



Bruce Smith

PROFILES

NOT LIKE TAKING THE WATERS

ENGAGED in preserving, or trying to preserve, the peace in the United States are a hundred and seventy thousand policemen, ranging in rank from rural constables and sheriffs, who may not have so much as a second-hand Ford at their disposal, to the chiefs and commissioners of the highly mechanized forces in the nation's largest cities, to whom helicopters and two-way radios are commonplace accessories of their calling. The leading authority on the activities of these many and diverse officers of the law, and a recognized expert on the science of police work throughout the world, is Bruce Smith, a tall, ambassadorial-looking man of sixty-one, who is director of the Institute of Public Administration, a non-profit, partially endowed organization, with offices at Park Avenue and Sixty-eighth Street. As Edmund Spenser has been called a poet's poet and Rabbit Marranville a ballplayer's ballplayer, Smith, even though he has never been a policeman, has been called a cop's cop. In the pursuit of his profession, which is studying police forces, both here and abroad, with an eye to improving them—a study that has been in no small way responsible for the current signs of change in the New York City Police Department—Smith has spent long, tedious hours in station houses and brief, exciting ones with raiding parties, but activities of this kind are simply routine examples of his close identification with his subject. Not only does he mentally put himself in the place of the loneliest cop trudging a weary beat in some Siberia but he literally puts himself in cops' shoes; both on and off the job, he frequently wears the thick, snub-nosed, ankle-high shoes that are designed specially for policemen. In his preoccupation with his work, he has been known to stride out of his office and absently hail a police radio car instead of a taxi. Of all the tributes that have been paid to his ability, he is proudest of his working membership in the International Association of Chiefs of Police, a clanish organization, whose members seldom admit outsiders, even as luncheon guests. Smith's best friends here and in Europe are police officers, many of whom upon first meeting him were inclined to regard him suspiciously as a sort of social scientist or other intellectual meddler; they soon changed their minds and found themselves getting together with him, feet on desk, to

tell him their troubles. Because policemen in general are natural-born complainers and Smith is a natural-born listener, they usually hit it off fine, even when he is outspokenly critical of their performance. "Bruce speaks our language," one of them said recently. "He's as much at home batting the breeze with the cop on the corner as most folks are reading the paper in their own living room."

A self-styled skeptic, Smith believes that man is "self-diminishing and non-progressive"—bound to do evil and largely incorrigible. Even his most scathing indictments of police departments have been tempered by a tender awareness of what policemen as a group are up against. No matter how incompetent or negligent he may think some of them are, he has enormous respect for the average cop, whom he regards as "unhappily caught in a damaging cross fire between the underworld and the upper world." To him, the position policemen find themselves in is sadly symbolic of man's dilemma—of the clash between a halfhearted wish to behave, and thus to have laws and the means of enforcing them, and an almost anarchistic dislike for all authority. Smith has carried his recognition of this fundamental conflict to the point of describing himself as a conservative Christian anarchist. He is in fact conservative, not at all religious, and an anarchist only to the extent that he believes the least possible government to be the best. He looks upon policemen simply as agents of restraint, who should be expected to do little more than keep things from getting out of hand. "I started out with the crusading idea that the policeman represents a remarkable social instrument for improving people, but I've given up the hope that people can be improved—by cops or anybody else," he said not long ago. "We can't expect the police to compel men and women to tidy up their sex lives or to cut down on their drinking and gambling."

Smith and his wife, who is a minister's daughter, have differed for years over the question of uplifting and improving mankind. Mrs. Smith, a handsome woman with a purposeful manner, has consistently associated herself with various national and international movements for bettering society. Commenting on her husband's hardheaded skepticism, she said recently, "I wish he'd



Bruce Smith

devote just a little of his time to something like Boys Town." Smith chuckles at such an idea. He believes firmly that man gets what he deserves. The opportunities his work has given him to observe the dubious interrelation of politics and business have led him to the conclusion that, above all else, this is a nation of "fixers." "The rich father fixes the difficulties his growing son gets into," he says. "The crooked politician fixes the troubles of his lawbreaking constituents. Our national key word is 'fix.'" As Smith sees it, the cop on the beat is in the difficult position of trying to uphold the moral standards of the community while often being almost obliged to be personally dishonest by a complex of *quid-pro-quo* machinery in which he is only a small cog. The American policeman's predicament is partly historical, Smith feels. In "Police Systems in the United States," the best known of several books he has written on the subject of police, he says that the early settlers were so busy battling the wilderness that they had no time "to give much thought to the nice distinctions upon which successful police administration often hinges," and that when at last conscientious citizens did have time to consider such matters, "it was already too late to rescue police from the control of the partisan political machines which have since exploited them so thoroughly and with such devastating effect." After studying over a hundred municipal police departments at first hand, Smith has reached the con-

clusion that nearly all policemen live perpetually under the shadow of political domination. The public, he thinks, has no real interest in cleaning up police departments, for it has a cynical distrust of policemen in general and in particular of the bothersome cop who rides his horse or motorcycle up and down congested city blocks, handing out parking tickets.

The public's resentment toward—or, at best, lack of interest in—its police is, Smith feels, another throwback to earlier and more robustly lawless days. This is a subject upon which he becomes rhapsodic, and in doing so reveals a side of his nature that, in view of his calling, seems downright paradoxical. When Smith ponders the million larcenies and the hundred and sixty-five thousand crimes of violence, including homicides, rapes, robberies, and assaults by gun or knife, that are committed in this country each year, he is not as dismayed by the number of crimes as he is by the crimes themselves, most of which he looks down on as pale and shabby reflections of a former era of splendid criminal ebullience. In "Police Systems in the United States," he writes: "Men lived violently and died by violence in great numbers along the Penobscot and the Kennebec, in the logging camps of Michigan, on the Great Plains, throughout the vast empire that is Texas, among the river towns of the Mississippi, and in the mining settlements of the Far West, long before modern crime had pock-marked Chicago's boulevards with machine-gun fire, made San Francisco's waterfront a battleground for labor warfare, or taken over the purveying of costly vices on Miami's silver shore. It is possible that such latter-day manifestations and many more like them in other communities both large and small may be nothing more than the last degraded form of a lusty

manner of living which once marked the ever advancing frontier. If this conclusion be correct, their final passing will be regretted by many law-abiding Americans who consider violent outbreaks to be an evil but necessary feature of a vigorous race." Here, Smith's friends feel, he casts a harsh spotlight on his own inner conflict. "Bruce was really born too late," one of these told an acquaintance last fall. "The significant words in that statement of his are 'vigorous race' and 'many law-abiding Americans.' By 'many,' Bruce of course means primarily Bruce himself—not that others wouldn't agree with him. On the one hand, he's a thoroughgoing traditionalist, even a Victorian, with a great respect for good behavior and decorum. On the other hand, he wants to kick over the traces and cause a fuss."

To this, Smith unwittingly added his own postscript a few weeks later when someone asked him why it is apparently so much easier to control crime in Great Britain than in the United States. He hesitated for a moment, and then, confidentially lowering his voice, replied, "It's because they're losing their oomph over there. Some of their young punks lack vitality."

IN the opinion of some of Smith's associates, he is not only a cop's cop but the embodiment of what a cop should be. His whole bearing radiates confidence and authority. A native of New York City, he is of Scottish descent and is built along bluff British lines; his manner, too, is as much British as American. Six feet one and straight-backed, with firm, well-shaped features set off by hair



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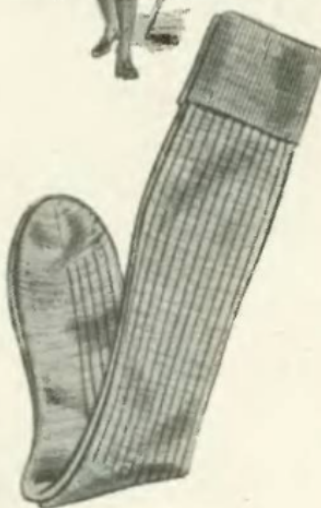
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that is turning white and a full, neatly trimmed mustache, he looks like a roughhewn composite of Dean Acheson and Anthony Eden who might easily be asked to pose for an advertisement for a twenty-year-old Scotch whiskey. Appropriately, since he delights in sailing, he has the air of a polished sea dog. An associate who has known him for forty years remarked recently, "I've always had an image of Bruce standing indomitably at the helm in a storm, his jaw jutting out, at war with the elements." The effect is heightened by a booming voice, which Smith uses to advantage both when he is laughing appreciatively and when he is roaring his disapproval, and by a series of facial expressions that range from the earnest and solicitous to the scowling and morally indignant. A man of swiftly changing moods, he is given to shifting, flashing reactions that often frighten and confound people who don't know him well or who are not sure of their ground. He is more at home with men than with women, and in stag company swears loudly and triumphantly; the men he likes are those who swear with him or back at him with the same zest and extravagance, whether they are policemen defending themselves against his criticism or companions on a cruise.

For many years, Smith made an annual pilgrimage to Canada, where he camped in the wilderness, and fished, and insisted on paddling his canoe on his haunches, Indian style, heedless of the stiffness and pain it caused his middle-aged muscles. "Bruce is at his best when he's enduring hardship," one of Smith's former camping companions has said. "He has a whole set of rules for pleasure as well as for work. When he's fishing, fishing is the most serious thing in the world. The Indian guide has to be an Ojibway, the canoe has to be beached just right, and the tackle has to come from Abercrombie & Fitch." Lately, Smith has confined his spare-time activities pretty much to sailing on Long Island Sound. For the last four years, he has owned a twenty-six-foot racing sloop called the Tartan, which was always the first craft afloat at the Port Jefferson Yacht Club in the spring and the last one out of the basin in the fall. Except that he plans to use the Seawanhaka-Corinthian Yacht Club, at Oyster Bay, as his base of operations, he will undoubtedly follow the same schedule with the Lady Marguerite, a new sloop about a third larger than the Tartan, which he bought several weeks ago in Southampton, during one of his periodic visits to study British police



Who goes there?

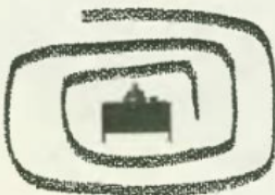
Just recently a famous violinist, starting the third movement of the Sibelius Concerto in D minor, suddenly signaled the conductor to stop and start the movement again. "I just forgot," he told reporters later. "In such a case the best thing to do is stop and start from the beginning."

Well, we've forgotten if we've ever told you in this column the basic facts about Nation's Business — who we are, where we come from, what our job is, and the like. So, with your permission, we too will start from the beginning.

Nation's Business is a monthly magazine for businessmen. It is published by the Chamber of Commerce of the United States. Over the past 10 years it has grown lustily — from 431,385 in 1944 to almost 800,000 today. It reaches the heads of all kinds of businesses, large and small, all over America.

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said there was no crime in their communities. Having heard that the European police were far superior to us in this respect, Smith made a trip through England, France, Belgium, and Germany in 1928, studying the techniques used in those countries. After he returned, he came to the conclusion that perhaps the biggest difficulty here was that all the forty-eight states had different definitions of crimes—breaking and entering, for instance, was subject to various interpretations, some forms of it being a felony in one state and a misdemeanor in another; and there was practically no agreement on how much money had to be involved to turn petty larceny into grand larceny. Smith began by precisely defining the seven types of crime that are most often reported to the police—criminal homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, and auto theft. A bill for the creation of a national bureau of identification was coming up in Congress. Smith went to see the late Fiorello H. LaGuardia, who was then a member of the House Judiciary Committee, which was sponsoring the bill, and proposed that a provision for uniform crime reporting be written into it. LaGuardia agreed, and the bill, with Smith's proposal incorporated in it, was passed in June, 1930. It paved the way for the organization of the F.B.I., under which uniform criminal statistics have been regularly assembled in Washington ever since. All the nation's seven hundred cities of more than twenty-five thousand population, as well as three thousand smaller cities, villages, and rural townships, now co-operate with the F.B.I. by reporting crimes that are committed within their jurisdiction. Their reports show not only the incidence and nature of crime in various parts of the country but details concerning its seasonal, monthly, weekly, and even hourly trends, and the sex, race, and age of criminals. The F.B.I. has not been the sole beneficiary of this information. Lawmakers and judges have been influenced by it, and sociologists and criminologists have found it extremely helpful.

Besides Smith, there are only two men in the United States who devote practically all their time to making police surveys. One of them is Smith's son, Bruce Smith, Jr., who started out in forestry but found the field vastly overcrowded and is now, as a free-lance, re-surveying some of the cities Smith père once surveyed. The other is Earle Garrett, who is also a Smith protégé. The elder Smith's subjects have included the police of Chicago, New Orleans,

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Cincinnati, St. Louis, Kansas City, Milwaukee, and New York. The survey here, which he completed last year, at a cost to the city of eighty-five thousand dollars, has been a source of contention ever since it was made public. Smith, who, with a staff of fifteen, was engaged to do the job by the Mayor's Committee on Management Survey, expressed shock at what he called the consistently poor performance of the New York City Police Department, which, with nearly twenty thousand men, is the largest in the country. When, in November, 1952, he told a public hearing at City Hall not only that New York's police were no longer "the Finest," as the press has doggedly referred to them through good days and bad, but that Milwaukee, Detroit, St. Louis, Los Angeles, and Cincinnati could "give New York cards, spades, and little casino and still have better police departments," the repercussions that followed were not surprising. A policeman wounded in a gun fight with a holdup man in Times Square muttered "To hell with the Bruce Smith report" as he lay on the sidewalk awaiting an ambulance. The *Baltimore Sun* called up and huffily asked why Baltimore had been left out. And Arthur Godfrey cooed to his morning radio audience, "I think we've got the best police force in the United States right here in New York City. Oh, my! Those guys—you never know, you never know. They used to call it New York's Finest? For my money, they always will be New York's Finest. They're a doggone nice bunch of guys, and they try to do a job—all of them." Smith was unmoved by the Godfrey homily. "What I object to is the 'all of them,'" he said. "I don't suppose Mr. Godfrey had time to read the report."

THE contributions Smith has made to efficient police work have been compared to those of the late Dr. Patrick Colquhoun, a London magistrate, who made the first complete police survey in history and in 1796 published a seven-hundred-page book on it, called "A Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis," which thirty-three years later helped bring about the passage by Parliament of England's first great Police Reform Act. In his opening paragraph, Colquhoun wrote, "Next to the blessings which a Nation derives from an excellent Constitution and System of general Laws, are those advantages which result from a well-regulated and energetic plan of Police, conducted and enforced with purity, activity, vigilance,

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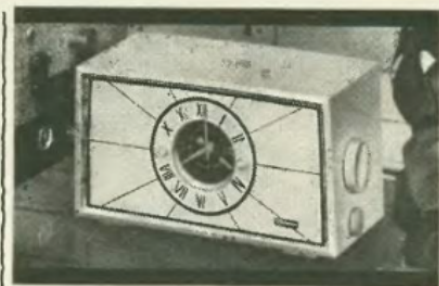
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and discretion." Smith is so wholeheartedly in agreement with this statement that he has been known to recite it in the manner of a Shakespearean actor rolling off a favorite passage from "Hamlet," and he often points out that the origin of our police is fundamentally Anglo-Saxon. The *vigiles* of Emperor Augustus's day were, in their way, policemen, and even they had their predecessors, but, according to Smith, the direct ancestors of the American cop were the members of Sir Robert Peel's New Police, who were organized a hundred and twenty-five years ago by an act of Parliament. Through the years, to be sure, the police of Britain and the police of this country have developed along separate lines, and Smith thinks that the resulting differences have been best summed up by an English friend of his, who once remarked to him, "If the members of an English force were assigned to police an American city, they would all be kidnapped within twenty-four hours, and if some American police were transferred to an English jurisdiction, they would promptly be placed under arrest for abuses of police authority." While Smith feels that the police of England now command a greater respect from the public than ours do, he thinks American policemen can be thankful that they have never been as thoroughly ridiculed as their early British cousins were. He regards such friendly lampooning as the old Keystone Cops and the comic-strip characters who portray "the law" in frantic and futile pursuit of prankish youngsters as pale copies of Shakespeare's Dogberry and Verges of the Watch. "The cops in those days were regarded with open contempt as well as mockery," he says. "Shakespeare almost fixed cops for all time."

The English police tradition stems from the "frankpledge," a system by which the early Anglo-Saxon kings made their subjects responsible for preserving order. These subjects were banded together in small community units of ten families each, called tithings, and every male member of a tithing who was over twelve was held accountable for the conduct of the other members; if no one put the finger on a wrongdoer, the entire group was fined. Each county had its king's steward, or sheriff. His principal duty was to collect the local taxes, but when criminals were at large, it was his auxiliary duty to muster a *posse comitatus* or call upon the law-abiding members of the county to set up a "hue and cry" and join the chase. If caught, criminals were fined, mutilated,



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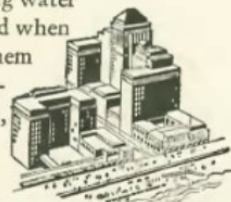
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or killed. In the case of serious crimes, punishment was not meant to be remedial. If a man was found guilty of such a crime and escaped the death penalty, he was branded on the brow with a red-hot poker, or one of his fingers was amputated. This was not to teach him a lesson but to mark him as a criminal. The early English sheriffs enjoyed little popularity; since they had usually bought their appointments from the Crown, their principal lookout, once they had raised an acceptable amount in taxes for the king, was to raise money for themselves. Early in the reign of Edward I, they were replaced by constables, who were appointed by the Crown for the primary purpose of preserving law and order, and thus were the first civil police officers. They had a harder time than the sheriffs, for they had to chase criminals all by themselves. Because many found this altogether too difficult, it became common practice to hire substitutes.

In 1285, under the Statute of Winchester, a "watch-and-ward" system was created—the first comprehensive attempt to deal with crime. It provided for a constant guard of six men at each gate of every walled town; in London, supplementary "marching watches" were instituted—roving guards, who were the first cops on a beat. For centuries, it remained necessary to protect oneself, however, and wealthy persons hired flambeau bearers and private guards, especially in London, where bands of young toughs set up reigns of terror. Smith, whose mind is so imbued with historical parallels that he often undermines his own theory of man as self-diminishing and non-progressive by recalling a worse mess in the past, may interrupt a discussion of present-day juvenile delinquency to cite an article published in London in 1712, which described the activities of a gang known as the Mohocks as follows:

Their way is to meet people in the streets and stop them and begin to banter them, and if they make any answer they lay on them with sticks, and toss them from one to another in a very rude manner. They attacked the watch in Devereux Court and Essex Street, made them scower. . . . They likewise rowled a woman in a tub down Snow Hill, that was going to market, set other women on their heads, misusing them in a barbarous manner.

In the middle of the eighteenth century, Sir John Fielding, a London magistrate, inaugurated a system of roving detectives known as the Bow Street Runners. The performance of the Runners—there were eighteen small patrols of them—quickly surpassed that of the



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two thousand-odd watchmen and constables who had been policing London, but while they succeeded pretty well at rounding up the leaders of predatory gangs, riots, robberies, and murders were such a commonplace there that in 1812 a special Parliamentary committee was appointed to find some way of "combatting the savage tendencies of the people," as a contemporary writer put it. At one of the committee's hearings, a Bow Street Runner testified that the streets of Westminster, especially Duck Lane, Gravel Lane, and Cock Lane, were so thickly infested by "desperate men" that "no policeman dared venture there unless accompanied by five or six of his comrades, for fear of being cut to pieces."

With the creation of Peel's New Police in 1829, London got its first citywide police force. The New Police consisted of three thousand men, picked for character and intelligence, and their headquarters were on the short street off Whitehall called Scotland Yard. In Smith's view, Peel's organization provided the basis of the modern centralized police system. "If all cops were as good as Peel's cops were, I'd have been out of business long ago," he says. In spite of their efficiency, however—or perhaps because of it—the New Police aroused fierce resentment; the public had not forgotten the police tyranny in France before the Revolution, and it regarded efficient police supervision as interference, and even espionage. The New Police force was referred to as Peel's Bloody Gang, and there were rumors that the Duke of Wellington was planning to use it to bring off a *coup d'état* that would establish him as a military dictator. Peel's men were frequently beaten up on the streets.

Although the police of New York have never been as strenuously and persistently abused as their London counterparts were in those days, they have had their troubles, too. The first police force here was the old Dutch Rattle Watch; its original five members were appointed in 1658 by Peter Stuyvesant, the colony's director-general, and they considerably carried rattles to warn thieves of their approach. After an interim of watch-and-ward and constable forces of British derivation, this outfit was succeeded at the beginning of the nineteenth century by the Leatherheads, who made their presence known by crying out the hour. This force, which was under the jurisdiction of the City Council, was a motley collection of what one newspaper called "jaded stevedores and teamsters," who patrolled Manhattan at

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night, prudently confining their activities to the so-called lamp district, south of Fourteenth Street; they were paid a dollar a night in summer and a dollar and a quarter in winter. Only half of the force was on duty each night. When they weren't patrolling, they stood in watch boxes, which were like sentry boxes, and the rougher element delighted in tipping these over while they were occupied. In 1844, a series of racial and political riots led the New York legislature to step in and replace the Leatherheads with a day-and-night force of eight hundred men, called the Municipal Police, under a chief who was appointed by the mayor. The privilege of appointing district captains, however, was given to local aldermen, with the result that discipline was slack. All the members of the new force were supposed to dress alike, though there were no uniforms as such, but in practice the police of each ward dressed as they saw fit, claiming they were not "serfs" and refusing to wear what they called "a badge of servility." Some wore white ducks and straw hats in summer, and gaily colored trousers and soft felt hats when the weather was cool. "If they were mustered together, they'd look like Falstaff's regiment," one commentator wrote. "They inspire no respect, they create no fear."

Rioting increased during the second half of the century, in large part because almost half the force was Irish and racial tensions were growing. In 1857, the state legislature replaced the Municipal Police with a Metropolitan Police force of two thousand, under a board of five commissioners selected by the governor to represent New York, Brooklyn, and nearby counties. The city reacted violently to this increase of state control. Mayor Fernando Wood almost fomented a local civil war when he summoned the members of the superseded force to City Hall and pledged them his support. Street gangs took sides with one group of police or the other. One day, when the 7th Regiment was marching down Broadway to the Battery, where it was to embark for Boston, it was called upon to fall out and break up an open battle between the two forces. In the end, the Metropolitan force won out and the quality of police work in the city improved, but resentment against the state's intervention continued. In 1870, Boss Tweed took over the city, and with it the police, and during the years of his notorious administration politics and graft prevailed. It was not until 1901 that the force was unified under a single commissioner,



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appointed by the mayor, and chaos gave way to a semblance of order. Smith's characteristic reaction to all these shenanigans is "This has always been one hell of a tough city to be a cop in."

LIKE most boys in New York City around the beginning of this century, Smith grew up with neither any intense hatred nor any great admiration for policemen. He has a fuzzy recollection that there was a red-headed cop on the beat in his neighborhood who was jovial enough, but, along with the majority of his comrades, he was inclined to regard all cops as pests who interfered with such normal pursuits as batting baseballs through windows and throwing snowballs with rocks in them. Smith was born in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn, a direct descendant of one of the early settlers on Long Island, who held a large crown grant of land between Huntington and Port Jefferson and for whom the present Smithtown is named. Smith's father was a banker, a real-estate operator, and a prominent Republican, whose patience was frequently taxed by his son's neighborhood escapades, which were numerous. "Any boy who doesn't belong to a gang isn't brought up well," Smith says today in his own defense, and to the bewilderment of people who don't understand his many-sided nature. Smith attended Public School No. 3, on Bedford Avenue, and Erasmus Hall High School, and then his father sent him to Wesleyan, hoping he would subside in the placid surroundings of Middletown, Connecticut, but Smith's college pranks became a Wesleyan tradition. Last summer, accompanied by a New England police chief who is a friend of his, he drove through Middletown and astonished the chief by the pride with which he recalled his college antics. "He took special pains to point out the hill near Main Street he used to roll cannon balls down, and said he'd swiped the cannon balls from monuments," the chief said later. "And he showed me the dormitory window he fired a sixteen-gauge shotgun from. He made it all so realistic I almost put a pinch on him." Smith's most memorable performance was in 1913, his senior year. Having strongly objected to compulsory attendance at Sunday chapel, he went over to Hartford one Saturday and bought a stopwatch, which he carried to chapel with him the next morning. "The chaplain was particularly long-winded that Sunday," Smith says. "When he finally finished, I got up and announced that



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the prayer alone had taken seven and six-tenths minutes. The old boy didn't appreciate it." Smith was expelled. Wesleyan at first refused to transfer his credits elsewhere but reconsidered when a friend of his father's threatened to change his mind about a donation he was thinking about making to the college. ("Another case of the good old American fix for you," Smith points out amiably.) Smith thereupon enrolled at Columbia, but not before the president of Wesleyan had personally warned the dean of Columbia that the university would be acting "at its own peril."

Being back in New York seemed to chasten Smith. Two encounters in particular helped quiet him down. He met his future wife, Mary Rowell, on Long Island, and he met the late Charles A. Beard at Columbia. By the time he had married Miss Rowell, in October, 1915, he was attending Columbia Law School and spending his spare time at the New York Bureau of Municipal Research, at 261 Broadway, of which Beard was the director and which was the forerunner of the Institute of Public Administration. Smith's feeling for Beard amounts to reverence. "Uncle Charlie took me out of the Lion bar, on a Hundred and Tenth Street, and put me in the library," he says. "The man's appeal to a young, inquiring, and naïve mind was simply overpowering." Although Smith got his law degree, he never took the bar examination. Instead, he began studying under Beard for a doctorate in government and working for the Research Bureau on projects involving municipal finance. One morning in 1916, Smith was poring over some figures relating to St. Louis's sinking fund when the head of the Bureau's field-work division received an emergency call for an assistant from one of his representatives, who was making a study of the Police Department in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. He chose Smith for the job. "That's how I got into police work," Smith recalls. "I was dragged in squealing and protesting. I knew nothing about cops. Boy, how I hated to leave those actuarial tables! So much for ordering your own life. More likely you get pitchforked into it."

Smith spent the afternoon hurriedly boning up on police work and took a late-evening train to Harrisburg, where he was met by the Bureau representative, Clement J. Driscoll, a former deputy police commissioner of New York. They stayed up all night discussing Harrisburg's police problems. "We even visited a few of the local dens of sin in the course of our study," Smith



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says. "I'm afraid that by daybreak I didn't have a very clear grasp of the issues involved. And then Clem made a speech to the Chamber of Commerce and took off for New York, leaving me with nothing but the perspiration on my hands." Smith stayed on in Harrisburg for three weeks, living in a small frame hotel and eating all his meals at the railroad-station restaurant. His task was to prepare a system for keeping detailed records of complaints received by the police, and he performed it so diligently—"I had everything in it from a dumbwaiter being stuck in a shaft to a dead horse being found on the street," he says—that when he attempted to turn the analysis over to the clerk of the City Council, as he had been instructed to do, the man declined to accept it. "He glanced over it and his eyes began to glaze," Smith recalls. "Then he whispered, 'That's fine, son, that's fine. Just pick me out three or four general types and we'll let it go at that.' The fellow wasn't antagonistic to me. I just gave him indigestion by throwing too much at him at once."

When the United States entered the First World War, Smith enlisted in the Aviation Section of the Signal Corps. He was given an eight-week indoctrination course at Cornell, and was then sent as an aviation cadet to Kelly Field No. 2, in Texas, where he started in on Curtiss Jenny trainers, the old JN-4s. "The exhaust pipes were right alongside the cockpit, and when I landed, my face used to be streaked with carbon like Casey Jones," Smith says. "We thought we were knights of the air for a fare-thee-well." In August, 1918, he went overseas as a second lieutenant. Out of five thousand American pilots in Europe, only six hundred and forty-two ever saw action over the front, and Smith was not one of them. "The rest of us spent our time drinking wine and standing two formations a day," he says. "We got to Paris fairly often, but the road to the front was a long one." Smith kept up with the war by reading newspapers, and he was glad when the armistice came. More than twenty years later—two days after Pearl Harbor—he was summoned to Washington to help rid the Army Air Forces of dead wood, and he was instrumental in shifting about three hundred and fifty colonels to field duty. Some of these colonels had been among the six hundred and forty-two pilots he had envied during the earlier war; they had since become sacred cows, for whom, with the nation once again at war, there was no longer desk space in Washington. The late

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General H. H. Arnold, Commanding General of the Army Air Forces and a pioneer flier himself, did his best to save some of his old friends from exile, even threatening at one point to commission Smith, so that he could order him around. "Bruce was the only man I ever saw talk back to Hap Arnold," an officer who was working in Washington at the time said not long ago. "He just roared right back, 'What the hell do you think I'm here for?' Arnold subsided."

AS soon as Smith got back from France and was discharged, he reported to the Research Bureau and was sent to Newark to help out on a survey of the governmental relationships between that city and its satellite communities. In 1923, he went to New Orleans, on what proved to be his first big job as a police expert. When he arrived there, gambling was wide open, prohibition had already become a joke, and dope was being smuggled in through the nearby bayous. The city, which had just started on one of its periodic spasms of purity, was closing down the prostitution cribs in the French Quarter, and there was a lot of opposition. The police were handicapped by a history of cop-fighting in the city that went back to Reconstruction days, when an all-Negro force used to engage in pitched battles with white mobs. The situation Smith found was one that he has come to consider typical. He calls it creeping paralysis and defines it as too many policemen with easy desk jobs and too few out on the street. During a six-week stay in New Orleans, he managed to create a more mobile police force and improve the detective system. The city has been an object lesson to Smith in man's tendency to retrogress; indeed, it may have done a good deal to crystallize his philosophical attitude. Recalled to New Orleans in 1946 to make another survey, under another reform rule—this one headed by Mayor deLesseps Morrison, who was trying to toe a difficult line between cleaning up the city and not being a kill-joy—Smith found that law enforcement had slipped badly and that again too many members of the Police Department had found sanctuary behind desks. He recommended a fresh start, which would include increased foot and motor patrols during the night hours and a tighter precinct organization. Returning a year later, for yet a third survey, he noted in his report that the superintendent of police had "adhered with extraordinary fidelity" to the spirit of the previous sur-

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vey but warned that New Orleans must "continue alert." New Orleans failed to heed Smith's warning; it has recently suffered a fresh batch of scandals involving its police. "You've got to want reform to get it," Smith says. "It's not like taking the waters. It's a major operation."

In making surveys of big cities, Smith generally has a team of several assistants—salaried, as he is—upon whom he imposes an almost military discipline. He has found this necessary because of the hostility that he and his men usually encounter when they arrive in a community, even though the survey has been requested by officials or respected civic groups. "By the time you reach one of these towns you've been so publicized that you can bet the whole Police Department is against you," one of his assistants has said. "They'll all have themselves convinced that you're longhairs getting a hundred thousand dollars for a couple of months' work that will end with half the force being fired. Everything you want disappears—the fingerprint records, the day and night books in the station houses, everything. Nobody knows from nothing. All you get is blank stares. A large section of the public is against you, too, and so are the politicians, who are afraid you'll uncover something bad. The newspapers profess to like you, but they'd just love to catch you raping a high-school girl. Bruce always makes sure the staff digs in at the outset and works and lives as unobtrusively as possible. You eat all your meals together, and after supper you just go upstairs and talk things over. It's a seven-day-a-week deal. You're allowed to get drunk on your last night." Smith has not always been so hard on himself. In company with Raymond Moley, with whom he did several police and crime surveys in the twenties, he used to while away nocturnal hours in local burlesque houses. "Bruce has since elevated his sights to opera," Moley says. "Nowadays I see him from time to time at the Met."

On only one occasion has Smith suggested the possibility of anything so drastic as the firing of a whole police force. This was in 1930 in Chicago, where he had conducted an eighteen-month survey and found "oppression, futility, and corruption—corruption everywhere!" To his mind, a wholesale dismissal was "the shortest road to police rehabilitation." Smith considers Chicago "the most perfect example of civic failure" he has ever come across, and, possibly for that reason, his most fascinating subject—a boisterous and profligate



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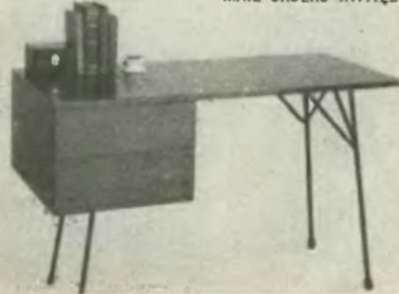
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but intrepid old frontier battle-axe, a kind of Marie Dressler among cities. He was at first not at all eager to go to Chicago, because he feared that under the regime of William (Big Bill) Thompson, who was then the mayor, he wouldn't be allowed to "burrow in." Presently, however, a group of civic leaders headed by Sewell Avery and Elmer T. Stevens pledged him its support and persuaded him that he would not be wasting his time. Once the survey had started, he received additional backing when he revealed that in all of Chicago's two hundred and eleven square miles there were never more than two hundred and fifty police on beats at a given moment, or one foot patrolman for every thirteen thousand inhabitants; the rest of the members of the force, which numbered 6,712 men, were off duty, on traffic or special assignments, or at desk jobs. As a consequence of these disclosures, twice as many men were sent out on patrol, and at the same time the total strength of the force was reduced, because economy was imperative.

While Smith's proposal to dismiss the entire force and start from scratch was overruled, many of his other proposals were acted upon, with the result that gang killings decreased at once. One killing that occurred shortly before the survey was completed actually helped Smith, because it intensified public interest in police reform. This was the shooting of Alfred (Jake) Lingle, a crime reporter on the *Chicago Tribune*. Anticipating a renewed uproar over the Police Department, in the course of which the files he had accumulated at Police Headquarters during the course of his investigation might well disappear, Smith hurriedly scooped up his documents and hid them in a building in the University of Chicago. The expected uproar started immediately, and the police commissioner was fired. Although Smith has never liked to inject himself into local affairs to the extent of recommending a candidate for office (and he has always refused to be a candidate himself when this has been suggested), he made no bones about being pleased when a little-known captain on the force named James P. Allman was chosen as the new commissioner. "Allman had no political ties and belonged to nothing except a golf club," Smith recalls. "His only friends were a doctor, and a priest in another parish." In 1931, Smith went back to Chicago and spent two years revamping the Department still further. Under Allman, crime in Chicago decreased considerably, but

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when he retired in 1946, after a record fifteen years as commissioner, the Police Department began to go sour again. Smith has turned down two offers to return, but his son has recently participated in a survey of Chicago's police, made under the auspices of a management-consultant firm. "They still remember the name out there," the younger Smith says. "I got a lot of growls from the old-timers on the beat who remembered the nice soft deal of phoning in from a grog shop to a friendly desk sergeant that Pop queered."

SMITH looks upon his survey of the New York City Police Department, which he began in the fall of 1951, as the most complicated task he has ever undertaken. He found the Department to be, among other things, badly organized, clannish, and full of false pride, and the accuracy of these findings would seem to be confirmed by the fact that they got a quick and hurt response both from the police themselves and from other city officials. A few of his relatively minor recommendations, such as the elimination of police payroll guards for private concerns and a more stringent program of police-vehicle maintenance, were quietly adopted, but the most far-reaching ones were pretty much pigeonholed. George P. Monaghan, who was police commissioner at the time the survey was made, at first endorsed it but later grew cool toward it, especially after the so-called "line organizations," led by the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association, bitterly assailed it. But Smith has not lost hope. The new commissioner, Francis W. H. Adams, has already set about tightening up discipline in the Department in a manner that causes Smith to smile and the P.B.A. to wring its hands in anguish. It seems fairly certain that the P.B.A.'s official opinion of Smith's report is not unanimously shared by the rank-and-file members of the force. After Smith had informed the New York police that they were no longer "the Finest," several hundred curious cops dropped in at the offices of the Institute of Public Administration and got copies of the report—tucking them surreptitiously into their trouser tops, like belly warmers—and a number of them later privately assured Smith that they thought his criticisms were just.

As the core of his plan, Smith recommended the creation of nineteen free-wheeling forces, each consisting of seven hundred and fifty to a thousand men headed by an inspector, each with its own equipment and its own specialized

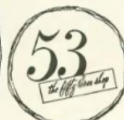
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squads, and each responsible for an area of from four to six precincts. A mobile general staff, working out of Headquarters under the chief inspector, would command these field forces, much as an army corps maintains control over its divisions on the battlefield. Smith also recommended consolidating the duties of the seven deputy police commissioners and cutting the number down to five, or even three. Those in charge of such bureaucratic functions as maintenance and personnel, he says, need not be trained as policemen and civilian experts might actually do the work better, but at least one deputy should be an experienced policeman who would roam around the city as "the commissioner's eyes and ears." In another section of the report, Smith recommended that at least twelve hundred more men be sent out on beats but that the total police force, which then numbered nineteen thousand three hundred, be cut by about a thousand. The desk jobs of fifteen hundred policemen could be discontinued, he contended, and those of eleven hundred more could be filled by civilian clerks, and in both instances most of the men who had been holding them would be assigned for duty on the streets.

In various parts of the city where muggings and assaults had been increasing for several years—notably on the upper West Side of Manhattan—Smith found that neighborhood civic groups, aroused by the sketchy way precinct station houses kept their crime records, were keeping their own records and sending them to Headquarters in the hope of needling the higher-ups into providing more nearly adequate police protection. "Cops in this city started out by misleading the public and ended up by misleading themselves," Smith says. He noted in his report that in 1949 the F.B.I. found the New York police so lax in keeping records of crimes that it refused to accept their figures in getting up standardized crime reports on the nation at large. On paper, New York presented a rosy picture, with arrests for crimes against property running as much as fifty per cent below the national average. Actually, insurance companies were paying off on twice as many losses as the police were reporting. When the reporting of crimes against property began to improve, thanks to a new complaints bureau that was organized under Smith's direction, robberies apparently increased four hundred per cent, larcenies seven hundred per cent, and burglaries thirteen hundred per cent. In some quarters, these figures were

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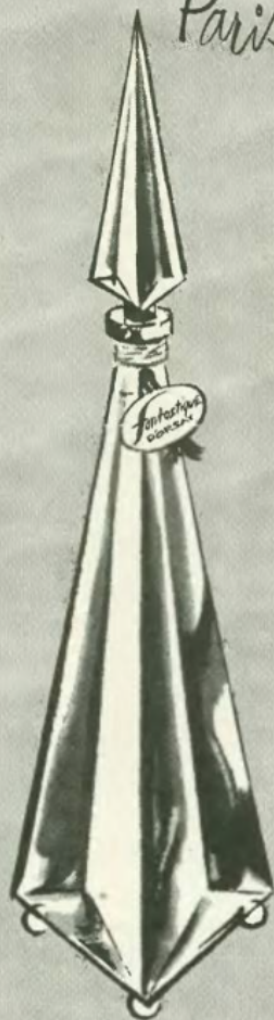
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"SOMEONE LOVELY JUST PASSED BY"

taken to mean that the city was having a crime wave, but Smith reassured the public by announcing over the radio that it was simply benefiting from "a crime-reporting wave." In 1952, the F.B.I. began accepting New York's crime reports again.

Some of Smith's sharpest criticism was directed at the way New York policemen are selected, trained, and disciplined. He recently told the International Association of Chiefs of Police that "the destructive effects of Civil Service domination over the police forces of our three largest cities should be a warning to police throughout the land." The Civil Service Commission here, he found, was extremely careless about its medical examinations; these took an average of forty-five seconds, he reported, and sometimes failed to spot men with flat feet, bad hearing, or histories of mental disorders. Only ten per cent of the candidates for rookie policemen were undergoing character investigations, Smith discovered. When Commissioner Monaghan later announced that the percentage had risen from ten to sixty, Smith was not satisfied. "If we still don't know anything about the character of forty per cent of the rookies we send out on the streets armed with guns, the police force constitutes a major hazard to public safety," he said. Smith feels that policemen should be chosen by the police force itself, and, once the physically and morally unfit have been carefully weeded out, should be picked for their native intelligence and their common sense rather than for their book learning. "I don't care if a rookie thinks the Duke of Wellington is a man, a horse, or a smoking tobacco," he remarked not long ago. "Police business is an intensely human affair. What counts is a man's character—his ethical standards, his physical courage, and his ability to resist boredom on the beat."

While Smith was looking into the matter of police discipline, he examined the Department's records for the past twenty years. He learned that of five hundred and eighty-four multiple offenders who have been given Departmental trials during that time, eighty-eight per cent were found guilty but thirty-one per cent were let off with reprimands, thirty-seven per cent were docked a day's pay or less, eighteen per cent were fined more heavily, and only two per cent were discharged or allowed to resign. One policeman with forty charges against him, which included assaulting civilians, being drunk, and losing his gun, had been fined a total

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of thirty-three days' pay. "Nobody expects cops to be plaster saints, but we were amazed at what they had been getting away with here," Smith says. When Commissioner Adams recently sent plainclothesmen into the precincts to check up on discipline, and thereby became involved in a controversy with the P.B.A., which claimed he was reverting to the old spy system called "shoo-fly," Smith strongly supported him. "What do you do when the mice are loose—bell the cat?" he demanded. Poor discipline, he points out, leads to police brutality. His own views about cops who act tough have changed since he embarked on his career. "Thirty years ago, rough-and-ready police methods were pretty generally accepted," he says. "We were a gun-toting people and not too far removed from the old wild and woolly. Cops needed short cuts, folks felt, and I went along with the idea. But as time passed, I started wondering why our cops weren't getting more public support, and when I went abroad, I found out. The police in England, France, and Belgium, I discovered, were respected by the public because they were using lawful methods. But don't get me wrong. You can't bring the punctilious demeanor of the cricket field to this New York jungle. This is a place where you've got to start your haymaker way down low and let it fly. I think we'll win our fight for better policing in this town, but I'm not suggesting, mind you, that what we may accomplish now will have a lasting effect on the future. There'll always be plenty of wickedness to keep cops busy."

—ROBERT SHAPLEN

Q. How can I economize on fruit stain from a dress or tablecloth?

A. Less sugar will be required if one teaspoon of lemon juice is added to every pound of fruit.—*Annapolis (Md.) Capital.*

Next question.

From Strasbourg we've received another shipment of that delicious parfait de foie gras. There is something reassuring in the circumstance that the price hasn't gone up.—*Adv. in the Los Angeles Times.*

Well, that's the *only* reassuring thing about it.

HOW'S THAT AGAIN? DEPARTMENT
[From a review of "Coriolanus" in the *Daily Worker*]

In viewing this piece it would be a mistake to expect Shakespeare to be more democratic or anti-democratic than he could be an aviator.



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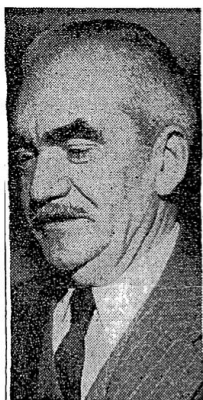
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The New York Times, 1952
Bruce Smith

BRUCE SMITH DIES; CRIMINOLOGIST, 63

Public Administration Expert
Revised Police Departments,
Taught at F. B. I. Academy

Special to The New York Times.

SOUTHAMPTON, L. I., Sept. 18—Bruce Smith, criminologist and director of the Institute of Public Administration, died this morning in Southampton Hospital of a heart attack. He was 63 years old.

Mr. Smith, whose home was at 19 Kensington Road, Garden City, had been in the hospital since Aug. 16 with a lung ailment. He had been stricken aboard his yacht.

Never Wore Uniform

Mr. Smith, who never wore a police uniform, had the reputation of knowing more about police work than any other man in this century. He knew the insides of police stations from coast to coast, rode patrol cars, went on raids and was familiar with the jobs—with definite ideas on how they could be done better—of law enforcers from rural constables to big city police commissioners.

Two years after his graduation in 1914 from Columbia College, Mr. Smith joined the staff of the Institute of Public Administration. He became an expert on police methods and administration, traveling across the country and revising police systems at the request of local and state governments.

In 1950-51, at the request of the Mayor's Committee on Management Survey, Mr. Smith studied the New York City Police Department and made broad recommendations for tightening its efficiency. He told the city officials bluntly that their police force was no longer "the finest" and that several other cities could "give New York cards, spades and Little Casino and still have better police departments."

Mr. Smith's remarks aroused controversy and some police tempers flared. But his recommendations resulted in improvements, including elimination of many indoor jobs and transfer of others to civilians, that increased greatly the number of policemen on patrol.

Put Civilians at Crossings

He was responsible also for the institution in New York of one of his favorite projects—the appointment of civilian guards for school crossings, freeing regular patrolmen from intermittent traffic crossing duty.

Mr. Smith worked out, from 1928 to 1930, a system of uniform crime reporting that was quickly adopted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and later by the New York and other police departments. He had been a visiting faculty member at the F.B.I. national police training academy since its inception in 1935.

J. Edgar Hoover, director of the F.B.I., said last night:

"The imprint left by Bruce Smith on American law enforcement will survive his passing. An expert in municipal management, he sought through his analyses of numerous American cities to have police departments operate on an efficient basis."

Police Commissioner Stephen P. Kennedy of New York said Mr. Smith's death was "a tremendous shock."

"We have lost a friend and critic whom it will be impossible to replace," Commissioner Kennedy added.

Working on Two Surveys

Mr. Smith was working on surveys and recommendations for Michigan and Connecticut when he was taken ill. He was the author of several works on police methods, the best known being "Police Systems in the United States." He was a member of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, a tribute to his criminology studies.

For many years Mr. Smith had served intermittently as acting director of the Institute of Public Administration, a non-profit research group, during the absence on special studies all over the country of its director, Luther Gulick. He became director in 1954 after Mayor Wagner named Dr. Gulick as City Administrator.

Mr. Smith was a member of the New York State Law Revision Commission from 1934 to 1945; chairman of the Commission to Revise the New York Code of Criminal Procedure from 1933 to 1939, and member of the New York State Commission for the Administration of Justice from 1931 to 1939.

He was born in Brooklyn and held B. S., M. A. and LL. B. degrees from Columbia University.

Survivors include his widow, the former Mary Rowell; a son, Bruce Jr., also a police management survey expert; a daughter, Mrs. David Justice of Ridgewood, N. J., and a sister, Mrs. Marion Torreson.