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Well, here's another fine mess I've gotten us stencils into. It is the August, 1976, edition of Horizons. It's also volume 37, number 4, FAPA number 141, and whole number 147. Harry Warner, Jr., 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland, 21740, U.S.A., scripsit. The Coulsons mimeo it.

### In the Beginning

The Fantasy Amateur: These comments begin with the February mailing which finally reached me on April 15, less than four weeks before the professed deadline for the May bundle. I fail to understand why a shortage of small denomination stamps should have had a delaying effect. Surely the Berkeley area post offices have meter machines available for providing custom-made postage stamps for parcels like FAPA mailings. Of Members and 'Zines: Again, indispensable for egoboo ballot filling out. Not many people fill out that ballot, but I suspect that Peggy Rae's service prevents the number of voters from dwindling to preposterously small numbers. ' ' Maybe we could persuade all those extreme fringe attendees at worldcons to adopt the system which the League of Women Voters member used with Peggy Rae's tape recorder. Conditions would be less crowded and hectic if two-thirds of all interested people just sent their tape recorders to the program items which are their only interest at worldcons. Erg Quarterly: Maybe Terry had more luck or persistence with that airbrush. The newspaper bought one years ago for the photography department and nobody ever developed the knack of retouching with it. So it sat around until it decompressed or something and one day it vanished as totally and mysteriously as Manfred. IMK: The Russians must want to regain the space race prestige that they had until the United States made the first manned landing on the Moon. But there are other reasons why they should be interested in getting Russians on Mars. It is probably the closest thing to a habitable body in the Solar System, outside Earth, and there's nothing to prevent the first nation which lands men on it from claiming territory as national property. Cognate: In emergencies, a dried-up ballpoint pen can often serve for a mimeograph stylus. ' ' I doubt that those are seven Star Trek shows never seen before anywhere. Star Trek fans would have rendered Dallas uninhabitable by now, if such a thing really had come from one of its television stations. New to syndication in Dallas, perhaps. Seeds and Stems: The bicentennial has accomplished one thing in Hagerstown. It inspired a new all-time record for early merchandising of Christmas-type stuff. A local store put Christmas tree ornaments in a display window at the start of June. They were bicentennial tree balls. ' ' Somewhere I read a theory that the Nazi groups in the United States are the reason the Ku Klux Klan has come upon hard times. All the young fellows who would normally be supplying fresh blood for Klan groups are joining Nazi clubs, instead. There's not much difference in philosophy or techniques between the neo-Nazis and Klan. ' ' I don't so much think it's wrong to poke fun at a dead person as it is to start doing it as soon as he's dead. That looks like taking advantage of the individual's change in condition to say things that fear inhibited during the person's lifetime. ' ' You'll never find the byline of Harry Warner, Jr., in a Hagerstown newspaper. The publishers don't make exceptions for



me when they maintain the usual journalistic standard for name accuracy. They persist in using just plain Harry Warner, which is not my name. I don't pretend to understand the system through which my stuff is published. I write five editorial page columns weekly, some of which run in only the morning or the afternoon paper, some in both. There are also miscellaneous things like a farm column, book reviews, music sycophancy, and selected short subjects. But I never know when any given item will appear or in which paper. Grandfather Stories: If that explanation for no Spock at a big Star Trek convention is accurate, so much the worse for Nimoy. He virtually owes his career to Star Trek fandom. He would be as obscure as almost all the stars in dropped television series, without that adulation. He should feel enough gratitude to show up at a sane personal appearance fee. Allerlei: I never thought I had anything in common with a mighty pro like Arthur C. Clarke. As usual, I was wrong, because I feel just as he does about the way it was when all fans could read all the new science fiction because so little was being published. He might have added the accompanying benefit: this situation caused most of us to re-read incessantly while waiting for another prozine or the year's new science fiction book, giving us a fuller acquaintance with the fiction. ' ' I'd choose the Beatles rather than Tolkien as the source of the occult revival. When the Beatles proclaimed that God was dead, their generation couldn't conscientiously let religion continue to serve as a release for certain instincts that are built into all of us. So people started to turn to other forms of the comforts that Christianity had been supplying, like the assurance that there's no total death for the individual and that there are unseen powers around us. ' ' Tolkien's deficiency in handling the bad guys isn't so much in his failure to describe them graphically. It's rather the vagueness with which he refers to the nasty things they do. Writing about darkness and poor landscaping isn't enough to convince me. Celephais: There is public TV, and then there's Maryland public TV. The people who run this state's public TV network seem to choose programming only on the basis of whether it's dull. No movies, no sports except tennis, just aviation weather, weekend tourist traps in various parts of the state, the role of women in selling vacuum cleaners, and travelogs about the drabber parts of Asia. ' ' Gee whiz, here I'd been hiding my admiration for Julie London's records in the belief that nobody else in FAPA could possibly understand, and it turns out that Bill Evans also likes them. I experienced a few minutes of happiness for the first time in weeks the day I found a copy of her first lp at a yard sale. ' ' The explanation for why the industry phased out monaural records is the official one. But now that we can't buy monaural records so dealers will have smaller inventory, we find those same dealers stocking the same selections in two or three tape formats as well as in lp manifestation. ' ' One of the photography magazines published a while back the result of tests which seemed to prove that mirror vibration creates perceptible degradation of the image when really big enlargements are made from single-lens reflex negatives. As I remember the article, it happened even when the camera was on a sturdy tripod and triggered by a cable release. There seems to have been some progress since then in damping mirror movement in some brands of cameras. Dam-



balla: It's hard to understand why Chuck Hansen keeps poohpooching his art. The cover on this issue is superb, much better than the slick commercial-style illustrations which Chuck seems to admire. There's a real sense of strain against the storm and the three trees seem almost characterized in the different degrees of yielding to the gale. ' ' Sadly, I must agree about the comparison between doctors and auto mechanics. I felt as if the world were ending the day early this year when the service station I always patronize for small jobs informed me that from now on, I must check the day before to determine if there will be time to handle my car's needs. Fortunately, this station hasn't discovered yet the current going prices for small repair jobs. The last time I couldn't get the car started, they made a house call, tinkered until they could drive it to the service station, fixed there whatever was wrong with the choke, and the total bill was six bucks. And people keep urging me to buy gas elsewhere where I'll save a penny or two per gallon. ' ' It's comforting to find someone else who doesn't think that a job justifies the uprooting involved in moving. If I ever do break loose from 423 Summit Avenue, I want it to result from my own decision, not someone else. Interstellar Ramjet Scoop: Apparently "realtor" isn't the in word for Australian land and house merchants. This is a perfectly good word found in dictionaries which a trade association has tried to kidnap, writing threatening letters to newspapers when they find it used without a capital letter applied to a non-member of their group. ' ' I can't believe Bill is naive enough to believe what he wrote on my reference to poor white trash. The state attorney general office man who made that ruling about private employment of county police wasn't thinking about social matters. He based his ruling on the fact that the county government does not have home rule while the city government has it, therefore city police can be hired out and county police can't. I know it doesn't make sense and someone in that office recommended a test case in court on the ruling to see if it was nonsense. The Best Loins Are on the Floor: The "franking" procedure as it has operated up to now is bad because it puts too much power into one person's hands. The official editor decides what shall or shall not go into the mailings because he claims the right to accept fanzines which are not the work of members if he wishes. I would vote in favor of non-members' material becoming eligible for mailings under proper safeguards against abuse: if the official editor were required to accept anything submitted provided it met mailability requirements of the postal service and didn't appear likely to engulf the organization in a libel suit, and if the member who recommended material for "franking" agreed to pay any extra postal or packaging expenses it might create. ' ' I suspect that a Willis article is the real holder of the record for reprints in fanzines. This immortalizes me, in a sense, because Walter wrote it in response to a frank confession I'd made about my reaction to puns. In Vino Veritas: Hagerstown is quite thoroughly Swedenized by now, thanks to various state-imposed regulations and its own planning and zoning people. For instance, while we haven't had a hassle over a street musician, much the same sort of brouhaha occurred here last summer over a man who wanted to sell hotdogs, soft drinks and sandwiches from a little cart in the downtown section. City authorities threw one roadblock after another at him, the general public got infuriated over so many departments ganging up on



someone who wanted to earn a living. He finally found sanctuary on the courthouse sidewalk. The city decided not to insist on chasing him from there because it's county property and the city is trying to get the county to take over various financial responsibilities. But with all those fat volumes of regulations, twenty-year plans, and so forth, the city can't fix its gutters so pedestrians won't get drenched by splashing autos in even small rainstorms, it can't seem to control the panhandling and molesting of women, and it can't even keep street signs in place in that same downtown section. Non-Evocative: I must remember to write Howard Lyons for the McCoy address. I feel myself on the very verge of plunging deep into old radio fandom. It would suit so well my newly acquired urge to do almost nothing as much as possible, which is the customary procedure when listening to tapes of old broadcasts. I might even augment my Natalie Wood collection from her old radio appearances. The Devil's Work: I suppose it's right to say that Clarke's science fiction is lacking in characterization. But science fiction has this built-in inhibitor of character-drawing, because so many of its characters are non-human or humans too remote in time or place to behave like the humans we know. Only a few first-rate science fiction authors have consistently created memorable characters, the much-maligned E. E. Smith prominent among them. Philistine Quarterly: It's also almost impossible to reach your destination from many parking lots. With all the useless and expensive regulations in effect, you'd think it would be possible to substitute for a few of the unneeded ones a new requirement that shopping centers, stadiums, and similar establishments must build sidewalks with curbing through parking lots, to enable people a fighting chance to survive after getting out of their cars. '' Drug prices wouldn't necessarily tumble if those drugs were legalized. Check the prices of legal drugs the next time your physician gives you a prescription, and compare the cost of good whiskey today to the cost of bootleg whiskey during Prohibition. '' There are several reasons for orbiting Mars and returning without landing during the first manned flight to that planet. Nobody is sure what such a long space flight will do to humans, physically and mentally. If the first men who fly to Mars land there, then go bats on their return flight, how will we know if they've cracked from the strain or are suffering from some disease picked up on Mars? A successful round trip limited to orbiting would increase the certainty that the trouble can be traced to something that happened on the surface. There's also the superior photographic work that an orbiting manned ship could achieve, making it easier to find a safe landing place for the next flight; much resolution is lost on the televised transmissions from unmanned orbiting craft. A manned orbiting ship could determine if there is anything on Mars like the gravity differences which turned up on the Moon, and might be able to scoop samples of the outermost fringes of Mars' atmosphere for study back on Earth. A scientist ought to be able to think of lots of other advantages to handle the Mars flights in the same way as the Moon flights. Ultimate South: The latest idiocy involving the postal service here is limited to weekends. Anything mailed in Hagerstown over the weekend is now sent to Baltimore for sorting and dispatching to its destination, which means that a letter to an address a mile away in Hagerstown makes a 150-mile round trip and any mail ad-



dressed to destinations in the 90 per cent of the nation which lies west of Hagerstown also travels 150 miles before it gets west of this city. (There are perhaps a half-dozen spots in Hagerstown where there are mailboxes marked local, and stuff put into them during the weekend won't go to Baltimore, but it won't be touched at the local post office until Monday.) This change doesn't save a penny because the men who had been working at the post office on weekends have had their schedules shifted to weekday work, and nobody has been laid off. All it does is increase the chances for lost and misdirected mail at the bigger sorting facilities in Baltimore. Le Moindre: Maryland does it differently from Ontario. Here you don't have to wear a seatbelt in an auto but you must buy liability insurance for your car or if you're uninsurable, make a payment into a state fund maintained for this purpose. This is one of those extreme rarities, a situation where I think it's better the way we do it. Most serious auto accidents seem to be caused by individuals who have no possessions, no prospects, and nothing worth suing for if they don't have insurance and there's no state fund for uninsured drivers. The auto occupant who suffers more serious injuries in an accident because he wasn't buckled in is the main sufferer, except for the added strain he may put on hospital and medical personnel. The analogy with seatbelts on airplanes is not exact. In a plane, it's hard to imagine a crisis where you'd be better off without the belt in place. There are some situations in an auto where the belt is a handicap and there are people who would rather take their chances on a split-open skull in return for unhampered ability to jump instantly if fire breaks out or the vehicle stalls in the path of a railroad train. ' ' Boyd makes me more reconciled to the fact that I didn't see the movie version of The Boy Friend. I think the lp of the Julie Andrews production of the show is still available: it's a unique chance to hear her voice before it had darkened and before she had lost the ability to soar with ease into high altitudes. Well, not unique, because 78 rpm records still exist which she made as a child singing opera arias, but they haven't been generally available since she became famous. ' ' Ravel didn't put to music the English words quite as Boyd quotes them. He thought "marmalade" was a four-syllable word and wrote a separate note for its final e. Aussiecon Preliminary Report: I hope there's an alternate universe in which these Aussiecon photographs turned out better. They look to be extremely good ones, and it's a shame they reproduced with too little contrast and too much mottling. Unexpectedly, I find myself experiencing some faint but perceptible preliminary impulses to go to next year's worldcon. If I'm not too congealed in my ways, I might see Florida for the first time then. Goliard: It's just as well I was born in 1922. I could cope with Lotto and Old Maid. I don't think I would have been up to Dungeons and Dragons. The Fan Birthday Calendar: This is a good idea. I don't think it would be hard to get the NFFF birthday list to add to these. I didn't take the trouble to count, but it looks as if fans' birthdays are distributed quite evenly over the months and seasons. Somewhere I'd heard that there are slight differences in characteristics of people conceived at certain seasons, and I'd thought it might show up in fandom where a generous supply of energy is almost essential. Nerguhs Glompum: Now I know just about everything about this new place of residence, except whether Don has bought it or leased it or taken up squatter's rights or what. It's rather disheartening to find him getting his possessions



straightened out already. After 19 years at this address, some of the boxes packed during the move from Bryan Place aren't opened as yet. Kiwis Are a Dying Race: I kept wishing Carey had made this about six times longer. I enjoyed such details as he included, but felt much the same frustration about other facts as I experience when I look at those photographs of Jupiter recently published, showing so much and yet so little. 520 07 0328: The landscape at Ouray looks remarkably like the narrowest part of Maryland's neck near Hancock. The scale is probably ten times bigger in Colorado, but it's hard to tell from seeing Maryland live and Colorado via photograph. '' One of those traveling book sellers must have received special commission for the works of E. P. Roe. It's amazing, how sets of that once famous novelist keep bobbing up in Hagerstown at used book sales. What I really want, a complete Hawthorne edition, apparently wasn't peddled here in the 19th century; I've never encountered even a broken set of his works at these sales. '' It isn't fair for California to claim credit for all those earthquakes. Hagerstown has had some, too. There was one back in the late 18th century which was strong enough to ring the Lutheran church bell, but the most remarkable thing about it was that it happened very late at night and everyone was talking about it the next day. It sort of shakes up the general image of our pioneer ancestors being early to bed and early to rise. '' Used book hunting seems on the decline everywhere. Waiting in line at the latest AAUW sale here, I got to talking with a dealer who makes the rounds regularly in the Baltimore and Washington areas. He told me that he rarely spends more than ten bucks per trip now, despite the recent rise in book prices at Goodwill, Salvation Army, and similar places, while just a few years ago he used to buy \$40 or \$50 worth of books per expedition. Twentieth Century Unlimited: A bourgeoised Mike McInerney is the most astonishing concept of the year. Somehow, I always think of Mike and Lenny Kaye in the same synapse, but I recently learned that Lenny remains unadulterated. Some fans saw him on television not long ago, playing guitar during a Patti Smith concert. Notes from Arinam: Of course I remember Booth Tarkington. Just bought nine or ten of his books in a lovely uniform binding from a limited edition set. About four other titles in the set had turned up in the same place about two years earlier. I can't imagine why they're showing up piecemeal like this. It can't be a case of someone reading them before putting them up for sale, because they're uncut. I suppose that someone published somewhere a Tarkington bibliography, but until I see it, I'm going on the assumption that he wrote an infinite number of books which no one person could ever get a complete set of, somewhat in the manner of the inability of the Chinese people all to walk past a given point. '' Here's another underestimation of Easterners, this time about their alleged failure to travel like folks Out West. Even I have fallen into the habit of going to the Funkstown flea market once a month, and that's two full hills away from the edge of Hagerstown. Synapse; Reading through high fidelity magazines, there's no apparent evidence that low volume sound's have any effect on hearing deterioration. Irregardless of that, the Sleepmate puts out less decibels than riding in a normal automobile. '' Focussing a through-the-lens camera is done like you focus a slide projector (in most respects because you keep turning the unfocused lens until it looks sharp and find you've gone too



far beyond the greatest sharpness and turn back and once again you must probably back and fill. With a rangefinder camera, you can stop after one turn of the lens when the images line up. As a preventative for this difficulty, some single lens reflexes have a central spot in the viewfinder which splits that section of the image until it's in focus. But it's small, hard to use in poor light, and needs something with distinct edges to operate efficiently. No such help is available for twin-lens reflexes. '' I know that it's not possible to restrict what the buyer does with something he purchases. My query involved the possibility of restraining the sale of fanzines which the editor gave away or traded away, by stating somewhere inside that the magazine in question remained the property of the owner and was given on indefinite loan to the recipient with the understanding that it would be larceny after trust if the recipient should yield to temptation or an empty purse and sell the fanzine which the editor, whose purse may have been just as shaky as that of the recipient and perhaps not as bad as that of the purchaser, the way fanzine prices are today, didn't want someone to profit on after having done nothing in particular to deserve it in these latter days which see hucksterism pervading almost every aspect of fandom, which didn't used to be anything like that. '' I admit to sometimes, when I'm busy with other matters or feeling bad or even fearful of acting like a dirty old man, having been remiss about watching the Miri episode of Star Trek with Kim Darby. What I'd really like to know is if she really did have a small role in another Star Trek episode, as I've been told. The Fantasy Amateur: Almost imperceptibly, we've gone through several postmailings and are now in the May bundle, which arrived less than a month after it was due to go out. My envelope bears no postmark or cancellation of any kind so I can use the stamp again as soon as first class postage costs 21¢. '' I hope that anyone who plans to use the mailing contents list for indexing or research purposes will take note of some inaccuracies. Uncle Elmer was given credit for a Terry Hughes fanzine, the FA isn't listed or counted in the total number of pages in the bundle, and I gather that Helen's fanzine's title is really Helen's Fantasia, as usual. '' The most remarkable thing about the ego-boob poll results is the fine showing of Susan Wood. As a rule, the top people in the overall totals are those who have been among the most active members in publishing during the year in question. Susan's third place finish with only 18 pages in the bundles themselves proves that she would lap all of us if she had been really prolific. Well, there was a good-sized postmailed Woodzine, but it's the stuff in the bundles that usually makes most impression on voters. Three Cubic Acres of Fanzines: As a public service, someone should stock up on a dozen or so copies of this, and send one to every fan who seems to be thinking about putting out a new updated edition of the Fanzine Index. The discovery that just one fan needed eight pages to list in the most condensed form almost 400 fanzines he published in less than a decade should be sufficient to convince even the most ambitious fan about the impracticality of such a project. Philistine Quarterly: I keep telling myself that from now on, I'm going to stop proofreading Horizons. But I always chicken out. Mainly, it's because I'm so prone to the kind of typographical errors that the reader can't figure out



instantly. I type a properly spelled word which isn't the one I meant instead of just transposing a couple of letters in the right word, or I leave out a word altogether. For years, I never read over the letters I wrote to fans, and there's no telling how many misapprehensions I created by doing this. Finally some of my best friends broke the bad news to me, and now I plow through everything before mailing it off. Venus: One thing I can't understand about New Orleans' Mardi Gras. Why aren't the parades televised by one or more of the major networks? They seem to be more lively and almost as elaborate as some of the Thanksgiving and football bowl parades which are shown every year. As it is, the only extensive scenes I've seen of a Mardi Gras parade are those in some movie or other whose climax occurs amid one such parade, and lots of stock footage is interspersed with the staged stuff. I wish I could remember the title for certain; The Hanged Man or something like that. Cacoethes: Nematodes don't sound so awful after my difficulties with the rabbit that fell into love with my backyard. He immediately began to construct an elaborate subterranean rapid transit system, and the grass looks as if it had been through a worldcon. The stupid dogs in the neighborhood don't seem to understand how dogs are supposed to behave when they find a rabbit hole. ' ' I've done an article for Granfalloon about the apa crisis. I think the basic problem is the diversity of interests and backgrounds in fandom for the people who join at random a large apa. The apas that are doing best are those that have a membership with something in common: geographic location for SFPA or APA-L; a specific theme for discussion like movies or swords & sorcery; or a semi-invitational method of replacing dropouts which keeps congenial people in many of the small Cult-like apas. Seeds and Stems: An official in Maryland's prison system gave a talk not long ago admitting that the parole people aren't the ones who can judge best who should be paroled. The guards in the prisons are the only people with real insight into prisoners' outlook and behavior. It's too easy for the prisoner to put on an act for the short time he'll be up for a hearing. The parole system as it exists is mostly expediency, anyway; if no prisoner in Maryland's institutions was found worthy of parole for a few months, there would be no place to put the incoming new prisoners. I think I would favor a specific term in prison for convicted men, no paroles, with such privileges as access to television used as an incentive for good behavior. It isn't fair to punish two men for different lengths of time for a similar offence, simply because one happens to be hypocritical or passive enough to behave himself behind bars.' ' My consecutive mailing string should be somewhere around 130 by now. The last time I missed a FAPA mailing must have been the one after I had that bad attack of intestinal flu at the end of 1943. ' ' It's exasperating about Mary Tyler Moore. I like her very much, consider her a most talented person, and I feel extra respect for her because from all reports, she is one of the very few good guys among the major television stars. But all her previous television series were shown at night while I was doing night work, so I was never able to watch them. When I switched to mostly day work, she adopted this new avatar of a news person, and I can't bear to be a journalist by vocation and then watch journalists for relaxation and meanwhile, her earlier series had gone into syndica-



tion during my new daytime working hours. I'll have to try to hang on until old television fandom gets around to Mary Tyler Moore and I can buy her old series on bootlegged laser video discs. Ankus: I favor the amendment to make it easier to find two FAPA officers. But maybe it should be more extensive, covering all four officers and also requiring all the officers to use their real names in FAPA. Pennames don't seem apt to cause trouble in the immediate future, but some day there might be difficulty locating someone whose real name nobody in fandom knows. Helen's Fantasia: I still haven't read much Sherlock Holmes. The complete editions which Marboro used to advertise regularly seem to be no longer available there. Sherlock Holmes readers don't seem willing to give up their books because I've never found one of those complete editions at a garage sale or flea market. Meanwhile, it might be instructive to try to figure out why certain mystery story authors appeal to fans while others don't. Fans like Agatha Christie, Conan Doyle, and Josephine Tey, for instance; they seem indifferent to Erle Stanley Gardner and Ellery Queen. The Best Lines Are Off the Wall: Sometimes I think the American Hitler will get his start by selling bumper stickers. They used to be amusing sometimes and innocuous the rest of the time. Most of them are now hymns of hate, appeals to prejudice, aimed at the lowest common denominator of humanity. ' ' I think Dean Grennell misremembered the penultimate line of that famous poem. I seem to remember it when it first appeared in FAPA a long time ago as "Which accounts for the hump on the camel". ' ' Yes, other people had boleros before Ravel. But he made a lot of unexpected money because a big shot in Hollywood didn't understand that fact. He was paid a big sum for screen rights to a word which didn't belong to him and he accepted the favor quietly. Hollywood apparently thought it was a title he had invented. Damballa: If The Mule could upset Hari Seldon's expectations, there's no reason why an equally unforeseeable event, Elmer Perdue's heroic rescue work, shouldn't have thrown out of kilter my time schedule for FAPA's doom. But I still feel FAPA will die if things are permitted to drift a little longer. Large quarterly apas have fallen on hard times. OMPA is either dead or so close to that condition that it makes no difference. N'APA died, someone tried to resurrect it, and the last I heard of it, there had been a mailing containing 40 pages or so. SAPS seems to be almost as badly sunk in apathy as FAPA. Unless there are petitions or some other factor I'm unaware of, it looks as if we've lost within six months Ted White, Susan Wood, the Luttrells, Jim Caughran, and Leigh Edmonds, among others. How long can FAPA survive that kind of talent drain? ' ' I'm sure "sprightly" wouldn't be the adjective for FAPA if Phyllis Economou should return. ' ' I don't see why a member who questions an activity credential should be required to run for the office of secretary-treasurer. I intend to continue asking about those which I suspect don't meet the constitutional requirements. Since the constitution is no longer being included in The Fantasy Amateur, it might be well to point out here that credentials must be not more than a year old, must be given both when the individual applies to get on the waiting list and again when he becomes eligible for membership, and must consist of either contributions to two different fanzines published in different geographical areas or publication of a fanzine of his own. ' ' Why nag at me to get to work on the new fan history manuscript? I finished it in August, 1975. Get after the people at Advent who wouldn't accept it or return it,



as I'd written it, month after month. ' ' I used to grumble about the haze of pollution, too. Then I decided that I was as much to blame as anyone for the situation, by running an automobile and buying stuff which was produced by factories belching fumes and wastes, and in general by existing. I'm going to try to shut up until I put up by refusing to do anything non-essential which aids and abets pollution. Horizons: There's no sinking feeling like the sinking feeling that comes when you've just mailed off a batch of FAPA stencils and you suddenly realized that you forgot the punch line for something included on them. I meant to finish the narration of the first adventure on my birthday by telling how I finally began to wonder if that might have been Gabriel's horn which I'd been hearing, and predicting that I'll mistake the last trump for something else if it should sound out during my lifetime. ' ' I might also point out that Richard McKee, mentioned elsewhere in that issue, was in the cast of The Ballad of Baby Doe on PBS television not long ago. He was William Jennings Bryan, and got bad reviews for his performance. The Rambling Fap: Dropping that remark about consigning FAPA mailings to the fireplace isn't the sort of thing that will encourage members to turn out more than 166 pages per bundle. FAPA's perishing "in any manner unsuitable to" me would consist of its dying spontaneously, causing publications meant for its next mailing to be useless. It's all very well to keep saying over and over that FAPA will live forever. The fact remains that it is losing prestige, members, waiting listers, regularity, and constitutionality. I saw VAPA die in exactly the same lingering manner that FAPA seems to be doing. Why not take a vote on, first, whether the majority of the members think FAPA should be kept going, and secondly, what changes they would favor to reverse its current slide. Maybe: I don't think there's anything involved in becoming a pro writer which forces the individual to give up fandom. Unfortunately, it often looks this way because so many fans succumb to greed after the first success or two and can't bear to think of doing anything at the typewriter which can't possibly result in financial reward. Patter: I can't bear to think about the controversies that may go on for years about whether it is the equivalent of abortion operations to eat fruit and nuts, if people accept this new estimate of the emotional and intellectual capabilities of plants. ' ' Another way of summing up the business of lawyers, courts and judges: to keep the status quo for the distribution of money and property. ' ' I thought the Biblical estimate of man's lifespan was three score and ten years. But it's things like the extra-long lifespans which the Bible gives for some ancients, and the different versions of the Creation story which Roy Tackett mentioned, which make me believe that there hasn't been as much tampering with the Bible's texts as the skeptics claim. I would expect the same people who are alleged to have inserted passages in the New Testament to match Old Testament prophecies, for instance, to have tidied up many other things while they were at it: conflicting reports in the various Gospels about the same events, for instance, or the downright contradictions within the Sermon on the Mount. ' ' One curious thing about plants which Paul doesn't mention. One of those techniques for photographing "auras" of living things has produced under certain conditions a visible outline of a leaf on a twig from which the leaf has been pulled off. It works that way only in the spring and only, for some reason, with certain types of film.



## The Worst of Martin

More Gluth

Parts of Jon's weighty "History of the Dark Thousand" are always worthy of review and coaing.

During that highly uncritical period when practically no advancement was made either scientific or enpnelogikal--for that matter--the years 1900-2000, old style, a number of curious habits and customs are noted.

In sections of the "civilized" world credit operated mechanisms were available, apparently every few yards, from which a product called "cigarettes" could be extracted. Cigarettes were made from a weed (tobacco) aged and flavored in a barbaric and totally unsanitary manner and rolled into paper tubes. These were inserted in the purchaser's lips and ignited--the furthest terminal point, that is. Then by sucking, clouds of unsavory smoke could be introduced into the pleural cavity.

This irritation of course gave rise to violent fits of coughing. Extended use inured the user to evident irritation but shortened expectance considerably. Kon states that use of this virulent drug was available to children as young as 30 or 40 but this is considered by other peraeon students as most unlikely. As Hrdl states: "How barbarian can you get?"

While preparing this review I brought the matter of tobacco to the attention of feelow Jaak ag Gs. He found the matrix amusing for a few moments and said: "Jesezl bopin burph!"

What else can one add to that?

Elsewhere Jon reminisces on his lecture tours and the amused doubt his listeners expressed over the books on "musical instruments". Jon is convinced that during that dark period individuals "played" contraptions they called "instruments". These, apparently, can be likened to a person playing a single line from a symphic. Actually making the sounds himself on this "instrument". I know your first question is: "Fer what?" At least you can accept this possibility. The objective of this conditioning is difficult to accept.... It appears that great numbers of similarly trained individuals gathered and "played" simultaneously on their various "instruments". The results being a symphic.

Ah! You can't imagine a composer not writing directly for the symphicon. Perhaps Kon's hypothesis will help you believe: "They didn't have one."

MEN MEN MEN Girlie pictures--the kind you red-blooded men really want. You'll never be lonely again with a set of our Girlie Pictures. One hundred different pictures for only three credits. There is Larrain: a full-varished Mercurian with a trio of pseudopops the like you've never seen. And Miss 98 of Jupiter. We don't mean the year but her fantastic measurements. She has the largest ilyak in the system....Liven up your den. And if you haven't got a den why just any room will look like a den after you get them up. Address: PICS, Box Uno, Freeport, Mars.

(From the Summer, 1953, issue of Grotesque, written and published by Edgar Allan Martin)



## Hagerstown Journal

April 28--Something seemed unusual when I walked into the restaurant where I often eat my noon meal. It's an extremely small establishment and it didn't take long to detect the special circumstance: the man with black garments who was using the pay telephone, attempting to persuade someone to deliver a message to his wife. He turned out to be a moderately famous country music singer, by his own admission. When he hung up, he informed all of us that his wife had been shackled up for the past six weeks with an extremely famous country music singer, who could have her, despite his just-concluded negotiations on Mr. Bell's invention. I'll call this special guest Delaware, in the hope that I won't inadvertently duplicate a given name of another artist. Delaware next decided that he must find his way to the nearest station that plays country music exclusively. None of the patrons of the restaurant showed any strong desire to taxi him over there. In fact, someone pointed out that Hagerstown's television station's studios were directly across the street, suggesting that he could get himself some publicity through an interview. "Hell," he said, "ol' Delaware don't want interviews. Ol' Delaware wants to sell records. Lousy TV stations don't play my records." Among the patrons was Old Man Brewer, a decayed politician who had the biggest mouth in town until this noon. At this point, he slunk out of the restaurant, looking shriveled and defeated. Someone expressed out loud suspicion that this might not really be ol' Delaware. He immediately burst into song. I'd always assumed that microphones are used by people who lack the resources or the training to project the voice over a big audience. Wrong again; my eardrums like to bust from that enormous voice in that dinky little restaurant. The song stopped midway in a phrase as if someone had picked up the stylus. "Go on," a customer urged. "It'll cost you \$1,700. That's as far as ol' Delaware can sing without charging his regular fee." He was on his way to another community to participate in the c&w show there. Some of us doubted he would make it, particularly when he began collecting exact directions on how to reach the nearest taverns both up and down the block. This restaurant serves beer, nothing stronger. But Vickie, a waitress who should have been one of the world's great research scientists because of her bold imagination, told him about the bottle of vodka stashed away in the kitchen. He was tempted, but: "No, this is the day when ol' Delaware got drunk in Hagerstown, Maryland, but ol' Delaware needs vodka like he needs a hole in the head. Where's the dressing room?" He was told that its closest approximation was the one-holer men's room. He peeped in, recoiled in horror, and instead went behind the counter to use the long mirror back there. Now became evident the nature of the mysterious plastic bag he had been hugging to himself the entire time. Out of it popped one bottle and packet after another with which he proceeded to apply intricate makeup to everything from the collar bones upward, to make himself presentable for going out into public. It took only ten minutes, after which he gave his final instructions to Vickie: "Look, I left word for my wife to meet me here, but I'm going. When she comes, give her this five hundred dollars and tell her to grab a plane and go back where she's been the past six weeks. He makes more money than ol'



Delaware does." He signed several autographs for people who were finally convinced that this really was ol' Delaware and not just an imposter. Meekly, he redid one autograph to someone's child, after the parent scolded him for misspelling the child's name. Then he strode to the door and paused there, looking up and down the sundrenched sidewalk like a squatter Gary Cooper in High Noon, wondering which of the two directions he should take to the adjacent watering holes. "Hey," someone called after him, "where's that five hundred dollars?" Ol' Delaware majestically turned back for a moment and replied fortissimo: "Where's my wife?"

June 19--It's an ordinary sort of summer in Hagerstown in most respects. But what isn't happening strikes me as just as significant as the things that are happening. People aren't talking about the possibilities if that unmanned spacecraft manages to land safely on Mars and hunts for traces of life next month. Maybe it's not altogether the fault of the public. The progress of the flight has rarely received more than one or two sentences on broadcast news programs. I've seen perhaps two stories about it during the past month in the Hagerstown newspapers, both buried deep on inside pages. Maybe the public doesn't realize what might happen. But I'm growing tense, a couple of weeks before whatever is destined to happen really happens. Unfortunately, nobody informed NASA about FAPA deadline problems and so the experiment was tentatively scheduled for early July, too late for me to learn the outcome and write about it after the fact, if I expect to get this issue in the August mailing. So whatever I write in June will probably be rendered foolish by what actually happens in July. I keep telling myself that there will be no final proof of anything next month, no matter what happens. A safe landing on Mars may be foiled by mechanical difficulties. If a spacecraft does touch down without harm and does carry out the search for life, there's almost certainly going to be much dispute over the outcome. If it finds that some kind of life exists or existed on Mars, there are bound to be scientists here and there who will dispute the finding on the grounds that the equipment was contaminated by earthly substances or fooled by inorganic compounds in the soil of Mars. If there's no sign of life after the experiments, some of us will maintain that Mars could have life in forms totally unlike those on Earth and therefore undetectable by the experiment or that the Martian life may be confined to other parts of the planet or huddling deep in crevices where the probe couldn't reach. Still, for me the suspense will be quite as extreme as it was the night I listened and watched as the first man set foot on the Moon. It's the first real chance of learning that we aren't alone in the universe, although I'm still not convinced that the Moon doesn't contain evidence of former life from its youth, far under its surface. It's also, for me, the last good chance to find life on another world. If there's life on Venus or the outer planets or their moons, it most probably is in forms so unlike ours that there's little hope of proving it's there during my lifetime. If there's no tremendous breakthrough in propulsion, I can't hope to live long enough to learn in my present incarnation about the outcome of the first explorations of other nearby planetary systems. If bems from other worlds are visiting Earth and haven't revealed



themselves because of the military and moral climate here up to now, there's no reason to expect them to change policy for quite a while to come; as the gospel song tells Christ, "It's worse now than then." It would be nice to know next month that there's life on at least one other world, settling the small doubts I've had all along despite my chronic optimism on the topic. So I know now how I'll be acting during those first days in July, unless some kind of personal catastrophe strikes in the meantime. I'll have my new cassette recorder within reach and the radio or television set turned on while I'm in the house, hoping to be able to preserve the first bulletin if the news should be good about that search for life. (I doubt if the flash would come unexpectedly, unless some network should take half as much trouble with this topic as it does with the presidential primaries and hires a couple of scientists and rents equipment to permit it to interpret the transmissions from Mars as fast as NASA does. But I want to be ready.) If life is discovered up there, I'll feel enormous elation that won't be adulterated until they telecast the first interview with a man on the street who says he doesn't see why this is worth making a fuss over. If the news is bad, I'll adopt Scarlett O'Hara's philosophy about tomorrow's status as another day, trying to hide from myself the thought that the next tomorrow in the search for life will be quite a formidable distance in the future. Whatever the outcome, I'll try to remember a science fiction story in which the characters underwent this particular kind of experiences in their attempts to learn the facts about Mars, and I doubt if I'll think of one. And, if anything occurs that seems to be conclusive, not matter what, I'll give a few pious wishes of requiem for the validity of all the science fiction stories about first explorations of Mars that have just been transferred to the same obsoleted literary category as all the novels about the first men on the Moon and the first use of atomic power.

February 3--The mailman brought today a letter with a Hagerstown postmark and 58 cents in postage affixed. I didn't think the first class mail rate was escalating quite that fast. It turned out to be certified mail, return receipt requested, which contained the depressing news that I had been lulled into a sense of false security when smoke didn't come out of my commode on my 53rd birthday. That was the day last December when the city had shot smoke bombs into its sewer lines in the neighborhood, after warning residents to be prepared to evacuate if their homes turned murky. Any kind of plumbing defect would leak the smoke. After the famous early morning auto horn excitement, I stayed home that morning until I'd seen the city workmen dashing around the streets and alleys and had heard the fire truck draw up to a property almost across the street from mine, where obviously the occupants had forgotten about the smoke bombs and had mistaken the defective plumbing for a conflagration. Then I went to work, relieved to know there was one thing right with 423 Summit Avenue. But today, more than a month later, I discovered that it had been false optimism. The expensive letter informed me that I had had on December 19 "some discrepancies" and that these violations were, more specifically: "Smoke from ground in rear." I was further advised that I had 30 days from the date of the letter to correct the situation. The letter was dated January 28, so one-fifth of that period was already gone. My first



concern was over the vagueness of this message. I wasn't even sure if I needed my physician or my plumber. A call to the city plumbing inspector's office wasn't too helpful. The man who answered explained that another department handles the matter and he would try to find out about it for me. I waited day after day for him to call back, nothing happened, and my thirty days were dwindling alarmingly. Finally I managed to reach the plumbing inspector himself, whom I know because he had been my plumber before ascension to his present elevated status. Shucks, he said, I didn't have to worry about the deadline because I'd proved my good faith by trying to find out what I should do, and besides they'd found hundreds of smoke violations as a result of their bombardiers' saturation attack on the south end's sewer system, entirely too many to follow up even if they wanted to prosecute. Eventually, he came around to the house, bearing a little Polaroid picture that they'd taken during my birthday morning. It showed a smudge of smoke coming up at approximately the same spot where the fairies caused Bea Lillie to gain fame. Apparently a scrub tree which had been growing down there had strangled the sewer pipe with its roots. So I called my plumbers. They sent a reconnaissance man to give me an estimate on repairs. "It will be easy," he assured me. "We'll run a back hoe in and find the break in a jiffy." I tried to break gently to him the news. There is a steep terrace in my yard between the house and the source of the trouble. In the other direction is the alley, almost ten feet above the rear end of my yard, separated by garages and a stone wall. There's another stone wall between my yard and the next property to the south. The coast is clear to the next property to the north, not even a fence separating them, but another precipice yawns on the other side of that adjoining property. "Well," he gulped, "it looks as if I'll have to dig without a back hoe." He promised to get to it as soon as possible. About ten days later, nothing had happened. I called to inquire and was informed that his boss had decided that digging was too hard work for a plumber. I took my last two bicarbonate of soda tablets and found another plumbing firm. This time I got a prompt estimate and a pledge that work would begin on the next morning but one. Sure enough, at the stroke of 8 a.m., the firm's truck pulled up, seven plumbers thundered onto my front porch, and informed me that they had come to fix the commode that wouldn't stop running. They looked awfully suspicious when I told them the commode was fine and it was the sewer line that was in difficulties. The girl in the office had given them clear instructions, they pointed out. Sometimes I can think fast in extreme emergency conditions. This was one of those times because I snatched out of thin air an argument which seemed valid even when it came from a layman who knows nothing about plumbing: I told them that it wasn't probable the girl would have dispatched seven men to subdue one delinquent commode and besides, I didn't think there was room for seven people to get within reach of it simultaneously. The leader of the group was shaken enough to call his office and moments later, six of the men climbed into the truck and drove away, leaving the seventh in my back yard with pick and shovel, hunting the sewer line. The plumbing inspector had pointed out to me its probable location, and he thought it lay only a short distance below the surface, because he had lent some sort of awful implement to a former occupant of my house years ago when the line clogged up and this gadget had gotten



loose and almost decapitated the man before it could be caged again. By the end of the first day, the hole was so deep that the digger barely was able to climb out. When he made it, he dropped as if shot. I thought he was dead, but it turned out that he rested like that after a hard day's work. The next day, he began a new excavation, this time in the spot that the plumbing inspector and I had suggested, and he hit the line six inches down. It looked as if deros had been mad at it. I arranged for replacement of the broken section, rejected a plan to cut down the tree on the theory that I'll be dead or living elsewhere by the next time the city blows smoke into the sewers in this part of town, and seven different people provided me with seven mutually contradictory sets of instructions on the best way to plant grass seed over the tornup area of my back yard. Repairs were completed, inspected, and I was back in the good graces of the City of Hagerstown only a week or so after the original deadline, after all. The bill came to a hundred bucks less than I'd expected, and I tried to consider that a sort of indirect birthday gift. A couple of weeks later, I was looking through a State of Maryland survey of its ground waters. In it I found information about the way the City of Hagerstown's sewerage treatment plant was causing considerable pollution of the Antietam Creek, and how the city was expected to remedy the situation by 1980. It was either just before or just after this discovery that a local firm filed suit against the City of Hagerstown for several hundred thousand dollars' worth of sewer construction work which it claimed the city owed and hadn't paid. I thought about my thirty day deadline and about the way I'd paid my bill by return mail and I wondered if there might be one rule for a city and another for the individuals who live in it.

June 21--I hesitate to commit this entry to the permanent form of a mimeograph stencil. Some kind of curse seems to exist for major fan history and research projects. Fred Patten's worldcon history hit some sort of submerged obstacle and foundered, Harold Palmer Piser's updating of the Fanzine Index was interrupted by death, and I've had so many difficulties with my new fan history manuscript that I hate to risk a flat statement to the effect that it is finally on the way to general distribution. But so many FAPA members lead sheltered lives which are not penetrated by events in the portion of fandom that lies outside this organization. This portion of the Horizons readership will not have learned about the situation from other sources. So maybe those who know what has been happening will forgive a summary of the situation for the benefit of the others. I received an urgent request from Advent for the manuscript of the history of fandom in the 1950's, back in the summer of 1975. I dropped everything to finish it within a few weeks, because Advent wanted to start typesetting as soon as possible. There ensued a series of communications between Ed Wood, the senior partner at Advent, and me. After a couple of months, I decided that I couldn't conscientiously make the changes he wanted, principally a group of additions to the manuscript involving the events of the 1950's in which Ed had been particularly active. I also realized that Ed and I have too divergent outlooks on fandom for him to understand what I have tried to do in this manuscript. So I asked him to return the manuscript unless he was willing to publish it with only such changes as were needed to correct errors.



He didn't agree to publish it on those conditions and he didn't return it. Months passed during which I grew increasingly disgusted and quite baffled about what I should do next. I wasn't sure of my legal situation because I hadn't received a specific statement that the manuscript was rejected and I was afraid to try to interest someone else in publishing it via a carbon copy, for fear I'd suddenly find the same book emerging from two different presses. Then at the Boskone early this year, Ed spouted off about our dispute, loudly enough for a substantial part of the crowd to hear him. Everyone else seems to have learned by word or mouth within an hour or so. I started to get telephone calls and letters from people who asked if they could publish the manuscript, since Advent didn't seem to want it. So I wrote George Price, another Advent partner, with whom I'd worked on publication of All Our Yesterdays. He agreed to get the manuscript back to me. Another month passed and I still didn't receive it. Finally I wrote Ed another letter, telling him that he could keep or return the manuscript as he preferred but that he must not publish it under any circumstances and that I was submitting the manuscript to other interested people. I sent this letter in the same extravagant certified-cum-return-receipt method as I'd experienced in the smoke from the rear excitement. I also put a carbon copy of my letter into another envelope, addressed that to me, and when it arrived I put it away unopened. I don't know if all this had any legal significance, but it worked. I got the manuscript back promptly from Ed, except for some pages that he had lost. Then I faced the problem of trying to decide among the offers, knowing that I would probably anger some of those fan friends, no matter whom I chose. So I did an article for Arnie Katz' Swoon in which I explained the situation and outlined my main concerns about the manuscript. I want to get it published in some form at the earliest possible time, I want it to be available at a price that fans can afford, and I won't allow it to be subjected to the instant rarity gimmick which is so annoying just now. Ed and I disagreed about many things but we think exactly alike about publishers who turn virtually their entire edition of a book over to one or two dealers who promptly advertise it as out of print and ask for copies an even higher sum than the original list price. The Swoon article brought in some more inquiries and may have scared off some other people. Now I've decided to let Joe D Siclari put it out, and I hope that putting that statement on stencils doesn't activate whatever malediction may be lurking around all such projects. I made the decision partly because he was the only one interested enough to come down to Hagerstown and talk it over in person with me, partly because I like his intention to handle things backward from the way Advent did it through production of a cheap edition first followed later on by a better book-form edition, and partly because he promises to make every effort to get this cheap edition out in time for the MidAmeriCon. I doubt if he'll achieve that last goal, but it's a refreshing change from the way Advent, after asking for my manuscript, changed its plans and moved another new book ahead of mine in its publishing schedule. If I had surrendered unconditionally to Advent, the new book still wouldn't have been published until mid-1977 at the very earliest, maybe not until later. If the



present intentions are carried out, I must caution you all not to expect the cheap edition to be similar to the Advent paperback. This one will be primitive in comparison: no index, few illustrations, set on a typewriter and either mimeographed or photo offset. But it'll still be better looking than what would have resulted if I'd carried out the intention I conceived when I was most undecided what to do next. I thought I might pick up a second-hand mimeograph somewhere and publish the manuscript on it myself. I'm trying to foresee possible eventualities in case the curse should strike Joe. He has agreed that all publishing rights revert to me if he doesn't get either the cheap or expensive editions into print after a specified interval and if at any time in the future he allows the work to remain out of print for more than a specified length of time. The whole experience has soured me on fan history and it has not exactly strengthened my immunity to gaffiation. All I want at this moment is to be free from writing letters about the manuscript, free from getting questions from fans about why it hasn't been published, free from even thinking about writing anything more on fan history. I've changed my mind in the past after such periods of disgust with other fannish matters so maybe I'll feel differently later on. Fortunately, a couple of years lie ahead in which I'll be free from fan history obligations even if I do change my mind. If I should be foolish enough to tackle the 1960's, the obvious procedure would call for working at the same time on the 1970's, too, just as I took notes and asked questions about the 1950's during the years when I was primarily preparing to write All Our Yesterdays. So there would be no point in starting research until the 1970's are almost concluded. If someone else feels ambitious enough to go to work between now and then on a history of fandom in the 1960's, more power to him; I'll be particularly interested to see how he manages to get everything about the 1960's into one volume, the task which had already inspired me to tell people before the recent troubles that the new book might be the last one from me on fan history. No, I don't know yet how much the cheap edition of the book about the 1950's will cost, or what address you'll write to in order to buy a copy. If you're interested and too far out of fandom to have heard by the time you receive this, why not get back into fandom sufficiently to be aware of such matters?

May 12--One of the very few pleasant things that have happened to me so far in 1976 has been my penetration of the austere pages of Who's Who in the East. Every year for the past five or six years, I suppose, I've been receiving these biographical forms from Marquis Publishers, who put out the Who's Who volumes. They were always accompanied by circulars offering me a chance to buy at a discount the new edition of the volume for which my biography was being considered. I assumed that ordering a copy would get a person included. Naturally I didn't bite, and sometimes I filled out the form, sometimes threw it away. Last year, I received a proof which looked very much as if I'd been accepted this time, but along with it came the inevitable offer of a special price on the new edition. Then around the start of this year came yet another opportunity to buy at a discount the new edition in which, I was informed, my biography appeared, and somewhat later, yet another sort of big chance, this time to buy the basic Who's Who at a discount because my name was in it in a listing of persons whose biographies appear in the regional volumes. I took all this with continued



skepticism, assuming that my name and address had somehow been misplaced by the Who's Who people into the stack of suckers who had ordered their books. But then I started to receive advertisements from various firms and organizations on whose mailing lists I'd never been before. This seemed particularly significant in the light of the fact that the appeals for money which were new to me had little boxes which you checked to show that you were donating \$1,000, \$2,000, or \$10,000. Normally, the kind of charity pitches I receive send me cards where you checked to show if you are giving \$2, \$5 or \$10. Finally I got curious enough to check the local library. Sure enough, it had acquired the new edition of Who's Who in the East, and lord love us, there I was, pretty far toward the end of the book, but maybe the accepted order honored for the letters of the alphabet had something to do with that. By the most fortunate of coincidences, I had independently been contemplating a course of conduct that might make me unique among the new inclusions in Who's Who in the East. Two or three years ago, I had needed some kind of jacket or sport coat to wear on the rare occasions in the warm weather months when I dassn't go in shirtsleeves to some function involved in my job. I had been tempted to buy one at Goodwill Industries, because I wear one only perhaps a half-dozen times each summer. Just at that time, I had been invited to join the Hagerstown Rotary Club. Membership in the Rotarians is quite prestigious in this community and I was genuinely flattered. I was also tempted briefly, not because I wanted social status or thought I might become a power for good in the community as a Rotary Club member but because joining would confer a certain economic security on me. The Rotarians look out for their own, to avoid the shame of having a member dragging down the club's reputation by financial straits, and by joining the Rotarians, I would virtually be guaranteed another job somewhere if I should get fired from the newspaper or quit my job there in repulsion. I eventually declined with thanks the invitation from Rotary, feeling I didn't need the security blanket badly enough to subject myself to eating my noon meal at the same restaurant every Wednesday for the remainder of my ambulatory life and becoming active as either a bowler or a golfer. But I remember reflecting at the time that I might have been the only person in history ever extended an invitation to Rotary while he was considering purchase of a sport coat from Goodwill Industries. In the end, I decided to buy a brand new coat. After I wore it about a dozen times, it fell apart at most of the seams. This spring, I knew I would need a replacement when it became too warm to wear winter garments to places where a coat is a necessity. So I found myself unexpectedly in a position to capture the distinction which I'd missed a couple of years earlier. Just about the time I verified the fact that I'm in Who's Who in the East, I was keeping a close watch at Goodwill Industries, every time I went there in search of books and records. Sure enough, it happened. I found the annual spring half-price sale sign posted above the men's clothing racks, and before I even looked at the record rack on that visit, I sped to the iron pipes. I found one that seems like a perfect fit and it was in impeccable condition except for a loose button which I reinforced in a mere two hours of concentrated work once I got it home. By some wild coincidence, there may be another man or woman who is also a newcomer to Who's Who in the East this year and who also bought a sport coat at Goodwill Industries when the book was published, because of bankruptcy or some such accident. But



I don't think I'm overestimating myself when I claim absolutely unique status for myself as a person who not only entered that book and bought a used coat simultaneously, but also was patient enough to wait until he would need to pay only 79¢ instead of the full price of \$1.59 for his coat at Goodwill Industries.

June 2--Zoning has triumphed again and I've lost much of the minimal amount of respect I ever possessed for the concept of zoning as practiced today in the nation's cities. The 400 block of Summit Avenue has been zoned residential ever since the city adopted a zoning ordinance perhaps thirty years ago. When I moved out here, 19 years ago, there were two non-conforming uses of buildings in this block, the corner drugstore and the insurance agency which an old man operated in his home across the street from my house. Both had been there when the zoning laws were put into effect. The old insurance man died and the people who acquired his house devoted it solely to residential purposes, while the drug store has continued to operate. In the apartment house immediately south of my house, the first floor occupant as long as I've lived here has been Samuel Gray, who ran Hagerstown's only fur shop. He was getting far up in years about five years ago when he decided to retire. He sold his business which occupied a small building in Hagerstown's downtown area. The new owners had been running it only a year or two when the city decided to expand a parking lot and bought up a couple of small buildings, including the one with the fur shop, for razing. The new owners closed down the business rather than hunt a new site. Meanwhile, Mr. Gray has been growing a bit restless for his old trade, and former customers kept asking him where to go for the repair service on their garments that his little business had once offered. So he decided to ask permission from the city to operate a part-time fur repair service in his apartment, partly to give him something to do, partly to fill a community need. It can't be done, he was told, because of the zoning law. He was turned down flat, even though he wouldn't be able to handle more than one customer at a time, guaranteeing against worsening the parking shortage in the block. He pointed out to the zoning people that in the second floor apartment of the building where he lives, a woman has been conducting a dressmaking business for many years, involving customers who visit the building for fittings and to choose materials. This dressmaking activity had begun after zoning was adopted, it had never been made known to zoning authorities, and nobody in the neighborhood had ever complained about it. This woman was moving to another part of town. This made no impression on the zoning people; there was nothing on their records to show the existence of the dressmaking business so it couldn't affect the situation. Mr. Gray appealed the decision and conducted a survey of the entire block. He claims that he talked to someone in every house and apartment and didn't find anyone who objected to his fur repair proposal. He probably told the truth, because I haven't heard any bad reaction in the block to his making public these findings. The zoning appeal board took up the case along with another appeal. The other appeal involved a man who runs a travel agency and wanted to move it to a block zoned residential in another part of town, one of the best residential sections of Hagerstown where property values and average income are probably double those in this block of Summit Avenue. The appeal group reversed the original decision on the travel agency, on the



grounds that a beauty shop operating as a non-conforming use in the same building he proposed to occupy for his travel agency had an effect on the situation. There was strong neighborhood opposition to the travel agency because of the increased demand on parking spaces that it will create. The travel agency will also create a slight danger, because a large middle school stands across the street and every customer will be one more auto for the kids to look out for. Mr. Gray's appeal was rejected, on the grounds that the fur repair business would change the character of the neighborhood. So Mr. Gray, like Othello, finds his occupation gone. I'm sure he won't open a repair shop in a building where it is permitted by zoning, because there wouldn't be enough customers to justify his staying away from home all day. He buys Cadillacs frequently enough to convince me that he doesn't need the business for the money. Now, in the apartment house immediately north of my home, there have been two occasions in recent years when a whore has moved in and conducted a thriving business. Both would still be there if the neighbors had waited for zoning regulations to stop that particular change in the character of the neighborhood. I am certain that elsewhere in the block one man was peddling drugs on a large scale for several years. This has stopped but once again, it wasn't thanks to the protection that zoning is supposed to provide. That building just north of my house was once a one-family residence. Now it is an improvised apartment building with separate apartments in basement, first floor, and second floor, plus two more apartments in the former garages behind the house, converted and augmented by addition of a second floor. The occupants of this property have among themselves five automobiles and one motorcycle, and zoning didn't do a thing to force creation of off-street parking for them. This entire block is gradually degenerating as a result of its transition from owner-occupied single-family dwellings that once existed to all-tenant apartment houses of today. Grass doesn't get cut, beer cans lie around, alcoholics abound, a police cruiser pays a call to one building or another several times weekly, and many other annoyances are building up. But the zoning law prevents us from adopting one form of defense against such problems. Fences can't be more than four feet in height, and a fence no taller than that is of no practical use. On the other hand, when the city or the county builds a public housing project or new school, ten-foot fencing is promptly erected around any parts that might suffer from vandalism or intruders. Meanwhile, there's the 300 block of Summit Avenue. It has some decent people living in it. But that block isn't zoned residential, probably because it is bisected by railroad tracks. The tracks belong to a connecting link between the Western Maryland Railway and Baltimore and Ohio Railroad which still was busy when the zoning law was written. By now, it gets next to no use, and the B & O has been trying to shut down altogether its Hagerstown branch. The 300 block has two service stations almost opposite one another at one end, an apartment house whose ground floor used to house a soft water service but is now occupied by an insurance agency, and when I moved out here, a grocery store existed in another apartment house, by now converted into another apartment. A few years ago, yet another apartment house in the 300 block had its first floor turned into a dress shop which was pretty much a one-woman venture. Last year, the dress shop was closed up and in its place appeared a beauty salon



which, according to its newspaper advertisement, has five employes. The 300 block has an even worse curbside parking problem than the 400 block, because several of its apartment buildings are larger and because at lunch and dinner times and late at night, it gets the overflow from a restaurant-tavern on an adjoining street whose parking lot contains room for perhaps a half-dozen customers. The parking pressure must be worse with five employes and enough customers to keep them busy in the new beauty shop. I can't imagine why zoning laws should try to provide a different kind of protection to people in the 300 block from the type it affords in the 400 block, if protection is needed and desirable, or why the desire of the people affected shouldn't be given more consideration when decisions are made, or why zoning boards shouldn't be elective rather than appointive. Until someone answers such questions in a satisfactory manner, I'm going to feel very sorry for Mr. Gray and I intend to hang on tight to my long-standing conviction that zoning is one of the biggest factors in the decline of American cities, big ones and little ones, too.

June 15--It would be a trifle egotistical to assume that the universe is maneuvering its processes solely to impress me. But I keep getting that impression as I grow older and older and more and more things over which I have no control come to full circle around me. I've already explained the amazing way in which Pen Mar, the nearby amusement park which was so important in my boyhood, is coming back to life in time for my senility. Then there's the thriving status of old radio fandom, which permits me to hear again so many things that everyone had assumed were lost irretrievably. Now baseball has gotten into the act. The news came over the air about Charles Finley's sale of Vida Blue, Rollie Fingers and Joe Rudi for millions, and instantly I was again a pre-adolescent trying to comprehend the breakup of a pennant-winning A's team by the owner's action in selling off his stars. I was a front runner as a boy, I suppose, because the Philadelphia A's were my first love. If they broadcast their games around the start of the 1930's, I didn't realize it. But I read the A's box scores every day as fervently as I now study TV Guide listings in search of Julie Andrews programs, I haunted a store which posted the day's line score each evening to keep track of Lefty Grove the year he had that marvellous winning streak, and I stood for hours in front of the electric scoreboard watching the World Serieses with the Cards being reproduced in lights at the newspaper building. Then after another year or two I began reading about the sale of Lefty, Jimmy Foxx, Mickey Cochrane, and all the other greats to the Red Sox, Tigers, and other teams, and it was as if I'd been partially orphaned. I was old enough to understand that Connie Mack didn't have the financial resources to withstand losses which dwindling attendance had created for his team. But I didn't think he could expect me to continue to root for the A's, no matter how inevitable his actions had been. So I switched allegiance to the Red Sox, which had gotten the biggest names from the A's roster. I tried, but I couldn't keep up my rooting for the Boston team for even one season. The names were familiar but the team wasn't and it just wasn't the same. Besides, it quickly became evident that Tom Yawkey couldn't buy a pennant, so pretty soon I changed again to a team that was both nearer to me and a much better prospect for lots of first place finishes in the



years ahead, the Washington Senators. I stuck to them as long as they stayed in Washington. Now, more than forty years later, when almost everything in me and around me had altered beyond recognition, once again the A's were being broken up and I felt briefly that same helpless, unbelieving sensation I'd known in boyhood, even though I haven't been a great admirer of Charley or his team. Curiously or perhaps significantly, the press and the broadcast people didn't pay any attention to the déjà vu circumstance for several days, while it was the first thing that came to my mind. I didn't find any reference to the parallel until two or three days had passed, and Richie Ashburn interviewed a Phillies official on a pre-game program who made a somewhat mixed-up review of what Connie had done. Then the next day, I found in a newspaper a feature story about the breakup of the A's during the Depression as well as the slightly less extensive destruction of the A's even earlier in the century. The manner in which Connie Mack kept building great teams from nothingness is so much a part of baseball lore that I can't believe that even the youngest wire service writers didn't realize it had all happened before quite promptly. I suspect that the media's dislike of Finley inspired a decision not to bring up at least for a while the fact that he hadn't done something unprecedented, so he would remain in the worst possible light. I don't know how the case will fare in the courts. But I do remember that Connie Mack suffered no such blasting in the press in the early 1930's. The writers then seemed to agree that it was a shame but it was just about the only thing for an owner to do when the fans didn't turn out, the achievements of the players put them into peak salary brackets, and the owner didn't have among his possessions a couple of breweries or other giant enterprises which could be used to solve his financial problems with the ball club. I feel more sympathy for the underdog than I did when I was a kid, and I'm starting to hope that Charles Finley will somehow come out on top in this situation, perhaps even furthering the readjustment of the universe for my benefit by moving the A's to Washington and renaming them the Senators.

June 17--It seems reasonable enough that a person who makes himself so conspicuous for writing so many locs should receive some locs in return. I get them at the newspaper office from time to time as a result of stuff published in the local dailies, and I assume that I don't see nearly all the reaction, because quite a bit of the mail addressed to me there never reaches me. But the most regular loc writer to me is a mysterious person who signs himself only The Old Timer. His letters sometimes arrive weekly, sometimes only once a month. They aren't mailed, which may account for my receiving them so often, but are left with the girl at the switchboard. He seems to be quite far up in years, interested in a wide variety of subjects, pretty well traveled, and in the habit of writing to me just to get things off his chest. I can't reply since he never includes an address and I can't publish his letters because of company policy against running anonymous communications. If I inquired of the switchboard girls, I could probably track down his identity quickly enough. But he obviously wants to remain a mystery and I've restrained my curiosity out of respect to his wishes. Sometimes I manage to work something he has told me into a column, but most of his long letters just go to waste. Typical is this one, which I'll abridge discreetly for a fannish audience: "Another nice column on some of the old folks, the Hamiltons in this case. There were still



a few of them around when I hit the valley. You mentioned the fact that one of the Hamilton girls married Hiram Percy Maxim. Which fact brings to my mind several facts about him and of a very close associate of his. They might add an interrogation point or so to the column. Did you know that when H. P. Maxim died (1936) that he was buried in the Hamilton family plat at Rose Hill Cemetery? An immense block of granite marked the site for some time but eventually disappeared. Presumably the City of Hartford, Conn., reclaimed the body of one of its most illustrious citizens. Check the facts with the cemetery association. Back in the first decade of this century, Hiram P. was the most prominent and chief organizer of the amateur wireless operators in their fights with the commercial wireless interests and the armed forces of various governments. Calling themselves the American Radio Relay League, they were among the first to use the term radio. Maxim was the president of the league for many years. One of his associates was Charles Stewart of St. Davids, Pa., on the Main Line. Having had some legal experience (some said not enough) battling for his family's business (Stewart's Scotch Snuff) against the American Tobacco Company, he was made vice-president of the league for legal matters. As to the family's battle with American Tobacco, what result? You guessed it. As the battles of the league with Marconi, United Wireless and government forces got rougher, they eventually had to get real legal talent. Charley was a real nice guy. Boys from miles around were welcomed at his big amateur station; some setting up their own. A couple had some sea duty. Maxim was a member of a brilliant family. His father invented the single barrel machine gun and his uncle smokeless powder and various high explosives. Don't look him up in the Encyclopedia Britannica. They only give him a couple lines and that practically is a footnote to his uncle's biographical sketch. His father? Nothing at all. Oh, that Britannica! It took them some years to find out that Gen. Anthony Wayne was not born at Waynesboro, Pa., and another old encyclopedia a long time to find out that it was not at Easton, Pa. Where then? At Waynesborough, the family estate in Easttown Township, Chester County, Pa., about a mile and a half south of Paoli, Pa. Waynesborough is still occupied by descendants of the old general. The Britannica has become a big nuisance. You look through two sets of books to find out sometimes that it dunno from nothin' about your quest." The Hamiltons are the family I've mentioned in Horizons for having produced a Maryland governor and a Hagerstown newspaper editor. If Maxim's body really was transferred, a big ceremony in that cemetery honoring the now silenced inventor of the silencer was wasted a few weeks ago. I was particularly unhappy that I couldn't quote a poem he sent me on the awful indignities inflicted on the town square:

"Spindly trees in pits and pots; / Some in most unlikely spots. / Benches few, and none with backs, / Concrete blocks and wooden racks. / Bedraggled flags hang in the rain; / 'Lectronic flag poles. Stung again! / Glassed-in structures, a mystery / One of 'em got a Christmas tree. / We old jay-walkers stand and stare, / Little old ladies everywhere / Taking chances with their luck / Dodge a car and then a truck. / Huge light clusters on flimsy posts, / Let's hope that they'll exorcise ghosts: / Ghosts of shops and little stores / Peering in at darkened doors. / After spending all that money / Doesn't it seem sort of funny / That good intention's not enough. / P. T. Barnum knew his stuff."