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Illinois Wesleyan University

FRESHMAN CONVOCATION

Westbrook Auditorium
Presser Hall
August 23, 1997
4:00 p.m.

PROGRAM

President Minor Myers, jr., *Presiding*

Organ Prelude .....John Pescitelli '80, *Organist*
Visiting Assistant Professor of Music

Fanfare — *William J. Mathiaf (1934-1992)*

*Invocation .....Dennis E. Groh '61
University Chaplain

President's Welcome.....President Minor Myers, jr.

Greetings from the Students.....Andrew Killian '98
President, Student Senate

Performance
Tarantella — *David Popper (1843-1913)*

Bethany Von Behren '2001, *cellist*

Greetings from the Faculty .....Janet M. McNew
Provost and Dean of the Faculty

Introduction of the Speaker.....Janet M. McNew
Provost and Dean of the Faculty

Address.....Robert C. Bray
2001: A Class Odyssey — *R. Forrest Colwell*
Professor of American Literature

*Alma Wesleyana — NATIONAL HYMN
George William Warren (1828-1902)

From hearts aflame, our love we pledge to thee,
Where'er we wander, over land or sea;
Through time unending, loyal we will be—
True to our Alma Mater, Wesleyan.

When college days are fully past and gone,
While life endures, from twilight gleam til dawn,
Grandly thy soul shall with us linger on—
Star-crowned, our Alma Mater, Wesleyan.

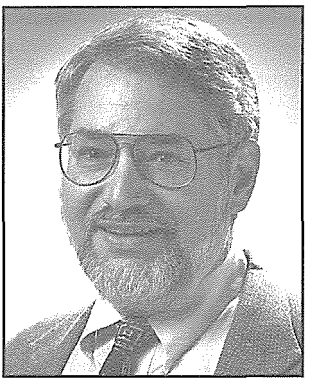
—*Professor W. E. Schultz (1935)*

*Benediction .....Dennis E. Groh '61
University Chaplain

Organ Postlude.....John Pescitelli '80, *Organist*
Visiting Assistant Professor of Music

Trumpet Voluntary — *John Stanley (1712-1786)*

*Audience will please stand



ROBERT C. BRAY, Ph.D.

R. Forrest Colwell Professor of American Literature

Literary critic, professor of English, author and editor, public advocate for literature, chronicler of 19th Century Methodism, scholar of Abraham Lincoln and Midwestern Americana, biographer of regional writers, adviser to libraries—Robert Bray is a passionate admirer of the written word and the fine art of teaching.

Since 1986 he has held the R. Forrest Colwell Endowed Chair in American Literature at Illinois Wesleyan, whose faculty he joined in 1970. A native of Kansas, he received a bachelor of arts degree from Kansas State College (now Pittsburgh State University) in 1966 and earned a master of arts degree and the Ph.D. with honors from the University of Chicago, where he specialized in 19th Century American Literature.

He has been the recipient of numerous fellowships, including those from the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, the Danforth Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities. His teaching interests, in addition to 19th Century American Literature, encompass American painting, interdisciplinary humanities, writing, the literature of the Midwest and of Illinois and literary criticism.

In 1986 he was elected to the Society of Midland Authors, comprising authors of works printed by recognized publishers and accepted as worthy of literature attention. In 1981 the University of Illinois Press published his *Rediscoveries: Literature and Place in Illinois,* and also contracted for Bray's work-in-progress on the life of the early Methodist circuit-rider, Peter Cartwright. Bray and his Illinois Wesleyan faculty colleague, Paul Bushnell, of the history department, co-authored *The Diary of a Common Soldier in the American Revolution,* published in 1978 by Northern Illinois Press and now in its sixth printing. Bray served as editor-in-chief and contributor to *A Reader's Guide to Illinois Literature,* published by the Illinois State Library.

Among Professor Bray's numerous articles for scholarly journals are works relating to Abraham Lincoln, Mark Twin, Hamlin and the Cartwright-Lincoln acquaintance; as well as introductions to a book of small town Illinois photographs and Bloomington author Harold Sinclair's *American Years.*

Bray has served Illinois Wesleyan as coordinator of the American Studies degree program, as chair of the English department and as a member of numerous University committees. He is a student advisor for freshman and English majors and has served on such faculty committees as the Personnel and Curriculum Councils, the Academic Planning Committee and the Council on University Programs and Policy. In 1991 he was named recipient of the DuPont Award for Teaching Excellence which is presented annually to a faculty member upon selection by colleagues.

Recognized statewide by Governor Jim Edgar for his chairmanship of the "Read Illinois" program 1988-93, Bray has also served as a director of the Illinois Humanities Council and the Illinois Center for the Book.