Fourteenth Year of Publication

CANFAN

JUNE 1956

THE BEST LONG ARTICLE OF 1955

H.P. LOVECRAFT

by Don Wilson

CANADIAN FANDOM

14th Year Of Publication
June 1956
Number 29

House of York

Editor
WILLIAM D. GRANT
11 Burton Road
Toronto 10, Ontario
Canada
Phone HU 9-0766

Printed by
GERALD A. STEWARD
166 McRoberts Ave
Toronto 10, Ontario
Canada
Phone OL 5487

Stencil Cutting
William D. Grant

Special Contributor
Tod Johnson

Published 1943--1947
BEAK TAYLOR

Published 1947--1951
NED McKEOWN

Published 1951--1953
THE (Old) DERELICTS

Published 1953--1954
GERALD A. STEWARD
William D. Grant

A DERELICT PUBLICATION
QUARTERLY

Single Copy 15¢ - Four for 50¢
Eight Copies for $1.00
We Will Not Accept Larger Subs.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

In Preparation: A Symposium on FRITZ LANG -- We are after comments on any of Mr. Lang's films, short or long. These will be added to the material already at hand and you will be given full credit for anything that you may contribute...

CANADIAN FANDOM IN THE 40'S

Short Gems From Past Issues of Canadian Fanzines.....
Some of them have been slightly abridged
for obvious reasons..WDG

ELSNER LOOKS BACK

by HENRY ELSNER JR

Canfan # 12
July 1947
Canfan # 29
June 1956

I think that there are a considerable number of stories that have appeared comparatively recently which have been overlooked chiefly because of the tendancy to look back to the "good old days" for the "classics." Because of their very length, short stories cannot come up to longer efforts in certain characteristics -- but I do regard them as well-written, entertaining stories; ones which I think you will enjoy reading as much as I have.

I would like to put in a word of praise for one of my all-time favorite stf tales -- a story which I so far seem to have been alone in admiring. It's The Inheritors, published in Future Fantasy & S-F for Oct. 1941, and co-authored by two men known to more as fans than authors: Robert W. Lowndes and John B. Michel.

Whenever a fan poll is taken, Hubbard's Final Blackout is sure to come in high on the listing, if not on top. And yet, to my knowledge, a story with a similar theme, and with vastly superior atmosphere has never even been listed on any poll sheet. The future war-devastated world pictured in The Inheritors is much more fantastically horrible than that of Hubbard. Widespread use of poison gases of many varieties has caused the chemicals in the soil to unite with the gas particles, making the surface of the earth one dense mass of swirling vapors and marsh-like land, upon which neither flora nor fauna can exist. The remaining humans exist in huge underground steel fortresses where all food and air are manufactured. These fortresses are practically impregnable from the outside, and are ceaselessly shelling similar fortresses of the enemy. Generations of humans born growing up in this environment have gradually become sluggish, apathetic and mentally degraded, until no one can remember who is being fought or why; but the work of firing the huge guns about which the fortresses are built must go on. The picture presented is one of a totally futile existence ; parts break down and cannot be replaced, water is half-poison, as is the food, and the few humans left with sufficient mental capacity to realize what is happening are unable to do anything but literally wait around to die.

At the time of the story, a small band leaves a fortress in an expedition to the outer world to make peace with a neighbouring fortress in an effort to halt the decline of homo sapiens. The murky world where swirling corrosive vapors eat into the protective "spacesuits"; where nothing can be distinguished in the weird half-light is vividly

described. As our party of humans gropingly proceed on their way, several of the men disappear mysteriously. Finally the sought-for fortress is reached and the startling discovery is made that it is in excellent repair, with good food, light and water, yet apparently deserted of all life except one dying man. Then comes the terrifying but somehow fascinating conclusion to which the atmosphere has let the reader accept as inevitable; though you, perhaps, will be as unprepared for the denouement as I was.

I know of no other story which has gripped me as powerfully as The Inheritors. The dominant mood of a valiant, yet futile battle against an overpowering pall of defeat and finality is remarkably well done, and consistently maintained throughout the story. Final Blackout ends in a soul-stirring scene; but it is one of powerful, if tragic, triumph. Not so The Inheritors.

"Stilson felt an emptiness inside him. 'Heller, what shall we tell them when we get back?'"

"'We'll tell them that the Enemy won't make peace, that we've got to keep fighting. Maybe -- if I get back -- if anyone gets back -- it would be a good idea to put something in the water supply so that they all go to sleep painlessly and clean.'"

"'Humanity's done for, John. There's no real sense in fighting or trying to go on. There's nothing here on this earth,' and his hand swept over the night before them, 'worth our living.'"

"'I don't know,' he said slowly, 'perhaps it's worth the trouble, at least of moving our people to the domed city. At least death won't come in the dark and in poisoned atmosphere. And maybe -- there, they can find a way --,' his words trailed off because he knew he had no faith in them. What could they do when the far-superior dome dwellers had failed utterly."

"He snapped on the flashlamp and went from sleeper to sleeper, shining it in their faces, checking, wondering with a chill in his heart if Marth would awaken when it was time to go on."

"The night spread about him, deep, pitiless. He could sense a deeper blackness within its ebon depths, moving, shifting, moving....."

CROUTCH ON UNIONS

ORIGINAL TITLE "HODGE PODGE"

by
Les Croutch
Macabre # 1
March 1948
Canfan # 29
June 1956

Are we becoming too civilized -- or are we slipping back? Think. In the days of the movie "Scarface" and Al Capone, a favorite game of the racketeers was to go after some poor guy who was trying to make an honest living and tell him to pay protection or he'd get himself shot up, his shop smashed, and so on. Those racketeers when hauled into a court were tried and convicted because they had broken a law. Then the Unions came. A fat little foreigner who might have been a racketeer in the days of prohibition hauls down a nice salary and tells radio

stations in his own country and outside his own country that after a certain date they can't play phonograph records....this is the old protection game in a fancier guise. But it is legal because it is an organization of thousands and there are laws now that make it operatable. Unions are all right, in my estimation, for they have made higher wages and higher living conditions and better working conditions possible, but when one man can get such a strangle hold on a large industry and effect the lives of millions outside of his own men, I think he is just one step lower than Mussolini, Hitler and Joe Stalin. He is one step lower -- legally, but honestly he is not even in the same class. Dictators are more honorable men than these -- for a dictator does not guise his actions as being honest and he makes no bones about wanting power and political dictatorship.

Perhaps someday things will be like this:

You'll need a union card to whistle the latest popular song or else you'll have a union member dogging your steps with his hand held out demanding royalties every time you pucker.

Maybe we'll have no books, no magazines, no newspapers because the paper will be all used up printing union cards, royalty returns and red tape making it permissable to talk in anything but a flat monotone. Chinamen will have to pay dues to singsong, and you won't dare hum while in the bathroom having a shower. Then one day you won't be allowed to talk at all, for to talk you emit noises -- and noises are tonel combinations made by the vocal chords. And some union organizer will discover that when YOU say "hello" the first syllable will use a tone which happens to be the same as in the first bar of "Beat Me Susie With A Rotten Hamburger" and therefor you are infringing, and will have to pay a royalty.

Of course there is a bright light. One day some smart Joe will organize a Union of Talkers -- and then the musicians will have to pay everyone who speaks a royalty for they will suddenly discover that every note of music they write is lifted from somebody's voice. That will be the day we shall have our revenge.

The doctor will have to join the Plumber's Union to work on your inner piping.

You'll have to join the Autoworkers Union to fill your radiator with water or tighten up your valve cap.

You won't dare cut that hair sprouting from your nose for then you will be depriving some barber of his livelihood and his union will be down your neck.

Poloticians will have to join a Hunter's Union to shoot the bull.

You won't be able to sit down in the warm sunshine and whittle at a stick, for then you'll be infringing on the sancrosanct domain of some Logger's Union.

You won't be able to saw off anything for then the Carpenter's Union will be after you.

You won't be able to die for if you die you are disposing of your will to live and no doubt the merchants will have a union to cover that.

It won't be any use getting married and conceiving little images of yourself for to conceive is the same as to bring into being or to invent and there will be an Artist's and Inventor's Union to cover that.

We could go on forever but what's the use? Even when you go to Heaven you'll likely have to pay dues to an Angel's Union. I'm surprised the angels haven't formed an association by now. LC

A SHORT COURSE IN ART FOR FANZINE ILLUSTRATORS

BY BOB TUCKER

Le Zombie # 63
July 1948
(Derelicts of Toronto)
Deadwood # 12
Sept. 1950
Hyphen # 7
March 1954
Canfan # 29
June 1956

Fans who draw women, nude or clothed, for fanzines simply don't know a damned thing about women. The ignorance of these artists is terrible, as the first glance at their nude illustration will reveal. The features they place on the women are out of shape, badly proportioned, and untrue to life. Their fond illusions discolor artistic judgment.

Consider the bust most usually seen in fanzines, the healthy looking object to the right labeled "A". Artists who put this type of bust on female figures are due for a shock when they get around to studying their first woman; a woman's muscles will not support such a weight at such an angle. The "B" exhibit is the correct one for the size indicated, even though it may offend the artistic senses.

And watch the height and build of their figures. Only a fairly short, well-padded girl can have "B". Tall, thin women possess "C", "D", "E", or "F" and nothing else. If it appears to be something else, do not be fooled, it is only a gimmick known as a "falsie" and pictured in "G". Nature will not give a tall or thin girl a healthy bust; the artist, to be lifelike, must follow nature's lines.

Conversely, a short and fat girl is represented with "E" or "H", usually the latter depending upon her glandular activity. While few such fat figures ever appear in fanzine illustrations, it is well to note this for future reference.

Figure "E" probably represents the average American girl and should be followed in fanzine illustrations; or it will be noted that where girls appear in the picture alongside a man, a machine or an animal, the height given the girl by the artist indicates her to be average, or normal. Less than five feet, six inches, for a certainty, hence figure "E" is correct for this average or normal build. Figure "C" sometimes appears on such women but does not lend itself readily to good picturization. Figure "D" is found on the Oriental girl, but rarely in America.

In studying female figures in fanzines, you will note that women artists do not make these mistakes; some of the very best published nudes have been drawn by women, and the male artists will do well to study, even copy, the feminine illustrator. To some degree it is also true that the male artist who has studied a live model will be more faithful in reproducing the correct proportions on paper, although all too soon he too tends to slip away from rigid natural busts and distorts the illustration for the sake of romanticism. This tendency must be held in check and the artist must force himself to remain close to nature's model.

Figure "I" indicates an elderly lady. Skip it. BT

by
Weaver Wright
Canfan # 13
Sept. 1947
Canfan # 29
June 1956

The Dictator's long delicate forefinger paused briefly above the button. The button that would transmit the knockout blow to Los Angeles!

The other Atom Bombs had already been dispatched a few seconds before. Destinations: Washington, New York, Unopolis, and Chicago.

Atoms Over America! Just as Jenkins had predicted in The Murder Of The USA. Four live television screens before the Dictator's darkling eyes showed simultaneous scenes of the stratosphere; four jet-propelled projectiles of doom, streaking through the upper reaches of earth's atmosphere, arrowing for the vitals of unsuspecting America.

Not all the metropolises of the United States must die, but five had been selected for terror targets, savage warnings of the fate of the entire nation if capitulation were not complete and immediate.

And an object lesson for Canada!

But San Francisco could substitute for Los Angeles, should the Dictator choose. The ultimate choice was his alone. He paused to contemplate a factor which had previously been completely overlooked.

It was not a military factor; it was one of morale: part of Los Angeles was Hollywood, was it not? The A-Bomb would obliterate all the suberbs! More importantly, certain superb figures rose in the mind's eye of the monstrous assassin: luscious Lana Warner, whom he had recently seen smouldering (in flaming technicolor) in Where There's Smoke.

Sultry Ann Sherman, voluptuous as Jean Harlow in Platinum Blonde.

And curvaceous Laurel Lee Donne, who made her "wow-bow", to quote the picturesque New York columnist (who would momentarily cease to exist) in Moon Maid.

The Dictator's sensuous lips quivered. It would be manifestly foolish to destroy such lovely women, to reduce such beautiful bodies to atomic ashes. When the conquest of America was complete, they would compete for his favour with their flawless figures.

And so, because of the magic spell of the Celluloid City, Los Angeles was spared the destruction.

But the Dictator's desires were ironically frustrated, for at the moment Manhattan was transformed into an aerial mushroom, Donne, the dimpled darling was being feted at a dinner there.....Ann Sherman was sight-seeing at the Capital.....And Lana Warner was making a personal appearance in San Francisco.....

##

In 1975, when Pan-Time Productions of Hollywood, California, United States of America (not Germany, or Russia, or Japan, or ?) filmed the historical spectacle, Death And Rebirth Of The USA, Margaret Oberon portrayed her own mother, the former child star who, at the age of eighteen, had won an immortal place among American patriots by assassinating the Dictator during his "triumphal tour" of Hollywood.

Canada had cause for celebration, too. For Oberon was Canadian born. And the Dominion was still free.

WW

THE DECLINE AND FALL OF SOME

by William D. Grant

What is going on in Fandom these days? What is keeping certain groups alive? And one could conjure up dozens more, but as an example take the Derelicts of Toronto for a starting point.

Today a club meeting is a rare thing in Toronto, actually most of the bull sessions take place over the phone. The urge or the spark that fed the flames in 1952-53-54 has simmered down. The majority of the members have all had a crack at fan publishing via Gerald Steward's Gestetner. The fact that all the publications have rated high, right from the beginning, it shows almost an urgency for each individual to express himself. For each magazine certainly reflects the personality of the editor. To think that all these individuals were originally satisfied to support the workings of Canfan back in 1952. So in a sense the group as a whole has tasted the wine of success in amateur publishing.

While the publishing part of the group is still strong, the connecting links have tapered off. In other words the decline has set in. This decline comes at varying speeds, internal clashes of individuals usually breaks a group up very quickly, if there are no clashing minds the culmination of decline is quite a bit slower.

Most of the groups that have piloted a World Convention experience this "I've had it" feeling, this is one spot where we loose a lot of fans. Some of them briefly appear in Fandom years later, sort of a "I wonder what is going on" appearance, then they disappear for good.

Right now there are five major groups that are keeping up the propaganda and in three of the five cases it is a convention (or gathering) that is putting them in the spotlight.

The NFFF is blasted, praised or about any other thing you can think of, but the fact remains it is still very much alive. Last January I visited Janie Lamb in Tennessee and I realized how much was going on in this organization, there have been changes, but the letter writing that goes on in that circle is more than fabulous.

As evidenced in fanzines I know there is something going on out in California, but it is so darned far away it never quite penetrates my thoughts.

In Charlotte, N. C., there is a small convention coming off this winter, these lads are after a buck, so there's the proof.

The Ohio group (Barrett, Ford, Skirvin, Tarr, Lavender, Tabakow and so on) are strongly behind the Mid-West Con. Which, to me, is by far the best organization of them all. Their set-up leans on informality and no program, strictly a gathering of the clans.

In New York the big event comes off this fall at the Biltmore. In this instance we have a mixture of the amateurs and professionals. Like California there will always be something going on in this area, I know that as long as Cheech Bedone is in the area that there will be action in some form or another. Cheech is the Walter Winchell of Fandom and has just scooped all of us by getting married.

There are other groups, I know, but they are localized. Some of them spring into the limelight temporarily for various reasons, for example; a nice little hoax, dirty names, somebody went to somebody's room, a flying saucer came to our club meeting and I could go on.

Certainly in the early 1950's Science-Fiction became commercial, and was recognized by the outsiders (the general public), but frankly the level of reading material has gone down, there are occasional

spurts of light when some editor leaves an author's story intact. This is about the only time the author can find out whether he really is able to spin a good yarn and it is moments like these that remind the older readers of things past, which doesn't help the cause today.

The good old Science-Fiction Book Club has virtually put most of the small publishers out of business. True some of the authors managed to swing over to the bigger publishers, but there are quite a few authors that didn't get there. And now the squeeze is on, people are just not buying SF from the big publishers, like they did in 1952 and 53, which means that a lot of the neofans have also stopped buying. The older fans have become quite selective in their reading tastes, besides they have plenty to choose from and know in most cases what to choose.

For myself I collected everything in sight, up until 1949, then SF went big time, quality went down and I said the heck with the whole thing. Now I buy Fantasy Press, some Gnome and anything I can pick up at a sale price. My magazine reading is almost nil, except for novels.

Larry Shaw's Infinity looked interesting, but I heard a rumble that it may be going into the moth balls. And those of you who attended the Mid-West Con last year may remember him saying that Infinity was strictly a small experiment and that the first issues would decide the future. It would be great if Infinity did survive, for Larry's sake.

In fan publishing there seems to be a new one every week and they also seem to fold about the same speed. Take a look at a FAPA mailing sometime, I would say that this is as good a cross-section as any, a good 60-65% of the pile is pure "once read, throw it away" material. And you can find this backed up by reading some of the reviews in the FAPA zines about previous issues. Yet there are fans just about ready to do murder to get on that list, which proves that the smaller the list, the more exclusive it looks, thus the waiting list.

Upon visiting Don Ford recently in Sharonville a few very signicant statements vibrated into my earphones. One of which really struck the gong, quote; ".....and when I turn out anything I know that it can be picked up ten years from now and be just as interesting. Just imagine some of the crap you get today being picked up by a neofan ten years from now....." There is no doubt about it he would be at a complete loss. Of course, somebody can always say I don't want to be immortal I'm just doing it for the hell-of-it. There are about ten people that can turn out stuff for the hell-of-it today and their work will be readable ten years from now. I know three of them, personally, Tucker, Bloch and Grennell. The group that is turning out the comical soap-suds (the real crud) will in most cases be but forgotten in two to three years time. Before it slips my mind, Les Croutch is another craftsman at comedy, but his comedy leans more towards the Esquire type, and this puts him in a class by himself.

I'm afraid Don is after a pretty tall order, but there are issues of the older zines that hold up partially. There again it is all according to your brand of entertainment.

So from the above you can see, if you want to recognize it, a decline in professional publishing, not so many active groups or a lot of almost inactive groups, and a very high percentage of inferior amateur publications which contribute to a very rapid turnover in Fandom.

In this turnover we loose some very nice people, who get just plain disgusted and turn to other interests. As for myself, I'm hanging on, because there are ways, it will have to be a group to lead the way. The answers are probably right under my nose. WDG

THE MAELSTROM ☆ EDITED BY WDG

V E R N O N L. Mc C A I N
908 Walker Street
Wenatchee, Washington., USA

Am I right in thinking the Bloch item was rescued from the files of Browne's projected musical magazine? Happily, I never got around to sending Browne anything. Loved your cover for it. The only trouble is that when I put the contents on my turntable at 33 rpm I get nothing but a slow tearing sound and shredded paper. Did the musicians maybe forget to turn up for that session?.....I enjoyed the Bloch article although I've encountered most of the views either in other published stuff by him or his letters. I'll agree with Bloch that the jazz and longhiar cults may be affectations and it may be silly to memorize every Haydn symphonic theme by number or memorize the order and date of every Berigan solo, but it seems to me essentially harmless and if it gives the individual pleasure why not? And as the sort of person who is constitutionally incapable of enjoying anything moderately I assure you that this fanatic thirsting after every detail is a source of considerable pleasure to the individual who happens to be crazy in that particular fashion. And it certainly seems to be no worse than committing to memory the identity and careers of every actor of any importance in early movies and the theatre of the same period as one of my favorite correspondents has done. It can even be useful, to oneself or others, on occasion though admittedly it usually isn't. Personally I feel the most fertile field for this type of microscopic examination is either recorded music or else the work of certain writers (you can interpret that last word singularly or plurally). I'm currently immersing myself in Ellingtonia, to an extent that would probably make Mr. Bloch's Berigan-fancier horrible example look like an amateur. If it has no other results than those already yielded via increased appreciation of Ellington's music, it will be thoroughly worth the time expended, but I also have other plans I intend to use this knowledge for, eventually.....

Looks like Vernon collects Ellington, like I collect Crosby and Armstrong. Why is it that all hobbies cost money? I made a statement about how Crosby and copied Russ Columbo's style and believe me Vernon straightened me out. Perhaps I should have been more exacting and said Columbo was the first to do the crooning talking lines, Columbo's big numbers repeated themselves within weeks, with Crosby doing the same thing. And both of them at the time recorded for Victor, but Columbo was by far the more valuable piece of property at that time. For further proof on the dates all one has to do is check the reissue pressings put out on the Jay label of Columbo's early Victor recordings. Some of these numbers have also been reissued on Victor's "X" Archive Series, a twelve inch Columbo special.....WDG

D U T C H E L L I S
1428 - 15th Street, E
Calgary, Alberta., Can

You've got a tremendous amount of material in this latest double-size Canfan. Splendid issue, the best Canfan you've put out.....Your layout and headings, art and photo adaptations are excellent as usual. Your cover calls for special mention--the design is good and your job of putting it on stencil really is magnificant. You must have put a lot of skill and patience into that.....The CON REPORTS were the most interesting items in the mag.....THE MAELSTROM

was much too short.....Steward was lively and interesting in his GASPIPE, especially in his comments on Geis' new mag, SFR. Your own brief reviews are very good. As I've said before (in a review, I think), your idea is excellent.....Lyons was fairly interesting, but I don't know any Latin. The thing looks intriguing. Do you have a Peter Z. Ingerman on your mailing list? Real Latin fiend--he might be able to make something of it.....As for the February issue MUSIC AND ROBERT BLOCH was fascinating. That sort of reminiscence by someone as intelligent and perceptive as Bob Bloch always makes good reading, but unfortunately, it's not the sort of thing that you find in many fmz. Which makes it even more enjoyable when you do encounter it.....THE MAGIC BOX was also good. Reprints such as that are well worth reading.....Reta Grossman's BLUES FOR TOMMY was very interesting. I enjoyed it. Reta had mentioned to me that this would be appearing in Canfan. She didn't prepare me for such a weird, exciting story.....Steward's SECOND TUCKER FAN SURVEY was worth reprinting. I'd read it in Gasp, but reread it here with as much pleasure.....

D E S E M E R Y
93 Hemlock Street
St. Thomas, Ont., Can

Beautiful cover. In a ghastly sort of way, of course.....The only part of the Con-Report that astonished me was that everyone had inhibitions. Amazing. Utterly.....Regarding Dr. Keller's still-applicable item, I'd like to go sercon for a mo and wonder out loud, why is it that we can have atomic subs, atomic planes, even atomic cars forecast, but we still have to heat our homes the way we did in the cave days - plain old hot fire.....I like the idea of an occasional issue with only a few good long features like in issue #28. Especially when the features deserve it. I think it helps a good deal, to formulate an idea of a person in fandom when you can find out what he likes and dislikes outside of fandom. Consequently I feel I know more about Bloch now than I did before I read this MUSIC AND BOB BLOCH piece. THE MAGIC BOX is well-written, entertaining, and renews my belief that publicity doesn't always bespeak greatness.....Regarding the SECOND TUCKER FAN SURVEY, the most surprising item is Ger's own statement that he is surprised that only 8.8% of fandom is Catholic against 42.3% Protestant. I wonder why he thought there would be more Catholic fen than Protestant? Perhaps if he had broken the Protestant into sects it would have looked different. One question I would have liked to have seen on the questionaire is the matter of politics - not just political affiliation, but beliefs. After all, with sex and religion, politics is the most discussed subject around.....

T E R R Y C A R R
134 Cambridge Street
San Francisco 24, Calif., USA

I got the two issues of Canfan today, good issues, from what I've read so far..... I note that you showed what was apparently the "Convention Jackpot" film at the Clevecon. Do you still have them, or was that what you gave to Ken Bulmer to take back with him?.....I'm working on two zines now -- both should be out fairly soon, depending on my finances, which are in a sorry state, considering the fact that Christmas is creeping up on us. DIASPAR # 5 is all dummied, but probably won't be out until after INNUENDO, which is almost entirely on master.....

Your absolutely right, Ken Bulmer has the film and as to how long it will be "over 'ome" is strictly a question mark as far as I'm concerned. The next stop is Franklin Dietz, who is looking after the RECORDS for the 14th World Con.....WDG

CLIFFORD I. GOULD
1559 Cable Street
San Diego 7, Calif., USA

Wonderful cover on Canfan # 27 -- don't tell me that you stencilled that with your own lily--whites?.....The absolute worst thing in # 27 was P. Howies bit -- he seems to be having all sorts of troubles -- console him for me.....I take it that FIE has folded. At any rate, I think that Ger's GASPIPE will do much to liven up the old mag -- give him another couple of pages to romp around in -- he deserves them!.....Why didn't you include the Clevention Report and the After Con bit all together in one epic? At any rate they both were well done, with perhaps, the CON REPORT taking top honors.....I don't expecially dig the Keller article, but I suppose that someone who receives Canfan will -- else why would you have printed it?.....It is indeed a sorrowful state when it comes to printing a mere page of letters! Please print all of (good) the goddam letters that you can get your hands on -- I plead Billy -- I plead.... On a whole # 27 is a very readable, although sorrowfully unbalanced issue, what with ten pages devoted to Con reporting, four pages to a Sercon article, two pages to crud, four pages to fmz reviews and a mere page to letters.....Loved the pic of Harlan Ellison's leg on page 22!.....Issue # 28 is also an unbalanced issue -- however the Bloch article saved it from being an ehhh -- issue. As usual Bloch really didn't dig into the issue, but rather gave us some very interesting auto-biographical notes, some hard-to-come-by facts, and some lucid observations -- however as I said he really didn't dig into the subject matter -- rather he deflowered it and stepped aside to let us have a lot of fun with it. BLOCH WAS SUPERB! Just one comment on the thing tho -- it seems that what with Bob's other likes and dislikes that he should like the music of Mohler -- Bobby?.....THE MAGIC BOX barely held my interest. I felt preached at and the fiction was no more than passable.....The SECOND TUCKER FAN SURVEY was excellent reading and most interesting, however I've already seen it in Ger's own GASP!.....PLEASE MR. GRANT SUR, DO THIS FOR ME? -- Dept.

1) Have Ger do the GASPIPE as a regular feature for Canfan
2) Don't print any more crud by P. Howie
3) Print a looooong letter column
4) Write an editorial
5) Slow down -- get off schedule for an issue or two.
Mess up the reproduction a little. Make a few typoes.
Unjustify the margins and in general have a little more fun in pubbing.....

B I L L C O U R V A L
4215 Cherokee Avenue
San Diego 4, Calif., USA

27: Who is Mrs. Sam Silverberg? Lord knows that between a degree of astigmatism I have from squinting at that black blot held me and the 150 watt kitchen light. How did you expect to keep the identity of Ellison's partner from fans by merely blotting it out? Heck, we're old hands at reading almost-but-not-quite obliterated words. Sure, 90% of all blotted out, "x"ed out, etc; words or phrases are merely corrections of faulty English usage, but the other 10% is when the person thinks he has stepped too far out of character (or else his real one is showing thru) for comfort. Boy, it's fun to decifer those.....I'm beginning to take to your style of writing. It's definately rather stiff and formal (especially for a Canadian fanzine) but has a well-oiled stiffness and a warm formality that I find appealing.....It was well perfected in the "other articles".....Looking at the last stencilled page all I can say is: Well, if you are going to succeed C. Hall in bringing us "the poor fans

Playboy", then I might as well do my little part by supplying you with this '53 Ballyhoo Calendar to trace since you aren't giving us JWC. .....# 28: You mean there won't be another issue of Canfan out till next summer? I don't like that a bit, nossir.....

B O B B L O C H
Box 326
Weyauwega, Wisc., USA

I am glad to get the new Canfan, but in retrospect a bit sorry about my article -- it halls so short of being in any way definitive. If I had written it as a sort of deliberate survey of music in the '20s and '30s, I'd have included so many more names and shifted the emphasis: as it was, the whole thing was purposely introspective.....As such, it doesn't help your very interesting listing which follows. I feel that I've let you down by being so casual and rambling in my approach.....Lots of good things in this issue, Wm. Glad to see somebody mention Freise-Greene and THE MAGIC BOX. I found it a most depressing and somewhat incoherent film, but interesting because of the glimpses of all the British players. The overall story, though, saddened me. I read a grim moral into yarns of this sort.....

Actually Bob should not apologize because this article was originally written for a project that Norman G. Browne was editing a few years ago. I'm just thankful that Bob let me print it and the reader reaction is the proof of the enjoyment derived, so Blochowitz no more from you.....WDG

REV. C. M. MOORHEAD
Box 171
Bettsville, Ohio., USA

I have thoroughly enjoyed the combined issues, Dec. 1955 and Feb. 1956 of Canfan. I wish you could publish it more frequently. That article THE MAGIC BOX by Ray Allister was good. Let us have more of it's calibre.....But the thing that made my eyes open up was the SECOND TUCKER FAN SURVEY. I was really astonished to find such a large percentage of fandom that had any religious beliefs at all!.....

At this point Reverend Moorhead went into the percentages definitely astounded at the 42.3% quotation. Frankly I think quite a few others received a surprise from what Gerry has said since. One conclusion that I have come to is that this survey has cleared up a lot of foggy or indefinite ideas about fandom and the TUCKER FAN SURVEY should be a little more frequent.....WDG

J A N I E L A M B
Heiskell, Tennessee, USA

Canfan just arrived and this is a swell issue. Your Con report was fine -- now if someone else will write a few reports I'll know what went on -- such as, was Gerry Steward really there?..... I can hardly believe Willy Ley spoke for 90 minutes. This was one of the high spots of the Con for me -- I enjoyed every minute of it. This was in my estimation much better than Isaac Asimov's welcome speech. .....Remember the letter in Canfan from Carpenter dealing with the survey? Well, you may tell Gerry, Carpenter had the "emotional upset" or nervous breakdown. Tried to shoot a man, the man was successful in taking the gun, then Carpenter stabbed him with a paper knive -- he is out on bond. The gossip is Dr. Carpenter went nuts and did this, here-to-fore he was a respected Dentist, a regular church goer and teacher in the Methodist church -- so maybe he can visit his psychiatrist friend. Knowing this had happened made that little excerpt from his letter interesting to me.....

RETA GROSSMAN
47 Kirkland Blvd.
Toronto 10, Ontario., CAN

Funny, I had always pictured the Jabberwock as an entirely different crittur. This one is truly horrendous.....Re: The Clevention taped speech: I can quite see the point of reprinting stuff as long as it is still current enough to make sense. But a lot of reprints I have seen lately are dated. Even Dr. Kellar's is a little dated. I can readily agree with his statement that SF stories should tell of inventions, etc. beneficial to man, but can every story have a happy ending? Or can all inventions possibly be bebeficial? In pure scientific research, does one know what on earth one will come up with?.....Pro Ed. Panel: F & SF is one of my favorite mags, but it seems to me that all Boucher does (outside of editing the stories) is write fancy intros for same. And the intros, unfortunately, are more exciting than the stories. If he went back over some of them (just the intros alone) for several years, he could write his own stories. The intros don't describe the story too well, I'm afraid.....The Grinding Monster -- is this one of the poems you were talking about? Sounds like Rich Kirs in a less maudlin mood than usual.....After the Con: Y'know, I may be going to Cons via your films from now on. It may be the only solution.....One thing I want to know: which do you enjoy filming more, people or nature? With all the films of scenery, etc. that you have taken, you could make Canada's answer to Arne Sucksdorf. .....The Music and Bloch article was exceedingly entertaining and gave a very comprehensive picture of Bob's musical tastes, to wit: catholic choices, devil-may-take-you, I'll listen to what I like, you listen to what you like, and may our records never meet. Ellington, in my opinion, as a pianist is a good composer. His piano solos are pathetic, and so arrid. Mr. Bloch, have you noticed that Johnny Ray wears a hearing aid? It is my theory that when he starts to sing, he lowers the volume so that he can't hear himself. Otherwise, how could he possibly stand his own voice?.....THE MAGIC BOX I enjoyed very much, informative and the type of story I like.....As for the SECOND TUCKER FAN SURVEY, I've said all that I'm going to say about it to Ger.....

A/3C BILL CONNER AF15534626
3320th Installations Group
Amarillo AFB, Texas., USA

Dr. Kellar's article, SCIENCE - MASTER OR SERVANT, seems to me to be more of a history of man's weapons than of his science. Still, you could go so far as to say that the history of science IS the history of weapons. Almost every major invention or discovery has it's peaceful use or uses and also it's use or uses as a weapon of war. Usually the use as a weapon comes first. There is one belief that I do not follow, and that is that science will be the ultimate toll of Man's destruction. To support my belief, I give you this example: If two men were fighting a duel, would they use dynamite at 10 paces? Of course not! The progress of atomic weapons will soon make a world war as suicidal as this duel with dynamite. Then it will no longer be a question of which country is the strongset in Air Power, A-Weapons, or rocket missiles. A small nation could attack a much larger nation and reduce it to ruin, but the nation being attacked would have enough time to retaliate and likewise devastate the small country. No nation is going to start a war that they know they can't win.....I can't think of science as a villain in any way, nor can I think of SF, with it's tales of super weapons and the destruction of the world in the same light. What would SF be without world disintigrators, alien invaders, or machines with mechanical inventors. You can imagine how awfully DULL SF would be without the villain element. You can't have ANY kind of a story that is all sweetness and light, and this includes SF! A child's fairy tale is worthless without a villain. And so I'm wondering just what Dr. Kellar has in mind for SF to use as a plot. Without the villainous element, you'll have no story. A story has to have it's conflict that is all straightened out by the hero in the end.....However, Dr. Kellar may not have been implying this at all. Maybe he meant we should do away with stories of doom and gloom where the hero doesn't win out in the end. These stories are rather depressing, if we have to read too many of them, but it's good to read a story once in a while where the hero is defeated by the villain. I will sum up with this thought. I think that science is evolving itself into a servant by it's own progress, and that the authors of SF may well give up the notion that man is going to destroy himself.....

This column is being written on a cold Monday in February while I lie in bed, at death's door, sick with a cold. (So it isn't really that bad!) In any event, I was talking to Bill a week ago and he informed me that he was putting together another issue of Canfan, so I decided that today is as good as any day to get my column written.....GAS

"THE GASPIPE" BY GERALD A STEWARD

POOKA # 2 - Don Ford
129 Maple Avenue
Sharonville, Ohio., USA

Don publishes this little mag primarily for the Off-Trail Magazine Publishers Association, or O M P A to you fans, but is available to f-a-a-a-ns by the simple expedient of sending Don a postcard containing your name, address and a statement that you are interested. This, the second issue, contains a short two page autobiography of Russ Winterbotham, old time pro and a checklist of Winterbotham's science-fiction output. Also to be found in these pages are a few letters, some comments on the last OMPA mailing, and a few more checklists of science-fiction magazines. By far the most interesting item in the issue is a two page advertisement for the 1956 Midwest Con, to be held this year at the NORTH PLAZA MOTEL. The North Plaza is a plush motel complete with swimming pool. (which the motel operators have promised to fill with water for the convention, the obvious motive being to sober up certain fans) One thing that caught my eye, and will catch the wallets of all convention goers, are the rates. At a rough guess, I would say that unless one is a remarkably good scrounger, one will have to pay twice as much to stay at the North Plaza, than one paid at Bellfontaine last year. This, plus the fact that I recently changed my job, and consequently won't be getting any time off for a vacation this year, puts me in the positive position of not being able to get to the Midwest Con. Current plans seem to indicate that the Derelict Insurgents will save their moneys for such other luxuries as MG's, Tape-Recorders, and Nycons.....

INSIDE and SCIENCE-FICTION ADVERTISER # 13 - Ron Smith
611 West 114th Street - Apt 3d-310
New York 25, New York., U S A
(bi-monthly - 5 for $1.00)

This issue does not strike me as being as good as the last issue, which as I mentioned last time, I read on the way home from Cleveland, however # 13 has one item of high interest. At said Clevecon, one Sam Moskowitz was complaining that the science-fiction of today did not have a "sense of wonder". He has also expressed similar opinions in past issues of Inside. Lin Carter, who was hacking letters with the rest of us five or six years ago, and Randall Garrett, have taken it upon themselves to lampoon Sam's "sense of wonder" in a delightful manner in a story entitled MASTERS OF METROPOLIS. All I'll say about said story is that it is a satire on the Gernsback type story, concerning a hero named SAM IM4SF/, whose "sense of wonder" is threatened by an underground movement. I won't say more for fear of spoiling the story. Read it yourself and bust a gut.....Leading off this issue are six stories by David R. Bunch, labelled a story sequence. I read these, enjoyed four of them and then went around for the next week trying to figure out the connection between these six stories. Finally, it came to me. They were all written by David R. Bunch.... Inside is a fanzine, which I suspect, aspires to avant-garde-ism, but to which I give my highest recommendations.....

ECLIPSE # 15 - Ray Thompson
410 South 4th Street
Norfolk, Nebraska., USA
(10¢ a copy - 6 for 50¢)

Ray's magazine looks very good, partly because of the better, neater reproduction, and neater format, which add so much to the enjoyment and entertainment a fanzine can give. If a mag is easy to read, it will be enjoyed more than one which may have slightly better quality

material, but poorly formatted and printed. Ray's editorial runs six pages, and unless my guess is wrong, this is the longest editorial he has written. Martin Graetz, a column which at a glance appears to concern itself with the pro mags, this is followed by Thompson's fanzine review column, and here Thompson does himself good, by proving that he has arrived. Yes, Thompson has arrived, he has become a mature TRU-FAN, and he proves this by recognizing Clod Hall for what he really is. Thank you, Ray Thompson. Your review of Muzzy pleases me very much, and does my heart good. Terry Carr has a short short piece of fiction here, which I won't mention, not having read it yet, and the mag is filled out by letters from such notables as Dean Grennell, Ron Ellik, C. Lee Riddle and others. I haven't read anything in the zine except the Muzzy review, but from the appearance, and from glancing thru, I think I can put the "Recommended" stamp on it.....

WAD # 2 - Curt Janke
1612 South 7th Street
Sheboygan, Wisconsin., USA
(irregular and no charge)

At last after a 1-o-o-o-o-ng period of waiting, Wad has again blessed my mail box with its appearance. This, Wad # 2, is not quite up to the standard set by Wad #1, but it it is still the same rollicking, ribald, risque self, and extremely interesting. Wad is written entirely by Curt Janke and the subjects concern women, jazz, women, dianetics, sex, women, and occasional other items. One of the items which struck me as being best in the issue is a short little one page thing, in which Janke rants and raves that jazz is the "only" music. (if you get what I mean) On the surface, and without giving said item any thought, you might jump to the very wrong conclusion that Curt is a very narrow minded person. But when you think about it for a minute, and sort of read between the lines, you'll realize that in WHY JAZZ, Curt is actually doing a very subtle and funny take-off on the school that maintains that "GOOD" or "CLASSICAL" music is the "only" music..... Incidently, Wad is printed in three colors, on seven different colors of paper. Something I disapprove of, and this is the only complaint I have. All you have to do to get this mag is to allow your address to drift up to Sheboygan and become known by Curt. Then watch out, you've asked for it. Recommended.....

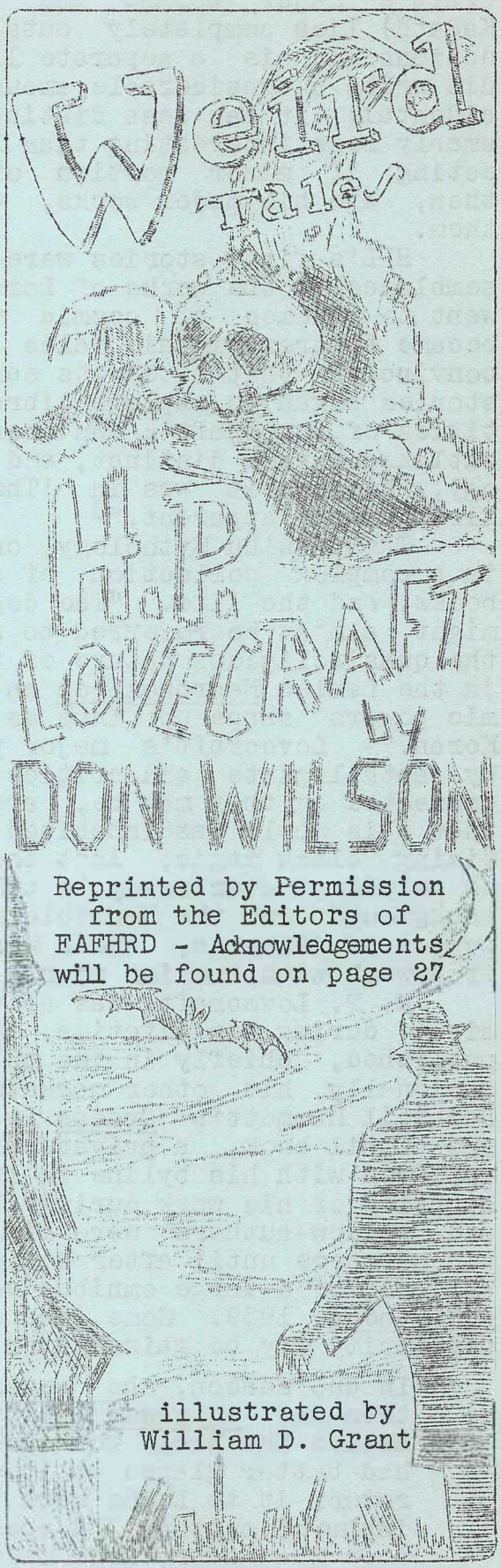
HYPHEN # 15 - Walt Willis
170 Upper Newtownards Road
Belfast, North Ireland AND
Chuck Harris - "Carolin"
Lake Avenue, Rainham.,
Essex, England
(one copy for 15¢)

This issue is dated Nov. 1955, and it seems to me that another issue should have appeared by now, I do not recall having received any later issue. "-" 15 contains one of the very few Clevention Reports that I have seen. This one is written by damon knight and is condensed from a letter by knight. It is extremely interesting, and in spots, humorous. Knight's other contribution, the Microtome, over does things a little I think. Earlier, damon allowed Rev. Moorhead to review Hell's Pavement by Damon Knight, in Mircotome. Now, knight reviews the reviews of his novel, which I feel, is going just a little toooooo far.....I think the best thing in the issue is John Berry's historical article, "High Wide and Transom", concerning The Incident Of The Broken Window At Oblique House. I feel that this probably is the funniest thing John has written. Berry keeps getting better and better with every outing.....I repeat, for the benefit of fen who do not know, Hyphen is among the best of fanzines, being one of the top three, and a zine no fan should be without. Highly Recommended.....

GRUNT - Gina Ellis
1428-15th Street, East
Calgary, Alberta., CAN

This is a one shot, put out by Georgina Ellis, sometimes known as "Gina" or "Dutch", but who is most famously known as, "that Canadian fan-ne who wears falsies." In case you are wondering, Gina is not offended by this last nickname, or nick-phrase, because the whole gag started in A Bas and has been pushed hardest by the Derelict Insurgents. As a matter of fact, Gina has made several

(continued on page twenty-eight)



Composing a paper on the life or works of Howard Phillips Lovecraft poses something of a problem. Most authors whose works are noted in the literary circles fall readily into one category or another--they may be famous, their works classics in the field; they may be comparatively unknown, one or two of their stories showing signs of literary promise; they may be virtually forgotten except for one masterpiece which is well-known. Lovecraft, however, does not fit in so neatly. He has been dead only eighteen years--too short a time for his real worth to become apparent. Though Lovecraft's works (and the man himself) have a fan following which is quite fanatical and which is often called the Lovecraft Cult, he is far from being generally well-known. His works are not anthologized by compilers of textbooks, and his name is not bandied about in literature courses. It is even doubtful if many authorities on American literature know a great deal about this author.

Still, Lovecraft is a force in modern weird writing; and he is often enough cited as a master of his genre to insure at least his high place in the field of macabre and fantastic literature. As August Derleth, himself an author of note both in and out of the weird field, said in introducing a collection of Lovecraft's stories, "Though Howard Phillips Lovecraft died in 1937, he is, in a literary sense, more alive today than ever before. To some of us, his place in American literature, and espcially in what is called 'the Gothic tradition', was always secure, and it has become increasingly evident to a growing number of literate people that H. P. Lovecraft's untimely death at forty-seven was a great loss to American letters, as well as a personal tragedy in that Lovecraft had not yet reached the fullest development of his powers." 1

Basically, H. P. Lovecraft was a writer of short stories and novelettes. Of his three longer works, one ("At The Mountains of Madness") is structurally a novelette, and another ("The Case of Charles Dexter Ward") is of inferior quality and is not ranked among Love-

craft's major works. The third "novel" (Dream Quest Of Unknown Kadath) lies completely outside the mainstream of his literary productions and is a separate literary tradition unto itself. Lovecraft did write a considerable amount of poetry, but "his verse remains incidental: it has less distinction than his best stories, and is presumably less interesting than his letters....../His verse is/ an interesting if minor portion of his work."[2] Lovecraft's horror stories, then, are his major works, and his literary reputation is based upon them.

HPL's first stories were dream-like fantasies which bore much resemblance to the works of Lord Dunsany. "From pure fantasy, Lovecraft went to themes of cosmic terror and horror.....After a time, there became apparent in his tales a curious coherence, a myth-pattern so convincing that after its early appearances, readers of Lovecraft's stories began to explore libraries and museums for certain imaginary titles of Lovecraft's own creation.....Bit by bit it grew, finally its outlines became distinct, and it was given a name: The Cthulhu Mythology, because it was in 'The Call Of Cthulhu' that the myth-pattern first became apparent."[3]

The Cthulhu Mythology, or "Mythos" as it is more commonly called, is a complex collection of deities, lost races and cities, fabulous books, and the like. "The dean of authors in the field of the macabre might almost be referred to as a Mahomet of the supernatural, since the quasireligious nature of the rites of evocation and concilliation in the fabled Necronomicon and the steady processional of mighty, cosmic powers shape up into as plausible a theology as anything in the Koran."[4] Lovecraft's major premise, which has been quoted many times by anthologists and critics of his work, was: "All my stories, unconnected as they may be, are based on the fundamental lore or legend that this world was inhabited at one time by other races who, in practising black magic, lost their foothold and were expelled, yet live on outside, ever ready to take possession of this earth again."[5] This background, and the horrible involvements his characters have with the powers of darkness, their worshippers, their spawn, etc., forms the framework within which nearly all of Lovecraft's work is cast.

H. P. Lovecraft was neither greatly successful nor greatly admired during his lifetime. Something like fifty of his stories were published, chiefly in the pulp magazine Weird Tales, although he occasionally hit other markets. A few anthologies, among which were Dashiell Hammett's Creeps By Night, included Lovecraft stories; and one small book, a private printing of his The Shadow Over Innsmouth, appeared with his byline in 1936. This was the extent of general publication of his work during Lovecraft's life.[6] His circle of friends and fellow-authors were his chief admirers then; the fan following did not come until after his death and the publication, by Derleth and Wandrei, of a large omnibus volume of his horror stories, The Outsider And Others, 1939. Some idea of the way this book affected Lovecraft's popularity may be gained from this fan testimonial:

> In due season, he reverently brought over his copy of the then new Outsider And Others, and left it with me. It sat around the house for several days, but finally I decided I had better glance at it enough to seem to have read it, and return it to Duane with thanks.....I leafed back to the beginning of a story I'd opened to, and started skimming through it. That story held me more than any single yarn I had ever

> read, and when I came to the denouement I was really sent... I read HPL that night until after three in the morning, and did not really stop until I had read that book through and through.[7]

After The Outsider And Others had provided a literary "shot in the arm" Lovecraft's popularity grew quite rapidly. A second omnibus was published, Beyond The Wall Of Sleep, containing the remainder of his horror stories, some selected poems, revisions, and other material; and two small volumes, Marginalia and Something About Cats And Other Pieces, completed (except for the forthcoming Selected Letters) the original collection of his work, August Derleth, co-publisher of the first Lovecraft omnibus, was his biographer, in H. P. L.: A Memoir, and Derleth has also edited two popular editions of Lovecraft's work, Tower Books' Best Supernatural Stories of H. P. Lovecraft and the Armed Services edition, The Dunwich Horror and Other Weird Tales. Various pocket-book editions and innumerable inclusions in anthologies of varying quality and literary standing complete the roster of Lovecraft's appearances in books.

This has been a brief sketch of Lovecraft's literary history. Now let us look for a time into the author's personal life.

##

Several characteristics stand out in observation of the man personally, and most of these, upon study, prove to be significent. Derleth writes:

> Curiously, H. P. Lovecraft in his life fitted rather colorfully into the role of a writer of weird fiction, of supernatural prose and poetry, as the imaginative public might have conceived him. He was a recluse, and literally a haunter of the night. He had an allergy to cold, and often had to remain indoors for months at a time. Though he enjoyed the hot sunlight of those halcyon days of antiquarian exploration he spent in St. Augustine, Charleston, Natchez, New Orleans, and other old cities of North America, he loved most especially to wander the night-shrouded streets of his native city, Providence, Rhode Island. As a child, H. P. Lovecraft was an invalid, and often confined to a house which contained the library of a grandfather; he read omnivorously, and had a remarkably retentive memory, that was filled with a variety of information, an accretion of years in every imaginable field, including that of the customs and manners of the eighteenth century, which was the time in which he would have preferred to live, as he often put it in his voluminous correspondence.[8]

Early in his life Howard Lovecraft got off on the wrong foot emotionally, and his childhood experiences immediately insured that he could never develop into a "normal" person. To begin with, both of Lovecraft's parents were abnormal. "Lovecraft's mother, one of several children, was genteel, sheltered by her father.....but little equipped to deal with the world in which she had to live; his father, a travelling salesman.....was committed to a guardian three years after Howard's birth, and in five more, climaxed a period of increasing abnormality by dying. Winfield Lovecraft was a paretic, and Sarah Phillips Love-

craft was a psychoneurotic, determined to shelter her son from the rigors and dangers of life."[9] Thus, while Lovecraft's paretic father influenced his life only through heredity, Mrs. Lovecraft's influence was direct and environmental as well. Maternal overprotection, according to psychology, causes its victims to turn into persons who are "highly dependent upon the dominant persons in their social environment and try to maintain favor by sweetness and submission rather than by achievement and equality of status. The boys in this group tend to marry maternal women who baby them and run their affairs."[10]

Mrs. Lovecraft eventually took up residence in a hospital for the psychotic, where she died, "a woman who was obsessed with the nearness of bankruptcy, who was mentally and physically exhausted, who believed that her son was a 'poet of the highest order', and manifested other similar psychiatric instabilities."[11] The physician in attendance at this time, according to Dr. David H. Keller's medico-psychiatric study of Lovecraft's life, "Shadows Over Lovecraft", "notes his belief that mother and son combined to form an Oedipus complex."[12]

The effect of this unnatural relationship was heightened by Mrs. Lovecraft's weird attitudes and behaviors, both toward her son and toward other people. Derleth writes in a recent article:

> Mrs. Carlos G. Wright, in The Providence Journal, October 3, 1948, adds that she grew up in the neighborhood where H. P. Lovecraft lived. "As a little girl I was scared to death of him, for he used to walk rapidly up and down Angell Street at night just as a group of us were playing Hare and Hounds at the corner of Angell and Paterson Streets. His appearance always frightened me. He was certainly the neighborhood mystery. He would never speak to any of us, but kept right on with his head down." There is something close to pathos in these accounts. The pictures they afford of Lovecraft as a young man are not very happy -- despite Lovecraft's many accounts of his pleasant childhood. Clearly, he was an intensely introspective youth, very probably keenly aware of the differences in health and background which set him apart from such companions as he might have had if his development had been more normal. It is entirely probable that his mother, who is seen by these accounts as an hysteric with perhaps a basic paranoia, suffering from the shock of the basis of her husband's fatal paresis, looked upon her son as touched by the same disease. Perhaps she actually saw him as the 'hideous' or 'ugly' son she told people he was; the decaying mind plays strange and sometimes terrible tricks, which would enable her to believe sincerely in what she said even as she could honestly pity anyone who did not agree with her.[13]

Derleth quotes another observer: "The last time I saw Mrs. Lovecraft we were both going 'down street' on the Butler Avenue car. She was excited and apparently did not know where she was. She attracted the attention of everyone. I was greatly embarrassed, as I was the subject of all her attention...."[14]

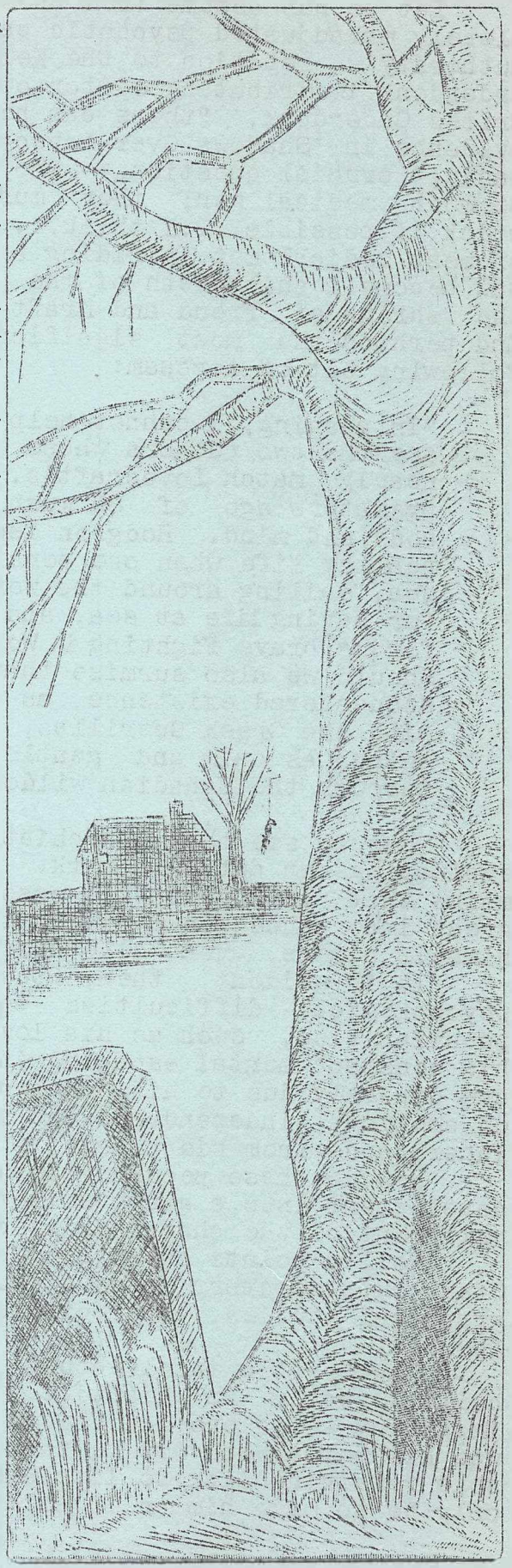
After his mother's death in the asylum, Lovecraft's aunts assumed his care, and he lived with one or the other of them with one or two minor interruptions until his death. One of these interruptions was

Lovecraft's brief marriage. "Probably a subconscious attempt to escape from this vicarious [Oedipus] comples was one of the reasons for his marriage to Mrs. Sonia Greene of Brooklyn. This marriage is a type familiar in the case histories of men involved in an Oedipus complex following the death of the mother. In marriage, always with an older woman, they seek a mother-substitute."[15]

Lovecraft's marriage, as stated above, was brief. Lovecraft "wrote in 1931, that his 'one venture into matrimony ended in the divorce court for reasons 99% financial,' but financial reasons were not the only source of incompatibility. He wrote J. Vernon Shea in 1931, 'Financial difficulties, plus increasing divergences in aspirations and environmental needs, brought about a divorce -- though wholly without blame or bitterness on either side.'"[16]

Judging from Lovecraft's wife's (now Sonia H. Davis) own account, the difficulty lay again with maternal overprotection, as assumed after the mother's death by HPL's aunts. Sonia earned much money as a dress-designer, while HPL's earnings as an author and literary revisionist were far from great. Her jobs were in Brooklyn, New York, and elsewhere, for "The aunts gently but firmly informed me that neither they nor Howard could afford to have Howard's wife work for a living in Providence. That was that."[17] And perhaps partly due to Lovecraft's attachment to his aunts and partly due to his love of his childhood associations, Lovecraft could not bear to live outside of Providence.

Probably the divorce had much influence on Lovecraft's physical decline, for whereas during his marriage he had grown fat on Sonia's cooking, after the split he returned to his old habits of scrimping on food money, and perhaps literally began to starve himself to death.[18] "Food in any great quantity or variety he could take no interest in. He worried his aunt and other familiars with his starvation habits. He was guant and pale....."[19] Keller interprets this as meaning that "It is evident that he was beginning to show the early symptoms of the final shadow, cancer, which caused him to pass into the unknown on March 15, 1937." [20]



Let us not assume from these references that Lovecraft was a completely maladjusted psychotic case. It is interesting to examine one authority's reaction to the Keller article -- a letter by Matthew H. Onderdonk, contributing editor of Fantasy Commentator. "I don't think," writes Onderdonk, "there can be much to quarrel with in the medical evidence in 'Shadows Over Lovecraft'.....However, we come to the old, basic, crucial question -- who cares?.....Dr. Keller's fault is that of most medical men; they must make a diagnosis, and must make it stick if possible....I think....,that Dr. Keller shares the obtuseness of most medical men in riding a hobby to death. The word 'psychiatry' has become a shibboleth of the present day; he who does not worship at the shrine of Freud and Kraft-Ebbing is a heathen beyond the pale." And perhaps the most significant among Onderdonk's remarks is the following bit of sarcasm:

> "In passing, I cannot help recalling that Machen and Hodgson are the two authors whose weird concepts of cosmic evil most nearly match Lovecraft's. Machen, who recently died at the premature age of 85 must indeed have had a weak and puny body and mind. Hodgson led a singularly sheltered and unhealthy life when one considers that he spent eight years at sea, sailing around the world three times, receiving a medal for saving life at sea, and distinguishing himself afterwards for his brave fighting in World War I, being killed in action. Should we also surmise that Lord Dunsany has lead /sic/ a sequestered existence as a British Army Officer associating with the Greek Guerillas, and that Algernon Blackwood found things as calm and gentle as a rest-home when he tramped through the Canadian wilderness in his younger days?"[21]

Thus we see that psychiatry is not the be-all and end-all in evaluating an author's work. But objections aside, it of course remains that in Lovecraft's case psychological considerations do have great importance in deciding the why of his writings. This Onderdonk himself admits, even while asking the question "So what?"

It is evident, then, that Lovecraft labored under a number of psychological difficulties throughout his life; and that many of his peculiarities, such as his love of wandering back streets at night, his constant mental escaping into his beloved eighteenth century, etc., are directly due to his overprotected youth with its consequent lack of emotional independence and social contacts, and to his psychopathic inheritance from his parents.

How did these peculiarities and eccentricities influence Lovecraft's development into a great writer of horror stories and lead to the development of the characteristics peculiar to Lovecraft's writing?

Keller points out a good many of the answers to these questions. Other supplementary answers are evident in the various memoirs, biographical studies, appreciations, etc., which have been written about the man.

Lovecraft's intellectual and literary background began to be built up early in his life, when his ill health (which perhaps was imaginary -- as one old friend put it, "I shall always believe that it was his mother and not he that was sick -- sick for fear of loosing her sole remaining link to life and happiness. The result on the boy could only be to make him an invalid."[22]) and maternal dominance had largely

forced him to take to reading for amusement. His grandfather's library was luckily available. "At the age of four," says Dr. Keller, "he was reading Grimm, at five The Arabian Nights, and when six absorbing Greek and Roman mythology. His first horror story was written at the age of seven....." In addition to reading these books, the young Lovecraft often acted them out, and "Beyond question the time came when, as narrator, he felt that he personally experienced the horrors he so vividly and carefully described."[23]

Lovecraft's interest in the horrible probably derived directly from the literary influence of his grandfather's library and its effect on the natural imagination of youth, which tends to see ogres and monsters in the night even if not bolstered up by Dore and Dante. Lovecraft himself put it like this:

> "When I was six years old I encountered the mythology of Greece and Rome through various popular juvenile media, and was profoundly influenced by it. I became a Roman, incidentally acquiring for ancient Rome a queer feeling of familiarity and identification only less powerful than my corresponding feeling for the eighteenth century. In a way, the two feelings worked together; for when I sought out the original classics from which the childish tales were taken, I found them very largely in late seventeenth and eighteenth century translations. The imaginative stimulus was immense, and for a time I actually thought I glimpsed fauns and dryads in certain venerable groves. I used to build altars and offer sacrifices to Pan, Diana, Apollo and Minerva. About this period the weird illustrations of Gustave Dore -- met in editions of Dante, Milton and The Ancient Mariner -- affected me powerfully."[24]

The effect of Dante and Dore on a lad of six are obvious. To what direction but the weird and horrible could his tastes turn?

Obviously, too, as was brought out by Derleth,[25] a boy who built altars to Roman gods was not destined to be well thought of by his comrades of his own age; and the effect of this rejection was intensified by Mrs. Lovecraft's overprotection of young Howard. He continues in his autobiographical sketch, "Among my few playmates I was very unpopular, since I would insist on playing out events in history, or acting according to consistent plots. Thus repelled by humans I sought refuge in books.[26]

Three more major factors contributed to the preoccupation with supernatural themes that are common to Lovecraft's works. Again his own writing best sets this forth:

> "One effect of [my absorption in the eighteenth century] was to make me feel subtly out of place in the modern period, and consequently to think of time as a mystical, portentious thing in which all sorts of unexpected wonders might be discovered. Nature, too, keenly touched my sense of the fantastic. My home was not far from what was then the edge of the settled residence district, so that I was just as used to the rolling fields, stone walls, giant elms, squat farmhouses and deep woods of rural New England as to the ancient urban scene. This brooding primitive landscape seemed to me to hold some vast but unknown significance, and certain dark

> wooded hollows near the Seekonk River took on an aura of strangeness not unmixed with vague horror."[27]

The third remaining major influence was Lovecraft's interest in science, which he says he acquired at the age of eight, and which continued (in perhaps increasing intensity) until his death. Lovecraft's regard for the natural sciences was --

> -- an attitude which pervaded his philosophical outlook. He was a thorough-going materialist whose conception of the universe had no room for the supernatural in any form nor for any deity.....This may seem surprising to the more casual reader of H. P. Lovecraft's weird fiction who tends to class his work with the usual run of supernatural horror writing. Closer study of Lovecraft's writing reveals it is utterly devoid of the conventional "ghost", "vampire" or other stock weird entities, but deals with macabre beings which could conceivabley exist without definitely contradicting scientific laws, if one grants the hypothesis of the story in the same fashion that one grants the hypothesis of a science-fiction story. In general the to be accepted involved some aspect of the so-called Cthulhu mythology which may be viewed as a product of Lovecraft's creative imagination reflecting his interest in paleontology and archeology.....Lovecraft wrote horror-fantasy purely for the imaginative pleasure it afforded and as an escape from the real world. It enabled him to gain a mastery over time which man can never attain in the physical sense.....The men of his own time whom Lovecraft most admired were not only his literary idols such as Lord Dunsany and Arthur Machen, but also men of science such as Sir Arthur Keith and J. B. S. Haldane.[28]

These factors, then, influenced the content and subject matter of Lovecraft's tales. Additionally, "He absorbed the works of Dunsany, Machen, Poe, Blackwood, Chambers and de la Mare. The reading of these masters of the weird was an important influence on the development of his style.....Although surrounded by books, his real and most valuable library remained, carefully cross-indexed, in his memory."[29]

Among characteristics peculiar to Lovecraft's writing are the fact that the main action of his tales occur at night; the fact that his heroes almost never eat, and that they never partake of liquor; the lack of humor in all but an insignificant portion of his collected writings; complete absence of love or sex interest; and most significant when considered in relation to his life, his morbid preoccupation with heredity and degeneracy.

Dr. Keller's psychiatric study of Lovecraft's life makes quick work of most of these items. The action of the stories was set at night because Lovecraft loved the night himself and was averse to sunshine. His narrators and heroes do not eat because food was not one of Lovecraft's own interests. He was a total abstainer, ergo his heroes do not drink. Humor is absent because "he found little in life to laugh at.....Deliberately he lived the part of an old gentleman as described by Lord Chesterfield in his <u>Sciences and Maxims</u>: 'Loud laughter is the mirth of the mob, who are only pleased with silly things.....A man of parts and fashion is therefore only seen to smile,

but never heard to laugh.'" Finally, there is no love interest in Lovecraft because "Though women dominated his entire life he never understood them, and therefore never wrote of them. Uninterested in sex because of his neurasth enia, shyness and strong belief in heredity, he lived a life devoid of feminine interest as that of St. Anthony." His marriage was a searching for a mother-substitute, not a matter of sexual attraction or love.[30]

"Heredity is an important factor in many Lovecraft stories, and is always of a degenerative type. His families deteriorate both mentally and physically, become shiftless paupers, and, in at least two stories, develop cannibalism.....Nowwhere does the human race give promise of reaching toward the stars. There is always family decadence."[31] This preoccupation is explained by Dr. Keller by reference to Lovecraft's parents; his knowledge that both of them had been psychotic before he was born, and the fact that the elder Lovecraft's "Demise was attributed to 'an advanced stage of paresses /sic/,'" which is causes by syphilis.[32]

Much, too, is often made out of Lovecraft's hatred of the sea and his aversion to cold. These also may be interpreted psychologically, as is evident from the following passage:

> It is well known that the great Howard Phillips Lovecraft had two strong and self-acknowledged phobias -- a hatred of the sea, and an antipathy towards cold which was strong enough to affect him physically. Remembering that /Dr. Edmund Bergler, in "On A Clinical Approach to the Psychoanalysis of Writers," Psychoanalytical Review, Jan. 1944/ says that writers write to defend their own subconscious fantasies and prejudices, see how well this works out in the case of Lovecraft. His hatred of the sea is rationalized by the creation of the Cthulhu cycle -- "The Call of Cthulhu," with its monster from the depths of the ocean -- "The Shadow Over Innsmouth," with its hordes of hideous sea-monsters. The entire Lovecraft Mythos seems to owe its inception to this sea-phobia. And in "At The Mountains Of Madness" we find that hatred of cold -- a hatred curiously inverted in the short story "Cool Air." There are other interesting facets to the Lovecraft stories; for example the recurrence of plots involving the mystery of paternity -- fantasies regarding the father. Now we can only attempt to guess at just what the sea and cold symbolized to Howard Phillips Lovecraft; that they were symbols is self-evident in his work.[33]

Some have found Lovecraft's striving to create horror inneffective. One critic writes, "He....relied much too often on reference to things distasteful to himself that he assumed would produce similiar feelings of aversion or fear or disgust in others -- fishy odors, for instance, which he couldn't endure and used again and again as a symbol of the evil and the malevolent; the strangeness of the foreigner; the unpleasantness of things squirmy and slimy, and chief of all, the sensation of cold."[34] However, by and large Lovecraft's peculiar interests did have a favorable effect on his fiction -- his awe of nature, curious attitude towards time and space, etc., all adding greatly to the quality of his work.

The impression Lovecraft's friends and acquaintances received of the man was much better than might be assumed from the foregoing account of his eccentricities, poor heredity, and the like. Many people -- authors and otherwise -- who knew the man have contributed appreciations of Lovecraft which glority him. Probably the most glowing praise comes from E. Hoffmann Price, a fellow writer who knew Lovecraft by correspondence for many years, met him twice for several days, and collaborated with him on a story once. "My summing up," writes Price, "is this: that HPL the man was so important as a human being that it makes little difference whether his writings have or have not permanent value.....HPL the man looms up, from my viewpoint, in such ways as to make it relatively unimportant what he wrote -- or even if he wrote at all."[35] The woman who was for a time Lovecraft's wife said, "I do not believe it an exaggeration to say that Howard had the mind, taste and personality of a much greater artist and genius than that with which he was accredited in his lifetime."[36] HPL's old friend Rheinhart Kleiner sums up what seems to be the feeling of all his acquaintances: ".....his passing left a vacuum no one else can fill."[37]

Lovecraft's worth as a person, then, seems to have more than balanced his peculiarities, psychological maladjustments, and eccentricities. But regardless of these manifestations of friendship it is as a writer of horror stories that Lovecraft is notable to those of us who did <u>not</u> know him.

It is of course impossible to appreciate a writer's work by reading glowing descriptions of it or passages quoted from it. One must read the material himself to enjoy it. Lovecraft's work is no exception. However, perhaps some idea can be given of the effect of HPL's fiction by a brief description:

> Another fantasy writer, Fritz Leiber, Jr., called Lovecraft the Copernicus of the horror story. He shifted the focus of supernatural dread from man and his little world and his gods, to the stars and the black and unplumbed gulfs of intergalactic space. To do this effectively, he created a new kind of horror story and new methods for telling it.....Arthur Machen briefly directed man's supernatural dread toward Pan, the satyrs, and other strange races and divinities..... Earlier, Edgar Allan Poe had focused supernatural dread on the monstrous in man and in nature.....Algernon Blackwood sought an object for horror especially in the new cults of occultism and spiritualism.....Meanwhile, however, a new source of literary material had come into being: the terrifyingly vast and mysterious universe revealed by the swiftly developing sciences, in particular astronomy.[38]

And from this, Lovecraft drew his concepts. He believed that a dislocation of time and space, more particularly of time: "<u>Conflict with time</u>," he wrote, "seems to me the most potent and gruitful theme in all human expression."[39] His emphasis in his stories was on atmosphere, not on action; and on a building up, chiefly through hints and associations, of a gradually rising suspense finally culminating in the climax. This is best seen in the great stories, "The Shadow Out Of Time," "The Whisperer In Darkness," "The Dunwich Horror," "The Shadow Over Innsmouth," "At The Mountains Of Madness," and perhaps another or

two. Leiber goes on, "There were three important elements in Lovecraft's style which he was able to use effectively in both his earlier poetic period and later, more objective style. The first is the device of confirmation rather than revelation. In other words, the story-ending does not come as a surprise but as a final, long - anticipated 'convincer'.....So closely related to his use of confirmation as to be only another aspect of it, is Lovecraft's employment of the terminal climax -- that is, the story in which the high point and the final sentence coincide." This latter device was used with great success in three of the five stories named, and in a great many others of Lovecraft's better tales. "Lovecraft re-inforced this structure /building toward the terminal climax/," continues Leiber, "with what may be called orchestrated prose -- sentences that are repeated with a constant addition of more potent adjectives, adverbs and phrases, just as in a symphony a melody introduced by a single woodwind is at last thundered by the whole orchestra. 'The Statement Of Randolph Carter' provides one of the simplest examples. In it, in order, the following phrases occur concerning the moon: '.....waning crescent moon.....wan, waning crescent moon.....pallid, peering crescent moon.....accursed waning moon.....' Subtler and more complex examples can be found in the longer stories."[40]

Occasionally Lovecraft went whole hog in pouring on the horror, as is seen by these quotes from "Imprisoned With The Pharoahs," a story ghost - written by Lovecraft for the famous magician, Harry Houdini. ".....their crazy torches began to cast shadows on the surface of those stupendous columns. Hippopotami should not have human hands and carry torches.....men should not have the heads of crocodiles.....A fiendish and ululant corpse-gurgle or death-rattle now split the very atmosphere -- the charnel atmosphere poisonous with naftha and bitumen blasts -- in one concerted chorus from the ghoulis legion of hybrid blasphemies.....the light of their torches showed their bended heads -- or the bended heads of such as had heads. They were worshipping before a great black fetor-belching aperture which reached up almost out of sight....."[41] Or from "The Outsider": "I cannot even hint what it was like, for it was a compound of all that is unclean, uncanny, unwelcome, abnormal, and detestable. It was the ghoulish shade of decay, antiquity, and desolation; the putrid eidolon of unwholesome revelation, the awful baring of that which the merciful earth should always hide. God knows it was not of this world -- or no longer of this world -- yet to my horror I saw in its eaten-away and bone-revealing outlines a leering, abhorrent travesty of the human shape; and in its moldy, disintegrating apparel an unspeakable quality that chilled me even more."[42]

But the effect of Lovecraft's writing does not come from his horror-passages -- chilling as some of them are, indeed disgusting to some. Nor does it come from his adjectives, which often have been condemned for repetitiousness. Appreciation of Lovecraft is largely a matter of mood. It depends upon absorption of his carefully formed atmosphere, close attention to the details of the story in order to keep up with his careful construction and consistent attitude while reading. Lovecraft's stories should each be read in one sitting; splitting up a reading of them destroys the suspense. Readers who are fond of action, dialogue, and characterization will not enjoy Lovecraft. All is concentrated in his stories upon the effect and the mood.

Howard Phillips Lovecraft

Lovecraft wrote much material which is mediocre, much more which is not great. But his best stories stand as fine examples of fiction, and at the topmost pinnacle of the weird field which, because of his background and upbringing, was Lovecraft's own. Apart from the fan following, more and more the general world of letters has become aware of H P L. "Since the untimely death of Howard Phillips Lovecraft in Providence, Rhode Island, early in 1937," writes Derleth, "something like half a million readers, at a conservative estimate, have become aware of his strange genius through the medium of his stories, now widely reprinted.....Few writers of our time belong so substantially to the tradition of Poe and Hawthorne, Bierce and Hearn, and Lovecraft's fame, already attested by the recognition of discerning critics, is destined to grow still more."[43]

FOOT - NOTES

1 August Derleth (ed), Best Supernatural Stories of H P Lovecraft (Cleveland; World Pub., 1945), page 7.
2 Winfield Twonley Scott, "Lovecraft as a Poet," in Rhode Island On Lovecraft, Donald M. Grant & Thomas Hadley (eds), (Providence, Grant-Hadley, 1945) pp. 3, 7.
3 August Derleth and Donald Wandrei, "Howard Phillips Lovecraft: Outsider," in The Outsider and Others, by H P Lovecraft (Sauk City, Arkham House, 1939), p. xxi.
4 Francis T. Laney, "The Cthulhu Mythology: A Glossary," in Beyond The Wall of Sleep, by H P Lovecraft (Sauk City, Arkham House, 1943), p. 415.
5 Ibid.
6 August Derleth, H P L: A Memoir (New York, Ben Abramson, 1945), pp. 113-8.
7 F. T. Laney, Ah! Sweet Idiocy! (Los Angeles, Laney & Burbee, 1948), p. 2.
8 Derleth in Best Supernatural Stories, loc. cit.
9 Derleth in H P L: A Memoir, op. cit., pp. 9f.
10 Floyd L. Ruch, Psychology And Life (Chicago, Scott, Foresman & Co), p. 459.
11 Derleth, H P L: A Memoir, op. cit., p. 14.
12 Keller, David H., MD, "Shadows Over Lovecraft," Fantasy Commentator, II (Summer 1948), p. 249.
13 August Derleth, "Addenda to HPL: A Memoir," in Something About Cats And Other Pieces, by H P Lovecraft (Sauk City, Arkham House, 1949), pp. 2[illegible]f.
14 Ibid.
15 Keller, loc. cit.
16 Derleth, HPL: A Memoir, op. cit., pp. 15f.
17 Davis, Sonia H., "Lovecraft As I Knew Him," in Lovecraft, Something About Cats, op. cit., p. 244.
18 Kleiner, Rheinhart, "A Memoir of Lovecraft," in Lovecraft, Something About Cats, op. cit., (reprinted from The Arkham Sampler, Spring 1948, p. 2[illegible].
19 Winfield T. Scott, "His Own Most Fantastic Creation," in Marginalia, by H P Lovecraft (Sauk City, Arkham House, 1944) p. 326.
20 Keller, op. cit., p. 244.
21 Onderdonk, Matthew H., letter in "Open House," Fantasy Commentator, III (Winter 1948-49) pp. 24-6.
22 Paul Cook, "An Appreciation of H P Lovecraft," in Beyond The Wall Of Sleep, by H P Lovecraft (Sauk City, Arkham House) 1943), p. 428.
23 Keller, op. cit., 239.
24 H P Lovecraft, "Autobiography: Some Notes on a Nonentity," in Beyond The Wall of Sleep, p. xii.
25 Supra., pp. 7f.
26 Lovecraft, "Autobiography," loc. cit.

27 Ibid.
28 Kenneth Sterling, MD, "Lovecraft and Science," in Marginalia, pp. 352-4.
29 Keller, op. cit., p. 239.
30 Ibid., pp. 240f.
31 Ibid.
32 Ibid., p. 242.
33 Robert Bloch, "Fantasy & Psychology"; speech delivered at the Sixth World S-F Convention, Toronto, July 3-5, 1948, and printed in The Torcon Report, Edward N. McKeown (ed)(Toronto, House of York, 1948), p. 9.
34 Dorothy C. Walter, "Lovecraft & Benefit Street," in Rhode Island on Lovecraft, p. 11.
35 E. Hoffmann Price, letter in "Open House", Fantasy Commenttator, III (Winter 1948-9), p. 24.
36 Davis, op. cit., pp. 245f.
37 Kleiner, op. cit., p. 228.
38 Fritz Leiber, Jr., "A Literary Copernicus," in Something About Cats, p. 290.
39 H. P. Lovecraft, "Notes on the Writing of Weird Fiction," in Marginalia, p. 135.
40 Leiber, op. cit., pp 297f.
41 Lovecraft, Marginalia, pp. 32f.
42 Lovecraft, The Outsider & Others, p. 66.
43 August Derleth, on jacket flap of Something About Cats.

This article originally appeared in FAFHRD, Vol. 1 - No. 2., August 1955. It has been reprinted complete and unabridged with the kind permission of Mr. Ron Ellik (277 Pomona Avenue., Long Beach, California) and Mr. Ed Cox (115½ 19th Street., Hermosa Beach, California).

And to Don Wilson we can only say that this is the best long article we have come across in the year of 1955. That is our main reason for reprinting it. We hope through the pages of Canfan that this article reaches a few more readers and sets an example of what should be appearing in amateur publications these days, but is so sadly lacking. WDG

YEARNING.....by Henri Percikow

O, how I yearn to lend my hands
To change this crumbling world
In which the gruits of our toil
Are plucked into golden baskets,
From which ruthless gods
Devour soul and life.

Through the web of my memory
I remember poverty, tears.
Grim faced children, embittered men,
Bare shadows clinging to breath,
Yet lifting fist to build-
A world anew.

O, how I yearn to lend my hands
To build with the people
Our triumph arch.

HE.....by Martha Millet

City born, city-bred,
how shall the child be led
knowing not branch or bird,
meadow mild, forest wild;
by no salt-wind stirred;
no fur creature's word
in his ear; nor the clear
lift of the mountain crest
and the seamed valley breast
water-veined, russet-grained...?

This is He
Man-to-be.

City-trod, city-torn,
how shall his heart be born,
on what first star be fed,
lap of grass lay his head,
flower-belled, vision-welled...?
caught in stone
man alone
has the art to make dread...

City-born, city-bread,
how shall the child be led?

WATCH FOR THE SEPTEMBER "CANFAN"
Fantasy & Psychology---Robert Bloch
Solar Myths----------Fred Hurter Jr
Mid-West Con '56------Old Woodchuck
Croutch on Religion-----Les Croutch
Viking Ship Hoax---------Redd Boggs

allusions to it herself, and does just that on the cover of Grunt. Said cover is a multiple level satirical type thing, taking off on the cover of A Bas, the falsies gag, Grue and several other minor things. Inside Gina has a take-off on WHO'S WHO IN GRUE'S CREW, a take-off on a column in Femizine, and a take-off on the Second Tucker Fan Survey. The whole magazine shows that Gina has quite a sense of humor, and is quite a tease. In view of all the take-offs in this mag, you might be tempted to call Grunt a strip-tease.....It is a limited circulation one shot, I don't know whether you can get one at this late date. If you missed out, too bad.....

MUZZY # 8 - Clod Hall
2214 San Antonio
Austin 5, Texas., USA
(irregular - PAR)

In his editorial, Clod states that Muzzy will appear in "form, content, and smell--just about like the standard set in this issue", and believe me, that is not much of a promise for the future. Earlier in this column, I mentioned that Ray Thompson did an excellent review of Muzzy, in that review, Ray observed that Muzzy is a likely contender for the dubious honors held by Star Rockets. In case there are any new fans reading this, who have not had the dreadful experience of reading Star Rockets, let it be suffice to say that this zine was probably the worst ever published. It was, to my knowledge, the only fanzine to become famous for being so consistently lousy. It was considered to be the epitome (if I may use that word) and criterion of crudiness. Star Rockets has long since folded, and is all but forgotten by fandom, and one of the things which helped fandom forget it is Muzzy. Muzzy is not only a likely contender for the aforementioned infamy, I would say Muzzy is the possessor of said infamy. Hall editorializes for roughly eleven pages, during which he yatters pointlessly about events which happened to him while in the army, tries his hand at writing fiction (which was a mistake) and comes up with a useless bit of crud and ends up talking about Caverns in Texas and Oral Roberts, Miracle Faith Healer. Upon scanning the review column I arrived at one inevitable conclusion, Hall does not review fanzines. Primarily he judges a fanzine by the amount of fiction it contains, (the more fiction, the better the zine) but a large part of his evaluation is based upon how you receive his zine. If you give him a good review, or send him a complimentary letter of comment, he'll return the favour by giving you a good review. If you criticize his zine in a review, or in a letter of comment, then he will <u>try</u> to tear your zine apart in his review column. I know of three cases where the editors of certain fanzines expressed dislike for Muzzy, and in one case where this probably happened, and in all four cases, Hall made a futile attempt to shred the zines of these editors. Figure it out for yourself. The rest of the zine contains two pieces of mediocre fiction, an uninteresting column by Nan Share, and an equally dull and uninteresting article on science-fiction by fringe-fan Wilkie Conner..... Definately not worth trying to get, and certainly not worth any money, but, if you should come across a copy of Muzzy lying in a garbage can or if you somehow come across a copy thru absolutely no effort or expense on your own part, look thru it, it's an experience, and it will show you what not to do, if you ever decide to publish a fanzine.....

FAFHRD # 3 - Ron Ellik & Ed Cox
277 Pomona Avenue
Long Beach 3, California., USA
(price - comments, exchanges, etc.)

Fafhrd, (you try to pronounce it, I've given up) is reasonably new on the fannish scene, has been around for only three issues. However, the people behind it, Ron Ellik and Ed Cox have been around for quite a long time. (especially Cox, who has been around since the dark ages, eh Edco?) Edco and RonE do a reasonably interesting editorial, and reprint a story written some years ago by Redd Boggs. Said story concerns space satelites, or more exactly, the effect man's conquest of space will have on fandom. The idea for reprinting this story was inspired by Prexy Ike's announcement that the US would launch a space station. Des Emery, Canadian;

and Andy Young, Scholar, (I can go along with the gag, GAS) review a few books while Edco does a competent review of fanzines and works in a few good lines. A letter column rounds out the mag, and the only complaint I have is that the letters were not differentiated enough from the comments. A little work on the format will soon rectify this. A good little zine, try a copy.....

WENDIGO # 9 - Gina Ellis
1428 - 15th Street, East
Calgary, Alberta., CAN
(price - comments & so on)

Wendy is a personality type fanzine, and for my money, is definitely one of the better mags around these days. This issue is rather slimish and is written almost entirely by Gina. The most interesting item, from my point of view, is the article titled, wittily enough, "BEHOLD THE NOBLE? HEAT-RESISTANT REDSKIN", and is a criticism of Murray Leinster's SAND DOOM, in the December ASF. Gina criticises harshly, justly, and snickers up her sleeve at Leinster, and I find myself snickering with her, despite the fact that I haven't read the story. Also of interest to me, and to all TRU-FANS, is a little item called "Be Of Good Spirits" and concerns liquor advertisements..... The only disappointing item in the issue is a Xmas story by Norm Clarke which is far below the usual Clarke standard.....Wendy is another magazine to which I affix the "Recommended" seal.....

OOPSLA # 19 - Gregg Calkins
2817 - 11th Street
Santa Monica, California., USA

Up front in this column, I mentioned that Hyphen was one of the top three fanzines. The other two are Grue and Oopsla. Need I say more?.....Calkins leads off with his editorial talking about his 1955 Chevy among other things, and remarks that he had the speedometer needle up to 110 mph on one occasion. That may very well be so, but I'll wager that the car was not moving along at that speed. A good estimate would be 90-95 mph. Must allow for speedometer error, which is fantastic at high speeds. Dean Grennell is here with his Grenedean Etchings, in which he etches a number of topics onto paper, among which, automobiles are only one. Walt Willis continued his series about The Harp Stateside, which will be reprinted and bound in its entirity in the near future. John Berry, Irish Fandom's Natural-Born Historian writes a humorous account of a visit to the Republic of Eire. (I always thought an Eire was an eagles nest) A department titled Therbligs rounds out this mag, and consists of a letter of comment, editorial ramblings and miscellanious notes. An excellent mag, one no fan should be without.....GAS

BRIEF COMMENTS: FRONTIER # 5 - Serious, first rate contents, for example: "Conquest Of Space" by Norman V. Petersen, a guided Missles Engineer at the Sperry Gyroscope Division. For the fanzine buyer, six issues for $3.00 is pretty stiff.....OUTRE # 1 - This is in the same reproduction class as the aformentioned Wad. Printed on book paper stock, sadly lacking in contents, but a wonderful outlet for those of you who want to contribute and see the results in an excellent format .....BOLIDE # 1 - Another new one with a cause, darned worthwhile too. The policy is to plug Fantasy, not just to see their names in print with every issue. They have plenty to learn, but the effort is an honest one. I sure hope they succeed.....UMBRA # 11 - Neatly done and pretty well readable all the way. Very good letter section.....IT'S A LONG WAY TO TIPPERARY (an inadequate convention report) - A Lee Hoffman 'funny one' that makes comments on various sidelights at the Clevecon. This is an example of fan publishing where both editor and the lucky readers who received a copy have one 'wing-ding' of a good time.....PHLOTSAM # 4 - Includes a FAPA zine review section with very light hearted comments. The cover is real cute, but the random remarks sprinkled throughout are the high spots. I was ten years old back in '32 when Messrs. (I'm not too sure) Charles Laughton and Boris Karloff scared the heck out of me in "The Old Dark House", I can well imagine Phyllis getting a few shudders, even today.....WDG