

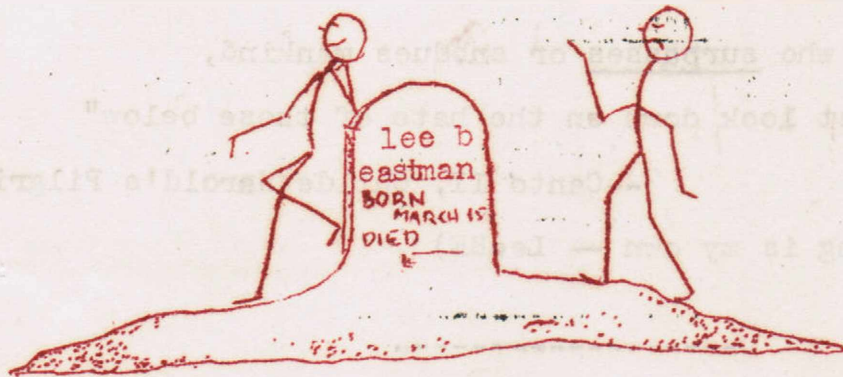
LEE B. EASTMAN

FAPA

-LAST TESTAMENT

OMIGAWD!

HE'S GONE—HIS SOUL
HATH TA'EN ITS EARTHLESS
FLIGHT; WHERE? I DREAD
TO THINK — BUT HE IS GONE.



DECEMBER, 1941



18th MAILING

I bequeath my love of life to Earl Singleton --- who made a mistake. Did you ever make a mistake?

I bequeath my love of reason to Walt Whitman -- who loved Walt Whitman. Do you love Walt Whitman?

I bequeath my love of tolerance to fandom -- which loves no man. Do you?

I am broke.

This issue is dedicated to Elmer Perdue -- THE PERDUE, not for any special reason unless it be that Perdue thinks he's a Hellofasmartguy and isn't far wrong.

Dear Elmer,

"He who surpasses or subdues mankind,

Must look down on the hate of those below"

--Canto II, Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, Byron

(The underlining is my own -- LeeBE)

If I have any worship, it is worship of the open mind, the mind that is always seeking to find the truth, never to defend a lie. This is the essence of adaptability, which is the essence of greatness.

I am neither God nor Superman.

LeeBEastman

The first issue of LAST TESTAMENT will use no art work of any sort, either for headings or for illustrations with the single exception of the front cover. There are two reasons for this. The first is that the editor feels that his dominant personality supplies all the decoration needed (please pardon that one, Joe J. Fortier). The second reason is that I ain't got no art work.

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This is the first issue of Last Testament and will undoubtedly (?) be the last of it (the issue, Koenig) although you never can tell. Resurrection is a curious thing and happens to the curiousest people. Future issues may be confidently looked forward to in each mailing.

It is edited by Lee B. Eastman of 1419 Muller Ave., College Place, Columbia, S. C. and published by him with the help of Joseph Gilbert. Distribution will be free through the FAPA mailings and by request (if I like yer looks). Exchanges will be accepted.

Absolutely no paid advertising will be carried so don't come begging. I will put in a plug for anyone I choose to either by request or in spite of request. JG is not responsible for any errors, typographical or otherwise which appear herein. I told him to stencil the copy as received and left him with permission but not responsibility for the correction of obvious errors in spelling and grammar and etc. (correction, Koenig — and you'll be sorry if you try to point out all my errors. Paper costs money these days.)

* * * When I was in the 8th grade in school, I gathered the various scraps of verse and description that I had written over the last two years and made a little booklet out of them. The booklet is gone and it was no loss. Since then, I haven't tried any more publishing. But the title I chose when I was 13 yrs. old is written on the flyleaf of my copy of the divine Milton's poetry and has thus survived. It was called, Fragments and Feelings of Lee B. Eastman. They were not true fragments or feelings of anyone; they were ersatz. They were imitations of what I was beginning to learn (at school) of "good form" and "composition". But I think the title would rather fit this magazine, or parts of it. I intend to make it somewhat autobiographical. A singular feature of autobiographies is that they are about the author. So don't holler if you see too much of me within — just quit reading.

Some people "hate my guts"; others just hate me. Such people could not be expected to read this. Contributed material will probably show, to the discerning reader, Fragments of Eastman in the choice and in the comments. Let it, I say. Look at what Walt Whitman got away (and he wasn't even egotistical). Now do you see why this thing is free?

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MAIDEN'S SONG TO THE MOON

You were cold, O moon, you were pure and chill
As you rode aloft so clear and high —
Your soul was ice, and your heart was still —
Cold and white on the breast of the sky.
Loneliness found you there above,
O pure white moon, and you knew not love.

Your scarlet lips have held a kiss,
O red, red moon — you have fallen low —
You have given your lips — you will not miss
The cold white heart you treasured so.
You will not want your place *above,*
O red, red moon — for you have love.

--Paul Wynburn

The Conversion of a Skeptic

Or — The True Account of the Remarkable Denconversion.

When I was a little lad with fur upon my lips I did long to sail over the briny sea in briny ships. But when I was a greybeard with pants upon my hips I did fear to sail the briny sea in even brinyier ships. This dilemma loft me in a terrible quandry for a time but it finally occurred that I could write about the briny seas without ever going near a briny ship. So I became a Writer and learned that I couldn't write about the briny etc and without etc.

Not long after, in the 8th grade, an English teacher decided to acquaint me with the classics. She place reverently in my hands a copy of the most colossal literachewer (got its name, we suppose, from the charming expression, "to chew bull" or sompm!) of that super slan Englishman, Bill Shakespeare. Bill was not a SF fan and neither was I. In fact, I wasn't much of anything in Bill's day. The book was printed on beautiful thin paper and bound in bright red leather — well, it looked like leather. But I couldn't figure out which end to start from. It seemed like it didn't make no sense nohow, not from either end. When I returned it, she took one look at it and said, "Oh, you smart child. Why you must have practically memorized the whole book."

Then I moved to Columbia. In Columbia I found Main Street, Crane Creek and Joseph Gilbert. I never did like Main Street; there were too many people on it. But Crane Creek had fish in it and the pools were deep under the shadows of Little Mountain in the summer and the wster was cool and there weren't any people in it. If there were, the creek was full of other good holes. But JG wasn't so easy to classify and it took me several years to discover how completely alike we were in our individual dopiness.

Joe moved onto my block during the height of the DOC SAVAGE PERIOD of his life and we used to kid him unmercifully about his red (bronze) hair and other supposed resemblences to the Bronze Man. He tried to follow Doc's program for physical improvement but we kidded him out of that. We were horrid. He tried to make me read Doc Savage but I only turned my nose up at him. I used to stay up half the night reading copies that John (twin brother) dragged in. Joe naturally moved soon; he has spent all of his life one jump ahead of the sheriff in the very best of artistic traditions. I have spent all my life one jump behind art in the very best of Eastman traditions. I have been encouraged by various people on a number of occasions to stay behind.

I read SFiction when I was 8 years old — American Boy SF — and I liked it but liked the stories of the little bears that swiped the beans even more. There was a story about a dope who burned a hole to the middle of the earth and found a lot of — you guessed it — just plain gold. This wasn't one of the first ones. I misrecall them. I read "When Worlds Collide" when it first appeared in serial form, gosh knows where. I read several stories by Edgar Rice Burroughs — about the hollow middle of this earth and some hunk of land out in space but I never would read Tarzan and I never did until after I graduated from High School. There were time machine stories and space travel stories and invasions of the earth by horrible creatures who succumbed to the germs of earth diseases and stories of human monsters (?) and there was the man who speeded up his reactions till he could catch a bullet in his gloved hand. The American Boy was a wonderful magazine in those days. I learned to read in it and it was almost all I did read up to the 5th grade. Some of those old

are among my choicest reading memories. But never a word of pulp science fiction. I didn't even know the stuff existed.

I didn't know it existed but on third thought it 'pears like I did read a little of it. Not by the name of "pulp Science-Fiction", though. I was in the 7th (?) grade and young and ignorant and oh, so naive. My first pulp reading was in Adventure and so all the rest of my pulp reading was "adventure stories". The whole mess had been given me by an ill-meaning friend; there were about 20 well-mixed magazines with Adventure predominating and though I read every one of them from cover to cover, it was the only one to make such an impression. The story that made the most powerful impression on me had to do with two men in some place in Arabia where they hadn't orter been. They found a gorgeous statue of a gorgeous woman in the hands of some natives and promptly swipe it. The natives resented this so they resourcefully made their escape in a boat on the Red Sea. They took the statue with them for the fun of it but it wasn't so much fun when they tried to decide which one it really belonged to. They fought most bitterly; a storm arose; the ship began to fill with water. When next they looked at the object of their mutual affections, it had dissolved to a fast crumbling shell. Salt is soluble in water. Do you remember Lot's wife. The author did.

I believe I was twelve years old at the time which would place it in the late fall of '34 but this may be a year or two off. There were a few SF mags but I remember them only very slightly and have no idea what their names were. Compared with the American Boy stories I was beginning to tire of, they were dull and without any imaginative appeal whatsoever. I soon switched to the history of warfare, a study that completely occupied my reading energies for about two years. After this, I took to reading light novels in the romantic vein and read from one to three a week for about a year. Then came chaos. I dabbled in various things but chiefly several (seven or eight) magazines of outdoor sports -- Field and Stream, Outdoor Life and so forth.

Comes the Dawn. Joe really went to work on me the summer after I finished HiSchool. I was on the loose -- not yet decided whether to go to college or not, but strongly disposed not to. Joe tho't I was going to be a Fan and figured it was his divine mission to lead me in. By the time he changed his mind, it was too late for him to back out gracefully and I was becoming somewhat interested.

He began by trying to teach me to "appreciate" Science Fiction. After the first two months of my rat year at College, I was ready for anything as a change and did read quite a bit of it. Being fundamentally an impetuous fool, I had signed up for an engineering course on an impulse and then felt obliged, for some strange reason, to finish at least one year of it. I listened to Joe with a mildly interested air for the rest of the year. That summer, I read more and more of his magazines and began to devour the fanzines. That was the summer of the Chicon. I wasn't much interested in it.

But the following winter I became interested in fan activities and read every fanzine I could get my hands on. I will always remember LeZombie for two things; as the first fanmag I ever read and as the best of the whole bunch in that early reading. These magazines caused my desire to become known as a Fan. I wanted to receive them and I also wanted to publish one.

Joe now decided to start me on fantasy. This was the natural approach to the problem since I had always had a decided flair for fantasy and

needed only to feed it a little on Unknown and Merritt tales. None But Lucifer, Darker Than You Think, and Death's Deputy all hit pretty close to the right spot but it was Fear that really did the trick. It was the first pulp fantasy I liked without reservations (unless I read The Snake Mother earlier — at any rate, they were the first two). After Fear, I began to haunt the newsstand for Unknown and Joe formally pronounced me a finished product at the next meeting of the Columbia Camp. I wrote letters to three famous fans proclaiming the fact and then added them to my imposing collection of unmailed correspondence.

Nevertheless, the reading of Fear did not mark my wholehearted acceptance of fandom, Joe to the contrary. It was the Denvention that made me determined for the first time to step into the fan activities. I participated somewhat feebly in the first issue of the SOUTHERN STAR, chiefly when mailing time came. But as soon as it was out, I proposed a forty page second issue for a dime and, with Harry's help, persuaded him to try it. I financed it but again didn't help much with the work. My name appeared as poetry editor in this issue, tho, and made my head swell somewhat. (The story of this editorship is too long to go into here but will certainly have to be told someday).

What with the STAR and the Denvention and Unknown and the beginnings of a fan correspondence, I felt pretty good about the whole thing at this time and was carried along temporarily on a wave of self-enthusiasm. This was in a way the high point of all my meagre participation in fandom although I wasn't really doing anything yet. I derived more pleasure from anticipating future activities in the two months prior to the Denvention than I ever expect to get from the doing.

It couldn't last and didn't. A series of unfortunate incidents turned my interests toward other things.

The reaction was violent and ended in my total-withdrawal from fandom. I drew into a shell — made of disappointment — and called it discovery. But that is another story.

.....

Zeno of Elea was regarded as the inventor of "dialectic disputation" — i. e. having for its end not victory but the discovery of truth.

From The Reader and Collector — Vol. II, No. 3 — We like the second paragraph of Still Another Man's Viewpoint. ---- Yes, Koenig, you still gripe Joe.

----- In a SC court, a deputy marshall was crying the court before an imported judge on the morning of December 2, '41. He was having considerable trouble with the language of the official blurb and when he came to the section where it reads somewhat as follows: "God save the blood-blah-bloc country and this honorable court"; he decided to simplify it a little. Before a hushed audience he read: "God save this court". Chaos followed the judge who laughed till the tears came.

----- Especially we like La Crème de la Crème in the fall, '41 issue of Sardonyx. 'Twas by Trudy. But, oh, how she hurt us: "I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!" when the terrible truth comes out so forthrightly in almost legible script for all to see.

----- We like Whacky, Vol. 1, No. 1, and wanna see more of it altho we prefer black hair to golden and are allergic to cement floors.

----- Elmer Perdue —

"Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!"
Ozymandias - Shelley.

The Last Testament

I was by bedside when he died and he died as I had always wished to die. I wrote it into my autobiography for all to see. "How brave he is!" they would say. "How filled with the love of life yet how he embraces death. This man knows not fear for his mind is open and he sees within."

AT THE DEATHBED: "You have been so kind to me," he repeated and his voice stumbled. "I have not known kindness like this always. There have been days when I wanted to die but I was afraid to die. I had not known kindness all my life. I was always afraid to die for I could see the Pit. When I slept, I hovered over its dark edges and the sea was there but the kindness was not. Always the sea was there and sometimes its waves tossed a ship wildly but sometimes the ship was gone. Then I felt very close — very close to the edge."

"But the ship! Where was the ship?"

He answered feebly now. "There is no ship. There is only kindness. I am going to only kindness. There is no pit. If life is kind, I do not want to die but I am not afraid: There is only kindness. I do not — want — to — die . . . but — am — not — 'fraidhhhh'"

We wiped the salt from his face and took his boots off.

* * * *

How can a man who has never seen the Pit ignore its presence? And what if he has known only Heaven; will he not fear Hell the more?

* * * *

An autobiography will age you as much as a last will and testament — which is equally final. But there is a difference between the two. An autobiography, to be genuine, must be a part of you; a will may be a part of anyone. It has only to give a part of you away.

* * * *

THE BOOK: When I published it, it was a great success. I was lionized and invited to lecture throughout the world. "How brave he is", they said. "How filled with the love of life yet how he embraces death. This man knows not fear for his mind is open and he sees within." — To a million people I said — "I do not want to die but I am not afraid afraid". And they believed me to the end.

* * * *

AT THE PIT: When the ship went from the angry oceans I became mad with fear. My eyes followed the sinking masts. And still the edges seemed to fade — and the light grew dim. — I fled from the edge of darkness, now empty and without form. The boots slowed me down; I kicked them off. — — — It was the darkness that slowed me down. And the wild winds; they were cold and wet; they slowed me down. — — All the world was white with bitter salt. I could run no further.

* * * *

AT THE DEATHBED: It wasn't funny to hear him pray for life and call it death. And when he tried to write and couldn't hold the pen — that wasn't funny. But the will was funny.

THE WILL: He left to man, the animal, his kindness, which he never used. He left to man, the soul, his fear, which he used too late. He left a pair of salty boots on the edge of the Pit — he no longer needed them.

Frederick Shroyer: "Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven" — Paradise Lost, Milton.

We have amused myself by picking out quotations from the third Canto of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage (Byron) which I think applicable to certain fans. We found it fairly easy since Childe Harold was essentially an escapist and an introvert and was, in turn, simply a projection of Byron's own nature. Byron did a good job of putting it into verse and left many cute little lines for me to take nasty digs with (follow me, Koenig). The trouble is, JG has censored us severely when it comes to the femme fans, blocking my every attempt to "feex" Trudy and even forbidding the tho charming little line I had for Pogo. I feex ---.

Doc Lowndes — "...yet he knew
How to make Madness beautiful ----"

Jenkins — "But Quiet to quick bosoms is a Hell ----"

Moskowitz — "Nor learn that tempted Fate will leave the loftiest Star."

Miske — "'Tis but a worthless world to win or loose;
So hath it proved to thee, and all such lot who choose."

Panurge — "No, no, go not to Lethe, neither twist
Wolf's-bane, tight-rooted, for its poisonous wine;"
Ode on Melancholy - Keats.

DAW — "I have not loved the world or the world me . . ."

Jack Speer — "To fly from, need not be to hate, mankind."

The careless format and bad typing and the numerous errors are, to a certain extent, deliberate. I haven't set about deliberately producing errors but I have not taken any trouble to avoid them for two reasons: I don't have the time and those who know me wouldn't believe the mag was mine without a certain sloppiness in its appearance.

Our attention is inevitably drawn to the following quotation from La Nova Femme in the first issue of NOVA:

"Ye Editoress -- has just returned from a sojourn in the body-garage for extensive excavations and complete overhaul. The Gang threatened to turn her in on a new model. But by dint of many persuasive smiles, and much good salesmanship, this move was circumvented."

. . . We vision Doc Lowndes or Joe Fortier reading the above.

For Gilbert and Jenkins -- thorns. The reason? Both of 'em are guilty of distorting and abusing the name of this sterling publication. As for instance, on the last page of JINX Harry refers to us as Last Will and Testament. It's a doity lie; witness our front cover.

Next issue we hope to run our short story (if you could call it that) originally titled "White Bridges"; now titleless. It is the story of three men: one of whom yields to a final temptation and goes to Hell; the second yields to a final temptation and goes to Heaven; but the third yields to nothing -- he is the product of strictly reasoned logic.

We print a fragment from our essay on Hate:

Silent the cats tread, Overhead,
The still, soft miles;
And still the shadows of the dead
Are wrapped in smiles ----"

We Declaim on Poetry ----

"Now the reason I like Prose better than Poetry --" he sez, "is --"; but he didn't get any further. I got up and walked very quietly out of the room, then slammed the door hard. The only reason I didn't sock him in the Puss was that he's bigger'n me. The reason? There ain't no such distinction and I consider that remark as one of the surest possible signs of utter imbecility. Prose is a literary (?) form: verse is a literary (?) form. Poetry is not and never was a form for anything. According to the best of the generally accepted definition, poetry is what goes into the form we create of words. It is thus abstract. It is the thought, the idea, that comprises the Poem and it is the words that comprise the verse or prose. See?

-- * Poetry is really a personal matter, isn't it? Every good poet advances his own definition of poetry. They all differ superficially, yet all seem to be groping toward the same idea. Not that this central idea restricts their theories to identities. Most poets have genuine differences in their ideas of proper subject matter and the mechanics of bringing this matter to life in words. Yet these ver differences seem to stem from a common source: a fundamental similarity in the different conceptions of poetry. I have found the search for this source quite fascinating and have arrived at an answer that I will now pass on. It is not necessarily the correct answer but it is fairly satisfying to me.

- - - The first step in an investigation of this sort is a complete acceptance of the abstractedness of poetry. It may be regarded rather in the light of a QUALITY of the forms in which it makes its concrete appearance. In this light we can appraise its effects on the human mind without regard to the closely related yet distinct effects of the mechanics of the form. I found, on examining the works of the poets which have lasted the longest, several recurring themes and again, on examining the definitions each of these poets give, there appeared the same themes -- still differing on the surface yet seeming to have a common source. Poe and Keats stress a beauty of the senses, both as a means and as an end. Shelley's "Beauty", in its pure form, is an ethereal, impalpable object lying wholly within the mind of the poet. Wordsworth's themes were emotion (recollected in tranquillity) and Imagination, which I prefer to call Fancy to distinguish it from Coleridge's Imagination, which is a Power to create certain effects, particularly through the Emotions. Coleridge was also a great master of Fancy, but this is still another thing. There is also pleasure and hate and love and fear and despair etc., as long as there is poetry.

But all these poets, when they eliminate the confusion of form from their considerations, seem to be discussing poetry essentially in terms of a power to accomplish something. This power may be directed toward creating an effect or establishing an idea either in the poet or in his audience. Poe and Keats both wrote to create, in the reader, an impression of a beauty of the senses, yet at times derived a personal ecstatic pleasure from the writing that few, if any, readers can ever feel. Shelley used this power to express his feelings of Intellectual Beauty and found consolation in so doing. He also used it to advance his political doctrines, annoying Keats, who thought Shelley insufficiently devoted to Art.

Coleridge seems to have had one of the clearest conceptions of this side of the nature of poetry that we can find in the Romantic, English Language poets. He stated, on several occasions, that all true poetry possessed the power to create some deliberate effect largely through the emo-

tions. He was a master of effects — a true spell binder who worked principally through the mind's natural association of certain ideas with certain emotions. Coleridge has lived because of his power to engross the reader in spontaneous imagery from within himself. Coleridge suggests ideas and leaves the reader to work them out according to his own capabilities.

This suggestion is one of the obvious and essential features of all poetry. Our figures of speech are based on the ability of the mind to associate separate ideas — i. e., its susceptibility to suggestion. All poets use suggestion in this sense — all the so-called "great" poets use it in the sense that Coleridge employs it.

To me, it is the most important test of poetry. If something has the power to suggest ideas to me which relate to and amplify what is expressly contained in it, I know that it may be poetry. My own definition goes beyond this point only to provide some very definite limitations as to the degree of this power necessary and the precise object toward which the thoughts are directed. I am not far off, then, if we proceed in the assumption that my reasoning is accurate this far, in defining poetry simply THE POWER OF SUGGESTION. This is what poetry is to me and I wish to repeat that poetry is a personal matter. At any rate, I will consider all poetry in any rag by my standards and none others. Myaaaah — as Harry would say.

But I am getting well lost so will knock off here and mess around with this again later.

AT NADIR

Can I deny myself the touch of things
I know I have most need of -- turn away
From mysteries because no strong light springs
At mere desire to make the darkness day?
Can I cling only to the easy way,
The false simplicity illusion brings,
And never wonder if the future may
Give me strength to soar on wider wings?

The lotus grows across the river's plain
And it is pleasant merely to forget —
Too pleasant, and too evil. I will get
New fortitude from sorrow, strength from pain,
That, where high mountain masses mock the Wain,
I may renew my love of living yet.

--L. R. Chauvenet.

We think this is poetry.

We reprint the poem by Wynburn only after overcoming his most strenuous objections. Paul feels that it's too wordy and admits that it is an imitation. He also wanted to work it over a bit. We have only reason for insisting on using it — we think it's poetry. And incidentally, in the next issue we will have one or more even better poems by him.

We would like very much to know where we can contact Earl Singleton (whom we like). If anyone can give us any information on this score we will naturally treat it as strictly confidential and, incidentally, we might even appreciate it if you ask us real nicely.

THANK YOU!!!!!!