your second, and the man I choose to second me will call and make the arrangements.'

Among Lattimore's student friends was a duelist so expert that he was constantly challenged because he could cut an opponent's cheek just the way it was ordered. He agreed to act as a second, and was instructed to inform the challengers that Lattimore would fight with pistols. 'But he can't do that here!' was the protest. 'In the South where my American friend comes from,' replied the second, 'the person challenged chooses the weapons. My principal chooses pistols and proposes that the contestants start at a distance of a hundred feet apart and approach one another until one or both fall.'

The corps went into executive session, and emerged with a decision that the street car incident wasn't as much of an insult as it appeared at first.

Because of his vegetarian leanings and his Tolstoyan beliefs about dress, some of his fellow students looked with askance at Rumely. He wrote that he held tenaciously to his own ideas about things:

including dress which consisted of a peasant woven linen shirt with soft collar and flowing tie, with shoes of woven leather straps. This dress brought me into conflict with German convention. One day when I entered the physics classroom already filled with students, I heard a scrapping of feet—the German students' sign of disapproval. It did not occur to me that this demonstration might be for me. But the next day, it was repeated and much more pointedly than before; for, as I took my accustomed seat, the two

students who sat beside me, who wore their corps badges, got up ostentatiously and moved to other seats. I then realized that I was the subject of their disapproval.

When the class was over, a tall blond North German who had come to Heidelberg for its tradition and its corps life, walked up to me, bowed stiffly and said: 'Colleague, just a word. Are you possibly an American?'

'Why?' I asked.

He replied 'My classmates and I are having a discussion; are you a Jew, or an American?'

I told him I was an American, but that I did not understand the purpose of the question. He said: 'We have decided that we would not allow a Jew to dress as eccentrically as you, but if you are an American, of course, it is all right. Come over and join us. I thanked him for the invitation but kept my seat. I had no further trouble, but I continued wearing my soft shirt, my flowing tie and my woven shoes. I never entered into the corps life of Heidelberg, but occasionally was a guest at those organizations [sic] drinking bouts that lasted most of the night. I was able to show that a vegetarian American could stand twenty-one mugs of beer without losing his feet.

In 1902, Edward Rumely moved to Freiburg to complete his medical education. In a desperate attempt to force him to come home, his father cut off all financial aid. His grandfather had recently died, so he lost the support of the sole member of his family who thought that he should continue his studies. Rumely decided to stay on in Germany and to complete his education there by working to pay his expenses. He worked as an orderly in a sanatorium, and wrote articles for American magazines on German customs and current affairs.

One of his articles on German municipal reform and social welfare came to the attention of Theodore Roosevelt, then President of the United States. A correspondence developed between the two men which con-

tinued until T.R.'s death in 1919. At one point, Edward Rumely sent President Roosevelt a book on German social insurance. T.R. wrote back thanking him for the volume and expressing agreement with the ideas Rumely had written to him. Roosevelt wrote: "With most of what you say I entirely agree. I am astounded at the folly of the very wealthy people, notably in my own city of New York who do not realize that I am saving them from themselves by the reforms I advocate."

During his student days in Germany, Rumely became close friends with a number of prominent Germans, including the industrialist Hugo Stinnes and his son Edmund, Julius Gueterman, the prominent silk manufacturer, and Professor Von Schulze Gaevernitz, an economist and a Liberal member of the Imperial Reichstag. These contacts were a great stimulus to the young American and helped to shape his understanding about possible relations of government, industry and the establishment of some form of social welfare. Julius Gueterman, for example, first introduced Edward Rumely to the efforts being made by German industrialists to provide good, low cost housing and cooperative ventures to buy cheap, good food for workingmen. This experience led Rumely to become an ardent advocate of the cooperative movement when he returned to the United States. When he became editor and publisher of the New York *Evening Mail*, Rumely began a massive campaign to stimulate interest in the cooperative movement. Through his friend, Theodore Roosevelt, he urged the 1916 Republican presidential candidate, Charles Evans Hughes to propose the cooperative movement as an alternative to Woodrow Wilson's demands for ever higher wages for working people. Rumely also prepared material on the cooperative



movement, based on his experiences in Germany for Theodore Roosevelt which T.R. used in his book, *Foes in Our Own Household*.

Throughout this paper references will be made to Rumely's autobiography. This author has found that Edward Rumely's account of his personal experience has proved to be an accurate portrayal of what actually happened to him. For example, his recollections of his activities, friends, and political beliefs during his student days in Germany were completely borne out by his English companion John Cory, in a letter he wrote Rumely for use in his defence in the *Evening Mail* trial of 1919. In the nineteen fifties, Rube Goldberg corresponded with Dr. Rumely about their work together on the *Evening Mail*. Rumely was then seventy-six, but was so accurate in his recollections that Goldberg wrote: "that I am amazed at your remarkable memory." This is an important point, because much of the material covering various aspects of his life is brought together and made more accessible in his autobiography than in his extensive correspondence. Nevertheless, if one wished to do so, the correspondence of Edward Rumely would confirm statements made in his autobiography.

During the bitter battles which Edward Rumely waged with advocates of the New Deal during the thirties and with supporters of the Fair Deal in the forties, he was often accused of being a facist, because of his connections with Germany and his many German friends. It was conveniently forgotten that all of Rumely's friends in Germany were either liberals or social democrats in political affiliation. During the Nazi period, Von Schulze Gaevernitz escaped harm because he was too old and considered too eccentric by the Nazi regime to imprison. His son Garo left for the United States while the elder

Frau Gaevernitz had to flee to Switzerland because she was part Jewish. Of the three Gueterman sons, all were imprisoned by the Nazis; one of them died while in prison of a fall suffered while taking a bath, or so the prison authorities asserted. None of these individuals qualify as either Nazi or pro-Nazi in sentiment. Others close to Edward Rumely reported that during the Nazi period, he was passionately anti-Hitler and often used his good offices to aid refugees. Rumely was largely responsible for getting the former editor of *Die Frankfurter Zeitung* into the United States in the late thirties. Herr Simon was later mysteriously murdered in Washington, D.C. and the Rumely family always felt that his death was contrived by the Nazis.

A determinative opportunity occurred to Rumely before he returned to America with his medical degree in 1906. One of his colleagues, a radical Russian medical student, suggested that he visit a "New School," or *Land-erziehungshome* as they were called in Germany. Following that visit, Rumely spent his summer working at the "New School" at Glarisegg in Switzerland. One of his letters home captured the spirit behind the "New Education," then gathering force on both sides of the Atlantic:

Just a few words from my new home. Vacation came and I decided to accept the offer of the director of this *Lander-erziehungshome* and come here during the vacation. It is the school of which I have often written—a place where the boys are developed harmoniously.

The training is not merely intellectual—body, character and mind are regarded as equally important. Aside from regular school work, the boy has to do two or three hours of actual work on the farm or in the machine shop. Their manner of life is Spartan in its simplicity. Mornings they rise from their mattresses—no spring beds, empty the

washwater and assemble in the school yard for half mile run with their teachers. . .

In the refectory, the spirit of the school is shown. The teachers of the school are not distant authorities to be venerated and feared—they are companions of the pupils, sharing their work, joy, and sorrow, taking part in their games and leading them in their studies. At table, each teacher had a group of eight or ten boys about him; there is no faculty table.

Two whole afternoons a week are devoted to outdoor work each week. . . after that, the whole school-teachers and forty-five boys go out for football. On returning from the fields, all undress and bathe together under the hot spray. Supper, half an hour of free time and (then) their *Abendacht* (evening devotion). This is something that should be better known; instead of repeating a formal prayer, night after night, the director reads aloud a piece of good literature that has. . . value. Sometimes it is a good story, again an edifying poem, and often the life of a great man, like Bismarck, von Siemens, or Washington. . . Our children need the example of men in touch with our time.

After this evening devotion, which is held on the shore of the lake in the summer, all go to bed. Sometimes the director speaks, instead of reading, or takes all out for walks. Recently, we went to a ruin on a nearby hill and watched the sun set, across the waters of 'fair Lake Constance.' It seemed as if some common spirit were speaking to each in his soul. All, even in the youngest, lay motionless and silent, with eyes fixed on the last whisps of red floating on the western sky. A beautiful world, it is, in which we were placed. To me, the budding tree, the silent grandeur of a mountain under the starlit sky, the color of the eastern sky at sunset, speak plainer language than all the books intended to spell out the bounty of the creator.

In the Spring of 1906, Edward Rumely received his M.D. degree from Freiburg. He returned to the United States and took up the practice of medicine in LaPorte, Indiana. In order to earn enough money to start the



school which he had dreamed about in Europe, he started working in his father's business. He saved his limited funds and was able to open his school in 1907 while at the same time expanding his family's business into new and profitable fields. Using his experiences with Rudolf Diesel in Germany, the young man was determined to impel the Rumely Company into the development of tractors powered with internal combustion engines. He was dissatisfied with the heavy and clumsy steam powered tractors of the day and searched for the means to develop a better tractor using kerosene then becoming both cheap and plentiful as a fuel. He contacted the inventor John A. Secor and convinced him to surrender his patent right to the M. Rumely Company. With Secor, he designed the 'Oil Pull' tractor in 1907 which was as powerful as the old steam engines but half the weight. Some of these engines were used thirty years or longer and were once a common sight in the western provinces of Canada.

In 1907 Rumely opened Interlaken School, establishing it first in LaPorte and later moving it to Rolling Prairie, a small town along the interurban line eight miles outside of LaPorte. Years later, he wrote that Interlaken was a great stimulus to him.

It needed between \$25,000 and \$35,000. . . and I had to hustle to earn that amount of money. . . In all, between my twenty-sixth and my thirty-sixth year, I put into the school more than a quarter of a million dollars. . . From the time it started until the summer of 1918, I was never free from thought of the school. All my financial and business plans, all my vacations and travel were regulated in its interest. The school gave me breadth and contact, and a motive and satisfaction in life. I have never cared for money and possessions, but the school gave me something to spend my money for, something to make the money worth the trou-

ble of earning it and this was a great spur to my business activities. . . of all my varied occupations and endeavors none has been closer to my heart than Interlaken School. In the ten years of its life, we received and taught some twelve hundred boys, and after that experience, I have often thought that the world might be a better place, if it was run for a time by schoolboys between eight and sixteen. Then loyalties are the deepest; the enthusiasms are the strongest. And then, impressions are the clearest.

Not only did the students at Interlaken pursue a rigorous academic program, consisting of the arts, sciences and humanities, plus large doses of Latin, Greek and modern languages, but they also did all of the work of running the school. Years later a visiting educator wrote of his impressions of Interlaken:

Here some fifteen necessary buildings were constructed, mainly by the boys; a herd of Holsteins were kept, tended by boys. Interlaken's sheep which won prizes at the local fairs were shepherded by boys; all that the school table required was grown by boys. Interlaken's rose garden was widely known; its nursery for trees and shrubs was well-developed—all this work was done by boys. Plowing, harrowing, planting, harvesting, fertilizing—all tasks, other than the expert, big and little, adult and juvenile, the farmer's, the gardner's, mason's, machinist's, orchardist's, engineer's, servant's, were executed by the one hundred and fifty boys. They learned through the use of the hands. Ah, this was the dawn, when it was bliss to be alive.

Edward Rumely, like John Dewey was attempting at Interlaken to meet the changing conditions of America. In the Interlaken catalogue, he wrote:

The men who are great in the nation were not reared in the city flat. They were trained, most of them, by hard work on the farm—in the open, teeming fields, under the blue skies, driving the patient-toiling horses, caring for cows, ducks and chickens, doing the manual training of chores, playing

hard, when they had a chance, in meadow, forest and brook, living helpfully in that world, of which we are a part, and upon which our life depends.

The old industrial life has passed forever, and we must adopt our schools to meet the changed conditions. In the diminutive school community of Interlaken, located on a farm, many of those processes which have disappeared from city life are still in daily use, and the pupils learn of them by daily sight, as well as by actual participation in the work.

Boys who are to undertake directive work must become interested early in the work of their fathers—the real work of the nation. To help them in this, the practical world is brought constantly into the school. Businessmen help in its direction, and visit it frequently. The daily papers and magazines are publicly read for their vital news of progress and achievement. The responsibilities and the opportunities of American life are forever present.

The students loved the school and they loved 'Doc,' as they called Edward Rumely. Years after the school had closed, Edward Rumely wrote about one of the boys who had come to Interlaken from a wealthy family in Venezuela. He wrote in his autobiography:

this boy happened to draw a work assignment, milking cows very early—having to rise at 4:30 in the morning, walking half a mile from the school to the stables, sweeping them out and then milking the cows. Several years after he had graduated, I happened to be on the same train with him going East and chatted with him. He told me: 'When I first came to Interlaken, it was a terrible experience, because when I was at home, before I went into the barn to mount my pony, an Indian had to sweep the floor, so that no straw was in my path, and then he took down a silver bridle, saddled the horse and I climbed up and he put the reins in my hand. Here at Interlaken, I had to sweep out the manure, and the only thing I could think of was that nobody in Venezuela will ever know that I had to do that kind of work.' But then he said to me: 'That was the only conso-



lation I had, then, but as I went on in school and learned to do all kinds of work that I never would have learned at home, I began to realize how valuable the experience was, and now I'm very glad that I had it.

Dr. Rumely and his staff arranged for the students to make visits to local industries and nearby cities. The school catalogue included a composition written by a ten year-old after he had visited the U.S. Steel Corporation plant at Gary, Indiana. Rumely wrote:

He had been told to write about his experiences in that wonderful new city. He chose for his subject the thing that he saw which interested him the most: 'First, I was brown earth buried in a mountain near Lake Superior. Then men came in great boats and called me iron ore and dug me out, and sailed away with me over the blue waves to Gary. With big shovels on wire ropes they hurried and lifted me out of the boat and dumped me on a pile on the land. They put me in towers with coke, and I flowed like water. They cast me into blocks, five feet long and two feet thick, and then rolled me between iron rollers, until I got thinner and thinner. At last I was long and thin like a rail, and then they cut me into seven pieces, and ran trains over me.

Nothing could illustrate better than that passage, the underlying progressive and optimistic spirit which characterized Interlaken School. But far more than that, this spirit was also characteristic of the age. America was on the move; a new day was dawning for humanity; science and technology would become the servants of man. In discussing the proposed branch school in Germany, Rumely expressed this idea even more passionately:

The age of travel and transportation has come. Commerce, science and the arts have become international. Our education, by imparting sympathy and understanding for other peoples, must prepare for a time when: The war drum throbs no longer and the battle flags are furled In the Parliament of Man, the Federation of the World.

Through Interlaken, Rumely met and in 1910 married Fanny Scott, one of the teachers at the school. Their long association was not only a close and loving one, but they recorded their views and opinions on all matters in their letters to one another. Fanny Scott Rumely was a formidable woman in her own right, a graduate of Smith College in an age when few women attended university; she was a sensitive writer and recorded her impression of their life together in her letters to her husband and to other members of her family and friends. Fanny Scott Rumely recounted a discussion she had with her cousin Isabel Niles, when she was torn by indecision about whether or not to marry Edward. She wrote: "I poured forth to her everything about Edward, the appeal and the warnings. She said: 'I think he sounds perfectly delightful. Our old New England blood needs an infusion from sturdy, intelligent, new stock. You will have a very interesting life with him and will have strong, active, intelligent, children.'"

She related a meeting she had with Isabel Niles eight years later after the New York *Evening Mail* crisis broke. Fanny Scott Rumely wrote that her cousin asked her: "'Do you think I gave you the wrong advice?' I looked at her in perfect astonishment. You gave me the best advice anyone ever gave me in my life."

During this same period, Edward Rumely, moved up in his family business, assuming the presidency in 1913. He had previously consolidated several smaller tractor, thresher and harvester companies into the Advance Rumely Company. Under his aggressive leadership the business of the company boomed particularly with the opening of the Canadian prairie provinces. In four years the sales of the company increased from two hundred and fifty-seven thousand dollars to five million,

five hundred thousand dollars. Rumely pursued an aggressive sales policy, expanding sales into Canada and looking further afield to Russia and Argentina. In 1912, he sent his brother, Leo, to Russia to negotiate for the sale of tractors and other machinery.

Along with the other major manufacturers of agricultural equipment Rumely soon realized that the industry faced peculiar credit problems, due to the seasonal flow of capital to farmers. Rumely worked out a plan with John D. Larkin of Buffalo, Michigan, Jim Patten, the 'Wheat King', from Chicago (the major dealer on the Chicago Grain Board during this period and the father of one of Rumely's students at Interlaken School), and the Solomon Company of New York to provide credit for farmers. The Agricultural Credit Corporation loaned money to farmers to enable them to make purchases of agricultural machinery from the Advance Rumely Company, International Harvester and other manufacturers. The plan worked reasonably well until the recession of 1913 when an unfavorable money market caused the venture to fail. Rumely was to return to a similar scheme during the twenties. The advent of the Great Depression caused the collapse of that plan, but the general idea remained viable and was adapted later by both banks and the large farm implement manufacturers to provide easier credit for farmers enabling them to make purchases of expensive farm machinery.

The genesis of Rumely's plan to provide easier credit for farmers came from his observation of the Raiffeisen Credit Associations in Germany. These were cooperatives in which groups of farmers banded together and pledged credit for fertilizer, livestock and other farm needs, at low rates of interest. In 1918, Rumely wrote that: "Underneath this (structure) there



were banking acts by which the credit of a large number of land owners was pooled and a prime security created that would attract capital to agriculture at rates of interest lower than the German government itself paid on its bonds." Long before the Federal Farm Loan Act was passed in 1916, Rumely was advocating the idea of a Federally supported effort to provide easier credit to farmers. He pointed out the anomaly "of drawing from agricultural centers the capital in reserve centers like Minneapolis and redepositing this money in Chicago, only to have this money redeposited in New York when capital was so badly needed to develop the farming operations of a state like North Dakota." As with many of his ideas he was once again well ahead of his times, and his ambition outran both his own ability and the limited vision of the men with whom he worked.

Rumely continued his interest in Germany. He was not only attracted to Germany by blood and education, but believed that the Germans had found the right combination of government, business, labor and personal involvement necessary to meet the demands of a modernizing and urbanizing society. He expressed these sentiments to his mentor Professor Von Schulze Geavernitz:

You Germans have the philosophy and the habits that will enable you to teach this lesson. You have solved the problems of social and commercial organization better than others. You have applied the sciences to industry and agriculture. These and many other things. . . You have great lessons that the world needs. It is my hope—I could say my earnest prayer—that all may go well with the German people.

In 1910 Rumely undertook to have the liberal faction in Germany create a "German News Bureau" which

would offer Americans a more accurate picture of that nation than the Americans were getting through their newspapers. In a letter to Frederick Nauman of *Die Frankfurter Zeitung*, he spelled out those features of German life which he felt would interest the American public. Rumely was closely attuned to the 'progressive mood' then sweeping the country and advised the Germans to heed this force and take advantage of it. He commended the efficiency and honesty of German municipal government, as opposed to the general American practices. He pointed out that social insurance laws providing for sickness, old age and death benefits should serve as a model for America. He praised the application of the scientific method to factory production and above all, the German educational system as a solution to some of America's most urgent problems. He also pointed out that Germany "has displayed an insight into the problem of soil conservation, of which we Americans talk so much, that goes far deeper than the mere restrictive legislation that our leaders have thought of up to the present time."

He also castigated the blatant propaganda efforts of the existing agencies of information about Germany; he wrote that "... they don't have the idea, or the knowledge of American publicity methods. . . They do not see the real vital things in German life, that would be of great value to our people, and instead of giving such matter, they resort to direct chauvinistic propaganda. That won't carry." He urged his German friends to cooperate with him in sending a good German newspaperman to America. He wanted the cultural message of the new Germany brought to the attention of the American people. He wrote Professor Gaevernitz, that this cultural message,

if brought home to the American people would do more than anything else to bring about a better understanding

between America and Germany, help offset the conscious effort of English influence that is prejudicing the American mind in favor of England. I am seeking the services of someone to cooperate with me by writing articles, furnishing data and political information to statesmen and men in public life; by cooperating with the staff of various magazines with which I am in touch, to enable them to get, without undue effort, reliable information about things German.

In 1911 Gaevernitz and Nauman, did send over a young man to work with Rumely in bettering Germany's image with progressive editors and newspapermen. Rumely wrote letters of introduction for Frederick Zollman to a number of newspapers such as *LaFollett's Magazine*, but he was not enthusiastic about Zollman and his presentiments turned out to be correct for Zollman failed to accomplish his mission. He eventually settled in America abandoning completely the aims for which he had been sent to the United States. Rumely had accurately analyzed the temper of American public opinion; he also knew of the power of the large German-American population centered in the Middle West. He was convinced that Germany was steadily losing ground in the battle for public opinion with Great Britain. He had analyzed the situation correctly, but was unable to turn the tide of opinion. His efforts were frustrated not only by the inadequacy of Frederick Zollman, but by the increasing bellicosity and irresponsibility of Kaiser Wilhelm and other German leaders. His efforts to present a different vision of the 'New Germany' came to naught and were used later by the Federal government to indicate his complicity with the Imperial German government during the First World War. Rumely's Germany had little to do with the Kaiser and his preoccupation with military posturing, but it had a great deal to do



with Rumely's credulity and inability to see the militarist side of Bismarckian Germany.

In 1912, Rumely became deeply involved in the Progressive Political Party. It is little wonder, given his character and temperament that he would be attracted to Theodore Roosevelt. In 1912, he attended the Republican Convention with S.S. McClure, the noted American journalist, who had sent his adopted son, Enrico, to Interlaken School. This was a fortuitous choice of companions, for McClure was also a long time admirer of T.R. They watched in dismay as the Republican Party steam-rolled the renomination of President Taft. When the progressive Republicans left the convention to hold their own meeting, Rumely attended that assembly as well. While there he renewed his acquaintance with Senator Albert Beveridge, of Indiana. Later in the year he worked closely with Beveridge and the Indiana Progressive State Committee, contributing more than \$5,000 to the state and national effort.

In June of 1912, Rumely wrote Gifford Pinchot discussing his rationale for joining the Progressive Party. His letter outlined a program for a rejuvenated and re-structured Republican Party. He argued that the United States should follow the example of Germany and:

must develop and strengthen our national government so that it can regulate the activities of large corporation and hold them within proper bounds. The Germans do not fear a large corporation as our people do the trusts, because they have a strong central government responsive to the interests of the people, and strong enough to hold any corporation in check. . . . The Republican Party must now rise above the ideal of the corporation to that of the national state, for the time of enlarged State activity is at hand. As a general thing, what the individual can do, should not

be delegated to the State, and this principle is violated by the Socialists promiscuous demand for State activity. There are many things, however, that must be done by the State, and unless a Progressive Party is willing to accept this fact, the people will have no recourse but socialism.

Rumely also worked for the Progressive Party on the state and local level sending out many letters to businessmen, medical doctors and others on behalf of the party and its candidates. Even after the defeat at the polls in November, Rumely continued to work for Progressive ideals. He carried on his correspondence with Beveridge and others. Having purchased the New York *Evening Mail* in 1915, his first act was to ring Theodore Roosevelt at his home in Oyster Bay and tell him that the *Mail* was at his disposal.

In addition to all these activities, Rumely also threw himself into the national controversy over vocational education then raging among educators and laymen. Through this period he corresponded with Magnus Alexander of the General Electric Corporation and later of the National Industrial Relations Conference Board. Rumely wrote a pamphlet entitled "The Dearth of Skilled Labor, Our National Problem and the Interlaken School Movement," which linked Interlaken School with the growing movement for a national industrial and vocational educational policy. At one point, he tried unsuccessfully to merge Valparaiso Normal College (now Valparaiso University) with Interlaken School for training vocational teachers.

By 1913, Edward Rumely had made a success of every venture he had undertaken. His school was thriving and was attracting national attention; the *Scientific American* called it "The Daniel Boone Idea in American Education." The Advance Rumely Company had ab-

sorbed a number of competitors and seemed poised on the verge of even greater successes. The Agricultural Bond and Credit Corporation which Rumely hoped to use as a vehicle to provide farmers with easier and more reasonable credit had become a reality. His efforts on behalf of the Progressive Party while not successful in themselves, had nonetheless, brought him into personal contact with some of the most influential men in American public life. His marriage to Miss Fanny Scott was a great success. Everything seemed to be going his way, and yet, with all this there were indications of danger. He was overextended financially and taxing himself physically.

Over the course of the next four years from 1914 to 1918, Edward Rumely reached a pinnacle of achievement which he would never attain again. This four year period began and ended under a cloud, however. In late 1913, the Advance Rumely Company ran into serious financial troubles and Edward Rumely was forced to resign. In July of 1918, Rumely was accused of having concealed the use of Imperial German funds in the purchase of the New York *Evening Mail* and was subjected to a trial which would result not only in the loss of his newspaper, and the destruction of Interlaken School, but also the tarnishing of his reputation with the American public.

As a result of the Recession of 1913, Rumely was forced out as president of the Advance Rumely Company. For a time, he assumed full control of Interlaken School, but the outbreak of the First World War in August of 1914 was to take him away from his beloved school and alter his life forever. When the war began, Rumely publicly avowed his support for Germany, going so far as to write the *Chicago Tribune* commending the



action of his old friend Professor Von Schulze Gaevernitz in joining the ranks of the German Army as a common soldier. He had many conversations with his friends trying to defend Germany's actions. One of these conversations was with a young journalist, Frank Stockbridge, a writer for *Popular Mechanics*, who had just concluded a series of articles on Interlaken School. Stockbridge later was to play a leading role in the slandering of Rumely's character, but, this lay in the future. In 1914, he wrote to Rumely after their conversation expressing disagreement with Rumely's support of Germany stating that: "I find that my belief that the German ideal is directly opposed at almost every point to the traditions and ideals of individual liberty on which this government is based, is shared by almost everyone with whom I have talked."

In October of 1914, rumors reached LaPorte of the possibility of securing large contracts for the sale of agricultural equipment to the belligerent nations. Since the American economy was in a depressed state, Rumely saw in this situation a great opportunity to recoup his own and his company's finances. He set off for New York with the blessing of his company's new administrators to see what success he could achieve. This venture led him to deal with the representatives of Germany, since that country was not only desperately anxious to purchase farm equipment but also dear to Rumely's own heart. Rumely contacted Dr. H.F. Albert, who later became the chief purchasing agent for the Central Powers in the United States. These negotiations are amply recorded in his correspondence and papers and seem to have concerned themselves entirely with what Rumely was later to claim they had been, i.e., the sale of U.S. farm machinery to Germany. In 1918, however, the U.S. government

claimed that these discussions were the prelude to German financing of the *Evening Mail*.

All of Rumely's intricate arrangements with Albert and Bernard Dernberg, who later was placed in charge of Germany's propaganda effort in the United States, foundered on the effective British naval blockade of the sea lanes. His efforts to sell tractors to Germany fell through, as did his attempts to sell tractors to the neutral powers in Europe. During the Christmas season, Rumely returned to the Middle West and tried to make arrangements to sell American wheat to Germany through the good offices of his friend, Jim Patten, but these efforts failed as well.

Following these unsuccessful ventures, Rumely next embarked upon a mission which was to lead him to disaster. His letters and autobiography give ample coverage of this project. One of the key figures in this episode was S.S. McClure. When McClure was forced out of publishing in 1912, he wrote to Rumely suggesting that they go into publishing together at some future date. Nothing came of this suggestion until 1915 when Rumely went to New York after spending Christmas with his family in LaPorte. There Rumely found McClure working for Frank Munsey on the New York *Press*. They talked and revived their idea of a joint publishing venture. Their efforts to buy the *Press* fell through because of Munsey's intransigence, so they turned instead to consideration of the purchase of the New York *Evening Mail*. Rumely had located some additional capital of which he had not been aware and was in a position to raise the remaining funds to purchase the newspaper. Like many other German-Americans, and a large number of businessmen, he was annoyed at the weak and ineffectual position which the United States had taken toward the British blockade. His

strongly pro-German feelings made him especially sensitive to the pro-allied and anti-Central powers stance of many major newspapers in the country. He felt that he could turn a good business deal and make some money, as well as performing a public service by owning and editing a non-biased, progressive newspaper.

Agreement was reached in May of 1915 to form the S.S. McClure Newspaper Syndicate and to purchase the *Evening Mail*. Rumely had hoped to interest American businessmen who had been hurt by the British blockade, as well as German-Americans dissatisfied with the biased journalism of many American newspapers. His efforts to enlist financial assistance from the Standard Oil Company failed, however, for several reasons, one of them being the involvement of McClure with the project. That company objected to financing any operation of McClure's, since they bore harsh memories of the articles Ida Tarbell had written, at McClure's bidding, about the Standard Oil Company. In order to interest wealthy German-Americans in his project, Rumely turned to the Anhauser Busch family and Herman Sielcken, the well known 'coffee king,' for financing. Rumely made approaches through Charles Nagle, former Secretary of Commerce under Taft, to the Busch family. Nagel approved of the idea and told Rumely that he would recommend his scheme to Mrs. Busch who was then resident in Germany. Through the good offices of his friends in Switzerland, Rumely contacted Professor Von Schulze Gaevernitz who, in turn, contacted Herman Sielcken, also residing in Germany. Many weeks after beginning these negotiations, Rumely heard through Dr. Albert that the German Embassy had been instructed to transmit funds on Rumely's behalf from Sielcken and an associate. Albert laid down the condition that these funds



were to be regarded as a loan and that Sielcken's name not to be associated with the venture. Although he did not like these conditions, Rumely agreed to them since he believed that Sielcken was worried that his international interests might be jeopardized if the British government found him supporting a 'pro-German newspaper' in America.

None of this was of much consequence in 1915, but in 1918, after the U.S. had entered the war against Germany, all these semi-secret and complicated moves appeared sinister to agents of the Justice Department. The presence of Dr. Albert, Germany's chief propaganda agent, working closely with Rumely, but claiming to represent the interests of Sielcken and another un-named party gave the matter a sinister air. It is little wonder that the government investigators felt that they were on the trail of a devious German attempt to subvert American public opinion through a major New York newspaper. It did not help matters that the law firm representing Sielcken's interests was shown later to have acted for the German embassy on various matters.

Rumely's purchase of the *Mail* was finalized on June 1, 1915. One of his first acts was to inform Theodore Roosevelt that the paper was at his disposal. This was hardly an auspicious beginning for an agent, conscious or merely being naive, of the Imperial German government. T.R. was already an ardent opponent of Germany and was calling for America to arm itself for the inevitable war which would come between the United States and the Central Powers. It seems very hard to reconcile Roosevelt's continued involvement with Rumely and the charge that Rumely was either acting as an agent, or being used by Germany.

Rumely's offer to Theodore Roosevelt was accepted and this brought him back into direct contact with the hero of his youth. During the period from June, 1915 to July, 1918 Rumely worked for Roosevelt on a number of projects. Among other things he prepared memoranda for T.R. which Roosevelt apparently used in various speeches and articles; these memoranda revealed that one child out of every ten in New York City was growing up malnourished and called for a city-wide program of education and milk distribution. When Roosevelt did not believe that this matter was a serious problem in the city, Rumely took him on a tour of the most depressed areas. Afterwards Roosevelt came out strongly in support of the programs which Rumely had recommended. As time passed the memoranda dealt more and more with war preparedness and related themes.

Edward Rumely wrote more than twenty memoranda in all for Roosevelt which T.R. used in one form or another in his own writings. One of the topics on which Rumely worked was the cooperative movement among farmers as an alternative to socialism. He also helped draft Roosevelt's famous speech which was given in St. Louis in 1916 in which T.R. denounced the German-American Alliance as both 'anti-American' and having committed 'moral treason to our country.' Rumely joined with Gifford Pinchot in buying space in the *Chicago Record-Herald* and the *Chicago Tribune* to denounce the German-American Alliance and praise Roosevelt. This was but one of the many facets of Rumely's often contradictory nature. Roosevelt must have known that Rumely had been pro-German at the beginning of the war, yet he felt that Rumely was working furiously to defend him against the attempts of some German-Americans to undermine his political power.

This may account for the statement Roosevelt made in a letter to Charles Evans Hughes the Republican candidate for president in 1916, commending Rumely as “one of the hyphenated Americans of German descent, who is American through and through. He is an expert in the processes, particularly of the industrial processes, which have given the Germanic Empire its extraordinary strength; and he has been particularly useful to me in connection with matters looking to a better handling of American industrial and social life.”

One of the many people who worked for Rumely on the *Evening Mail* was John Reed, a feature writer for the paper. Rumely reported in his autobiography that Reed was regarded with suspicion by the editors of the paper because of his radical views, but that they came to respect him because of his ability and flair for writing. When the revolution broke out in Russia in 1917, Reed received permission to go there with Leo Trotsky. They travelled together to Russia via Sweden. After Reed arrived in Russia and had spent some time there he cabled back a dispatch which summarized what he would later publish as *The Ten Days That Shook The World*. The American censors would not release the cable, however, though the *Evening Mail* had to pay a thousand dollar cable bill. There is no direct correspondence between Reed and Rumely, though there is a lengthy section on Reed in Rumely's autobiography.

Two other writers who later became enamored of the Communist world also worked on the *Mail*: Rheta Childe Dorr and Anna Louis Strong. Dorr worked for Rumely as a war correspondent and for other American newspapers in Europe, 1917-1921. From 1921 to 1923 she was a foreign correspondent based in Prague and from 1923 on, she travelled in and wrote articles on the



Soviet Union. Her major forte before this had been articles on the women's movement of the early twentieth century. She corresponded with Rumely throughout the twenties and some of her articles and other writings are preserved in his papers. Like Reed and Dorr, Anna Louis Strong was attracted to the Communist political system and spent many years working first in Russia and later China. She went to China in the thirties where she became an ardent partisan of the Communists. She came to know Rumely while working as a reporter on the *Evening Mail*; following the First World War she returned to the States and settled in Seattle. Forced off the Seattle School Board because of her radical political sympathies, she became a labor correspondent and then a foreign correspondent for various American newspapers. She was sent by the American Friends Service Committee to Poland and then to Russia where she worked as a correspondent for Hearst International. In 1924 she published *The First Time in History: Two Years of Russia's New Life*, a sympathetic account of the birth of the Soviet state. Strong corresponded with Rumely throughout the twenties seeking his help in presenting a better image of the Soviet Union. She later became an apologist for both the Soviet and the Chinese Communist regimes.

One of the many issues which *The Evening Mail* advocated under Rumely's direction was support for the 'Gary School Plan' of William Wirt. The plan, also called the 'Platoon Plan,' recommended maximum use of the school facilities year round. The adoption of the Gary Plan became a major issue of the New York City mayoralty campaign between Mitchell, who backed the plan and Hylan, supported by the regular Democratic Tammany organization, who opposed it. Rumely also persuaded Theodore Roosevelt to back this system, arrang-

ing for T.R. to visit various schools and then meet with the press to express his support for the idea. Fearful that some fanatic would attack Roosevelt while he was visiting some of the rougher sections of the city Rumely carried a pistol. When the *Evening Mail* case broke in 1918, some reporters remembering that Rumely had carried a pistol with him at times, put out the story that he was always heavily armed. This was then thought to be further evidence of his complicity in a German plot to subvert American newspapers.

When America entered the war in 1917, a martial spirit swept over the country engulfing Edward Rumely, The *Evening Mail* and Interlaken School. Like many progressives, Rumely naively thought that the war, however unpalatable it might be would be a means of drawing the nation together and purifying it. On New Years Day in 1915, Rumely had written his wife about a dinner party he had attended the night before at which a number of Germans, as well as German-Americans had been present. Among the guests was the noted German actor Emmanuel Reicher who had given a toast that evening which had profoundly moved Rumely and the other guests. Rumely wrote his wife that Reicher's toast moved all the guests to silence for several minutes after it had been given: he said: " 'We met a year ago and looked forward to a happy year, but instead came this time filled with horror. And havoc has broken upon us—A new Dawn must come out of all this struggle and loss. We must build a better human life.' " Rumely closed his letter to his wife with these words from Schiller:

Es ändert sich die Zeit  
das alte Sturtz  
Und aus de Ruinen-  
bluht neues Leben

By 1918, Edward Rumely appeared to have recovered from his problems of a few years earlier; the *Evening Mail* was steadily gaining influence under his guidance. Theodore Roosevelt acknowledged his help particularly in the area of the cooperative movement and as a knowledgeable expert on German social and industrial democracy. But then a small cloud appeared on his personal horizon which would prove to be a hurricane. The Alien Property Custodian launched an investigation of the *Evening Mail* claiming that the note which Rumely claimed he owed to Herman Sielcken was really owed to the Imperial German Government. The storm broke over his head on July 8th, 1918; from that date until January of 1925, most of his time was devoted to the controversy over the *Evening Mail*. He was to spend two of those years preparing material for his legal defence; Rumely was to call that task—"threshing the chaff." He was arrested on July 8th on charges of having failed to report alien funds in the purchase of his newspaper. He did not come to trial until December of 1920. During that time his public reputation was blackened, his equity in the paper was wiped out, and Interlaken School was forced to close. In 1918 he had been a moderately wealthy man; by 1920 he was forced to live under the shadow of an indebtedness from which he was never able to free himself.

One legacy of the *Evening Mail* controversy was the totally unfounded charge that Rumely had collaborated with the reactionary forces of Imperial Germany against the interests of his own homeland. During the fierce debate over 'Court Packing', and other efforts of Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman, critics of Rumely would often refer to this controversy assuming that all the charges against Rumely were true. Typical of this



attack was the speech made by Congressman Wright Patman in August, 1950:

Mr. Speaker, I rise to warn the American people and the Congress of the United States about a man, an evil man and an evil institution which he directs. . . You may discount, should your conscience permit, all of his facistic activities since the formulation of his committee of black reaction, but you cannot discount the pertinent fact that this man was convicted of trading with the enemy of the United States. Some of you may say, 'Well, he got a presidential pardon from Coolidge', but that does not wipe the record clean. A thousand pardons cannot erase the fact that this subversive character who deserves the affection and support of no man really interested in the welfare of this nation, was charged, tried, and convicted of trading with the enemy, even though his case went to the highest court of the land.

This was the legacy with which Rumely lived and died. His old friend, S. S. McClure told his wife with awful bluntness on the day of his conviction that Rumely would never recover from the adverse verdict. In many respects, McClure was correct. What is amazing is that Rumely went on to make a number of further contributions to his country, in spite of this burden.

After his arrest, Rumely was held incommunicado in the infamous Tombs in New York City until the government had time to launch a press campaign of extraordinary viciousness against him. All the major newspapers, even the staid and usually fair New York *Times* attacked Rumely and linked him to a massive German plot to subvert public opinion in the United States. The *Times* carried a lead article two days after Rumely's arrest to that effect: "Kaiser Set Aside 30,000,000 for Propaganda-Purchase of the *Evening Mail* said To Have Been Only Part of the Plan—Admiral Von Tirpitz's Ideas—Pro-German Campaign Here Arranged Before

the Lusitania Was Sunk—More Arrests Likely.” Far more damaging to Rumely’s name, however was a series of articles written by Frank Stockbridge. Stockbridge had first known Rumely before the war and then had been invited by him to work on the *Evening Mail*. In January of 1917, Rumely had forced the resignation of Stockbridge after being informed by his editors that Stockbridge had been abusing his position on the financial staff of the paper to enrich himself. For whatever reasons, Stockbridge wrote a series of devastating stories about Rumely, which destroyed what little reputation he had left.

A few of the headlines give the tenor of the attack: “Rumely’s Hun Kultur Exposed in Dream to Found Junker Caste With Sons of Noted Americans-Interlaken School First Step By Owner of the Mail to Train Youths to Manage Great Estates and Lay the Foundation for Duplicating the German Feudal System in the United States;” “Rumely Tossed Millions Away—Wrecked Great Tractor Plant With Ideas Made in Germany—All His Operations Were Governed by Teutonic Influence and Found to Be Inapplicable in America;” “Rumely, Confidant of High Huns, Aware of War Secrets in 1914 as He Laid Plot For Propaganda—Facts Only Known To Teutons Close to Command Bared By Owner of the *Evening Mail* As He Sought To Create News Service and Turn Favor of Public Opinion From Allies to Germany.”

It is little wonder that many of his former friends and associates deserted him. He was forced to resign from the Union League Club of Chicago after Stockbridge claimed that Rumely had laid plans there to subvert American public opinion. The *Evening Mail* was taken out of his control and even S. S. McClure, whom Rumely had commissioned to do a series of articles about

his round the world tour of 1917-1918 tried to put distance between himself and his former associate. Life long friends deserted Edward Rumely and his family and refused to recognize them when they passed them on the streets. One indication of the passions aroused by this case is shown over the incident involving the gramophone collection which had once belonged to Interlaken School. After the school was closed, Rumely sent the records to the American Legion Post in LaPorte as a free gift. The records were not only returned with a letter stating that they would accept no gifts from Edward Rumely, but all the records had been broken before they were returned.

The storm clouds did not lift even after the jury reached its verdict of guilty for Rumely and his two co-defendants. Rumely's case had collapsed when Mrs. Herman Sielcken testified that her husband had given no money to Rumely; she was joined in this statement by Mrs. Busch who had lately returned to the United States from Germany. The jury found that Rumely and his two lawyers had withheld information regarding the part-German ownership of the *Evening Mail*, but made a strong plea for mercy to the judge. The Judge gave the three defendants one year each in a federal prison. While his weeping wife had to be led from the courtroom, Rumely stood up and denounced the verdict: "Accept this verdict I cannot, for before the tribunal of my own conscience, I am innocent. . . If, my energies spent, this remains a legally recorded verdict, I must and will submit to the law of my land; acquiesce, I never can."

In September of 1918 Edward Rumely had returned for the last time to Interlaken School, then being converted into an army training camp. The letter he



wrote his wife on the train going back to New York conveys the anguish of that period of his life:

My dear Fanny, I looked at you and the children as this mad train took me away from you. You grew smaller and smaller in the distance, they holding your hands, and I gazing back. Again I am away and alone. Tears that I could not suppress filled my eyes. Another twenty-four hours with you- and then- and so little said, with so much to say. I could hardly have borne yesterday afternoon and night without you. Interlaken, the dream of my youth is ended; at the door of the dining hall, I said goodbye. It gave me you-the greatest good of my life. Once it was the medium through which I expressed myself; its pictures; its beauty; its slopes and trails; its rugged buildings—all were but symbols of a dream of a better human life that comes along and through them.

These days, you are gathering as little keepsakes, the petals and leaves of the rose. I am satisfied, because I believe that Interlaken was fertile and has scattered its seeds.

To me, it gave you, and to us both, the children to share. They will be the new medium through which can come the next great expression.

I gladly accept the fire of this present experience, if it will burn out the dross and leave me purified for them and for you. I grieve, however, because of the pain and sorrow that comes to you.

I am at peace now over the School; glad that if it was to end, it could end so well, by merging itself with our national purpose. Interlaken took root when my life was virgin-the faith-the enthusiasm of a boy's soul, untouched by experience went into it to give it strength. When I build again, not faith, and the snow white flame of early youth, but wisdom and the experience that come from a knowledge of *good and evil must guide me*.

You were tired this morning; you did not know how much you had given me as your head nestled in my side. As I looked at the dining Hall while parting from Interlaken, a conflict started that grew to a terror in the night before I

had mastered it. That is why I wanted you, you gave me of yourself without knowing it. And then gradually came calm., Soon I shall be ready to build anew, but this time, you and the children must be the center. I love you.

For six long years Edward Rumely struggled to vindicate himself. Shortly after the trial, information was released by Charles Nagle, attorney for Mrs. Busch which might have altered the verdict had it been released earlier. Nagle reported that his client, Mrs. Busch had indeed received information about the *Evening Mail* from Mr. Herman Sielcken while both of them had been resident in Germany. In spite of that information and a further complaint from Rumely and his co-defendants that highly prejudicial and previously excluded depositions had been sent to the jury when they were deliberating their verdict, the Court of Appeals turned down their appeal in 1923. The Supreme Court refused a petition for a *certiorari* and an appeal for executive clemency to the President was also denied in 1924, though President Coolidge did commute the sentences to one year, rather than letting stand the previous sentence of a year and a day. This allowed Rumely and his lawyers to serve in a local prison in New York, rather than going to the federal penitentiary in Georgia.

Finally when all legal recourse had been tried and had failed, Edward Rumely and his two co-defendants in the *Evening Mail* case, Walter Kaufman and the blind Norvin Lindheim, surrendered themselves to the Federal Marshal in New York City. They were taken from the city to the Rochester County Penitentiary near White Plains to begin their sentence for one year. Once in prison, Rumely accepted his punishment with good grace and threw himself into his work. He was assigned a place at the chicken farm where he immediately set about

performing experiments with regular feed mixed with yeast products similar to those produced by his Vitamin Foods Company. Rumely and his wife exchanged letters daily during this period and their correspondence reflects their courage and the strain under which both of them were living. Not only did Rumely work hard at the chicken farm on his experiments, but he took time to read and work with his fellow prisoners. He wrote his wife that: "Tonight, I read Tolstoy's Long Exile.' and Gorki's 'One Autumn Night' to the boys, all of whom are under twenty one- They are an interesting lot. My impression is that something could be done with them; if the place were equipped for trades training. After I read the two stories, I had them tell me a little about their schooling, work, and interest for the future. Strange how Gorki and Tolstoy fascinate, when well read."

While Rumely was in prison, powerful friends were working to clear his name. Charles Nagel was joined by Senator Borah and Henry Ford in making an appeal to the president on Rumely's behalf. Gutsom Borglum, the noted sculptor and great friend of both Rumely and Coolidge expressed his annoyance at his inability to clear Rumley's name. Arthur Garfield Hays, the successful defender of many unpopular causes also joined in the chorus demanding justice for Edward Rumely. Years later, in his autobiography, Rumely wrote that, in addition to all this action, Henry Ford had threatened to close all his automobile plants, keeping them closed while he and Mrs. Ford stayed in a house opposite the prison. For whatever reasons, President Coolidge issued Rumely and the two lawyers a full and complete pardon in January of 1925. Predictably Rumely re-affirmed his innocence and protested having to accept even a pardon.



Rumely was never able to remove the stain on his character, but a later action by Judge Cardozo, later Justice of the United States Supreme Court, ordering an investigation into the *Evening Mail* trial in order to start proceedings to re-admit Rumely's lawyers to the State Bar of New York, was important. He wrote that:

There is grave doubt whether there is any evidence of the guilt of these petitioners and doubt still graver whether the evidence, if any, is strong enough to bring persuasion that justice has been done.

Though bereft of much of his personal fortune by this time, Rumely continued to pursue his various interests and public minded activities. Even before the *Evening Mail* case had been settled by presidential pardon, Rumely moved into an entirely new area—that of vitamin foods. He worked with Eugene Christian, Robert McDowell Allen and Lewis B. Allyn to form the Vitamin Food Company. The company introduced vitamin enriched food products into the United States, including 'Vegex'—a yeast product somewhat similar to the British 'Marmite.' Vitamins and their role in health were not widely accepted then either by the medical profession or the general public. The work which Rumely did in helping to organize the company and publicize its products was a pioneer effort in the field of scientific nutrition. Rumely not only pushed the development of Vegex in various forms, including candy, but developed promotional and advertising campaigns to spread interest and urge consumption of his product. His papers contain a great deal of interesting material on this phase of the vitamin food industry. Rumely organized a nationwide contest for Vegex recipes and publicized his product to the medical profession and to the general public. As with

many of his ventures, one of the major problems he faced was being a full generation ahead of his times; in this case, he attempted to introduce a nutritious vitamin food product to an age which hardly accepted the concept of vitamins, let alone of vitamin candy, or food. He remained with the Vitamin Food Company as their Executive Secretary until 1930 when he went out to Chicago to try and save the foundering Agricultural Bond and Credit Corporation.

During this same period Rumely revived his relationship with Professor Hugo Junkers, the German engine and aviation designer. He had an old association with Junkers which had begun in late 1914. Rumely was so impressed by the Junkers diesel engine that he acquired the exclusive patent rights for the Western hemisphere. The engine was not yet ready for commercial development so Rumely engaged Philip Scott, a Cornell graduate to work on the motor. Since the First World War made communication with Junkers impossible, further development of the engine became very difficult. When America entered the war in 1917, Rumely turned over the records of the Super Diesel Corporation to the War Department. By the time the war ended and the rights were returned to Rumely, the work of other designers had superceded the Junkers diesel, though Super Diesel carried on into the 1930s developing numerous patents, all of which are recorded in Rumely's papers.

In the twenties Rumely's association with Hugo Junkers entered a new phase. Travelling in Germany in 1927, Rumely happened to be visiting in Berlin when the first East-West flight across the Atlantic was made by a Junkers airplane. Rumely spent some time with Professor Junkers immediately after this and promised to ar-

range a meeting with Henry Ford for the German designer. After the successful flight of the Junker's airplane, the *Bremen*, Rumely got the two men together in Detroit. Since he was friendly with both Ford and Junkers he was able to use successfully his good offices to arrange such a meeting. Though the meeting was a pleasant one, no business arrangement emerged from it, because Henry Ford refused to buy any patents, and Junkers, for his part would only sell them to Ford. Instead of developing a joint all-metal airplane, both men went their way. Shortly after this Ford brought out his Tri-Motor airplane.

Rumely's relationship with Henry Ford continued until Ford's death. He had come to know Ford through his work on the Oil-Pull Tractor and with the Advance Rumely Company. Ford was also fascinated by Interlaken School and paid several visits to it where he spoke to the students and visited the shops and classrooms. Rumely tried unsuccessfully to get Ford to invest money in Interlaken School; he did get Mrs. Ford to send her nephew there in 1914. After the war broke out, the two men corresponded regarding Ford's peace ship and his desire to enter politics in Michigan. When the *Evening Mail* scandal broke in July of 1918 Ford attempted, unsuccessfully, to intervene for Rumely with Woodrow Wilson. He was bitterly attacked in the press for his efforts to help his old friend. Later, Ford was instrumental in securing a presidential pardon from Calvin Coolidge.

When Ford came under bitter attack from the trade union movement in the late twenties and early thirties, Rumely corresponded frequently with him in an attempt to get Ford to go on the offensive by writing his autobiography. During that same period, Rumely frequently wrote to his friends in Germany urging them to adopt



Ford's methods and policies of mass production and higher wages for workers.

Harrington Emerson, the father of the science of efficiency, was a friend of both Edward and Fanny Rumely. Emerson had a nephew at Interlaken in 1910 and from that time he remained friends with the couple until his death. He carried on an extensive correspondence with both of them, but particularly with Fanny Scott Rumely.

Rumely came to know Gutson Borglum, the American sculptor and creator of the monumental Mount Rushmore sculpture, while he was editor and publisher of the *Evening Mail*. Their relationship deepened and lasted until Borglum died in 1942. Rumely was instrumental, as well, in sending young Isamu Noguchi to work as apprentice to Borglum in the early twenties. Borglum was extremely important in securing the presidential pardon for Rumely due to his personal relationship with the President. At one point, Rumely became involved with S. S. McClure in an attempt to raise funds for the completion of Mount Rushmore. After Borglum's death in 1942, Rumely was helpful to his widow in her efforts to salvage something of her husband's estate in Connecticut. Rumely also attempted to raise funds for a Borglum memorial garden in honor of his sculptor friend.

The contemporary Japanese-American sculptor, Isamu Noguchi, is one of the most well-known people who were helped by Edward Rumely in various stages of their careers. The impact which Rumely had on Noguchi is best summed up in a statement he made in a letter to the author: "I was most grateful for the remembrance of all that Dr. Rumely did for me in making me what I am, and indeed in rescuing me from a fate that, I would

rather not contemplate, I would no doubt have met otherwise." Noguchi was sent by his mother to Interlaken School in 1918 from Japan. In his autobiography, Rumely records the boy's arrival at Interlaken at the age of twelve, having come from Japan by way of Seattle, Washington. When he arrived at Interlaken, he asked to see Rumely: "'Where are your boys working? In the catalogue, I read that they work in the afternoon, and I have my tools.' He was given a board, sat down under a tree and began to carve a beautiful frieze around a border of seaweed, fishes, clams and shell.

"The American boys observed him and came running to me, saying: 'Gee Doc, the funniest kid that ever blew into this school is sitting out there under a tree. He pulls the chisel and pushes his saw— but, gee! Can that bird carve!'"

Noguchi was given a scholarship to attend the school by Dr. Rumely; when Interlaken was closed in the autumn of 1918, the Rumelys found a home for him in LaPorte. Later, Noguchi came to New York with Edward Rumely who got him an apprenticeship with Gutzon Borglum. That relationship did not work out, and Noguchi tried medical school before returning to sculpting. In 1927 Rumely helped Noguchi get one of the first Guggenheim Fellowships to study sculpture in Paris under Brancusi. There are a number of letters between Noguchi and Rumely during this period of life in which the artist discusses his art and his experiences in Paris. The two men remained very close to one another throughout the lifetime of Edward Rumely. One of the most touching documents in the Rumely papers is a copy of a telegram which Rumely sent to Noguchi before the artist set off on an extended trip to China and Japan:

You know my warm interest and friendship follow you wherever you go. While I believe that the star of your destiny should rest over the United States now, I know that it is high enough to lead and inspire you anywhere. You have a great work to do. A great life of leadership waits. Discipline yourself. Keep your best energies for your work. Live intensely. Taste all experience that life holds. Produce more. Come back soon. Your friends here await your return. I have loved you more than you know.

In 1953 Noguchi worked closely with Rumely in an effort to get a visa for his wife, Yoshike, to enter the United States. Shortly after the Second World War, Yoshike, a Japanese movie actress, had become involved with various left-wing organizations in Japan. This information came to light when she applied for a visa and was refused by the State Department. In spite of his well-publicized position against Communists and other leftist political organizations, Rumely went to bat for Noguchi and his wife in their efforts to come together in the United States.

In 1930, Kurt Hahn, the founder of Salem School (and later Gordonstoun School in Scotland), visited the United States in an effort to raise funds and generate interest in his school. He spent some time with Edward Rumely and was entertained by the Rumely family in Chicago. There was some correspondence between the two men during this period, including an unsuccessful effort by Rumely to raise funds for Salem School. Rumely was deeply impressed by Hahn and Salem School and felt that Kurt Hahn represented a more contemporary version of the 'New School Movement.' Hahn returned to Germany that year without having had much success in raising funds in the United States. When Rumely's daughter Mary Relief travelled in Europe a few years later she visited Hahn. After Hitler came to power



in Germany, the Nazis moved to take over Salem School and imprisoned Kurt Hahn. International pressure, particularly from Great Britain, forced Hahn's release, and he came to Great Britain where he established Gordonstoun School, modeled on Salem, in the north of Scotland. Gordonstoun was made famous as the school of Prince Philip and of Charles, the Prince of Wales.

Count Luckner became a very popular and dashing figure in the United States in the twenties. He first visited this country in 1927 and became acquainted with Edward Rumely. Luckner came to the attention of the American public because of his dramatic lectures on his own life, including his experiences in the great sea Battle of Jutland. He also had a sailing-training ship, *The Sea Devil*, which provided what would now be called an 'adventure-educational experience' for young men. Rumely saw Luckner as a means of bringing together Germany and America, as well as being fascinated by the man and intrigued by his work with youth. The two men corresponded about the sailing ship and the educational program as well as about a scheme which Luckner and others had devised to salvage gold and other precious metals from the ocean depths. Luckner had designed a submarine vessel to be built by the Krupp organization for this purpose. The Great Depression and the advent of Hitler's coming to power made this venture an impossibility after 1933.

In the mid-twenties Edward Rumely came to know D. C. Stephenson, through their mutual friend, Gutson Borglum. Stephenson was an intriguing minor figure in twentieth-century Indiana history. In the twenties he was head of the Ku Klux Klan in Indiana. Stephenson was found guilty of a bizarre murder of a young lady in the twenties and was imprisoned in the State Penitentiary in

Michigan City, Indiana. Throughout the thirties and forties he protested his innocence, and was finally pardoned in the forties. In the early twenties Stephenson claimed that he was moving the Klan along new and progressive paths. He was a good friend of Gutzon Borglum who introduced him to Rumely in 1923. In addition to the Klan activities, Stephenson worked for the coal mine operators in Indiana and also invested in S. S. McClure's magazine when it was revived briefly in the twenties. Even after Stephenson was found guilty and sentenced to life imprisonment, Rumely kept up a correspondence with him and visited him periodically. Rumely, Borglum and others worked unsuccessfully to secure a new trial for Stephenson; they felt that his trial had taken place in an atmosphere of great public excitement so that Stephenson had not received a fair trial. One of the most astonishing letters in the Rumely collection is one written on August 26, 1924, from Stephenson to Rumely in which Stephenson argued that the Ku Klux Klan of Indiana was really a modern version of the progressive movement. He also declared that the Indiana Klan was not affiliated with the national organization, but independent of outside control and influence. In 1924, Stephenson wrote an article for *McClure's Magazine* entitled "Roosevelt's Unfinished Program", in which he discussed the relation of his Klan activities and Theodore Roosevelt's progressive program.

With the advent of the Great Depression Rumely's life was to undergo another profound alteration. In 1925, Rumely had helped organize the Agricultural Bond and Credit Corporation (ABC) which was a more sophisticated version of the older Agricultural Credit Company of pre-war days. Men such as C. S. Funk, formerly General Manager of the International Harves-

ter Company, Steve Stratton, Vice President of the Commercial Acceptance Trust of Chicago, Magnus Alexander of the National Industrial Conference Board, Charles A. Nagel, and other joined with Rumely in this venture to provide farmers with cheaper and easier credit. The ABC grew during the mid-twenties, but was hard hit from 1929 on by the depression. Successful operation of the Corporation depended on ability to lend money to farmers at reasonable rates, which in turn depended on the ABC's ability to borrow money from banks. By the early thirties this had become an impossibility. In March, 1930, Rumely moved to Chicago to try to avert a collapse of the ABC. From late 1930 to 1932, the Rumely family faced one financial crisis after another and was forced to make substantial cuts in the style and standard of living. The two younger children, Niles and Scott, left their private schools and attended the LaPorte City Schools.

During this period, Rumely's correspondence details his increasingly desperate efforts to keep the ABC afloat. His correspondence with Edmund Stinnes, who was still living in Germany in 1932, is particularly interesting as it details the depressed condition of agriculture in the United States. Stinnes' letters to Rumely discuss the equally depressed and politically turbulent conditions prevailing in Germany during that same period.

In 1932, as the Depression worsened, Edward Rumely and various other individuals joined together in an organization which was to become the Committee for the Nation. Frank Venderlip, James Rand, Vincent Bendix, Irving Fisher and others, aided by the organizational genius of Edward A. Rumely, formed the Committee in an effort to find ways to ease the world's financial crisis. Professor G. E. Warren of Cornell University had



propounded the idea of a 'commodity dollar', i.e., the notion that the value of currency should be based not on gold, but on the value of basic commodities. The concept would have introduced a form of mild inflation in the American economy, thereby stimulating economic growth. Rumely was drawn into this group and provided the organization drive for its development, a mail campaign to promote the Committee's ideas to a national audience. The Committee felt that it had made some progress with President Franklin Roosevelt when he took the United States off the gold standard.

Rumely worked as Executive Secretary of the Committee for the Nation from 1932 to 1936. He corresponded extensively with various members and supporters of the Committee. Senators William E. Borah, Carter Glass and Burton K. Wheeler were among prominent political figures who worked with Rumely. Businessmen, General Wood, president of Sears Roebuck, Frank Venderlip, Jim Rand and the newspaper publisher Frank E. Gannet and others, joined in the work of the Committee and are represented by correspondence in the Rumely papers.

The English economist Sir Charles Morgan-Webb came to the United States to work with the Committee. Morgan-Webb was a supporter of Professor Warren's notions of the 'commodity dollar,' and a critic of those advocating rigid adherence to the gold standard. There are numerous articles and publications of Morgan-Webb in the Rumely collection, including the manuscript of his unpublished book, *The Paradox of Gold*. Morgan-Webb also worked with the National Committee to Uphold Constitutional Government and wrote various articles critical of New Deal policies. Among these are "The Road to Recovery: Is Pump Priming the Right

Way?", and "How Britain Settles Labor Disputes." During the Second World War, Rumely was instrumental in getting Morgan-Webb and his wife to come back to the United States to write and lecture on various economic matters. During and before this period Morgan-Webb and Rumely exchanged numerous letters in which the Englishman discussed the impact of the Second World War on Britain, detailing the enormous growth of state power in all aspects of British life.

The Committee for the Nation became increasingly critical of Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal shortly after Roosevelt's second term began. Rumely planned the publication and dissemination of numerous articles attacking New Deal policies and organizations, such as the National Recovery Administration and the Agricultural Adjustment Act. Many of the members and friends of the Committee for the Nation joined with Rumely in forming the National Committee to Uphold Constitutional Government in the spring of 1937. Before the Committee for the Nation was dissolved in late 1936, Rumely was responsible for the writing, publishing and distribution of dozens of books, pamphlets and articles supporting the Committee philosophy. He developed the techniques of direct mail campaigns and the purchase and distribution of books as a medium to spread ideas. This technique was to be used with success in his later work with the National Committee to Uphold Constitutional Government.

In the spring of 1937 Edward A. Rumely helped to organize the Constitutional Committee (as he referred to it) with the help of other individuals equally offended by what they perceived as the arrogant action of Franklin Roosevelt in introducing legislation to enlarge the U.S. Supreme Court. This action triggered an explosion of

outrage in the Congress and in the national press. Democrats and Republicans alike broke with Roosevelt over this issue; Carter Glass of Virginia was among the first Democrat to rebel, but he was soon joined by others. Amos Pinchot, the 'bull mooser', publicly broke with Roosevelt and attacked his 'court packing' scheme in a series of scathing public letters and pamphlets. Senators Borah and Wheeler, both old-line progressives, joined in the criticism.

To combat Roosevelt's efforts a group of prominent citizens formed the National Committee to Uphold Constitutional Government. Edward A. Rumely, S. S. McClure, Amos Pinchot, Fred Sexauer, head of the Dairymen's Cooperative League, called upon the newspaper publisher Frank E. Gannett to head this 'non-partisan' effort to oppose the court-packing bill. They were soon joined by the Congressional opponents of this legislation—Senators Borah and Wheeler being the chief politicians initially working with the Committee. The Committee was not an heir of the Republican Liberty League which had been formed by a group of wealthy and conservative Republicans to fight Roosevelt's anti-depression measures. The Advisory Board was liberally sprinkled with both Democrats and old progressives. The real sparkplug of the Committee at that time and until 1959 was Edward A. Rumely. The founding group met in the Hotel Seymour on February 5, 1937, where the Rumely family maintained their New York City residence. Rumely continued to play a major role in the organization from that time on. He directed the day-to-day operations of the Committee and was responsible for fund-raising as well as the publication and distribution of thousands of pieces of literature defending the ideas of the organization. By 1937, Rumely was completely disil-



lusioned with the New Deal. His feelings and those of many other progressives are discussed by Otis Graham in his *Encore for Reform*, which disputes the myth that only conservatives opposed FDR and the New Deal.

The strategy of the Committee in the fight against court-packing was a direct mail campaign orchestrated by Rumely. In the course of twenty-four weeks, 17,000,000 packets containing anti-court-packing information were mailed. The packets contained copies of speeches, articles and other information favorable to the Committee position. They were sent to carefully selected groups of farmers, lawyers, doctors, and others. The Committee maintained close contact with anti-court-packing senators and congressmen. Although some later commentators down-play the importance and the effect of the direct-mail campaign, contemporary observers more correctly assess its role in defeating the court-packing bill. Roosevelt had Harold Ickes launch a scathing attack on the Committee. In an article in *Colliers* Ickes denounced "mail order government" in an unsuccessful attempt to undermine the impact of the Committee.

The campaign of the Committee was largely responsible for forcing Roosevelt to withdraw the legislation, as well as his later attempt to reorganize the executive department of the Federal government.

Historians of the New Deal need to examine carefully the papers of Edward A. Rumely and the National Committee to Uphold Constitutional Government during this early period of its existence. What will emerge is a viewpoint which is sharply contradictory to conventional scholarship that it was primarily 'conservatives' who offered resistance to court-packing and other policies of Franklin Roosevelt. Almost from the very beginning of

the court fight, it was the old progressives who spearheaded the battle and provided the most outspoken criticism of Roosevelt. Senators Wheeler and Borah worked hand-in-glove with Amos Pinchot and Edward A. Rumely to build up grass-roots resistance to Roosevelt.

The next great battle which the Constitutional Committee assumed was their fight to keep FDR from 'purging' Democratic members of Congress who had opposed him in the court fight. Rumely's letters and papers contain a vast amount of information about this and other phases of the Committee's work. In 1941, the Committee was reorganized and its name changed to The Committee for Constitutional Government. Rumely stayed on as executive secretary until his retirement from that organization in 1959. In October, 1938, after the initial successes of the Committee in defeating some of FDR's efforts, Amos Pinchot wrote Edward Rumely a thoughtful letter in which he indicated his desire for the Committee to align itself with individuals and groups on the fringe-right. It was a prophetic letter, for, in the years to come, both the Committee and Edward A. Rumely did move increasingly to the right, so that by 1959 it was on the fringe of the conservative revival.

Two of the men with whom Rumely worked very closely in this effort were Amos Pinchot and Frank E. Gannett. Although Rumely had known Amos Pinchot from his early association with the Progressive Party and Theodore Roosevelt, he did not work closely with him until 1934, when Pinchot joined the Committee for the Nation. When the National Committee to Uphold Constitutional Government was formed in 1937, Pinchot was a founding member and worked closely with Rumely and that group until his death. There are numerous letters

between the two men, as well as copies of letters and articles written by Pinchot for both the Committee for the Nation and the Constitutional Committee. Pinchot's open letter to President Roosevelt is a classic statement detailing the reasons why Pinchot, as an old progressive, could no longer support the New Deal.

Rumely started working with Frank E. Gannett, the Rochester, New York, publisher, on the Committee for the Nation. Gannett was also a major personality in the formation of the National Committee to Uphold Constitutional Government in 1937. Gannett was closely associated with both Rumely and the Constitutional Committee until his death. In late 1938 and 1939, Rumely worked for Gannett, when he tried unsuccessfully to win the Republican presidential nomination in 1940. Though there is some correspondence between the two men from 1932 through 1935, the bulk of the letters are in December, 1935, continuing through May of 1939. Many of their letters discussed the financial needs of both the Committee and Rumely, though they deal with other matters as well.

In 1939, a bitter battle broke out in upstate New York over the organization of dairymen's cooperatives. Because of his association with Fred Sexauer, and his life-long involvement with the cooperative movement, Rumely threw himself and the Committee for Constitutional Government into a battle with the Dairymen's Cooperative League against the efforts of the C.I.O. to organize a labor-dominated dairy movement. His correspondence from September through December of 1939 is filled with references to this struggle.

During the thirties and forties, Edward Rumely both knew and corresponded with Jim Rand, the inventor and founder of the Remington Rand Corporation, and his



son, Jim. Rumely was instrumental in settling a bitter dispute between father and son in 1937. In 1938, Jim Rand travelled extensively in Germany using letters of introduction provided him by Rumely. He wrote Rumely regarding his experiences there, including in his letters observations about the German aircraft industry. In 1939 Rumely, in replying to a query from Jim Rand, was able to quash a rumor to the effect that German scientists were unwelcome at an American scientific congress. In 1940, Rand wrote Rumely a prophetic letter regarding the superiority of aircraft over battleships; later in May, he wrote him again regarding the possible use of German language broadcasts from within the United States as a means for sending coded information to Nazi agents in this country. One of his letters to Rumely in June of 1940 described his observations on the training of aircraft pilots in Germany and his wish that the United States would copy the German methods. In 1955, Rand and Rumely corresponded regarding the cancer-causing properties of cigarette smoking; later that year Rand involved himself with Rumely in the promotion of the pap test to detect cancer in women.

Rumely also worked with Commander Eugene McDonald, the head of the Zenith Radio Corporation. McDonald first came to know Rumely through the Committee for the Nation and then the National Committee to Uphold Constitutional Government. Rumely was also helpful to McDonald in the development of better hearing aids and edited the publication of *Better Hearing* for the Zenith Corporation. In 1938, Rumely helped McDonald and Professor Rhine of the Duke University Parapsychological Laboratory in an experiment involving Extra-Sensory Perception.

In his work for the Committee for Constitutional Government in the forties and fifties Rumely came into direct conflict with various Congressional Committees. In 1941, the Anderson Committee of the House of Representatives subpoenaed Rumely, demanding that he give them information. His refusal to do so led to a trial in which he was found not guilty for his refusal to cooperate with the Committee. In 1950, a more serious confrontation occurred when the House Select Committee on Lobbying cited Rumely for contempt of Congress for refusing to disclose to the Committee the names of individuals who had made bulk purchases of books, particularly Sam Pettingill's *The Road Ahead*. These books were then distributed by the Constitutional Committee as part of their national promotional campaigns. The House Select Committee was convinced that this technique was a ruse for raising enormous funds for lobbying purposes without having to file reports pursuant to the provisions of the Federal Regulation of Lobbying Act.

After the full Committee voted on the contempt citation, it was taken to the floor of the House where it was passed over the strong objections of Congressman Charles A. Halleck of Indiana, who argued that passage of the act represented a violation of Rumely's constitutional rights. The case eventually came before the United States Supreme Court, where the decision of the House was overturned. The majority opinion of the court held that the Select Committee had violated the authorization of the House of Representatives by launching an investigation of Rumely's Committee. The House authorization specified, according to the majority opinion, that the Select Committee could look into activities which directly affected Congressional activity. This decision neatly

sidestepped the more important constitutional issue of the right of freedom of association.

Justice Douglas wrote a powerful minority opinion in which he was joined by Justice Black, rejecting the main argument of their brother justices as spurious. To them the issue was clearly a violation of the constitutional rights of freedom of the press and freedom of association. They argued that a precondition for the freedom of the press is the tolerance of the government for friendly as well as unfriendly criticism:

If the present inquiry were sanctioned the press would be subjected to harrassment that in practical effect might be as serious as censorship. . . . A requirement that a publisher disclose the identity of those who buy his books, pamphlets or papers is indeed the beginning of surveillance of the press. True, no legal sanction is involved here. . . . But the potential restraint is equally severe. The finger of government levelled against the press is ominous. Once the government can demand of a publisher the names of the purchasers of his publications, the free press, as we know it disappears. Then the spectre of a government agent will look over the shoulder of everyone who reads. The purchase of a book or pamphlet today may result in a subpoena tomorrow. Fear of criticism goes with every person into the bookstall. The subtle, imponderable pressures of the orthodox lay hold. . . .

If the lady from Toledo can be required to disclose what she read yesterday and what she will read tomorrow, fear will take the place of freedom in libraries, bookstores and homes of the land. Through the harassment of hearings, investigations, reports, and subpoenas, government will hold a club over speech and the press. Congress could not do this by law. The power of investigation is also limited. Inquiry into personal and private affairs is precluded. . . .

Since Congress could not by law require of the respondent what the House demanded, it may not take the



first step in an inquiry ending in fine or imprisonment. (345 U.S. 41 *United States v Rumely*, No. 87, 73 Supreme Court Reporter, pp. 551-552.)

Although Rumely continued in his position as Executive Secretary of the Committee for Constitutional Government until 1959, he appears to have moved more and more to the periphery of political affairs, as did the Committee itself.

In 1955 he began working with Dr. J. Ernest Ayre, who had recently devised cytology (the pap test) as a means for the early detection of cancer in women. From 1955 to 1959, Rumely devoted a great deal of his time and effort in publicizing cytology and attempting to establish cytology clinics across the United States. This effort brought Rumely into conflict with the prestigious American Medical Association, the American Cancer Society and various medical members of his own Committee. The AMA and the American Cancer Society opposed the development of cytology clinics and a furious controversy arose over this issue. There are numerous letters between Rumely and Ayre and various other medical personnel, including the president of the AMA regarding the cytology question.

Just before his crippling stroke in 1959, Rumely distributed, on his own initiative, copies of Alton Oshner's *Smoking and Health* to the medical societies of the fifty states. It was a gesture typical of the man. In July of 1959, he suffered a stroke while visiting with his daughter and son-in-law in Mississippi; although he made a partial recovery from the paralyzing effects of the stroke, he retired from active involvement with the National Committee for Constitutional Government that same year. One of his last efforts was to have copies of Oshner's

book on smoking sent to the public schools in an effort to form a national campaign against smoking.

Edward A. Rumely had many careers: manufacturing, finance, education, editing and publishing, nutrition, and politics. His extensive papers cover virtually every aspect of his life, and include letters and other material from his 'galaxy of friends.' His papers shed light on the major political, social, economic and cultural developments of the twentieth century. His wife, Fanny Scott Rumely, who is over a hundred years old and still lives at their family home in LaPorte, was also a gifted writer and a woman of many talents. Her papers too are in the Lilly Library. Her accounts of their life together add depth and insight to the events of her husband's career.

The Rumely papers have been arranged by the staff of the Lilly Library into six basic categories. The first includes all autobiographical and biographical material, including, in this case, Rumely's memoirs as well as the material he prepared for his defense in the *Evening Mail* trial. This material is especially useful since virtually all of his correspondence up to 1918 has been transcribed and cross referenced. In addition to this there are numerous statements from his friends and associates discussing Rumely's activities in business, education, politics and finance. Second, his correspondence dating from 1880 to 1964, including incoming and some copies of outgoing mail. Third, a vast collection of writings, including his own as well as the individuals previously referred to in this essay. Fourth, printed material, including files of newspaper clippings from the New York *Evening Mail*, as well as other printed material ranging from material on the Vitamin Food Company to the National Committee for Constitutional Government. Fifth and sixth, collec-

tions of photographs and pictures as well as other memorabilia.

This essay has attempted to indicate the scope of the Rumely papers in the Lilly Library and to suggest a few ways in which interested scholars might use this material. The Rumely papers span American life and culture from the 1880s to the 1960s; they offer the diligent researcher rich insights into the development of America during this period.

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