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# PULL NO PUNCHES

The more I see of people the better I like dogs.

sixty-eighth mailing

BIRDSMITH / You're right about the skyscrapers but not  
McCain / about the weather. Unless I am greatly  
mistaken that music was written for the  
movie of "Street Scene" that was made in the thirties  
with a fine cast including Sylvia Sydney. The picture  
opens with a panorama of New York's skyscraper tops  
at dawn of a scorchingly-hot day, then shows numerous  
shots of people sleeping on fire-escapes, balconies,  
etc., all to the accompaniment of "Sentimental Rhapsody",  
or whatever you want to call it. It has deservedly  
been revived numerous times and been shown on tv.  
It's one of the most memorable movies I have ever  
seen, and I'm quite certain that no remake could  
ever come close to it. If you've never seen this  
version you haven't seen "Street Scene"... I doubt if  
professional engineers have ever made anything listen-  
able from "hopelessly bad" recordings. It's true they  
have transcribed some old acoustics with new orches-  
tra accompaniments that drown out the original tinny  
piano accompaniments. But it is obviously impossible  
to get anything out of a recording that wasn't in it  
from the start, and if your home recordings of loud  
brass make a "thin scratching blur" that is what they  
will always sound like. Trying to get anything else  
is like trying to make color prints from black and  
white negatives. Several times over the years I have  
heard reports of such a process but nothing has ever  
come of it and nothing ever will... Donlan could be  
the name of the girl who plays the heroine in "Miss  
Pilgrim's Progress". I'd never heard of her and took  
it for granted that she is British.

BURLINGS, ETC. / Who is this CHARLES BURBEE, anyhow?  
Burbee, etc.

CAMPAIGN LIAR / Heard you the first time.  
Graham

CATAclysm / Has "kettledum" any connection with  
Bradley / Tweedledum?

DAMN! / Do you use a Gestetner too, Norman? Looks  
Browne / a little like it... What the hell does "pot-  
rzebies" mean?... I've thought and thought  
about Ellison's story and all I can think of to say  
is that I like Bierce's "Parenticide Club" stories  
much better... The railroad article was written for  
the "Model Railroader" a couple of years ago and re-  
jected by the editor, John Page, because, as he said,  
"In short, and I am now swallowing hard, MODEL RAIL-  
ROADER'S humor has to be fairly prominently labeled."  
... You are only the second in eight years who has  
said "STOP" to page 15... The Mimeograph was used for  
the drawings on pages 6, 11, 17, and 21. Didn't you  
know? Honest?... As you have read by now in the last  
Lark, video tape has no advantages save possibly for  
delayed tv broadcasts. For such use the advantage is  
this: With movie film the camera must be set up to  
photograph the picture on the kinescope tube. After  
processing the positive film is run through a special  
projector-tv camera unit which turns the light back  
into electrical impulses again for transmission. The  
transmitted signal thus has all the distortion of the  
original tv image and this, multiplied by the distor-  
tion in the transmitter and the receiver, sometimes  
results in pretty ghastly pictures. With tape the or-  
iginal signal is recorded as electrical impulses which  
need only be fed to the transmitter. Theoretically, I  
suppose, this gives no more distortion than there is  
in a live transmission; I've no idea how it works out  
in practice. For tv stations the great bulk and ex-  
tremely high cost of the equipment probably are no  
great drawback, but the tape speed is so high and the  
amount of tape needed is so large that I doubt if the

process will ever be used more than for experimental work... Yes, I recall "The Navigator" and can still see Buster sitting all alone on the deck of the liner in a driving rain trying to shuffle a deck of cards for a game of solitaire. Did you see his only (I think) talkie, "The Cameraman"? Of course he made some shorts after sound came in, but this was a full length feature, and a good one. I don't see why he wasn't able to continue... Maybe your friend with the Jag is wise. It isn't everyone who can drive in races, and racing is very hard on a car. I've seen only ~~one~~ <sup>one</sup> Corvette on the road. Though it can't compare with a real sports car it's not bad for present-day Detroit and by comparison with Ford's Thunderbird it's a beauty. It would be a lot better if it were made available with a good floor-shift (manual, not automatic.)

DIASPAR / You don't have to convince me. I don't like Carr / any dictatorships, benevolent or otherwise, even the bureaucratic dictatorship built up in this country for 20 years. The danger isn't past yet, though some effort is being made against it.

DVAD (That's what it is on the cover.) / Noted  
Ballard and Gerding

FANEWS MAGAZINE / Fanews, Dunk?... I can remember seeing Dunkelberger / ing "Gertie, The Dinosaur" when I was a small boy. (Very small, since I was born in 1906.) I don't remember the name, or that it was by McKay, but I do remember mention that it was the first animated cartoon of any length. All I can remember of the picture itself is a scene showing the dinosaur drinking up an ontiro small lake. Since the punched-celluloid technique was far in the future every single frame of the film required a complete drawing on paper, and at the end of the cartoon scenes were shown of the roomful of drawings piled from floor to ceiling. This film was such an event that it was not shown in regular theatres; it was

shown in Pittsburgh at the Carnegie Music Hall.

FANTASIA / It's a shame those woodcuts weren't stored  
Wesson / in the same place as were the stencils,  
which appear to be OK...Glad to know that  
someone else dislikes those sans-serif typers. It's  
a wonder Bob's publishers don't kick.

FANTASY AMATEUR / Noted  
Officialdom

FAPESMO / For just a moment I wondered why this look-  
Harnoss / ed familiar when I came across it... You  
better watch what you call me. Mister Mil-  
dew to you.

FAN MAGGOT / What's a good way to get rid of maggots?  
Pavlat

THE FAN SPEAKS / It must be a Gestetner, Norm. You ap-  
Browne / parently tried hard but it just  
wouldn't come out as a Rike-type  
thing, would it?

FIENDETTA / Most 20- and 21-inch picture tubes will  
Wells / work on anything from 14 to 18kv; the  
actual voltage in any set depends upon  
the set parameters. DuMont sets are undeniably high-  
quality ones; considering the price they should be.  
Final picture quality depends upon many things, one  
of the most important of which is location of the re-  
ceiver. It's possible that almost any properly-ad-  
justed set would give equally good results in your  
particular location, which is apparently a good one.  
Often what may seem to be lateral bleed is caused by  
ghost images, which in many cases cannot be entirely  
eliminated. The best picture I ever saw was from KLEE  
in Houston, Texas, which I pulled in for about half  
an hour one evening about five years ago. But, as  
Ernie Pittaro pointed out, no tv picture can compare  
with a good movie... A. B. Dick calls those stencils

I referred to "die-impressed" stencils. It is very easy to distinguish between Varityping and printer's type; the stencils in question use the latter, and they have been available for a good many years. Mastersets could be printed directly by first making a mirror-image electro from the original type-matter. Membership in the VAPA was limited to 45 or 50, but there were seldom more than 25 or 30 members.

GEMZINE / You may find Dr. Guber's corrected sentences in the current Stef. If so you'll probably find you didn't get them right... I hope you're kidding in those deadpan remarks to Grennell on page 5. Hell, you couldn't be serious... Back around 1924 a bunch of clergymen got together and tried to get a federal law put through that made it a crime to say anything against any religion. I seem to remember reading that another similar attempt was made just a few years ago. Have you ever heard of Rupert Hughes? Well, in the mid-twenties he wrote a book called "Why I Quit Going To Church", part of which was originally printed in Cosmopolitan. In it he states that among those in our penitentiaries for the more serious crimes by far the largest percentage are priests or other clergymen. Since human nature has probably changed but little since then and since the figures are a matter of statistical record the situation is probably the same now. See Harry Warner's remarks on the final page of the last Horizons. The copy of Hughes' book that I read was borrowed; it has been long out of print and several attempts to find a copy have been in vain. You can have your "sound religious background"; I always found religion to be nothing but sound--meaningless sound... On the other hand, you're quite right about Wilfried Myers. I ran across his Boys Herald during my short stay in the NAPA. Believe it or not, but his junk comes pretty close to representing the average of the stuff in NAPA bundles. Since there are occasionally some fairly worthwhile items, this means that there are things even worse than Myers', hard as that may be to be-

lieve: I was going to say nothing about his "post-mailing" in the hope that if everybody else ignored him he might just go away. But since several of you have mentioned him I'll say that in my opinion any necessary steps should be taken to keep him out of FAPA. I only hope that no members have sent him some of the nice clean crap he requested. However, Gertrude, I'll bet if you inquired you'd find that he has strong religious convictions that he lives by.

GROTESQUETTE / Sorry, O. M.--Noted  
Martin

GRUE / Take another look at GTYT, Dean. Its her-  
Grennell / ro is Albert Weener. Ambrose J. Weems is  
the monicker Raymond Knight used as the  
announcer of that fabulous radio station, KUKU. For  
whomever it was that asked, Prudence Pennyfeather was  
also one of KUKU's staff; her readings of Po'try-no!  
I'm mixed up, but it was a long time ago. I think it  
was Prudence who gave the household hints. I don't  
remember the name of the gal who had Po'try in her  
soul... Please note the ad says "\$50.00 tub", not  
50-lb. Perhaps you forgot to send Fishel & Burper the  
fifty bucks... Are you sure that hand-colored nose  
is illegal? I just looked it up in the Postal Guide  
and found the following rule on third-class matter:  
"On the matter itself the sender may place all that  
is permitted on the wrapper, and may make marks oth-  
er than by written or printed words to call attention  
to any word or passage in the text, and may correct  
any typographical errors." (Italics are mine.) Guess  
that settles it, doesn't it?... So Terry is right  
about those spurs; I still think they'd be pretty  
damn inconvenient... I neglected to see "Captain's  
Paradise" at the Squirrel Hill, but since "Genevieve"  
was recently shown at a nearby neighborhood house I  
have hopes of seeing it yet, as well as "The Titfield  
Thunderbolt"... Your '30 Nash must have been badly  
out of tune. Mine gives 12-14 mpg and I've gotten as  
much as 15.5... Thanks for sending the Rexo pages...



In connection with La Banshee #2 there's another prospective member for the Dean Club: Dean Dixon, orchestra conductor available on ARS and other low-priced lp's. He's pretty good, too... I like those little one-line drawings in Bløen... To hell with burning Miss Steinbach in effigy. Let's burn Miss Steinbach. ... Never could stand Sheen when I had tv, but sure would like to have heard him singing "Back in the Saddle Again". I've seen a few trailer announcements of Autrey films, which were responsible for my solemn vow never to see any of his pictures... You should have omitted the last sentence from "The Question II". ... Even back in '28 when I drove with the family to Canada for a few weeks we found it easier to get into Canada than back into the U. S... Please note, Dean, that the name of this city has been spelled with a final "h" since 1906 or thereabouts. I'm sorry as hell I wasn't here when you called. I was at my brother's place near Franklin, about 80 miles up the Allegheny. That was one of three Sundays I wasn't right here at 2:30 reading the paper. It's Fieldbrook, by the way. Getting through the city isn't so bad now. Coming in on 30 you can hit the Blvd. of the Allies (which has only a short single-lane section for the time being) and from it get on the Penn-Lincoln Parkway via Bates St. The Parkway is a new superhighway which bypasses all the rest of the city and takes you right to the Turnpike. The reason for the 60-mile limit on part of the Turnpike is the large number of fatal accidents on it. I don't know what good it does, for the goddam trucks and busses just go as fast as they can all the time. Within a few months there were three accidents in which loaded busses ran into the rear of trailer-trucks. Save for the Turnpike and local restrictions the limit throughout Pennsylvania is 50mph, which in most parts is fast enough on the winding roads necessitated by the mountains... All considered the Stenofax photos turned out pretty well. Blue isn't a good color for halftones; in black they'd probably look a lot better... Larry Shaw is wrong about Fritzie Ritz and Nancy. Both are currently running in the Pitts-



burgh Press... That "practically" can be considered left off this time, Dean.

HORIZONS / Why all this to-do over definitions of  
Warner / science fiction?... You didn't quite get  
the point of WQXR's "Adventures in Sound"  
programs. The bad examples pointed out lacked realism because of poor balance or, as you say, too much prominence of certain instruments. But throughout the series emphasis was laid on the necessity for equipment that will reproduce the entire audible range. On two occasions frequency runs were made from 50 to 15000 cycles. I was surprised to find I could hear everything up to 9000, which I didn't think possible on am... The "incredible changes" in photography in the last 100 years is one of the best reasons for being dubious about video tape. At that time science as a whole was just beginning a rapid and rapidly accelerating advance; photography benefited from this advance as did every other process. Video tape came in only recently, with the benefit of all this advance at its birth. During its lifetime photography was provided with faster and faster emulsions, better and better lenses. But since its inception just before the war in Germany there has been little improvement in magnetic tape, because the equipment and materials for making a finely divided coating and applying it uniformly were already available and are not likely to be greatly improved. Tape speed is determined by two things--the band-width of frequencies needed to record an acceptable picture and the width of the gap between the pole-pieces of the recording head. This gap reached its smallest practicable size some years ago; if it is made smaller much more power is needed for a given signal level and the signal-to-background ratio deteriorates rapidly. Thus, while not impossible, it is very unlikely that the tape speed of 30'/sec can ever be materially reduced. If a 1200' roll of tape runs only 40 seconds it is unlikely that the process will ever be used for anything but tv commercials... I've found incomplete

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quotes occasionally in hardcover books. Why single me out?...You are a number of years behind the times when you say that "British amplifiers and speakers are strong for treble and weak for bass". The Wmson amplifier is a British development and a number of very fine amplifiers are imported from England. Some excellent speakers are made there too. You probably refer to pre-war English 78's which were intended for the acoustic machines that many people used there and possibly still do. But the industry has adopted now a standard frequency curve for lp's, though I am not sure that all foreign manufacturers use it. The sound recording in English movies used to be lousy, but, as I mentioned before, I haven't heard a bad one for years. Any theatre sound equipment has separate bass and treble controls, but that is no guarantee that they will be used intelligently. Your statement that acoustic records "... reproduce the voice today almost as faithfully as lp's made yesterday" is just further proof that your reproducing equipment is sadly lacking somewhere... The effect of planes upon fm (and tv) signals is exactly the same in principle as radar. The alternation between stations on the same channel, however, I believe is caused by what is called "sporadic E" reception. Certain conditions in the stratosphere make possible distant reception of such high frequency signals (for instance, my reception of Texas on tv.) Unless the two signals come in with exactly the same strength, which seldom happens, it is impossible to hear two fm stations at once. The limiters will automatically reject the weaker signal and pass the stronger one. So when conditions in the stratosphere bring in a distant signal stronger than the local one it is the distant station you hear. I have had an fm station in Richmond, Va., override one of the local stations. For a while I used a continuous tuning tv booster for fm, but when I got rid of tv I hooked up the fm to the rotating tv antenna and no longer need the booster. I've gotten as many as 25 fm stations in one evening. What sort of antenna do you use, Harry? A good antenna, located as high

as possible, is best, but a booster will help. UHF has lessened the demand for VHF boosters, so that they may now be bought cheaply. If you get one be sure it has continuous tuning so that it will cover the fm band... I wrote Boucher about the fallacy in that story of his and he was quick to agree that of course it is impossible to play a disc backward unless the turntable can run backward. Inside-start discs can be played on any turntable. But I once had a synchronous turntable which would turn whichever way it was started. Piano records played backward sound much like organ, and Delius' "Walk to the Paradise Garden" is an entirely new piece just as good as the original. Some music in reverse, though, sounds pretty terrible.

JACK SPEER--ELDER GOD / Noted  
Tucker

MARCHING FIRE / I found it all enjoyable, but there's  
Ency / nothing more I can say about it.

MARY HAD A LITTLE LAMB / Leaves me adiahorous. (Hi,  
Clyde / Dean!)

MASQUE / Why not draw "Snicker Comix" and give it to  
Rotsler / us in your next issue? Better yet, sell it  
to one of the comics publishers. It should  
sell like hot-cakes to all religionists. How about it,  
GMC?... Gerald continues to be interesting, but no-  
body could be that incident-prone. What percentage  
of his letters do you write?

PHLOTSAM / Sorry I can't say anything about this, but  
Economou / I never read reports of conventions.

RAHU / Granted that war should be avoided if possible  
Speer / how are you going to deter the possible ene-  
my--by turning the U. S. over to it? Once the  
commies decide to start a war that would be about  
the only way to prevent it.

RE  
Gording / Your disagreeing with Ernie Pittaro proves that you are not an average slob. Believe me, he's right. I've known people actually to admire a tv picture that was out of focus and elongated vertically so that everything was horribly distorted. I'm not kidding! And I'd like to have a nickel for every time I've heard someone say about one of those lousy little ac-dc squawk-boxes "it has a wonderful tone". So long as you realize tv pictures and the output of the average radio are no good but put up with them anyway you are not the average slob Ernie was talking about. So far as radio is concerned it is getting easier all the time to do something about it. There is so much interest now in high-fidelity that there are a number of units now available at quite reasonable prices. High-fidelity equipment will never be as cheap as the little table models, but for the price of the usual "console" radio-phonograph it is possible to buy easily-connected units of very high quality... It's not just what I've read about conventions that makes me dislike them. I dislike any large gathering of people (except in a theatre, where they are more or less orderly). Call me anti-social... I build my model railroad in the cellar. I started a Pennsy D-16 (a 4-4-0 of circa 1900) about six years ago. It's almost done, but of course there have been long stretches when I haven't worked on it at all. The pike itself consists of about 12 feet of test track... The picture on a tv screen is "painted" by a swiftly-moving tiny spot of light. This spot moves across the screen 15,750 times per second to form 525 horizontal lines of light. These lines form what is called a "raster" and in a properly-adjusted set the lines of alternate frames (there are 30 frames per second) are adjacent instead of superposed, so that they are scarcely noticeable. Well, you asked for it, and I sure hope I'm right. Les will no doubt correct me if I'm not... Gauge pins are devices that are fastened to the tympan paper in a job or hand press which serve as guides in feeding the paper. Ordinary pins with two right-angle bends may be used,



but commercial spring-tongue pins are more convenient. They are adjusted until the desired margins are obtained and, with careful feeding, the margins will be identical on every sheet and two or more colors can be printed in perfect register.

SHADOWLAND / I wondered about that incomplete joke...  
Martinez / "The Old Goat" is much shorter and much less interesting than Tiffany Thayer's book of the same name... About "Saber Tooth" all I can say is Magoo, Myup, Myass. But Shell is doing a fine job with the Multilith. I suppose he is in the printing business; surely he didn't get all that equipment just for the hell of it?... Clyde writes well, and if he could get over his complete pre-occupation with sex to the exclusion of everything else he might do something that would rival Thorne Smith.

SIAMESE STANDPIPE / I wish I could achieve printing  
Wesson / like this; perhaps when I've been at it as long as Sheldon I'll be able to. The fancy initials are most original and attractive, and with the color changes involved represent a lot of manual work as well as the artistic effort. I hate like hell to change color on my 8x12 or I'd do more color work... Jim Guinane's little story reminds me of Kipling's "Just So Stories", though it has been many years since I read them. I imagine that Granada's four tales could be expanded for Weird Tales or some such magazine. On second thought, they probably have been numerous times.

SLIPSHOD / It is, sort of, compared to the things  
Hoffman / you used to do, Lee... I know of a service man who dropped a 12" picture tube from a bench to the floor. Picked it up and put it back in the set and it worked OK! Fact... Perhaps the worst thing about Cinemascope is that, probably because different focal-length lenses are used and it's too much trouble to change them, the aspect ratio of ordinary films is altered. The result is that a little of the

top and a good deal of the bottom are cut off just to show the picture on the wonderful huge screen. To hell with Cinemascope.

SPACESHIP / Years ago, and I don't even remember in  
Silverberg / what magazine, I read part of one instalment of one of the Skylark stories. I couldn't finish the awful tripe, which is why ever since I have steered clear of Smith's stuff in any form. That is why, also, I didn't read Redd's article. ... Still have seen no 3D pictures, and guess I'm not likely to now. Almost saw Cinerama recently, but as of this writing (9-1-54) haven't made it yet.

THE STFMAE / What the hell is this?  
Stewart /

TARGET FAPA / Nope. I was right there when Harry drew  
Eney / that picture. After all, it's a cartoon. ... Quit trying, Dick. Far as I know Wells didn't intend any sort of anagram in the name "Tewler". Edward Albert Tewler is the name of the protagonist of "You Can't Be Too Careful", and Wells makes disparaging remarks about homo Tewler presumably as a comment upon the so-called human race.

TORRENTS / Noted  
Share /

WAWCRHetc. / More typical Willis. And, since he is  
Willis / now a member, I hope it is typical Harris, too. Whether or not its perpetrators have impeccable taste I like this sort of thing.

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Bill: I went home last night and found my wife posing in the nude for a painter.

Pete: Well, maybe she's artistic.

Bill: This was a house-painter.

--Typo Graphic

After I had run off page 7 I suddenly remembered that it wasn't Prudence Pennyfeather, but Mrs. George T. Pennyfeather. Possibly Prudence was the first name of the gal with Po'try in her soul or perhaps Lowndes was confusing her with the Prudence Penny that runs a housewives column in some of the newspapers. Some of the other characters on the program were Charlie Chu Chu, the great Chinese detective, Fetlock Soames of Scotland Back Yard and--Hell, that's all I can remember. Of course there was the Symphonic Razz Orchestra, which rendered the classics in a manner in which they have never been rendered before or since. It was a good program and I remember it with pleasure along with the first few books of One Man's Family, which started out as an entirely different sort of thing from the sentimental soap-opera crap it became later on. There were a few early episodes that were almost as funny as Station KUKU. Of course, in those early days OMF was a sustaining program; it began its downhill slide when it garnered a sponsor and the members of the family spouted cheese commercials. I suppose it still has many faithful followers among those who like to weep; I wouldn't know about this for I haven't heard it for years. But I am certain that Carleton E. Morse originally intended it as a humorous program. I suppose that when it went commercial the advertising agency furnished him with outlines to be followed, for when I last heard it years ago it had more than its share of sickness, accident, divorce, death and all the other necessary ingredients of soap operas.

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For this issue of Lark I have used three different kinds of stencils, all with coated cushion sheets and without films. Pages 2 & 3 are Supreme, pages 4 & 5 are ABD 1060W addressing and the rest are ABD 1260. There is little difference in results but the Supreme filled the type least and the 1060W the most. For the latter I had to clean the type about once every four lines.

This yellow paper is the same quality and weight as the blue used for the last three covers. Both are A. B. Dick's Gold Label 20#. But, while I had very little show-through with the blue, you can read the text through this stuff. The fault is not entirely with the paper, however. I ran a sheet of the blue through on pages 3 & 15 and got some show-through, though not as much as on the yellow. The ink in the machine is still the Speed-O-Print that Harness gave me. While it works fine on the white Ardor it isn't worth a damn on Dick's paper. The S-O-P ink has less body than the Mimeocon; presumably Dick's papers and inks are designed to give best results when used together. All this gives me a clue to another reason for the superb results from the Gestetner. Grennell has mentioned that the Gestetner ink is a rather thick paste; naturally the less fluid the ink is the less it is likely to show through. Also, of course, thick ink will give better "mileage", so the high cost of Gestetner ink is partially offset by the fact that it probably gives a good many more copies per pound. I wonder if it would be possible to use Gestetner ink in a regular mimeograph and whether it would be possible to use printer's ink in a Gestetner. If the machine were your own, Dean, I'd suggest you try it, for you can get good printer's ink for \$1 to \$1.50 per pound. But possibly it would dry out too fast on the belt and drums, and then you'd have one hell of a cleaning job. I suppose it has to be done sometimes anyway--is it fun?

The A. B. Dick Co., has published a booklet that has much information useful for anyone who does stencil duplicating. It is the "Modern Mimeograph Handbook" and it sells for seventy-five cents. Experts such as Rike, of course, have no need for it, but most of the rest of you will probably find it well worth the price. Of course most of the instructions and illustrations are based upon A. B. Dick machines but most of them apply equally well to other cylinder-type stencil duplicators. Address: Customer Instruction Dept., A. B. Dick Co., Chicago 31, Ill.