



# A HOLIDAY FOR THE JET SET

*Holiday's* urbane, martini-loving editor, Ted Patrick, and visionary art director, Frank Zachary, gave postwar America a passport to the glamour of travel, packing the magazine with big-name talent: Hemingway, Steinbeck, Kerouac, Cartier-Bresson, Steichen, et al. But, in 1964, tragedy would ground their flight

By MICHAEL CALLAHAN

he writer E. B. White was particularly hot and bothered. He had reason to be.

There was a heat wave going on in August 1948 as White walked into his room at the Algonquin Hotel—"halfway down an air shaft," as he would later describe it—across the street from where he had toiled for *The New Yorker* 20 years earlier. For four straight days, the mercury in Manhattan would breach 100 degrees.

There wasn't time to be fussy about all of that; White had a job to do. A magazine editor named Ted Patrick had written, gently inquiring if the venerated writer, now firmly ensconced as a country squire in seafaring North Brookline, Maine, would entertain returning to some of his old haunts in Gotham to write an essay about the unyielding mystique of New York. Patrick tried to sell him on the fact it might be fun. "Writing is never 'fun,'" White relayed in reply.

The assignment paid well—\$3,000, a princely sum in those days. (The rent on a comfortable three-bedroom Manhattan apartment was roughly \$200 a month.) White had a well-known aversion to travel but took the job anyway. The magazine in question happened to employ his 27-year-old stepson, Roger Angell, then just planting the roots of his own publishing career, one

FROM THE GALLAGHER ART AND FASHION MAGAZINE COLLECTION. COPY WORK BY GORMAN STUDIO

that would eventually land him at *The New Yorker*, as his mother, Katharine, and stepfather had been. “I think he did it for me, rather than for the money, thinking it would help me,” Angell says now. “Which it did.”

The resultant 7,500-word treatise, titled simply “Here Is New York,” was published in 1949. It would become not only one of the most famous essays ever composed about the island of Manhattan but perhaps the finest. Over the years its plaintive language has been categorized as both poem and hymn. But at its core “Here Is New York” is a very beautiful love letter. It begins:

On any person who desires such queer prizes, New York will bestow the gift of loneliness and the gift of privacy. It is this largess that accounts for the presence within the city’s walls of a considerable section of the population; for the residents of Manhattan are to a large extent strangers who have pulled up stakes somewhere and come to town, seeking sanctuary or fulfillment or some greater or lesser grail. The capacity to make such dubious gifts is a mysterious quality of New York. It can destroy an individual, or it can fulfill him, depending a good deal on luck. No one should come to New York to live unless he is willing to be lucky.

The essay would be made into a small gift book; by the end of 1949, Harper had printed 28,000 copies and had the work anointed as a Book-of-the-Month Club selection. And a half-century later—a year after the attacks of September 11, 2001—*Vanity Fair* would repackage the essay, in gift-book form, with its hauntingly prescient passage: “The city, for the first time in its long history, is destructible. A single flight of planes no bigger than a wedge of

travel bible—one that would re-invent the concept of American leisure under a rubric that deftly cloaked its promise to its readers. The publication was called, simply, *Holiday*.

#### On the Map

Philadelphia would seem an odd place for a magazine about the emerging world of cosmopolitan travel, but then, these sorts of happy accidents often occur in publishing. Introduced in 1946, *Holiday* was acquired in its infancy by the august Curtis Publishing Company, whose holdings included two powerhouses of the era: *The Saturday Evening Post* and *Ladies’ Home Journal*. Curtis operated out of an 11-story building of white marble and Ionic columns looking out on Independence Hall, not far from the Liberty Bell. The building had dark-paneled elevators (operated by men in somber gray livery and soft white gloves), gleaming floors, tinkling fountains, and a giant stained-glass mosaic titled *The Groves of Academe*, which had been designed by Maxfield Parrish and created by Louis C. Tiffany.

Yet, from the start, *Holiday* was always faintly Other in the staid culture that defined Curtis: the Auntie Mame in a family of tea-sipping dowagers. Tacitly acknowledging this fact, Curtis cordoned off the *Holiday* staff in a nondescript building catty-corner to its own. There was a lot of sterling prose, and a lot of Roger Sterling, going on. “There was one hell of a cocktail-party circuit there,” says Eric Biemiller, whose father, Carl, served as the magazine’s executive editor during the 1950s.

“For Philadelphia, it was a very sophisticated place with sophisticated people, a lot

Hall for a rally; the magazine’s staff doused him in confetti in welcome as the rest of the Curtis contingent—predominantly supporters of Dwight Eisenhower—watched from their windows. “I see the *Holiday* people are here,” Stevenson remarked dryly, “but I don’t see anyone from the *Post*.”

In America, the years after World War II were ones of dizzying possibility, an ideal time for a publication whose *raison d’être* was to offer armchair access to locales that were now accessible to the masses. Transcontinental flight was beginning to boom. So were ever more luxurious hotels, tour groups, vacation packages, and travel agents. And color photography was everywhere ascendant, allowing travelers to share shots of their excursions with envious friends. “It was a peacetime world,” says Roger Angell. “And you could see that all of these places that we had become aware of in horrific circumstances were now peacetime places that you wanted to go.”

“It was still exciting to travel, to go to Europe on a passenger liner,” says Arnold Roth’s wife, Caroline, a member of the *Holiday* cocktail-party circuit. “It was the beginning of the glamour of flying. It was just long enough after the end of the war, and everybody had money again, and you had guys who had been to Europe and were now anxious to go back under different circumstances.” There was a sense of mission too. As historian Mary Panzer has pointed out, *Holiday* promoted the belief that post-war Americans “had a responsibility to make something of their prosperity, productivity, and leisure.”

The magazine, in effect, sold an ideal of travel as enrichment, a literal path to intellectual and spiritual betterment. What *Vogue* did for fashion, *Holiday* did for destinations. Plus, the editorial formula was irresistible for those vagabonds providing all the words and pictures.

“The concept was basically to get famous authors who had maybe one or two weeks in between their books or projects to go and travel and write glorious pieces,” says John Lewis Stage, a photographer who circled the globe taking pictures for *Holiday*. “So you’d have James Michener sent off to the South Pacific, for example. It was an intriguing way to put together a magazine. It was an oddball publication that used photographs to tell stories.”

#### Starry Roster

And, oh, the stories they told. “What amazed me about it, other than how beautifully designed it was, [were] the huge names that wrote for *Holiday*: Cheever, Hemingway, O’Hara,” says Josh Lieberman, a Brooklyn archivist who in 2011 looked back on *Holiday* in an impassioned online appreciation

---

## THE MAGAZINE SOLD AN IDEAL OF TRAVEL AS ENRICHMENT. WHAT *VOGUE* DID FOR FASHION, *HOLIDAY* DID FOR DESTINATIONS.

---

geese can quickly end this island fantasy, burn the towers . . . cremate the millions.”

The magazine that originally commissioned White’s paean would also grow in stature, though its own luster would prove far more fleeting. Ninety miles south of E. B. White’s magical New York, his editor Ted Patrick (who would be joined in 1951 by art director Frank Zachary) and one of the most accomplished writing and art rosters ever assembled put out a monthly magazine that was less a periodical than a rapturous

of whom had come from New York and England,” adds Arnold Roth, the illustrator, who drew regularly for the magazine and would later gain international fame for his *Playboy* cartoons. “The *Holiday* people, they didn’t go to Horn & Hardart’s. They would jump in cabs and go to Little Italy and eat lunch at great restaurants. They were an impressive bunch, clearly the most sophisticated people at Curtis.”

In 1952, Democratic presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson came to Independence



GREAT  
ESCAPES

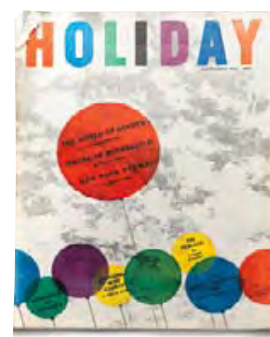
Magazine spreads  
featuring exotic  
locales from Rome  
to Rio



E. B. White, "Here Is New York," 1949.  
Benedict Thielen on Florida, 1959.



Al Hirschfeld on "Hollywood Fauna," 1949.  
Slim Aarons on the Bahamas, 1958.



Frank Zachary,  
September 1961.



Milton Glaser,  
November 1967.



Slim Aarons on Eleuthera, 1961.  
Ludwig Bemelmans on Rio, 1958.



Arnold Newman  
on Rome, 1954.



Susan Yates, April 1950.  
Slim Aarons on Lily Pons, 1959.



FROM THE GALLAGHER ART AND FASHION MAGAZINE  
COLLECTION; COPY WORK BY GORMAN STUDIO

for the Paris Review Daily. "For a lot of them, these articles don't exist anywhere else. So there is this trove of literature that has rarely been read by modern readers."

"Notes from a Native Daughter," Joan Didion's seminal essay about Sacramento, was first published in *Holiday*. The magazine published Carl Sandburg on Chicago; Morley Callaghan on the University of Toronto; Colette on love in Paris; A. B. Guthrie on Idaho; Mary McCarthy on

"The Vassar Girl"; William Saroyan on Fresno; Ian Fleming on eating in London; William Faulkner on Mississippi; Robert Penn Warren on the Alamo; John McNulty on playing piano in a silent-movie theater; Kenneth Tynan on Ingrid Bergman. Budd Schulberg wrote on everything from his Dartmouth alma mater to Florida's Gold Coast to, in 1954, Hoboken—the year he won an Oscar for his screenplay for *On the Waterfront*, which was set in the

New Jersey port. Irwin Shaw, Paul Bowles, Ogden Nash, Arthur Miller, James Thurber, John Steinbeck, William Manchester, Lawrence Durrell, V. S. Pritchett, Alfred Kazin, Alistair Cooke, and Clifton Fadiman—all published pieces in *Holiday*, some of them several.

"I remember Robert Graves came in and his sole had come apart from his shoe and was flapping away," recalls Dale Mackenzie Brown, who joined the staff as an





editorial assistant in 1957. “And [the poet] Robert Peterson would come in with grass almost sticking out of his shoes. It was a rare and wonderful display of people.”

The magazine’s starry roster was no gimmick but rather its backbone, along with its luscious photography and imposing trim size—a bountiful 11 by 13¾ inches. Each cover—fashioned by the likes of Ludwig Bemelmans, George Giusti, Fred Siebel, and John Cullen Murphy (father of the present-day *V.F.* editor Cullen Murphy)—bore the distinctive blocky logo, with letters so bold they hung suspended like ornaments: *HOLIDAY*.

Inside every issue was a Christmas present, packed with sparkle and surprise. Take the March 1956 issue, which featured an opening essay by Michener; a story on entertaining by M. F. K. Fisher; a theater column by Frank O’Connor; E. B. White on retirement; an essay by Angell on sports; and a photo portfolio from Edward Steichen. This grandma’s-attic approach—amalgamating widely disparate (and sometimes downright odd) literary features into one issue—became the magazine’s hallmark, and what made it so very seductive. *Holiday* was *curious* about the world. It ran stories on Polynesia, Christmas in Iowa, Grand Central Terminal, Pensacola, the *Titanic*, “The Oxford Scholar,” Italian movies, Coney Island, “How to Spot a Spy” (by Eric Ambler, who would know), Salzburg festivals, Cincinnati, Yankee Stadium, France’s finest artwork, the strange beauty of Vietnam, the Boy Scouts, space travel (by Arthur C. Clarke, no less), the Kentucky Derby, the First World War, Macy’s, Irish fashion, Princess Margaret (in

#### THE SKIPPERS

Top: from left, at *Holiday*’s Philadelphia offices, executive editor Al Farnsworth, articles editor Jimmy Cerruti, editor Ted Patrick, and art director Frank Zachary; above, Patrick and Zachary lounging, circa 1955.



two parts), J.F.K. (in three), the House of Rothschild (in four!), and, just for kicks, “A Capsule History of Tobacco.”

“The breadth of the articles was pretty astonishing,” observes Lieberman. “Not only would you have an article about traveling to Paris, but the next one might be about marijuana legalization. It wasn’t just travel—it was culture.”

In October 1958 the magazine published “Alone on a Mountaintop,” Jack Kerouac’s first-person account of a wintry summer spent in reflective solitude atop the High Cascades. It begins:

Anybody who’s been to Seattle and missed Alaskan Way, the old water front, has missed the point. Here the totem-pole stores, the waters of Puget Sound washing under old piers, the dark gloomy look of ancient warehouses and pier sheds, and the most antique locomotives in America switching boxcars up and down the water front, give a hint, under the pure-cloud-mopped, sparkling skies of the Northwest, of great country to come.

Four issues later, the magazine ran a commissioned memoir by Truman Capote, who unpacked the charms of his Brooklyn Heights neighborhood:

Window boxes bloom with geraniums; according to the season, green foliated light falls through the trees or gathered autumn leaves

burn at the corner; flower-loaded wagons wheel by while the flower seller sings his wares; in the dawn one occasionally hears a cock crow, for there is a lady with a garden who keeps hens and a rooster. On winter nights, when the wind brings the farewell callings of boats outward bound and carries across rooftops the chimney smoke of evening fires, there is a sense, evanescent but authentic as the firelight’s flicker, of time come circle, of ago’s sweeter glimmerings recaptured.

To flip through the pages of *Holiday* was to roam the halls of an eclectic museum, albeit European in its bias but undeniably American in its broad scope and naïve optimism. The experience left one’s soul sated and his worldview decidedly more Continental. In *Holiday*, travel was men in fedoras flicking open silver-plated cigarette cases in the boarding area, and society swans pirouetting to their seats, Louis Vuitton hatboxes swinging from gloved forearms. And every copy, while promising a glimpse at enchanting cultures and lives, reminded readers that travel was coveted and special—and had nothing to do with taking off one’s shoes to go through a scanner.

#### At the Helm

Ted Patrick was an ideal choice as editor of *Holiday*. An international traveler, gourmet, and jazz enthusiast, he possessed three critical skills: the ability to coax great stories out of great writers, a formidable tennis game, and the knack for mixing a great martini. He lived in an apartment in the fashionable Barclay Hotel facing Philadelphia’s posh Rittenhouse Square, where his closet was lined with rows of Turnbull & Asser shirts and Rogers Peet suits. He spent weekends at his beachfront spread in Quogue. “I’d go out to dinner with him and sometimes other people, and then I would sit up with him drinking. He drank *a lot*,” Angell recalls. “And I would try to keep up with him, then pour him into bed. I would come in the next morning a little worse for wear, and he’d have played three sets of tennis already.”

It was an open secret that the married Patrick had a mistress at the magazine; in this regard he was hardly alone. *Holiday*’s dreary offices belied the clubby atmosphere generated by the rakes who boozily edited it and slept their way through the steno pool. “If you watch *Mad Men*,” says Adrian Taylor, who was hired as an art assistant in 1952, “it wasn’t far off the mark.”

*Holiday*’s editor from its inception, Pat-

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF FRANK ZACHARY; BOTTOM, DIGITAL COLORIZATION BY LORNA CLARK

rick grew circulation from 425,000 in 1946 to just under a million in 1962. (By comparison, *Fortune*, in those years, sold more than 300,000 copies each issue; *Esquire's* audience would climb to 875,000.) In the seven years between 1954 and 1961, *Holiday's* revenue almost doubled, to more than \$10 million a year. Curtis didn't understand the magazine and didn't care to, as long as it kept producing strong returns. Which it did, in large measure due to Patrick's cabal of stellar editors, a group that included Carl Biemiller, who would become a best-selling children's author; John Knowles, who wrote the coming-of-age novel *A Separate Peace*; and Harry Sions, a former war correspondent who stored in his office both a champagne bucket that had once belonged to Adolf Hitler and a bust of himself sculpted by the renowned Hungarian artist Amerigo Tot.

**B**ut the biggest tool in the *Holiday* arsenal was a visionary art director who became as much a publishing icon as the magazine itself.

A debonair man, with two haystack eyebrows that would become his trademark, Frank Zachary favored Brooks Brothers suits with bow ties and liked to drink champagne with his Chinese food. His charm oozed through twinkling eyes and devilish wit. Adrian Taylor once had lunch with Zachary in a Sausalito restaurant owned by Sally Stanford, a former madam who would later become the mayor. According to Taylor, Stanford was fond of mingling with dining-room patrons while a parrot nestled on her shoulder, and would place between her lips watermelon seeds that the bird would then grab. Zach-

ning, wildly expensive homage to graphic arts that ran out of cash after only three issues, but not before revolutionizing magazine graphic design. The two men were neighbors in bucolic Bucks County, Pennsylvania, where Zachary lived with his wife and daughters in a fieldstone house that had once served as a supply station for George Washington. In 1951 he was named the art director at *Holiday*, and the family moved to suburban Philadelphia, into a pink Victorian furnished by George Nakashima, replete with a vegetable garden, a menagerie of dogs, cats, chickens, and roosters, and a houseman named Morris. The Zacharys spent summers in Amagansett, Long Island, where they bought a house in the dunes and socialized with the playwright George S. Kaufman and the composer Oscar Hammerstein and the painter Jackson Pollock.

Back home the family often saw Brodovitch, who smoked through a cigarette holder and kept a pet bull on his Main Line farm. "We knew very interesting people," Zachary's daughter Amy recalls. "It was an odd way to grow up: 'Oh, sure, another weekend at the Carlyle.'"

It was this sophistication, along with Brodovitch's influence, that Zachary injected into the design of *Holiday*. "The real estate in those magazines was incredible," says Pete Turner, a photographer who published his first work there in 1958. "If you were in *Holiday* or *Esquire* or *Look*, it was an incredible thing."

In a 1990 reminiscence, illustrator Ronald Searle would concur: "[Frank] gave me all the space one could dream of, the chance to fill it with color, the freedom to travel and what proved to be the last of the great re-

duce portfolios that conjured what writer Owen Edwards now calls "*National Geographic* with style." Steven Heller, in his 2006 book, *The Education of an Art Director* (which is dedicated to Zachary), writes that *Holiday* was not just "a stunning travel magazine but a wellspring for photographer and illustrator-journalists who blazed trails in a field that was primarily dominated by decorative and mundane styles."

It was at *Holiday* that Zachary and photographer Slim Aarons began a decades-long partnership that they would later bring to the reinvigorated *Town & Country*. For *Holiday*, Aarons produced stories on the world's haute merchant class, royal houses, rogues, and playgirls—that special breed that rotated through Villa d'Este, Positano, Bermuda, and the lobby of the Beverly Hills Hotel. Illustrators such as Searle, Edward Gorey, John Rombola, and Al Hirschfeld whipped up pop-y covers and features worthy of gallery showings. In crackerjack directives fit for *The Front Page*, Zachary dispatched his charges around the globe with often nothing more than a wink and a wave. "I'd sit with him and talk about a story and he would turn to me and say, 'John, just 10 great snaps,'" says Stage. "That would be the extent of the direction." Recalls Roger Angell, "Cartier-Bresson would come into the office, and Frank would yell out, 'Hey, Hank—you got the snaps?' Cartier-Bresson would simply smile and say, 'Oui, Frank—I have zee snaps.'"

Most Fridays, Zachary and Patrick took the train up to New York, where Zachary had founded a secret lunch group he'd dubbed "the Tantamount Club," because, as *Holiday's* Adrian Taylor remembers Zachary's explanation, "I don't know what it was tantamount to." Every Friday the club would enter a private second-floor suite in the St. Regis for cocktails, then adjourn to a private dining room for a ridiculous meal prepared by the hotel's famed chef, Joseph Castaybert, who would come in at the end to bashfully take a bow. "By the time lunch was served," Taylor recalls, "I was usually a little foggy."

For 20 years the staff and contributors—when they weren't jetting about the planet—enjoyed a succession of such liquid lunches and cocktail parties, burnishing the same glow that they brought to their singular publication. "For a while there," Angell says, "we were the shining light."

Until someone turned it off.

#### The Kiss of Death

**B**y the early 1960s, *Holiday* was under siege: mounting losses at its flagship *Saturday Evening Post* had Curtis scrambling to find a way to stanch the bleeding. A revolving door of executives would come in, each promising to turn the company's sagging fortunes around. And sensing an impending takeover of the mag-

---

## "THE CONCEPT WAS TO GET FAMOUS AUTHORS IN BETWEEN THEIR BOOKS OR PROJECTS TO GO AND TRAVEL AND WRITE GLORIOUS PIECES."

---

ary looked at Taylor and remarked, "Well, I guess you know she's kissed a cockatoo."

The son of Croatian immigrants, Zachary had transcended humble beginnings in Pittsburgh—his father had been a steelworker—to forge a career in publicity and journalism. Over time he fashioned himself into an urbane dilettante, one who would re-invent the modern leisure magazine in America. In 1949, Zachary had, with legendary *Harper's Bazaar* art director Alexey Brodovitch, brought to life *Portfolio*, a stun-

portages. Off to Alaska! Cover all of Canada! Bring me ten pages on the dirty bits of Hamburg! No expense spared."

Zachary used both the magazine's over-size spreads and liberal white space to let his artwork breathe. But his true brilliance may have come from how loose he kept the reins on the illustrious lineup of photographers and illustrators he tapped to bring *Holiday's* evocative stories to life. Zachary hired Arnold Newman, Henri Cartier-Bresson, John Lewis Stage, and Tom Hollyman to pro-

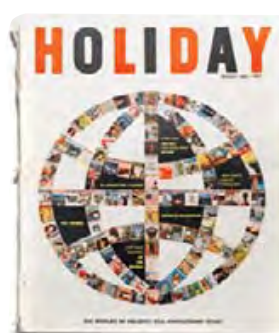




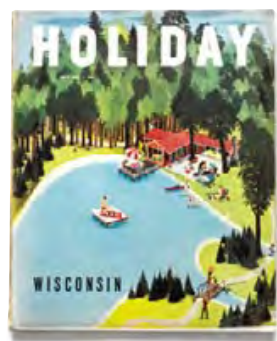
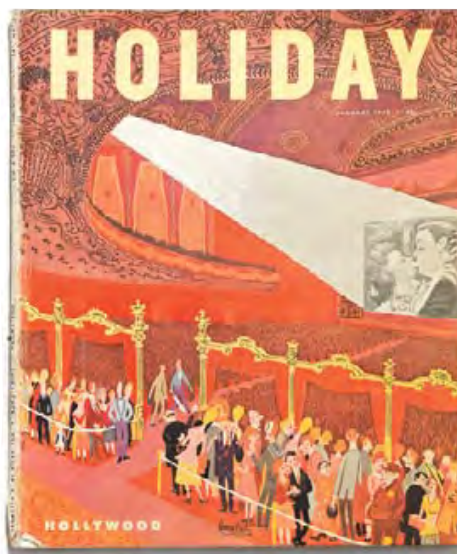
Alfred Mayor and Richard Rowan,  
"Club Méditerranée," 1967.



Slim Aarons on Newport, 1954.  
Frank Zachary, March 1961.



Truman Capote on Brooklyn Heights, 1959.  
José Bartolí, January 1949.



Richard E. Howard,  
July 1949.



Ludwig Bemelmans tours Europe, 1954.  
William Faulkner on Mississippi, 1954.



azine, the editor went on the offensive. Patrick gave an interview to *Newsweek* in which he warned that Darwinian cost-cutting "would be the kiss of death to *Holiday*."

In October 1963, Ted Patrick's wife died suddenly. He retreated to Quogue and drank even more. Five months later, he was dead.

Zachary had been operating as the de facto editor for the previous few years—a result of Patrick's increasingly raging alcoholism. As a result, the lieutenants who had spent the better part of a decade producing the periodical assumed Zachary would land the job officially after Patrick died. But just 19 hours later, Curtis chief Clay Blair Jr. summoned the senior staff to his office to an-

nounce that Don Schanche, an editor at the *Post*, would be the new top dog at *Holiday*. Zachary was devastated.

As was common in such scenarios (and still is), the new editor didn't appear all that keen on retaining the Old Guard. As Joseph C. Goulden recounted in his definitive 1965 biography of Curtis, *The Curtis Caper*, clashes ensued over stories and layouts, and Schanche began issuing a series of memos assailing the previous regime's product. In one he wrote that *Holiday* "still suffers from essentially passive editing by men who have grown old with a favored and aging group of literary and photographic contributors." Schanche would later remark to

editorial director Harry Sions, "The trouble with *Holiday* is that it's too well written."

Slim Aarons, meanwhile, fought a rear-guard action. He rallied some of *Holiday*'s highest-profile names for a half-page testimonial ad that he had published in *The New York Times* that December, labeled "Four Special Men." It lauded the recently marginalized Zachary, Sions, executive editor Al Farnsworth, and picture editor Lou Mercier for their body of work, citing them as the reason the magazine had been "both an artistic and financial success" and adding that "editors guide and manage and shape and, when they are good editors, also inspire. We believe *these four* are good edi-



tors." Among the ad's 56 signatories were Cleveland Amory, V. S. Pritchett, Stephen Birmingham, Sean O'Faolain, John Steinbeck, William Manchester, Laurens van der Post, and Arthur Miller.

Little good it did. Arnold Roth went to see Zachary, only to find him standing in his office, which had been completely stripped of its furniture. A telephone rested on the floor.

Roth was flabbergasted. "Frank, what happened?" he asked. "Are they going to redecorate?"

"No," Zachary replied calmly. "They're trying to get rid of me. But I'm not going to let them."

In the end he did let them. He had to. After another particularly brutal tussle with Schanche, Zachary led his three editors to the suite of the Curtis suits, where he angrily stated he would not put up with "immorality, venality, and pusillanimity." Then "the Four Special Men" simply walked out.

Schanche's reign, as it turned out, was brief, and he was soon replaced by an even more brusque editor. One by one, the remaining staff jumped, including editorial assistant Dale Brown, who bolted for Time-Life. "They were asking us to use both sides of a sheet of paper. It was getting sicker and sicker," he says of his fitful last days there. "It was a dismal magazine with all of the talent gone."

Curtis would be bought and sold and revamped and re-invented until it was eventually broken apart and sold for scrap in the 1970s. (*Ladies' Home Journal*, the only one of Curtis's holdings that still publishes

commercially, is now owned by Meredith, the Des Moines-based publisher of *Better Homes and Gardens* and *Family Circle*.) Its stately building still sits on Independence Square, CURTIS PUBLISHING COMPANY still engraved above the entrance. *Holiday*, limping along through the 1970s, was eventually merged with the competing *Travel* magazine and relaunched as *Travel Holiday*, bearing no resemblance to its former incarnation. The owners of *Reader's Digest* took charge in the 80s, then sold it to the Hachette Filipacchi company, which folded it in 2003.

You have to hunt to find old copies of *Holiday* today, usually in dusty library archives or strategic offerings on eBay. But its legacy remains intact. "In that crowded field, *Holiday* made its mark," says John Rombola, who drew some of the most memorable covers the magazine published. "So much of that was due to Frank. His taste was impeccable."

Frank Zachary is now 99 and spends his days engaged in the rituals of the very old, sitting and napping and simply being. His full head of hair is a shocking shade of snowy white, and he still has those mad eyebrows, perched like twin caterpillars. He likes to visit with his elder daughter, Jennifer Marcianesi, sitting in a tweedy armchair in the living room of the Hamptons cottage he shares with his other daughter, Amy, located down a long dirt road on the East End of Long Island, near the water. On the wall there is a large framed mock-up of *Town & Country* signed by everyone who was ever anyone in the Zachary coterie. "When I walk in I am always taken aback by this sense of nobility about him," says the photographer Jonathan Becker, a longtime contributor to *V.F.*, who was mentored by Frank. "He's almost beatific, as if he were sitting inside a great painting."

Zachary's handshake is still firm and vigorous, and his eyes carry that

signature elfin twinkle of mischief when he greets a guest with "Good to see you, my boy!," his voice hale and throaty. He doesn't say much anymore. But when he does, he commands one's attention. Recollecting how he came up with all of those magnificent ideas for the splashy pages of *Holiday*, he reminisces about sitting with Slim Aarons. "It was just two guys talking," he says quietly. "The idea comes out of the conversation." He offers little more, the iridescent raconteur now as measured and mute as a Zen sage.

His goal, he finally says, was simple: "I just wanted to make the finest magazine."

And that he did. *Holiday* may not be remembered as one of

the most important titles in the canon of publishing, but it was certainly one of the most transporting, the ultimate wish book. It painted a portrait of wonder, refinement, and savoir faire that helped ignite a passion for travel—and for the trappings of the good life—that continues unabated.

In 2004, on the occasion of Frank's 90th birthday, his daughters arranged to have a collection of his poetry—dating back more than half a century—published in a slim volume entitled *A Cage in Search of a Bird*. Included in the mix was a 1963 poem called "Death Takes *Holiday*," his eulogy for the magazine he loved. In it you see all of Frank Zachary and, with that, all of *Holiday*: something suave and worldly but delivered with a spot of cheek to show you it wasn't taking all of it—or you, for that matter—so dreadfully seriously. It reads, in part:

So toujours gai, what the hell, dear boy  
Let us be true to one another. Ply  
Me not with arguments to allay  
The qualms of those who work,  
but get no *Holiday*.  
For I would not have you  
change one whit, dear boy.  
Nor your happiness one whit  
would I alloy.  
Just let me gnash my teeth and  
curse  
The day Ted Patrick took an urn  
for the hearse. □

#### MILE-HIGH CLUB

Below, Harry Sions, Frank Zachary, Louis Mercier, Al Farnsworth (seated), with contributors Tom Hollyman, Arnold Newman, John Lewis Stage, Slim Aarons, Bob Phillips, and Fred Maroon. Left, news of the resignation of Sions, Zachary, Mercier, and Farnsworth.

4 EDITORS RESIGN  
FROM CURTIS JOB  
  
Holiday Magazine Loses Its  
Top Members of Staff  
  
ROBERT F. BEDINGFELD

## FROM THE ARCHIVE

For these related stories, visit [VF.COM/ARCHIVE](http://VF.COM/ARCHIVE)

- **The wonders of *Flair* magazine**  
(Amy Fine Collins, October 1996)
- ***Esquire*'s heyday**  
(Frank DiGiacomo, January 2007)
- **When Slim Aarons shot the high life**  
(Eugenia Peretz, December 2003)
- **The birth of *Time* magazine** (Isaiah Wilner, October 2006, and Alan Brinkley, May 2010)
- ***The Lady* endures** (Francis Wheen, October 2012)