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Horizons, which has helped to cause this typewriter's life to grow puny and peaked, begins for the 115th time. This is volume 29, number 4, FAPA number 109, which you may call either the summer or August issue as long as you give credit to 1968. Harry Warner, Jr., 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland, 21740, U.S.A., does some of the writing and most of the compiling of the reprinted stuff. The Coulsons, I hope, are still the publishers.

In the Beginning

The Fantasy Amateur: I'll probably cast a token protest vote against the dues-raising amendment, knowing full well that it will pass easily. For one thing, the amendment that we really need is one that allows the secretary-treasurer to set dues at whatever level the current postal rates and average mailing size require; this constitutional change is simply leaving the task to be done again whenever financial circumstances change. For another thing, there is precedent for raising dues without changing the constitution, since they have been lowered in disregard of that document. For a third thing, part of this increase will result from a practice that I oppose, the years and years of Fantasy Amateur expenses for dozens of waiting listers, who simultaneously are forced to pay in fees and postage much more than they should for such small benefit. "It's not exactly up to the vice presidents to decide whether the weird and parvertly poll category should continue. It's really up to the first fan who files libel action because he resents this kind of actionable reference. Scrote: I've seen my first Mission: Impossible episodes. My main reaction was to wonder how many years it would take this series to use up the action and bits of business that were in one hour of The Man from Uncle. Everything seemed to be in slow motion except Barbara Bain who acted and appeared as if she'd died two years ago. "It's encouraging to find some new FAPA members who want to revise the waiting list procedures, after we've heard so much from old members about how the waiting listers want the present system to continue. I don't think that admission to FAPA changes opinions that abruptly and I repeat my challenge to poll the waiting listers and see what they really think. Avanc: I'm sorry, but I am no longer capable of reading or talking or thinking about Vietnam. I don't know if we should be fighting the war there. But I do know that Vietnam typifies for me everything that is inhumane and filthy and utterly evil in men (not Americans or Russians, men), nature, and the way the universe is put together. If I don't keep away from the subject, I'm going to become in fact the hermit that I'm supposed to be in theory. I've had a bellyful of it. I recognize the probability that this is an indefensible attitude, if an intelligent and good person like Dick Eney gives part of his life and risks all his life for Vietnam. But I've had it. The Devil's Work: Gernsback must have been trying desperately to make science fiction profitable, when he emphasized "scientific detective" stories, just as he published a magazine called Air Wonder Stories. We are so reverent about the Gernsback Amazing that we forget what a short life it had under his backing and how much of that short span involved the economy of publishing mostly reprints. Moonshine: I'm not sure about the full value of criticisms made on the basis of reading stories aloud. I believe Len's statement that the criticisms have value, but I should think that even more valuable criticisms would come if the guild members encountered the stories as the editors and other readers will, with the eye in-

stead of the ear, which is so much in danger of missing the real worth or worthlessness of a story because of the skill or crudity of the reader. Besides, certain styles of writing that sound wonderful look bad on paper, and vice versa. ' ' I have a theory that the octagon hex symbol on Pennsylvania Dutch barns was placed there by painters who were paid by the Octagon Soap people to use subliminal advertising techniques. ' ' The first volume of the fan history has been completed for years. It's still up to Advent when it will appear, but things look brighter now than they have in a long while. Some day, I must publish a complete history of the fan history. It should fill three or four issues of Horizons and might cause people to forget Ah! Sweet Idiocy! ' ' The Immortal Storm credits Moskowitz with the original manuscript bureau. It must have been quite a while ago, since it's mentioned in the course of telling about the founding of FAPA. The Rambling Fap: I hope that nobody made the wrong assumptions from my remarks about Ron Ellick and silence about Lee Jacobs in the last Horizons. I hadn't heard about Lee when I cut those stencils. He had the most remarkable ability to be present at all the east coast cons that I managed to attend, and he was the rarest of fans, the fans whom you feel comfortable around. I never had the feeling that he expected me to say something brilliant or to reveal knowledge of the most obscure fannish scandal or to stay up until seven the next morning, and he was moreover one of the few fans who seemed the same on paper as he did in person. I feel somehow vulnerable to accusations that I'm throwing around sweetness and light when I speak of the dead in fandom, but doggone it, the ones who are dying are the best ones. ' ' I'm still unretired despite threats and intentions. One problem is that I hate to let unsavory people stampede me into making the move until I've accumulated the sum I've always thought necessary for safe retirement (that is, enough to eke out a comfortable existence on, if I suddenly lose the desire or ability to make money free lancing or other ways) and I'm just three years away from reaching the desideratum. ' ' Don't worry about Christmas becoming commercial. Just remember that it was invented for commercial reasons, to lure the heathen and retain the converted, and you won't mind the fact that the bloated rich grow even sleeker as a result of the season. ' ' I suspect that I couldn't take it with me if I died for much the same reason why I couldn't leave instructions on how I want to vote in the next election after my death. I won't be a person in the eyes of the law after I'm dead, so the inheritance laws will require that my money go to something that exists in the law's vision, humans or their living creations like institutions. ' ' The jeep has one fault that overrides the virtues it possesses for getting through snow. It doesn't offer enough protection to the people inside. I know that it was adequate for World War Two combat purposes, but it would hardly suffice around the folks who take out their cars only for church on Sunday and the ridgerunners who come in from West Virginia on market days. ' ' I answered the poll questions at face value, although I kept suspecting that this is really designed to determine if I can read accurately. "Is a faster-than-light drive possible" might refer to the future, and I answered it as if it did, but the careful reader would reply that it isn't on earth to the best of our knowledge today. Terminus Telegraph: But fandoms devoted to a single author aren't confined to science fiction and fantasy. Mark Twain fandom is an example of one that emphasizes the literary aspects of the writer. You can find in tourist guides many instances of other au-

thor fandoms whose members concentrated on non-literary activities, preserving a writer's home or some material thing that he wrote about. ' ' You can't prove anything by citing the Swiss firearm laws to apply to the local circumstances, any more than I can argue against arming policemen from the fact that they go unarmed in several nations. What's the logic in requiring the licensing of automobiles, if we're to compare incomparable things? If stricter firearm laws reduced by one-tenth of one per cent the criminal violations and the accidental shooting tragedies among honest people, they'd be justified. ' ' Germans should have no trouble understanding the emphasis by interletter spacing. That's standard operating procedure in that language. Snickersnee: After much debate internal, I have decided that this account of being trapped in a Turkish alley scared me more than Tucker's description of his trips over the snow and ice. If FAPA ever kills me, it'll come from one of these harrowing narratives about automobiles. Godot: I can't help feeling that the individual should begin to vote only after he has begun to earn a living. It's astonishing, the changes in outlook that come when you have problems bigger than getting into a fraternity and passing the next chemistry test. ' ' I've never cast a vote for the site of the next worldcon. The bad blood and overemphasis on hosting a worldcon may very possibly be the most serious problem in fandom today. Why do people want to let themselves in for all that trouble, anyway? ' ' I can't believe that I could be held liable for purchases made by someone on a credit card which I didn't order, and therefore didn't make my signature available on. From stamp collecting days, I remember that there is no legal obligation to return "approvals" if a dealer sends them to you unrequested. The Oliver King Smith Agency: Nobody under the age of 25 can possibly understand all the allusions unless he buys a copy of my fan history. Kim Chi: Disposition of useless cars is turning into a big issue around here. Most sensible suggestion I've heard is that the original purchaser should be required to pay an extra 20 or 25 which would go into escrow until the final owner decided the car was useless, whereupon the money would go to the firm that hauled it to the nearest scrapping operation. Nowadays, tow firms claim they can't make a profit unless they can handle a whole parking lot filled with junk cars at a time. Periodically the city police stage a drive to get them out of back yards and vacant lots, whereupon the county commissioners are swamped with complaints by people living in whatever area a junk dealer has started to store them. ' ' I know that the hippies deliberately choose a ghetto existence while possessing the ability to leave it at will. But I'm thinking about ten years in the future and a generation from now when a lot of these people will be too old to find jobs that pay a living wage and some will have diabetes and the women will be growing too haggard to attract men and kids are swarming all through the block. They're going to be trapped as hopelessly as the Negro has been down through the decades, for many of the same reasons. Helen's Fantasia: This is a conreport that I really awaited. It's pretty much as I thought it would be, paralleling many of my own opinions of worldcons. They're too big, and if you must attend them, you've got to start doing it while you're very young to surrender yourself completely to their lure. I hope Helen will try a Phillycon, for the regional event has all sorts of advantages over the monster event. ' ' I'd like to oblige, but my chances of becoming an uncle seem increasingly remote. I was an only child and uncledom by marriage is becoming annually a more fantastic concept. Doorway: There's a Sev-

evth Day Adventist colony on a nearby mountainside, and a healthier, livelier bunch of people you never did see. Moreover, they operate a convalescent home for people of all faiths, and it's one of the few in this section that wasn't closed down or radically altered by a health department pogrom against these institutions. Members of this faith eat no meat and don't serve it at the nursing home. They claim they're vegetarians for health rather than theological reasons, curiously, and they're willing to have relatives bring meat to the old folks' home. The SDA members are quite systematic about including protein substitutes in their diet, and maybe the vegetarians whom Greg encountered overlooked this point. 'I can think of several ways to alleviate the welfare load without radical projects like moving people to the country. Take up the driver's license and car title of anyone on relief, unless he lives more than two miles from the nearest source of groceries. Publish in the newspaper a complete list of welfare recipients and the amounts received in the past six months, semi-annually, omitting only persons over reasonable working age and those who are hopelessly crippled. Hire a special corps of welfare case workers who would go calling between midnight and 8 a.m. on the women who claim they have no man to support the kids. (Incredibly, Maryland law forbids workers from visiting these homes after 4 p.m., even if neighbors complain that the woman is living with a man whose working hours keep him away in the daytime.) Provide part of the monthly welfare money in the form of a food order, so the family can't sponge on relatives and contribute most of the relief money for the purchase of booze. If all these don't work, confiscate every television antenna and cable hook-up where welfare money is paid. Ankus: I've also thought that the trip reports in fanzines were the best possible publicity for TAFF. But there may be a couple of other contributing causes to the decline of interest in TAFF. Alas, fandom thrives on turmoil and dissension and every TAFF candidate for years and years has been a virtually enemyless person who behaved perfectly on his trip. One big fuss would stir things up gratifyingly. There's also the increase in non-TAFF travel of fans across the Atlantic, so it's no longer quite so exciting to help bring a fan from another nation to a worldcon. Salud: That isn't strength of character that I have. It's a habit of doing the same things over and over. So it really is wrong for me to give much time to the television set except when there's some all-encompassing interest in a program. If I watch a movie over television, I have used the time that could have been used to create one or two per cent of a novel that would bring retirement a few months closer, or in the two hours I could have written locs on four fanzines, easing my conscience and making some fanzine editors happy in this day of declining reader response or I could cut four to eight Horizons stencils, to list only matters connected with science fiction. 'My great grandfather made it possible for all his grandchildren and great grandchildren to get a college education. Under terms of his will, any of them could draw on his estate for \$300 per year for this purpose. As recently as the 1940's, my uncle got two years of college this way and hardly had to find any supplemental funds. The estate was really quite large at the time my great grandfather died, and I hate to think how inflation will have shrunk it by the time it is finally closed at the death of his last surviving child and the money is distributed. 'I like jokes that are "run into the ground" in movies, if it's done as Chaplin or Laurel and Hardy did it. The famous destruction of the watch in The Pawn Shop, for

instance, or the traffic jam in Two Tars that becomes an irreverent vision of judgment day, demonstrate that it's possible to extract a whole series of climaxing hilarities from a very simple basic gag. Sercon's Bane:: Why is it getting into the swim and fun to participate in a moronic overemphasis on con sites that drives good fans away from the hobby, creates hatreds that continue for decades, and makes gang fights in Harlem seem dignified and logical in contrast? Horib: Once again, all this space going to waste makes me nervous. Maybe this conspicuous consumption inhibits my mailing comment faculties, for I can find to say only: For an awful moment I thought you'd named your xeroxed fanzine after the wartime rationing agency and then realized how long it's been since World War Two when I no longer knew automatically that those initials were OPA. No reviews of Dangerous Visions that I've seen convince me that the stories run more counter to customary editorial policies than those Gold published in the first few issues of Galaxy. Arnie Katz provides another explanation of why many of us are content with movies on television, preferring cuts to clowns in the audience of the live theater. Bobolings: Nobody need to worry about this nation copying Russia. Now the unemployed in Hagerstown need not report for their money, much less report for city-county-state work as in Russia. The unemployment service here has decided to distribute checks by mail and not to require regular personal explanations of how the jobless have been unable to secure new work. Niekas: This deserves a full dress loc which I'll try to supply long before this Horizons gets distributed. Meanwhile, some sketchy remarks: Poul Anderson provides another most welcome blast at the annoying type of critics, and the best name for them that I've seen. Maybe I'd be one myself if I said that the thing which annoys me most about Poul's fiction is the tendency to have an international cast of characters, each of whom behaves in a manner quite opposite to the bigots' stereotype of how that race behaves. I suppose it's logical to assume a future with the mixture of races that you'll normally find only on the Notre Dame football team, but it still seems like an odd way to achieve characterization. ' If I do get some fiction written this summer, it may not be good, but it will follow quite closely Molly Titcomb's notions of what science fiction should be. One long story will be about just two persons, a man and a woman, on Mars, and the things that happen to them won't settle the fate of the solar system or even the future of mankind. It must be possible to write science fiction that doesn't have a cast of millions and a setting of three island universes. ' It would be easy to write fifty thousand words on things that a fanzine editor can do. The less tinkering with a manuscript, the better, I think, to save time for more important things: Persuade fans who don't write for fanzines to do so. Place illustrations where they won't clash too violently with the nature of the text on the pages they break up. Make his personality felt throughout the fanzine. Be the first to stop using some gag line that has been sweeping throughout fandom. Stop worrying about a regular schedule of publication, because there are no advertising contracts to fulfill or distributors to pacify, the reasons newsstand magazines appear on specified occasions. Null-F: About the riots: I worry mainly about what will happen if the rioters ever start to do things systematically. It's pretty obvious that even when a riot is started deliberately, it's improvised as it goes along. It isn't hard to imagine a couple hundred rioters mapping out tactics in advance which, carried out carefully, could make a

big city completely uninhabitable for lack of water, power, and communications. ' ' Are you sure that New England would be a good huddling place? Taxes tend to run high up there, the landscape is crowded with people, and the climate runs up fuel bills something scandalous. Why not the Appalachia low-income belt of West Virginia? You'd have your mountains, privacy when wanted, and fairly low cost of living; yet would be able to reach almost any point of interest on the East Coast in less than a day's driving. Warhoon: Another one that will probably have its own loc. ' ' The cover fits quite well my suspicion that you can't expect to find signs of intelligent life on a planet's surface. I should think that inhabitants would get out of the radiation, bad weather, dust, and other objections to surface living as soon as they grew smart enough, and our cities on the surface may be the reason the aliens aren't visiting us, telltale evidence of man's stupidity. ' ' But how can the spaceship be a phallic symbol if it changes from its traditional aspect? You wouldn't want science fiction readers to abandon their favorite literature and become weapons fans, would you? ' ' Willis' novel and its adventures have an eerie ring of familiarity. The events are so similar to what happened to my one and only novel, even unto the fact that Larry Shaw was a character in my cast, too. ' ' Lowndes seems to be confusing the poetic, which can appear in either prose or verse, with poetry. Either that, or his editorship of pulp magazines has made him suspicious of any prose that rises above the flat journalistic style. ' ' After reading Walter Breen on Philip Dick, I wonder if anyone will ever again have the heart to find personal idiosyncracies reflected in Lovecraft's fiction. It would seem awfully dull and limited after this. ' ' I'd better explain about the pagination of Horizons, in case I drop dead tomorrow; it'll save someone the trouble of muckraking later on. I have no idea whether the page count is even close to being right. The Coulsons had trouble collating unnumbered pages of Horizons, asked for help, and I just made an educated guess, not even taking the trouble to determine when I switched from a dozen to two dozen pages per issue. It's probably not more than perhaps a hundred pages wrong, one way or the other. Conceitedly, I wonder if anyone has a complete set of Horizons in one place. Unless stuff got left behind the last time I moved, I should have at least one copy of every issue somewhere on the attic but I don't know for sure exactly which piles and boxes contain all of them. ' ' No, the fan history is not written beyond 1950. But the notes are complete through perhaps 1963 or 1964. After the first volume sees print, I hope to get up to date on note-taking, since communications and publications of the last few years throw light on both the 1950's and 1960's. ' ' But the Martin material really is having the effect intended, even if nobody is reading it. Nobody has been tossed out of FAPA on a pretext and refused readmittance on technicalities that would be waived for any other members, since I've been running The Worst of Martin. Incidentally, about half of the non-FAPA copies of Horizons go to continental European fans, and they seem wildly enthusiastic about these Martin reprints. ' ' In any event, it's wonderful to find Warhoon back again. Dare we hope now for revival of Quandry, Le Zombiè, and Helios, as a result of the impetus provided by this revival? Are we on the brink of a new era in fandom, after the wave of returns of gaffiated fans, that will provide us with resurrected fanzines? Could Spaceways be published by anything except the Doubledoubletoilandtrouble Mimeograph?

Why VOM Had It

Somewhere I read a prediction about cycles. Sunspot cycles and weather cycles, the cycles that afflict the stock market and those created by irregularities in the birth rate, these and a couple of dozen others are some day supposed to reach simultaneously their low or high point and something awful will happen. I've been too busy to check up on how things are going in the cycle factories, but I suspect that a modified and personalized version of this procedure has been working on me. At a season which is unusually hectic in my regular job, I find myself inundated by fanish obligations: three promises of fanzine material that must be kept in the next two or three weeks, as many more semi-promises which I'll sprain my conscience, if I ignore, proofs for the first volume of the fan history making a sodden thump on my doorstep once every week or ten days, all at a time when I'm further behind than ever on loc duties and must simultaneously do something about the new issue of Horizons.

So I'm cheating in much the same manner as two issues ago. The reaction to the Horizons which I devoted mainly to fan history notes surprised me, for I thought that I was creating a lethal bore on those stencils. Just possibly, I can get away with the same method of saving thought in this issue, thereby cutting stencils when I'm not at enough mental ease to think of what I want to say next, and simultaneously cutting in half the total stencil-cutting time. I'm going to come dreadfully close to infringing on my own territory, the All Our Yesterdays column I've recently revived for Quip. But maybe I won't be interrupted by arguments with my other self, if I make it clear from the outset that there's enough raw material in VOM to use up a lot of this Horizons and then to furnish the starting point for an instalment of the Quip column and next to provide ample choice for the hundred-page anthology that should be created from the pages of that fine old fanzine, all without duplications.

Just in case someone in FAPA hasn't been in fandom for the past half-century, I should explain that VOM was a spinoff sort of fanzine. Los Angeles fandom started before world war two a clubzine, Imagination!, and when it collapsed, Ackerman with Morojo's help began to publish its letter section as a separate fanzine, Voice of the Imagi-Nation. VOM lasted for nearly a decade, fifty issues or so, its contents made up almost entirely of letters. Incredibly, in this modern day of specialized fanzines, nobody seems to have even tried to create this sort of fanzine for years and years, unless you count Tightbeam, the NFFF publication which differs in its constantly changing editorship and in its partial dependence on NFFF activities as inspiration for letters. VOM was different, a fanzine that relied solely on its own contents as principal generating force for following issues' contents.

But I don't want to publish here the analysis and comprehensive glossing that would belong in an All Our Yesterdays column. Instead, I simply want to quote letters from VOM, chosen with no particular criteria for selection except their ability to be comprehended today with a minimum of annotations. To make sure that Horizons is not mistaken for a scholarly fanzine, the excerpts which follow will omit the editorial interpolations that Ackerman inserted so often, and I'm not going to put dots where I've made abridgments, now that I've made it clear that most of the quotations are what I've called them, excerpts instead of uncut reprints of letters. VOM pursued most of its life a strictly sic policy, reproducing all the

typing mistakes in the original letters; I'm correcting these and attempting not to create too many new ones of my own. Some of what follows may seem like mailing comments about an apa whose mailings you've never read, but I think there's enough interest in the statements or how the statements reflect the personalities to console you for not having these discussions neatly sorted out and reprinted in chronological and systematic manner.

First, let's listen to some of the evidence which I offer to support my frequent contention that Francis T. Laney's greatest writings were his most spontaneous, his letters. Even though they lack the exhaustive thoroughness with which Laney sometimes dug into a subject when he wrote a formal article, they have the merit of remarkable conciseness, often resembling the tiny essays that said so much in the days of Addison and contemporaries. Strangely, Fran was often more impartial and less prejudiced by personalities in his letters, where you'd look for his foibles to show up most readily. VOM rarely included the date when a letter was written or postmarked, so the Laneyana that follows is prefaced by the date of the issue in which it appeared.

LANEY: (August, 1945) Raym's "Case History of a Fan" turned out to be extremely interesting. While I deplore his all-inclusive idealism, which I consider to be ill-founded and likely to lead him to extremely bitter disillusionment sooner or later, the sincere candor with which he discussed his fan experiences resulted in a revealing human document, and one which for some cause or another left me with a mingled emotion of sympathy and admiration. No matter how wrong I feel Washington is in some of the basic points of his philosophy, I must perforce admire the soul-searching which has led him not only to develop a personal philosophy but to evolve along with it. If he is able to continue his evolving and does not become sidetracked and stagnated too soon, another decade or so should see him a man in several thousand so far as his personal development is concerned. In passing I should like to ask Raym the criteria upon which he will choose the "classics of literature" to which he intends to devote the bulk of his reading time. I believe the value of a large proportion of the so-called "classics" is open to question. Far too many of these works are too hopelessly dated --in writing style, in science, in religious viewpoint, in social outlook, and a score of other ways--to be of much value other than as literary curiosa. This is not to say that certain of these works should not be part of the content of the well-rounded mentality, nor to imply that the only reading matter worthy of attention is that published in the past few decades. It is reasonably obvious that a work must have certain intrinsic merit in order to survive; on the other hand, one must not overlook the sad fact that a sizeable portion of the "classics of literature" are still in print because they are public domain and thus can be published cheaper than if some author were getting royalties and because such a huge number of copies are absorbed each year by poseurs who wish to give the impression that they are "cultured, my deah". It seems to me that Raym's twin desires to "gain as much knowledge as possible...about just what had gone before, and what is happening in the present" and reading "the classics of literature" are rather incompatible. While such works as Pepys' Diary or Cellini's Autobiography will do their bit towards gratifying both aims together, I cannot see the point of reading "classic" American history by Washington Irving or George

Bancroft in preference to the modern works of such historians as the Beards, nor the need of wading through the theology of Milton or the musty tediousness of Pope when one can read George Sterling. Or why bother with the chauvinism and archaic social viewpoints of Kipling when there are books around like *Strange Fruit*, or *Ulysses*, or the Studs Lonigan stuff? Mankind is bound to change, one way or the other, and too many fictional works reflect a momentary state of society that is either gone or on the way out. And in fields such as economics, sociology, history, psychology, and the sciences generally, few books more than a decade old are valid. Classics or no, 99% of the books on the first three subjects are wholly worthless, because they were written in ignorance of modern psychology and technology and were based chiefly on a mixture of medieval theology and blind prejudice. The only exceptions to this (except of course for the slowly growing handful of works written very recently and based on the scientific method) are unedited diaries and autobiographies and similar source material. These can be read by the modern and interpreted in the light of present-day knowledge. So step warily in that library, Raym!

LANEY: (August, 1944) One of the younger fan publishers went considerably out of his way to provoke my ire in the last *Vom*, and I do not feel quite like letting his remarks pass by unnoticed. Joel Hensley is the lad's name, *Apollo* the name of his fanzine. Back last winter, in the days when I was simpleminded enough to boost and help every new fan publisher I heard of, it was brought to my attention that my friend, Phil Bronson, had published a rather intemperate attack on the *Vulcan* chain (to which Joel belongs). So, to add spice to a rather uneventful fanwinter, I wrote a somewhat scathing answer to this item and allowed *Innman* to publish it in *Vulcan*. After discussing the matter with Phil, we decided the article perhaps should be withdrawn in view of the amplification of his remarks in the *2nd Knavve*. I was too late with my withdrawal, so perforce the article stood. This, I believe, covers the history of the incident to which Joel refers. If Joel, as he claims, has this "genuine appreciation of fandom", he would do well to consider underlying motives before he rushes into print to attack a person who has always acted towards him with friendliness. My defense of him may have been "utterly vulgar" --I do not presume to state if it was or not--but at least it was sincere. He states that he does not need any defense. I trust the readers of *Vom* are familiar with the average *Vulcan* publication. About all that can be said for the best of them is their burning sincerity; the material as a rule is definitely second-rate, and the presentation is very poor. I felt all along, and still feel, that each of these magazines and editors shows sufficient promise to be worth encouraging. I felt moreover that outbursts such as the Bronson article would tend to drive new editors out of the field, so I felt that it was desirable for some fairly prominent fan editor to take up cudgels in the lads' behalf. For my pains, I get torn apart in print. And I'm glad you tell us you are not 14. I'd begun to wonder.

LANEY: (July, 1944) It seems to be desired that fans let you know their plans as to marriage and children. I presume these figures will be published in tabular form? I personally expect to be reunited with my family before too many more months, but intend to stop perpetuating my line with the two daughters I already have. In the event that such a reunion should for any reason prove impossible,

I probably would marry again, eventually; I love children very much, and in addition like to have a home of my own, rather than some rented kennel somewhere. Your statement that the outsiders would rejoice at the absence of Forry Jrs. calls for comment. While I am of course in no position to speak authoritatively of the views of my friends and associates, I personally regret very much to see that you have such a sterile outlook. Obviously I am speaking academically and with no wish to pry or advise you on your personal affairs when I state that so intelligent a person as yourself owes the future some descendents. In your genes you carry potentialities which do not belong to you, but which belong to this brave new world scientificion fans forever discuss. You term yourself, I believe, the young man of the future; it seems to me that you should back this attitude up with children who would not only stand an excellent chance of inheriting your very genuine good points, but who would also be raised in such a manner as to be worthy workers toward a concrete realization of some of our daydreams. The tendency toward sterility in fandom is rotten; it gives the implication that we are dreamers afraid of our dreams, talkers and jabberers who lack the manhood to sustain our verbal output with deeds. While it is true that many fans are somewhat unfitted psychologically for the adjustments of marriage and parenthood, I believe that most of these same fans could apply their intelligence to making most of the necessary changes in their personalities. Even if they failed, they would have tried to run in the race rather than sit in the grandstand and watch life pass them by without even noticing their all-around helplessness and futility.

LANEY: (September, 1943) Next time you see Phil Bronson, will you be so kind as to pass on to him the remark my wife made about his photo on his xmas card? She looked at it and said, "He's really good-looking--what a pity!"...referring of course to the fact that he's a fan, and to her all fans are lacking in the upstairs portion.

LANEY: (January, 1944) MacDonald's remarks on fandom emerging from the science fiction stage don't entirely jell with me. While I'll be the first to grant that a fan should have a broad variety of mental interests, and not limit himself to any one field of human thought or endeavor, I fail to see the good in "emerging" from stf. Stf and its allied fields are the one great thing about fandom which truly appeals to me. Without stf, fandom would be a group of quite young, rather serious young people with radical ideas and a burning urge to express themselves. Certainly a futile bunch, except insofar as what personal satisfaction they might get. With stf, the picture changes. A detached point of view will show one that stf and its reading and collecting are futile as hell--but then, may I inquire what human endeavor is not as futile as hell? For the extraordinary individual, for the person who differs in one iota from the common herd, life is a futile and pointless misery; made bearable only by the cushioning effects of books, music, art, and perhaps alcohol. With stf, now, there is a chance for some satisfaction. There is a definite feeling of accomplishment in filling out some rare old magazine file, or in picking up some rare book. When one is fed up with it all, he can reread Starmaker and get his sense of perspective adjusted. He can dig into the November, 1928, Amazing, and read some old tale he has not thought of for years, perhaps not even read at all, and get considerable pleasure therefrom. He can, in short, indulge in all manner of satisfying acts--nothing cosmic, or worldshaking about them, but still thoroughly satisfying. The stf-less fan, on the other hand, is merely batting his head against the brick wall of

human indifference. "Emerging" may be a necessary stage in our personal evolutions, but we will undoubtedly be happier if we remain in the chrysalis. Milty's letter on the purpose of fandom stinks. Why must fandom have a purpose, anyway? Fans are fans because they enjoy it--any other reason is highly superfluous, and smacks of Horatio Alger and the Junior Chamber of Commerce. One of the most annoying faults in contemporary American thought is the apparent necessity that every activity have some definite and useful purpose. We can't do something because we enjoy it--hell, no, that would be too much like the shiftless natives of the south seas. We can't go out and play golf because we enjoy the game; we must play golf "because it is good for our health". We can't go to a juice store and get a glass of orange juice because we like orange juice and enjoy the taste of it; we must drink it for the vitamin PDQ it is filled with. We can't read for the sheer delight we may get out of someone's mastery of words; we must read to improve our minds. We can't beat our wives for the sheer sadistic kick we get out of hearing them scream; we must beat them because they need discipline. Why in the sacred name of Tsathoggua every human act must be rationalized so as to show a practical and useful purpose is completely beyond me. I am undisciplined, perhaps, but (with the sad exception of making a living) I do what I damn well want to, and only because I damn well want to. If it improves my mind, if it is good for my health, if it happens to have some practical purpose--I can't help it; that is wholly incidental. What I started to say, fandom needs no high and mighty purpose. We enjoy fan activities--get our kicks therefrom--what more justification does the field need?

As you might suspect, given the time and circumstances of VOM, a lot of its letter writers were fans who had not yet turned into celebrated pros. John Christopher was Sam Youd in those years, and he turned up quite often in the earlier issues.

YOUD: (April, 1941) VoM's cover is a little surprising to the antique fan. I remember back in the dim, dear days of sunny summer streets and a kid in khaki shorts, that I believed Fantasy Magazine --constantly referred to in the letters sections--was a professional magazine, and wasted much time in Woolworths, hunting amongst movie magazines for the desideratum. Since then, however, we have been hardened to hektoing and duplicating. Madge looks out of place. Did Ray Bradbury ever use that article I sent him? The Roberts boy sounds fascinating, but apparently I've missed a VoM, because I remember nothing of him beyond a slightly hysterical letter of apostasy. But Milty, you needn't be so sorry for him. Because you know and I know that in a few years' (or months') time he will suddenly build an extension on his sense of humour and discover that he can still glance through TWS before breakfast, and before he gets down to John Steinbeck and that novel he's writing. Because he will be writing a novel. So Ted is enjoying army life? Funny, that we have to get the news via Los Ang., Cal! I doubt if I shall, because I had four years in the school Officer's Training Corps and loathed it immensely. I gained a couple of stripes in the local Home Guard, too, but threw them up after disagreement with authority. Talking of lulls, the weather has stopped all bombing for the last fortnight. Today was beautiful, but it's dark now and--there goes the alert!

Roberts was a long-forgotten fan who had a career as violent as it was brief. Ted was Ted Camell, of course, and Milty was Milton A. Rothman. And I wonder how many people in fandom today can remem-

ber when the late Charles Beaumont was Charles McNutt, who in turn had been Charles Nutt before he changed his name the first time?

MCNUTT: (undated but around June, 1944) I gather that Ack-Ack vociferously aired his views on religion, denouncing with an oath all that is held allegedly holy by the churchgoers (a group to which I am not member). To me, strict atheism is comparable to strict anti-Semitism, in that both are either hereditarily or self-imposedly prejudiced. I think Les Croutch sums it up quite sensibly, and everyone must agree with him whole-heartedly. God and the Bible are, to me, like some story out of Unknown; improbable, yes, but impossible? No, I'm very much inclined to think that there is something that originally was the foreman in the construction of civilization, something that oversaw the creating of the universe. But, as Les says, it is preposterous--downright stupid--to accept the theory of the churchgoer. If their God was so infallible, then he would be immune to the silly goings on of such organizations as the Holy Hollers (for fear of suit), and the rest. Psalm-singing, knee-scutting and handwaving, spiced up with a few hallelujahs would or rather should be considered feats of bribery or flattery, impervious to his Holiness. Huh uh, it just won't hold water, and sooner or later the public will wake up to this. I haven't the slightest doubt that the Bible God is pure malarky, but these doubts waver at the many hints of a superior something that spring up around me. Where would the world be if there were no churches? Doubtless shooting a few games of pool or crap or perchance murdering a gink for some personal reason.

I can't find at the moment the issue that contained one of the all-time fan classics, a letter written midway in the war by William Temple. So you'll have to be satisfied with part of another letter, written shortly after peace had apparently returned, on November 13, 1945, but not published until considerably later.

TEMPLE: (July, 1947) Some musings in my den, attained at last after three years in foreign climes, though occupied often enough, God knows, by my astral body projected from such places as the Red Sea or a slit trench on Etna's slopes. Yes, it all looks the same: the same photos of Wells, the book-lined walls, the typewriter and my letter files, the batches of clippings about odd things, the carefully selected survivors of my once large collection of stf. mags. But does it quite feel the same? Nothing inside this room has changed, but the world outside, where I have been all this time, has changed. Have I changed with it? Some of the old wonder-thrill of these rows of books of stf., fantasy, and the weird-horror has hardened into lumpy fact for me. Do the pages of Bierce and Poe contain anything more gruesome than those four days and nights I spent, partly alone, in that cut off road tunnel in the Alps, with the bodies and parts of bodies of some thirty German engineers who, in attempting to blow up and block the tunnel, only succeeded in scattering themselves in unpleasant death along its length? Think I know now what it would be like to stand in a crater on the Moon. At one spot as you approach the Matterhorn via the Aosta Valley there are three gigantic rock-mountains in a row, upflung into jagged horns and sharp peaks, dead gray, utterly bare of vegetation and littered with volcanic rubble, and to the pigmy me who stood in the valley and gazed it was one of those "Imaginary Landscape on the Moon" illustrations of my astronomical books grown enormously into three dimensions. Except that the sky would be black instead of intensely blue, I've no doubt that it was almost exactly the first view of the

Moon one would get on stepping out of a lunar spaceship. Could any fantastic "rose-red city, half as old as time" be more picturesque than the tiny fairy-like town of San Marino perched like a Disney castle on the very summit of a great rock peak; or the minarets and domes of the Arab city of Takrouna, in the desert, also on a lone rocky height; or Venice, a city of colored floating bubbles in green water? That's Dunsany for you. As for Lovecraft and his ancient forgotten cities and haunted mausoleums: the silent streets of Pompeii--a time trip back some 2000 years; or the Colosseum at El Djem in the Tunisian desert, better preserved than the one in Rome, a huge bulk of masonry standing quite solitary and forgotten--"Round the decay of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare, The lone and level sands stretch far away"; or the tombs of Egypt. As Mr. Wells knows, the ruins of Everytown in Things To Come stand in London today. Which reminds me that all these books I'm looking at in this room once, in 1940, disappeared together with their shelves under the collapsed ceiling when a bomb landed at the end of the garden, and had to be dug out and cleaned patiently one by one. Which in turn reminds me of the time when one of the earliest bombs to fall in London fell near George Medhurst's house, and a lone bomb-splinter came in through the window and of all his collection of some 500 books of sf. and fantasy chose The Shape of Things To Come in which to embed itself. Far away seemed the war when I stood above the clouds 11,000 feet up on a glacier on Pian Rosa, where the Swiss, Italian and French Alps meet and join, the most wonderful spectacle I've ever seen: in every direction, range upon range, the countless snow-veined summits stood up, and it wasn't hard to imagine that through one of those high and lonely passes one might, by a geographical accident, stumble upon Shangri-la or the Country of the Blind. The Atomic Bomb of The World Set Free has come right out of the pages with a bang, together with atomic power and a shower of rockets of all sizes--I first met rockets coming the wrong way in Tunisia, in bunches of six at a time and with vampire howls--we called them the Sobbing Sisters. And talking of vampires, what Transylvanian roost could be more grim and foreboding than the Castle of Malatestiano in North Italy, the best-preserved mediaeval castle in Europe? I had stood in that room over the drawbridge where Francesca da Rimini and Paolo were slain by the half-insane Conte (an episode which inspired a tone poem from Tchaikovsky and a drama from Dante). The torture chamber, in the dungeon, with all its original ingenious fittings, is from the Poe of The Pit and the Pendulum, and there is a Pit, too, from which the bones of scores of murdered victims are still being extracted. In one of the gloomy halls hang the original portraits of two of the Conte's wives: he strangled one and poisoned the other. Dracula had better take a back seat. Yes, fantasy has grown more factual since I was last in this den. And yet, you know, these old romantic symbols, the very stuff of which it is woven, still hold their magic. These wanderings have if anything strengthened the fabric, given substance to smoke, made vantage points of possibility upon which credulity might stand. Which reflection inclines my eye to a newcomer on these shelves, Jules Verne by Kenneth Allott. It is so much more than just a biography of Verne. It's also an analysis of the 19th century birth of science and the romantic literature which inspired Verne, by someone who knows what sf. and fantasy mean and what they're made of. He lumps them together as romanticism, as against the dry factual classicism of reason. And shows that, as always, the poets were in the vanguard. Adjacent to Jules Verne I see another stranger to me, i.

e.: Speer's monumental Fancyclopedia. Only recently did I get my first view of it--I hadn't dared have it sent out to me abroad lest it be lost, as so much else was. A perfect example of the wit and industry of American fandom. This leads me to compare mentally American and British fandom, which broadens into a general view of the respective fantasy-stf-doms. Who has done more for this "romanticism"--Americans or British? On the surface, the States: they produced a once enormous, and now still large, flood of magazines, against which the British produced only two, both now defunct. But then the American public is magazine conscious: It buys comparatively few books. Whereas you can't keep the British out of their bookshops and libraries, and they have no great interest in the ephemeral magazines. Again, having a population going on three times the size of Britain's, naturally the Americans would produce more mags. Yet, nearer literature, Britain has produced more of the better class of writers. Glancing along the backs of these books of mine I see the names Wells, Stapledon, Rider Haggard, Conan Doyle, M. P. Shiel, J. D. Beresford, M. R. James, Aldous Huxley, S. Fowler Wright, Archur Machen, Victor MacClure, James Hilton, Lord Dunsany, G. K. Chesterton, Bram Stoker, Walter de la Mare, J. B. Priestley, William Hope Hodgson, Neil Bell, George Griffiths, Sax Rohmer, Eden Phillpotts, Algernon Blackwood. What American book authors can we place beside these? Bierce, Burroughs, Poe, Merritt, Jack London, Lovecraft, Thorne Smith, John Taine. I'll gladly admit Weinbaum. But are the Heinleins and Campbells human enough to stand on their own with the public outside the covers of Astounding? I don't think so. You've got to be an old hand with plenty of technical knowledge before you can fully appreciate the very real merits of their work. They might arouse John Doe's sense of wonder all right, but he'll only wonder what the hell they're driving at. And here, of course, is where we do hand it to the Yanks: all the latest experimental work in, and development of, stf. has been wrought in the States: thought variants and mutants and the super-terrifics hammered out in the TESmithery, and refinement upon refinement (until in some cases the wonder has been refined out of it altogether). Still, I maintain, the poets were in the vanguard--Locksley Hall, Ozymandias, The Golden Road to Samarkand, Kubla Khan, The Music Makers, Omar Khayyam, and so on. There's the font of our romanticism, the primary source of stf. and fantasy. Very British, you might notice. Line your poets up against Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, Browning, Byron, Shelley, Keats, Burns, Coleridge, Gray, Tennyson, Swinburne. What, poor little Poe on his own again? Where's Whitman and Longfellow? But all this isn't getting me anywhere (except in bad with my friends across the Atlantic). Tomorrow my furrough ends, and I must away back to Italy, to Bordighera on the Riviera where the thousand lights of Monte Carlo glitter all night across the bay. How much rather I'd just sit here! What new things to see, I wonder, ere I can dream in here again?

The previous year, Arthur C. Clarke hadn't felt quite so expansive. As a flying officer in the service, he wrote like this:

CLARKE: (April, 1944): I have just received the November, 1943, issue of VOM. I'd like to thank you for the trouble you have gone to in sending me so much literature in the past but please don't bother to do so any more. The reasons are manifold. Perhaps most important--though I shall always read science fiction I have grown out of the fan stage and am no longer interested in fan mags. Also scarcely any of the contents of VOM is intelligible to me. In addition, I simply

haven't the time for more than a very small amount of reading outside the technical field nowadays. I might mention, too, that I am fed up with the childish reiteration of badly--sometimes shockingly--drawn nudes which for no imaginable reason litter your pages. There are only two serious functions of nude drawings. One is the pursuit of beauty, which very obviously does not apply in this case as one can see at a glance. The other is the breaking down of sexual inhibitions and I see no reason why a fan magazine should concern itself so single-mindedly with this aim, laudable though it is. It seems, therefore, that the explanation in the case of VOM must lie in the realms of morbid psychology and though I don't much worry about other people's minds, I don't want my colleagues to judge my own by the literature I read. (I have a big enough job explaining away science fiction!)

You couldn't always be sure who wrote a letter in VOM without knowledge of fandom's finer details and some insight into the punning mechanism of Ackerman's mind. A neofan today might have difficulty identifying the letter published under the signature Nebularry but if you were around fandom in those years you know that Larry Shaw was still publishing fanzines, including one named Nebula.

SHAW: (March, 1944) The way SiDean states the premise: "five fans can accomplish more by working singly on separate projects than the same five fans can working together on one project" can be proved easily. Naturally, if the fans devote all the time to the project instead of having to correspond back and forth in order to work on it, thus wasting time, it will mean a larger amount of actual work done. Of course, almost any project would be rendered more valuable by having the work and ideas of more than one fan behind it, but Sid didn't say that. And Brown is wrong in criticizing Speer. How could fandom get along without help from the outside, Mel? How could any group get along without help from the outside? Or did you make the stencils for Fan-Slants yourself? To hell with Unity of Purpose for fandom. For real work to improve fandom in logical directions, Jack Speer has any three other fans beat for my money. The smoking controversy is dull. It doesn't seem to me that anybody with brains would give a damn whether other people smoke or not--except maybe on crowded buses. Personally, I now derive some enjoyment from a pipe, and find I can no longer even stand cigarettes. But I don't smoke the pipe much except when alone because it probably looks silly for a kid who looks as young as I do to use a pipe--if not silly, at least very affected. The expense item is not to be considered, because I still do and probably always will spend a heck of a lot more cash on candy bars, cokes, and especially chewing gum. Consider chewing gum. Lots of folks are chain chewers. One stick costs more than one cigarette. It's quite tough to get away with not giving away at least half of each pack of Wrigley's. And why is chewing not as great a vice as smoking?

Dave McIlwain was one British fan who created a new name in prodom that was easy to couple with his real name, because it rhymed. Before he became Charles Eric Maine, he was writing to VOM in this manner:

MCILWAIN: (August, 1941) Mi gojege ricevis VoM kaj la diversajn LASFJ-ajojn, kaj tre baldau mi intencas sribi kritikan (au laudan) leteron pri ili. La Himno al Satano estas bonega ideo, sed mi ne satas la muzikon. La fino estas lau kleo diferenca al la komenco--hontinda eraro. Se mi havos suface da tempo, mi provos realmuzikigi la strofon, lau la stilo de la modernuloj, kiel Skriabin

au Sibelius--multe pli tauga por fantazipoemo ol ordinara himna melo-
dio, cu ne? Mi hontegas pro mia letero en VoM...mi trovis gin plena
de eraroj. Cu mi vere skribis tian malbonan Esp-on? Sajnas al mi,
ke mi devos esti tre zorgema kiam mi skribos al vi, car mi ne dezir-
as, ke la stefanaro sciigu pri miaj teruraj pekoj kontrau la Majstro
--Heil Zamenhof!

It's unlikely that any of the letters quoted so far will be
seen in this new incarnation by their writers. But the next group
of excerpts will not give me immunity in this manner from charges
that I shouldn't have disturbed long-abandoned writing styles and
outlooks on the universe. Older FAPA members may begin at this
point to get worried, but I don't think they look bad at all in
these neofan guises:

SPETER: (June, 1941) Gibber, gibr, gibr! Dave McIlwraith said
"That was me" and Morajo fell in line. Does good English survive
neither in Britain nor America? The Gilbert-Jenkins letter was about
the most interesting in the issue. Example of whimsy carried nearly
to the ultimate. By the way, there was another torture they could
have stuck in before "Don't throw me in the briar patch": "Send me
Spaceways with dark purple covers." Gee; looks like I may have mis-
judged Ted Carnell. I'd pretty well pigeon-holed him as an unoffi-
cial adjunct of the Propaganda Ministry, and then he comes out with
"I hope that you guys don't get involved in this mess".

SPETER: (June, 1945) Rob Mastell gives an example of the kind
of thing Analestos denounces in a current Mopsy. He names five out-
standing needs for the future--and he puts World Government and
World calendar in the same bracket. Doesn't that show a woeful lack
of a sense of relative importance? I suppose if Mastell had five
evenings a month to spend in promoting reform, he'd give one to
World Government and one to the World calendar. I was mighty sur-
prised to see that Laney, more than a year after having set himself
up as a judge of fans and their works, should just be discovering
fanationalism. But having made this discovery, he proceeds to go
overboard with it. His suggestion of stef-versus-stefnism as the
cleavage in fandom is invalid for four reasons: (1) If stefnism
were to be considered a separate and self-sufficient culture, then
the only truly stefnistic writings would have to be about affairs of
the microcosm. Yet it is well known that the bulk of discussions in
the FAPA are about jive, politics, and various other things belong-
ing to the world outside both the FAPA and science-fiction fandom.
(2) The suggested fission is only one, and probably not the sharpest
one, that you could detect signs of. There's the division between
the casual hobbyists and the all-out collectors, publishers, and so
on. There's the distinction between those who read for the emotion-
al kick and those who read for the ideas in stef. There's the cleav-
age between the adults of all faiths and the bright-eyed fourteen-
year-olds. (3) Every stefnist is at least 40% a fan of science-fic-
tion, and every active scientifictionist is at least 30% a stefnist.
(4) Our history shows that every extreme movement toward an indepen-
dent fandom (that is, away from the pros) has been followed by a re-
action toward coalescence with the reader-collector enthusiasts.
This is natural, because old-timers drop out and must be replaced
from the ranks of the fantasy followers. From which I conclude that
an attempt to draw a line between fantasts and stefnists in fandom
would be like trying to divide the American people into rich folks
and paupers.

PERDUE: (May, 1941) Most important thing first--a request for

correspondents. Rock Springs, Wyo., though a town sincere enough in its way, still has no attractions. Precisely as one would characterize Philadelphia as a continuous slum, so would one characterize Rock Springs as a continuous red-light district. So for me, there's nothing to do but write letters and wear out deck after deck of cards playing solitaire, then tearing each deck quite neatly in four parts after its usefulness has departed. Mr. Fortier's SF encyclopedia has been anticipated. During an evening with Juffus, I read and enjoyed stencils--half a dozen or more--of his dictionary of fandom. Modelled after Samuel Johnson's notorious Dictionary, and includes what modern dictionaries do not--the writer's personal opinion. And I loved it. We now arrive at the subject of the Pro-Scientists. I feel honestly sorry for Raymond, whom I met at the Filco. I talked to the lad; while so talking, Milty came up, saying: "Don't bother with him, Jimmy; Mr. Van Houten has an extremely narrow mind." Raymond then wondered why I opposed his motion (that the Philco go on record against anti-Science) if I were in sooth a fan, and my counter was, simply, that I am a fantast. Ray then shook his head in disgust, saying: "I don't want to look at you. I can't even see you." I studied him rather intently, if I may say so, then left sadly, saying to Milty the while, "You were right, Milt; he is markedly dolichocephalic." The pro-scientists are wrong, dead wrong. They contend that, since science has contributed to the enlightenment of the world, we must not disparage it. But! enlightenment is not, and cannot be, purely physical. It must of necessity be mental. One does not achieve enlightenment just by those all-too-obvious things science gives--transportation, mechanical creature comforts. A ninety-mile speed in the new '41 Cadillac enlightens, and can enlighten, no one. About Slan--I was disgusted with the ending. And similarly with the remainder of we Washington Worry-Worts. Van Vogt attained genius when he murdered Kathleen; and it was so saddening that she was revived!

TUCKER: (March, 1941) Dankon for the big fat cigar you sent me, and the same to Joe Gilbert for his. However, Tucker the younger complains that the tobacco is a mite too strong for his throat, and my wife declares that the three of you are old enough to know better; that little babies shouldn't be smoking cigars--please send cigarettes in the future, until the child grows strong enough to handle a cigar like a man. In connection with Gilbert's cigar, I encountered a diversion: The wrapping had been broken in transit and when it arrived it was nothing more than a cigar with Joe's sticker attached, plus some sort of a tag with my address. The clerk at the window looked at it, smelled it, compared it with postoffice files on illegal shipments (and promptly looked disappointed), weighed it, and searched me suspiciously with his eagle eye. I grew tired awaiting the outcome of his scrutiny and handed him a little packet of matches and said: "Go ahead, try it". The clerk did not have a sense of humor. Speaking of the postoffice and a sense of humor reminds me to tell you that two outer-circle Eastern fans are not apt to be with us much longer. A fellow named Milt Rothman living in Washington recently sent a fellow named Don Wollheim living in Brooklyn a letter, and on the back flap this Rothman fellow etched a huge nazi cross, with ~~XXXX~~ kisses underneath. Now it follows that this Rothman is an alien foreigner from Norway, while this Wollheim is an alien foreigner from Zanzibar; therefore as soon as the old widow lady living next

door to Wollheim gets around to reporting to the Feds what she observed on the back flap of the letter, the two will be deported.

TUCKER: (December, 1939) History, and fan mags y'know, are made at night. Sully is out in the kitchen turning out Le Zombie, the canary is in the parlor attacking the problem of the square root of minus one for the nine hundred and forty-seventh time, and here I sit whacking out a missile to you to get my name in print. But then, things are like that around the Tucker Prehistoric House (no relation to Wollheim). Some of the damndest things go on...and off..around here, especially at night, for it seems that Prehistoric House comes to life at night. Le Zombies, Novas, and D'Jourals are always turned out at night. That lousy (literally) canary always works hiser's mathematics after dark. One evening I found the baby walking the floor trying to put the wife to sleep. Sully always chooses the darkest night to squat in the middle of the floor and think up poetry and new names for fan mags. And this night, I am thinking. I tried to get Fantasy News to put out an extra over this bit of news, but it wouldn't, so I turn to you with my thoughts. Brother Youd is a piker. He is only going to put Fantast out fortnightly, under Technocracy! I believe it is safe at this time to reveal the plans of Prehistoric House and its momentous policy it will follow under the glorious Cause!: D'Journal will be turned out weekly, Nova every other week, Le Zombie will be published daily! And we have grander plans than this! We have found out that the Technate print shops will print a magazine for us if we can show or guarantee a certain circulation. Well, we are pretty sure of about 100,000 readers, so we are going to publish a pro mag once a month, large size like Fantastic, story level of Astounding, fan breezy like Science Fiction with four covers unlike Amazing! The whole thing will only cost each reader a wee 1/4 erg or so, so we are assured of a tremendous circulation. I will be editor, of course. In a letter from Bradbury the past week he mentioned that somebody or other was gathering at somebody's house to turn out three LASFL pubs, the job to take all day. Pray tell, what do you chaps do out there, roll dice between the printing of each stencil? Working together, Sully and I usually get out, staple, fold and insert in envelopes a six page Le Zombie in the space of two hours, and we stop to make up science fiction songs between stencils! Speaking of Wilson reminds me of his magazine Escape, which reminds me of the incident mentioned in it wherein the T-Men raided Futurian House, which reminds me of the time last May when Wilson, Wollheim and Michel visited Prehistoric House. It seems that the five of us gabbed so long and so loud on the front stoop that some neighbor had the brass nerve to phone the police--this was a few hours after midnight, mind you!--and those gentlemen were most annoying. All of us had gotten safely inside except Sully, and the minions of the law swooped down on him, poor chap. Bravely, he beat them off, would not let them cross the doorstep without a warrant, saved us all from durance vile...in fact, we never knew the cops were there until he told us about it next morning, and lo! upon going out to examine the ground, did find huge patches of green grass beaten down where flat feet had stood.

SNARY: (Halloween, 1945) Might I say that the letters from fans from other countries you use are not ment to make fans love one another, and think of the world as brother. That is except for Crutch. One AProberts should go soak his head in one of Australian best water holes. Thank goodnes that all Austrailians aren't like him. N there is dear comrade CYoud. It is a good thing that some people don't read Vom. Think of what the anti Rusia people coud do

with that letter. I think of my self as some what of an optimist, and I don't think it looks good. I have allways tried to make what Russia does seem alright so as not to get to fearing it like most people, but this kine of stuff. It's not like the bunk you read in the paper eather. For you know that it is true. I have allways thought that fandom was made of better stuff. To my way of thinking every man or fan has a right to say what ever he feels like, but saying that he things his country may have to fight yours is going a pet far.

Len Moffatt turned up with fair regularity in VOM. But I'd better not include extracts in this type of reprinting, because he usually directed specific statements to remarks made in the previous issue, and it would take a lot of cross-references and supplemental quoting to make sense. Meanwhile, I'd better annotate a few of the FAPA members' quotations: The Hymn to Satan was a musical composition whose words and music were written by a feminine fakefan named Tigrina and published by Ackerman. For Spaceways' covers, I used packs of colored heavy paper that came from the five and ten in many colors, and finances in those years precluded any possibility of not using the ten per cent of the paper that was a deep purple hue. Mopsy was Speer's nickname for Matters of Opinion, one of his FAPA publications. Ray Van Houten tried to gain support for an organization to counteract any impression that science might do things for which people would be sorry. The Tucker letter apparently dates from so long ago that people gave new pops cigars, instead of the current tradition of father-to-friends transfer of ownership. Sully Roberds was an occasional helper on Tucker publications, whose existence was grievously doubted by many fans.

There weren't many known fans in non-English-speaking nations when VOM lived. But occasionally you found a pioneer fan in continental Europe represented there. This was written by a German fan with whom I'm still in occasional correspondence, even though he's on the far side of the Iron Curtain, Herbert Häussler, writing from somewhere in France:

HAUSSLER: (July, 1946) A very great surprise was your letter of February 26. Later on I got letters from former Esperanto friends, one who was and is still again a reverend at a church near Philadelphia, and another by an old Swedish friend, with whom I corresponded for nearly ten years, '29 till '39. Yesterday, I got very surprisingly a card from an unknown (to me) American Esperantist. His name I can't read but on this card is a stamp of the National Institute of Esperanto, Philadelphia. He writes that he read my name and address in the latest issue of Esperanto. Pardon my writing in English, not that I shouldn't be able to go on and write any more letters in our language Esperanto but, at this moment, I for some causes think it more convenient to use English. I got drafted into the army in June, 1940, and went to Poland as well as to France to take part in the occupation, but for the greater part to get the training there. In '41 we went to Russia and I was in the combat till the beginning of December. Because of illness in my left hand and my frozen feet I was transferred to the hospital and stayed in some of them more than two years, leaving in May '44. For combat service I was no longer eligible (I wasn't sorry for this) and got to be a pay clerk. At this I got captured one Sunday noon in the little Bavarian town, Dillingen on the Danube. I rose only to the rank of a Pfc during five years. The long stay in the hospital I needed, because I got not

fixed up any sooner. I lost four toes on my left foot and I'm hindered a little by walking. I can't endure to keep staying for a long time or walk as I used to do. Now I am in a workcamp for German prisoners here in northern France. When shall we go home? I don't know. Hope this will be soon. My home is situated what is now the Russian zone of occupation. As I mentioned before I still have no news from my wife, except the card when she wrote that she still lives and is going well. My little son Wolfgang died last February of pneumonia at the age of $7\frac{1}{2}$ years. I am very glad that this worldwide war is finished. I hate wars and the mass killing of soldiers and civilians alike. We live here good, the food is too good and enough now, if also we had very scarce times. I want to return home to my wife, to get a job and to go on working for peaceful purposes. I lost my father in World War I and never was for a dictatorship. Knowing so many friends of the different nations and countries through my correspondence in Esperanto I heartily want the peoples to come to an understanding one with the other. Why should it be impossible to live in harmony and peace together. I see no reason, why this couldn't be done.

Previous to this, VOM had published a letter that represented the first word in three or four years from Georges H. Gallet. He was a French fan who had been ready to publish the first French prozine when the war got hot. Well, if it wasn't a real prozine, it was almost one, a mixture of science fiction stories and science fact articles, with more of the latter than are normally published in prozines.

GALLET: (May, 1945) I won't try to tell you all. It would take a book, at least, to do it. The Germans came into Southern France. We had to keep on living somehow and believe me it was quite a problem--it still is--with black market prices soaring, for food, for everything in fact. I wrote science articles for serious papers, gossip for movie magazines, stories for juveniles. With 1944, the bombings by air became more frequent and the bombs had a deplorable habit of falling much too near my house. August came and Liberation, with fighting in the streets. Happily, except for windows, doors and shutters smashed, a few windowpanes broken and some perilous adventures during the battle in the town, my wife and I came out of it all rather nicely, after a little more than two weeks of living in the cellar, which, by the way, was not too uncomfortable in the warm summer. New dailies and magazines were born out of the various underground organizations. I resumed my writing with the first weekly to be published in liberated France--it is an illustrated called "V"--and, later, with some others. This permits me to wait until better times. That is to say when the paper restriction slackens and I will be able to take up old plans. Needless to say, as you know, these are all concerned with scientific fiction. And it has been one of my greatest privations since 1940 to be unable to get new American science fiction books or magazines, although I managed, during all that period, to receive English, and occasionally American, magazines, through friends in the Swiss diplomatic service. I had to be rather careful of course as the Germans considered this a capital offence. In spite of all, a few science fiction books were published in France. Two novels by my friend Jacques Spitz, whose name you already know: La Parcelle Z--parcelle means a very small portion used for scientific experiments--and Les Signaux du Soleil--Signals in the Sun. Another is coming out soon: Alpha du Centaure. Two novels by a new author, Rene Barjavel: Ravage (about a cataclysm which all but ends the world)

and Le Voyageur Imprudent--The Uncautious Traveller--(Time-travel). One novel just out by another friend of mine, Leon Groc, La Planete de Cristal--The Crystal Planet--(travel to a second moon, transparent and inhabited by two- and four-dimensional beings). I helped Groc with his spaceship and such. What a letter! I feel I have forgotten the more important things I wanted to tell you. Professor Mes-sac, the nice university man who was so much interested in science fiction and a good friend of Dr. David Keller, was arrested by the Germans and sent to Germany without explanations. He was a great invalid of the first World War. His wife has had no news of him for over six months. My own brother is still a prisoner in reprisal Oflag XC.

Ackerman was also in touch with many representatives of another race that frequently has great difficulty writing English, the pros. To make the transition easy, let's start with excerpts from a letter by the most fannish of the pros.

BLOCH: (July, 1944) Philip Wylie's Generation of Vipers is almost a primer for students of the contemporary American scene, to my way of thinking. It advances theorizations on religion and sex, too, but also holds up to consideration other forces which play an important part in our accepted mores. Companion volume would be Pitkin's A Short Introduction to the History of Human Stupidity; a cute little number called How To Run a War (author unknown to me at moment), and for those who can't read without moving their lips, there is even Tiffany Thayer's novel (it's clean, too) Little Dog Lost, which contains a hell of a lot of pertinent observations. Wonder if it has ever occurred to the smug element in s-f (who think anybody who writes an s-f story with mathematical formulae in it is a philosopher and savant the equal of Kant) to question the fundamental basis of logic on which current scientific theory is based? If so, Tertium Organum, by P.D. Ouspensky, will be a help, and my old favorite which I always drag in, Spengler's Decline of the West. It seems, boys and girls, that much of science is made up of rationalization and word-perversion and imagery founded on accepted imaginative concepts. For simple economics or sociology or what have you, beginners can understand Thurman Arnold's Folklore of Capitalism and Morrie Ernst's Too Big, and tackle Veblen later. (I ain't no radical, either--always vote the straight Satanist ticket!). And Gawd, isn't it time to drag out Hayakawa and the rest of the boys and have a go at semantics...which is, after all, at the root of the whole problem? Easiest approach I've found is Stuart Chase's The Tyranny of Words. Anybody who is interested in serious study will realize that the volumes I mention are mere introductions to a dozen different fields. I do not recommend them as the last word or even the most reliable word on any subject. But I found them within the grasp of a somewhat limited intelligence, and if I could understand them, so can any reader of Superman. But my point is simple, if overemphasized: You can only get so far by attacking current misconceptions anent religion and sexual morality. You must realize that correction of superstition will not remove its influence in other fields. What about religious influence in law... education...attitude of press...its ethical effect in medicine and, yes, in scientific research? What about sexual morality as applied to our economic problems and (surprise) our political problems? Some of the earnest theorizers seem to labor under the misapprehension that the problems of the world can be solved by individuals who devote their lives to being nonconformists on paper, and who would approach the solution of personal relationship with an Esperanto text in one hand and a copy of Astounding in the other. It ain't that simple.

Understand, I am endeavoring to make these comments to those whose concern in the matter is genuine, and above routine prurient interest in logos or libido. Nor do I hope to be understood by any of the "just too earnest and sincere" boys who will misinterpret my remarks as a plea for some damned philosophic system or other which will solve everything as quickly as Rinso solves your family washday problems. I believe that fantasy lovers may (a certain select percentage of them, anyway) develop a singular open-mindedness through their reading which in turn might enable them to maintain an objective viewpoint in a consideration of world problems. But they will have to forsake the notion that science fiction in itself is any key to the solution of those problems. Science fiction is merely a key to a detached viewpoint in certain cases. It is not a weapon of solution, as so many seem to think. Anyhow, I'd like to kick up a little fuss and see some fur fly off new hides. The carcasses of religion and sex have been kicked around until they're mangy.

WALDFFER: (Undated but linked with the Denvention in 1941)

Whether you like it or not I'm going to tell you how I got that name, Graph. It happens that I had the same front name as an uncle in my town, who is a physician (the uncle, not the town). Now a few years ago I used to waste time writing letters to the newspapers. This would have been harmless enough, except that the letters got printed, and they were signed with the same name as my uncle's which is the M.D. And since my uncle the M.D. is a lot better known hereabouts than I am, people thought he wrote all those scandalous letters to the poipers. The doc. was a good guy about it, but his business is carving people. A lot of customers were nervous about being carved by a doc. with such ideas as appeared in the papers over his name. They thought an idea is something that detonates if approached. A doc. with ideas was no fit guy to have playing around with their appendices. So to spare uncle anguish I changed the front name to Graph. I was sure that with that name I would no longer be confused with anyone in the United States. It's not really a name, but a nice, impersonal word. I've been using it for seven years and I'm thinking of having it confirmed by either baptism or tattooing.

KUTTNER: (May, 1941) A brief word of appreciation for the assorted fooze you so kindly sent us. Kat divided her attention at breakfast between briochees and fan mags, and, between hasty gulps of bourbon, I peered over her shoulder. I note a curious phenomenon. It has been a long time since I saw a fan mag. They've changed quite a lot--technically much improved, with a great deal more attention paid to format. Some of the stuff was extraordinarily well done. My devoted spouse is at present typing rapidly--God knows what--at her desk, and I have just finished brooding over the uncharted mysteries of the New York state income tax return. The Necronomicon had nothing on that. The hell with it, I say. All those fan mags gave me a sad feeling of nostalgia. Kat agrees with me that we should head west pronto. It's all quite indefinite as yet, but living in an apartment, in a city of eight million people, is a definitely artificial environment. Both of us remain baffled by subways, New Yorkers, stores, life, and New York. It is our intention, anon, to drive west and find a dwelling around Hollywood where one can see the horizon. Perspective is inverted here. Buildings get taller, farther away. There's little news. Catherine started a Northwest Smith yarn, but hasn't finished it yet. I sold Unknown a couple of new ones, A Gnome There Was and The Devil We Know. But both of us

would much prefer to wander into Clifton's and see Russ hurling his gavel at Bradbury, Fred reading his Bible, and Mr. Ackerman reclining drunkenly under the table. Allah grant that happy event will take place soon.

CAMPBELL: (January, 1939) The good die young! I am most sincerely sorry to hear that you must pass from the scene of science-fiction fandom, and can only wish that, now that the Critic has also gone its way, California will revive its unique abilities in some other form. Perhaps, even Madge can continue as a quarterly review? Surely weekends and holidays accumulate through three months to time enough for one issue, and in that quarter-year manuscripts of really good material might well build up to make an excellent issue. It seems too bad indeed that Madge, who really did have a future, should now have no more than a past--even though so thoroughly successful and enjoyable a past.

LEIBER: (January, 1939) I had never read The Hyborian Age when it appeared in fan magazine form, and last night I settled down and had a very delightful time. It's a very engaging work, and a very powerful one--as Lovecraft noted. Let me compliment you and your colleagues, both the editors and the mimeographers, for a very able bit of publishing. The introductory matter is well chosen, and the outline of Howard something that every one of his admirers would be delighted to possess. The outline of Conan's career strikes me as careful and scholarly, and it is interestingly combined with the bibliography. The format is dignified and simple, and--above all--clear. The mimeographing is a pleasure to inspect. More power to you all in such enterprises. I would be grateful for any news along such lines.

BRADBURY: (January, 1941) Now if any of you guys think you're gonna get something for nothing looking at this column, you're in for a big letdown. Futuria Fantasia is only ten cents, see, and it ain't gonna hurt you to kick through with the money, either, because it's the best damned mag in the business. And if you don't think so, I'll send Slith, the scaly reptile, around some night and have him wriggle down your cheap spine while you're in bed. So think it over, bud. Better buy it now. Address communications to 3054½ W. 12th St., L.A., California. Only a dime. Futuria Fantasia!

I don't know what fooze meant in the Kuttner letter, but it does not sound like old fan slang. The Campbell letter appeared in the first issue of VOM and had reference to the discontinuance of its predecessor. You didn't know there was a Howard fandom that long ago, did you? A fan booklet on the writer and Conan inspired the Leiber letter. I couldn't help the impulse that caused me to slip in the Bradbury letter, although it obviously comes before his change into a pro. The reference to "column" bothers me, too. It might have meant the fact that the letter was typed with lines stretching only about two-thirds of the way across the page, and in the space thus created was a little monster that apparently was drawn by Bradbury, who had contributed a larger drawing to one of the other early issues of VOM. And let's wind this up with a real rarity, Ackerman speaking frankly. His only brother, Alden, was killed in action in Belgium during the last year of the war. Forry put his picture on the cover of the 39th VOM and filled the first inside page with a little essay. Here's part:

ACKERMAN: (February, 1945) He died on New Year's Day, fighting, they told him, for a New World. I don't know whether he wholly believed that. I, myself, have strong doubts. But if anybody was kidding him, it's my business from now on to see he didn't die in vain. I can't make the authorities responsible to me, to see to it that his

life was not sacrificed for nothing; I can't personally reform the world; I can only turn my gaze inward, try to set an example by being a good guy, possibly good enough for both of us. This will not necessarily make for popularity--people are inclined to like the "right" guy, the guy with an easy conscience, better than the man with moral fiber. My brother's death came at a very opportune time for me. A concatenation of events had conspired to beat me down, spiritually, to a very low ebb. I never appreciated being born in the first place, and I had encountered so much scorn for my ideals, praise for abandonment of principles, and the like, that I was reduced to a rather hell with it all attitude. There is, at the present time, not one person living that I know of who believes in me, really and truly believes in me, that would say, "Forry, hop to it; you've carte blanche with me; I'm behind you 100%." So it works out this way, that I say "OK, I'll dedicate myself to humanity through my brother." He was a good kid, but he died before he ever got much of a chance to do anything about it. Let his chance, then, be incarnated in me. I will be good and do good, as I see it, for his sake. By being true to his memory I will be true to myself. If nobody living understands me or cares for what I'm doing, I can console myself that he would have approved. Maybe it's kind of screwy psychology, deciding someone who's gone would have appreciated you, because there's no way now of proving he wouldn't have. But it seems foolproof to me. Time cannot touch him, ever; he'll always be Aldie--nearly 21--a dear lad with an infectious smile, a sterling character, an inspiration for a loving brother.

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The Worst of Martin
Flight of the Loom

So this here character bought a brand new motorcycle with a "buddy" seat. His lubricious girl friend slid on in back of him and they roared down the street on their first ride.

Drawing to a curb he jumped off, left the motor running, and said: "Got to see a man--I'll be right back!"

And there she sat, bouncing up and down rhythmically with the rolling idle of the unadjusted motor. She had not the slightest idea of how to turn it off, and being heavy where a girl should be heavy she was quite unable to dismount.

She was beginning to stare around a little wide-eyed when the first man approached.

Her voice shook with the motion: "Do you, sir, know anything about turning off motorcycles?"

"Sorry, miss. Not a bit! I'd probably send you down the road."

There was a frantic note when she accosted the second man.

"I don't know the first thing about those crazy cycles," he snapped. "Why do you ride it if you don't know how to run it?"

If one had heard her first two appeals, they would surely have noticed that her voice bordered on pain with her third cry:

"Mister! Mister! Do you know anything about turning off motorcycles? Please? Please?"

Aware she was in some imminent plight by the pale pallor, the wide eyes, the raised appealing hands, this man came close:

"I'm awfully sorry--" he began.

"Never mind," she cut in breathless. "Kiss me!"

(From the winter, 1962, issue of Grotosque, written and published by Edgar Allan Martin in Hartford, Connecticut.)