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## **Joan of Arc: The Story Behind the Statues**

Betty Lou Harman

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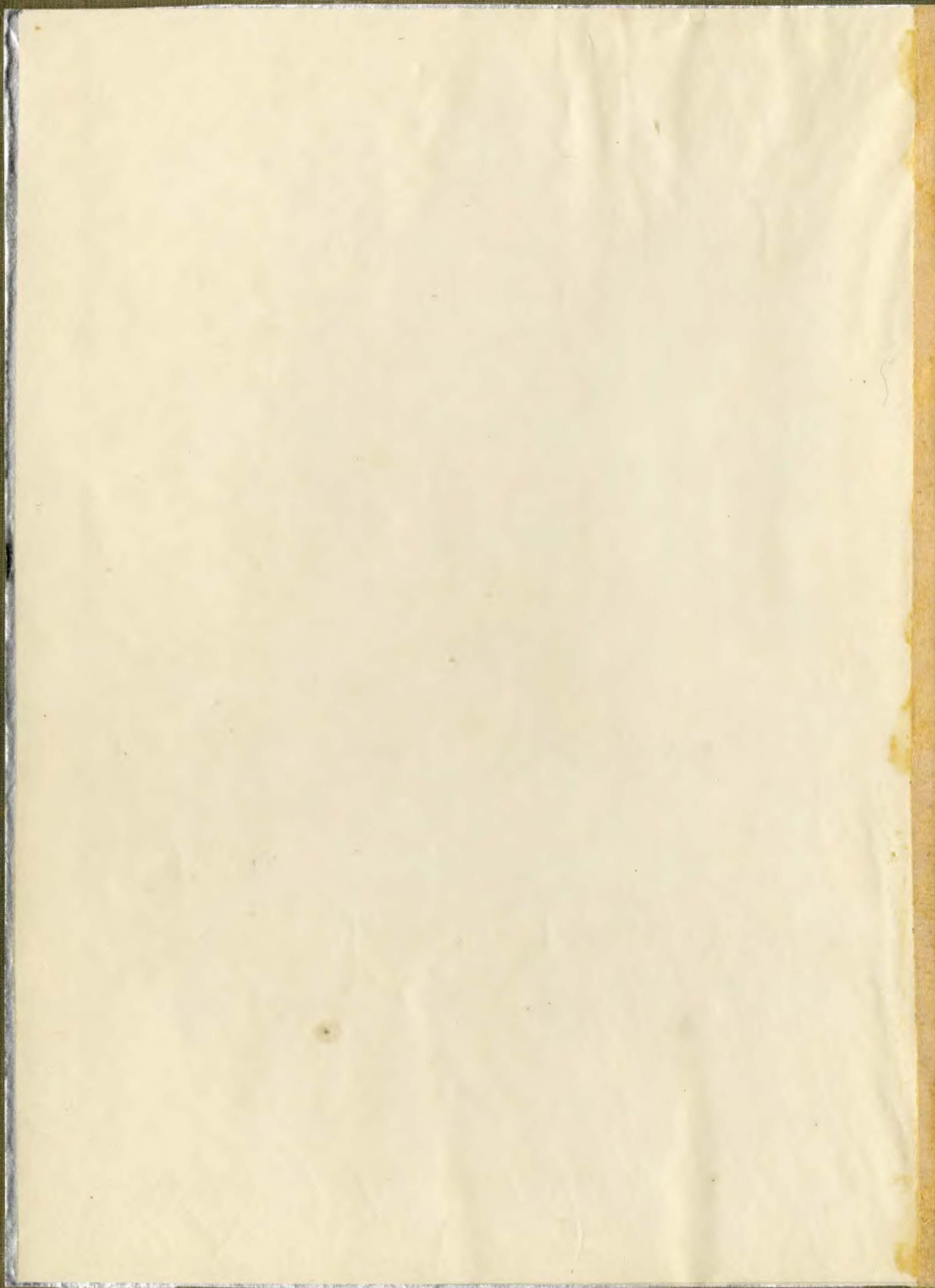
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Joan of Arc

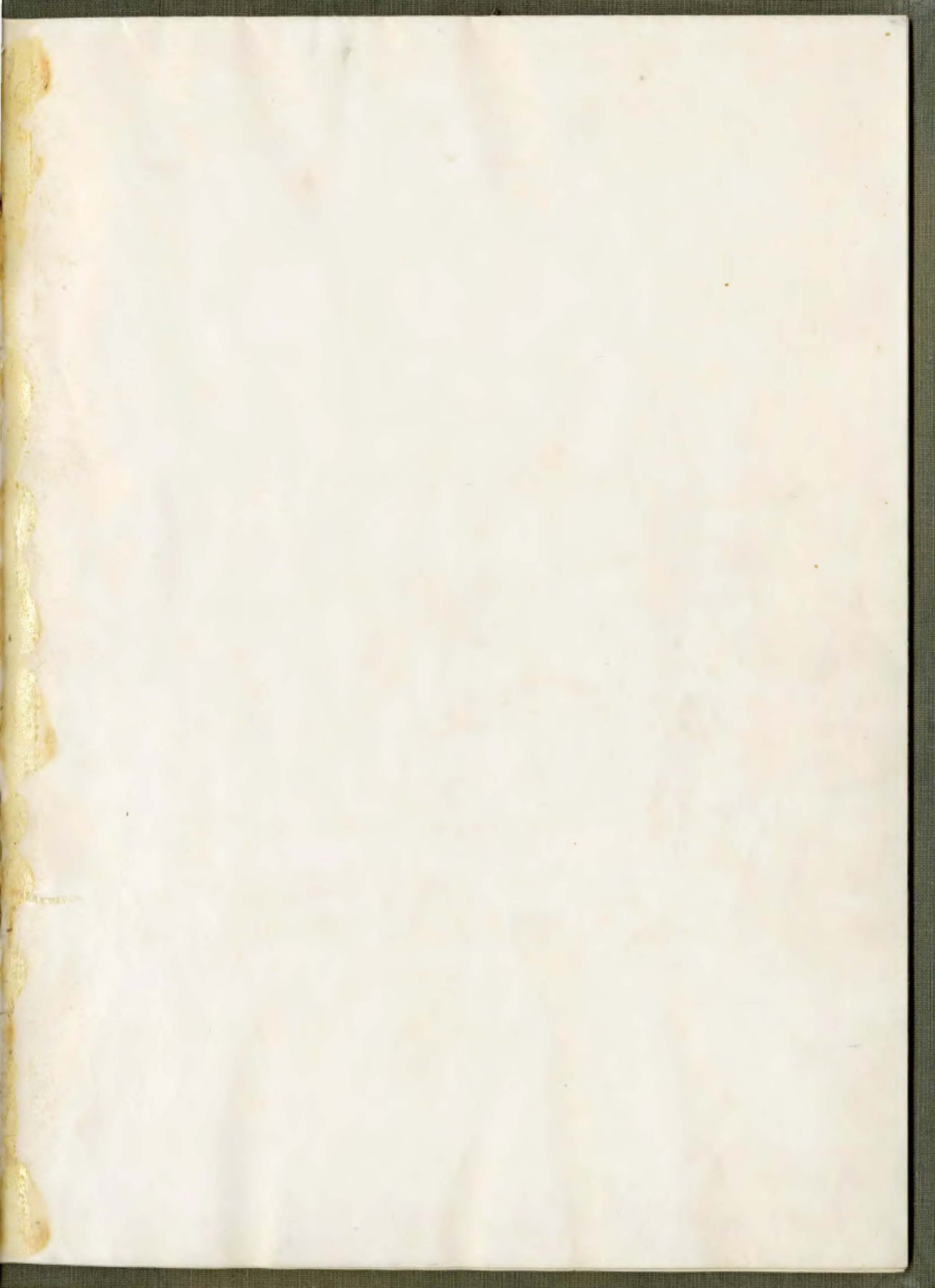
The Story Behind the Statues

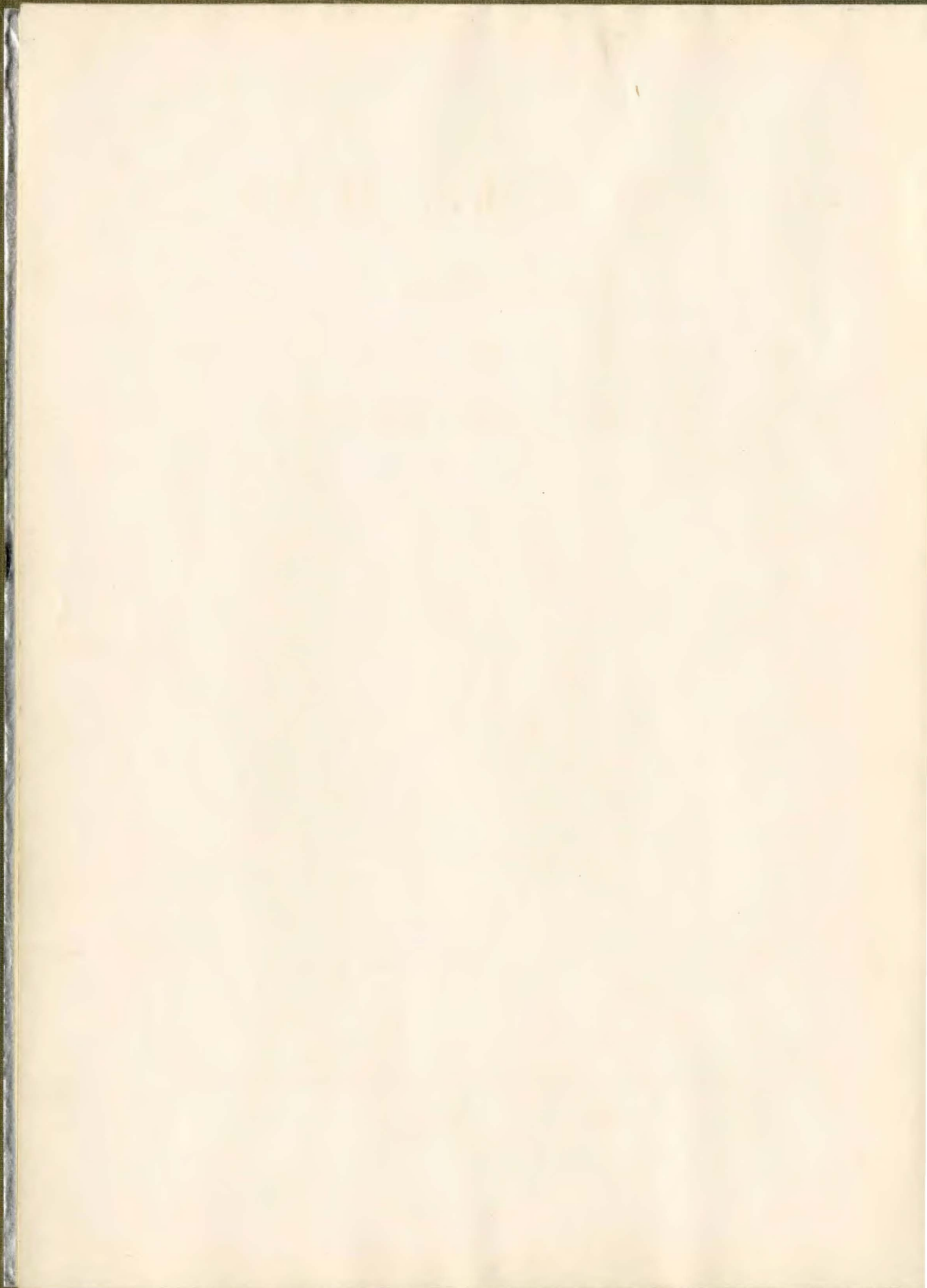
by

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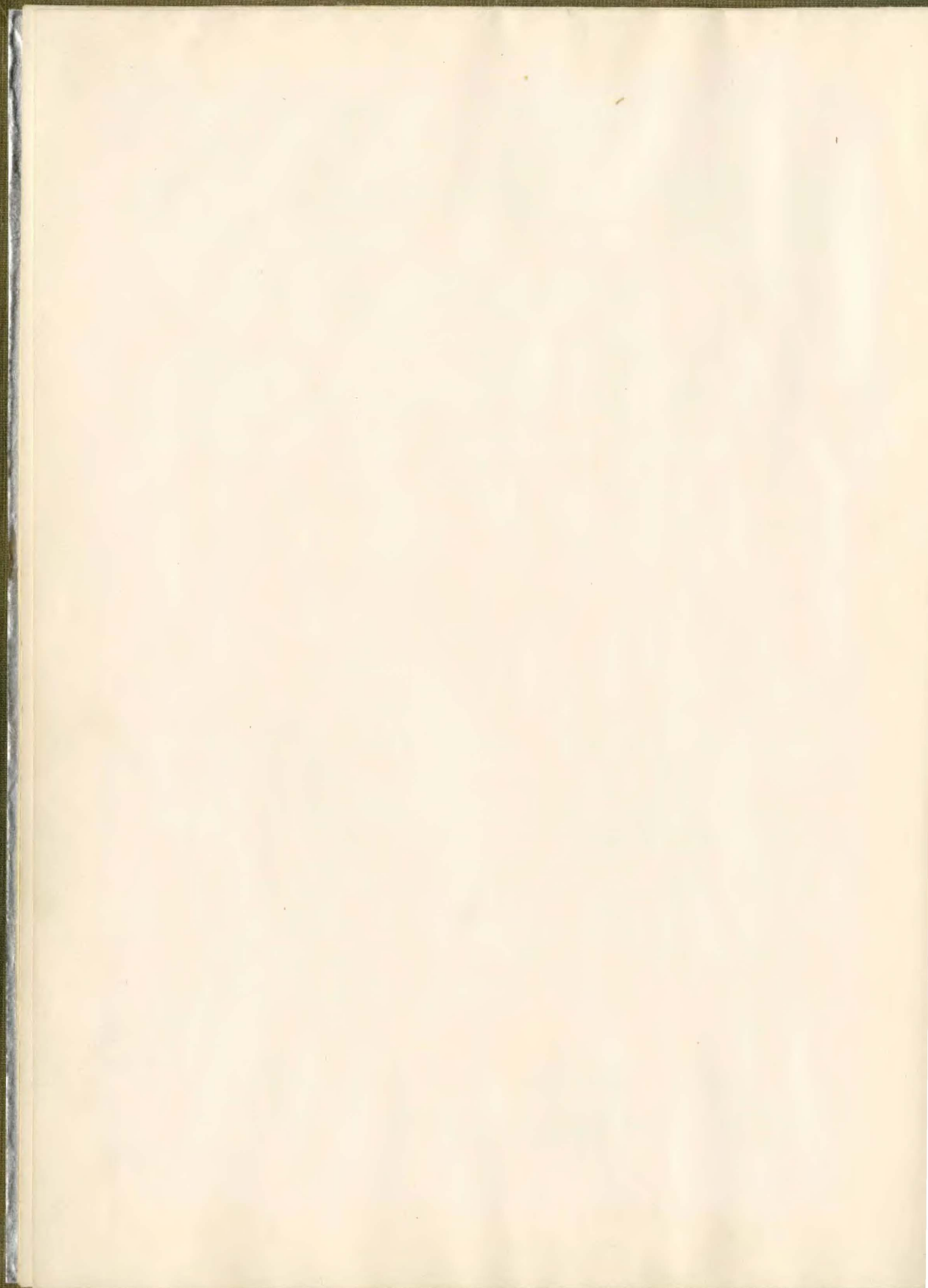
# "THE STORY BEHIND THE STATUES"

Joan of Arc

by

BETTY LOU HARMON<sup>A</sup>

Longwood College, Farmville, Virginia  
February, 1951







acknowledgements:

pictures: courtesy of Miss Lucille Jennings,  
literary advisor

typing: by Anne Lumsden

binding: by Lucy Jane B. Morton





No. 512 Joan of Arc  
Chapu, (1833-1891)

Phototext Junior

Art Extension Press, Inc.

Westport, Conn.

Original, Louvre, Paris  
French School

## THE STORY BEHIND THE STATUES

Joan of Arc

by  
Betty Lou Harman.

Joan of Arc will never die, though history says she lived only nineteen years. Today, she stands out as a symbol of eagerness and bravery; of loyalty to purpose and faithfulness to duty; of service to her country and her fellowman. Because the spirit of Joan of Arc is what it is, the young women of Longwood College more than a quarter of a century ago chose her as their ideal—as their "patron saint"

Today, two statues of the Maid of Orleans stand on our campus. To the class of 1914, we are indeed grateful for their gift of the statue of Joan of Arc that now stands in the center of the Rotunda where it arrests the attention of thousands of students and visitors. This statue is a reproduction of the famous one chiseled in 1870 by the French sculptor, Henri-Michel-Antoine Chapu of Paris. He called it "Jeanne d'Arc ecoutant les voix" (Joan of Arc Listening to the Voices). Today, the original stands in the Museum of Luxembourg, Paris.

Throughout the years that thoughtful listening look on the little French maid's face has inspired all kinds of people of the Old World to higher things. Likewise, for years it has inspired Longwood students to higher ideals.

Mari Bristow, now Mrs. Thomas J. Starke of Richmond, Virginia, was the president of that "famous" 1914 class. Somehow her father, Mr. R.C. Bristow, caught her enthusiasm and made a gift that covered the cost of the transportation of <sup>the</sup> statue, and the building of the pedestal. Her letter, which I quote here in part, tells the story back of the statue in the Rotunda.



Dear Betty Lou,

Endeavoring to decide upon a theme for the salutatory address for graduation exercises, June 1914, I appealed to Mr. James Grainger for help. From his suggestions, I chose "Leadership of Women" with Joan of Arc as the example or symbol.

At the same time that I was struggling for a theme, the Senior Class was deliberating over an appropriate gift to the College. Fortunately, we learned from Dr. Jarman that he had long wished to have a suitable piece of statuary for the Rotunda. After much research and several consultations with Dr. Jarman, the class of 1914, on his recommendation, decided that their gift to the College would be a statue of "Joan of Arc Listening to the Voices" as sculptured by Chapu.

The statue did not arrive in time for Commencement that June. But that summer my father, Mr. R.C. Bristow, later Business Manager of the College, supervised the uncrating of the statue, the building of the pedestal, and the placing of the statue in the Rotunda.

Sincerely,

Maria Bristow Starke, Class 1914  
(Mrs. Thomas J. Starke)

The other statue of Joan of Arc for which we are grateful is the "Equestrian Statue" which stands under the Colonnade. This statue depicts the brave maid obeying the voices which told her to take up arms for France. It represents her mounted with sword raised high, just as when she led the French Army to victory. This statue was presented to the College in 1927 by Anna Hyatt Huntington, the famous



American sculptor. Had it not been for the enthusiasm and initiative of Lucy Haile Overbey, a 1927 Longwood girl who truly had the Joan of Arc spirit, likely we would not have this "Equestrian Statue of Joan of Arc." You will probably think so, too, when you read these excerpts from her letter and newspaper clippings which follow it.

Farmville, Virginia  
February 15, 1927

My dear Mrs. Huntington,

In reply to your letter of November, 12, 1926, I wish to thank you for your information concerning the statue of Joan of Arc.

Since November, we have been corresponding with Mr. Drake. He said the terms would be on a thirty-day basis, and that the price was fixed by the sculptor...The statue in which we are interested is the Bronze Statuette 4'3" in height...At the suggestion of our president, Dr. J. L. Jarman, we are negotiating with a local bank here... The money will have to be raised in three years by a small group of girls in a student body of 1,000...To raise it, means that we will have to make the greatest sacrifices we have ever made... However, each of us is fired with such a keen desire to have this statue that nothing can stop us...And it's your statue, Mrs. Huntington, that has inspired us...We have studied every picture and every statue of Joan of Arc, and yours is the only one that represents the ideals of our Joan of Arc Circle.

The state of Virginia has five colleges for women, but Farmville is the oldest of them all...The statue will be placed in front of our largest and most beautiful building...It will inspire not only the present group of students, but also the thousands of Virginia girls who are yet to enter State Teachers College...In years to

come, this statue will mean to them what it now means to us.

And now, Mrs. Huntington, because you are the creator of the only statue that represents our ideals, we ask if there is anyway you can help us.

Sincerely,  
Lucy Haile Overbey  
Secretary of the Joan of Arc Circle  
of  
Alpha Delta Rho

From the ROANOKE NEWS:

SCULPTOR PRESENTS JOAN MODEL TO STUDENTS WHO  
LACKED MONEY

Farmville. April 30, 1927 (Special).-  
The student body of the State Teachers College, Farmville, has recently received a beautiful gift. Anna Hyatt Huntington, American woman sculptor, has presented the college with a four-foot bronze model of her famous "Equestrian Statue of Joan of Arc."

The history of Mrs. Huntington's interest in the college and its ideals is somewhat unusual. In searching for a gift which would embody its ideals of leadership and service, the Joan Circle of Alpha Delta Rho, an honorary society of the State Teachers College, selected from all the art portraying Joan of Arc, Mrs. Huntington's "Equestrian Statue". The price of the model selected was almost prohibitive to the group of girls who wished to present it to the college, but their enthusiasm would brook no hindrance and arrangements were made for its purchase.

Meanwhile one of the members of the organization, Miss Lucy Haile Overbey, wrote a personal letter to the sculptor. It was this epistle, fired with faith which so enlisted the interest of Mrs. Huntington and her husband that they ordered the statue delivered as a gift rather than as a sale.

There are three large replicas of this work in the world; one in Mrs. Huntington's native state, Massachusetts; one on Riverside Drive, New York City, and one in France. But the fact implied in Miss Overbey's letter, which no doubt touched the artist, is that none of these could have so great



an opportunity for noble inspiration as might be possessed by the Joan triumphantly lifting high her sword under the arcade of the Teachers College at Farmville, Virginia, where thousands of girls, now and in the future, may linger and gaze and imbibe the thrilling influence of the maid who gave all and asked nothing for herself.

Donates Model

Mrs. Huntington in reply to Miss Overby's letter wrote in part:

"In answer to your letter of the 13th I am much interested and pleased that your Joan Circle has chosen my statue of Joan of Arc out of all the others.

"I spoke to my husband about your raising a fund among you to purchase a four-foot model and he asked me to write to your circle that he would be very glad to present the Joan Circle of Farmville, Virginia, with such a bronze copy of the four-foot model.

"I have sent today an order to the Gorham Company to forward to the Joan Circle a bronze copy which my husband and I hope you will accept with our best wishes to the Joan Circle.

Sincerely yours,  
Anna H. Huntington

Mr. Huntington wrote:

"My wife is happy in the thought that the Joan is to stand in your great state and among those whose devotion to ideals will make its dwelling with you a distinction to the sculptor and a tribute of honor to a great woman."



Long may the inspiring influence of Joan of Arc, the "patron saint" of Longwood College, be felt by all the students-those who have gone before and those who are yet to come!





JOAN OF ARC

FRENCH

JULES BASTIEN LEPAGE (1848-1884)

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, N. Y.

MM 51 BROWN-ROBERTSON CO., INC., NEW YORK

PRINTED IN U. S. A.



No. 522 Joan of Arc                      Riverside Drive, N. Y.  
Anna V. Hyatt (Contemporary)      American School  
Phototext Junior      Art Extension Press, Inc.      Westport, Conn.





THE PERRY PICTURES. SMALL SIZE. 450. INGRES.  
JEANNE D'ARC.





THE PERRY PICTURES. SMALL SIZE. 3009.  
JOAN OF ARC.



THE PERRY PICTURES. SMALL SIZE. 836. BENOUVILLE.  
JEANNE D'ARC LISTENING TO THE SPIRITS.



THE PERRY PICTURES. SMALL SIZE. 827. GABRIEL MAX.  
JOAN OF ARC.





*"Joan of Arc" by ANNA HYATT HUNTINGTON,  
Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York City*



