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Not yet canceled, midway through the new season, despite its sagging ratings is Horizons. At the top of the show, the credits include identification of the director, Harry Warner, Jr., 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland, 21740, U.S.A., and the fact that the Coulsons are the producers. Just before the break for the first seven commercials, be advised that this is volume 39, number 2, FAPA number 147, and whole number 152, and just before the credits stop rolling comes a brief glimpse of the date, February, 1978.

In the Beginning

An old embarrassment has returned. It is more than a month since the date when the November FAPA mailing was supposed to go out, and I haven't received it yet. The only way I can be sure of getting this issue finished in time to provide the Coulsons with a fair amount of mimeographing time is to go without mailing comments. Even if the bundle came in the next day or two, I couldn't get it read before winding up this vacation week and there are a lot of hectic days to cope with at the office as soon as I go back, offering little time for such avocations as FAPA activity. If both FAPA and I survive another three months, I'll include comments on the November mailing in the next Horizons.

Castling about for something to fill the stencils I'd reserved for comments, I found in a rarely explored desk drawer a box where I had placed for a year or two various items which I didn't want to risk mislaying. I had forgotten all about the box and its contents. Maybe a rummage through it will provide a few morsels of interest to some of you.

Here are some notes on the backs of paycheck envelopes which I had made for a projected long article on Maria Schell. I wish I could interpret them. For instance, under "Operation Moonlight," I have scribbled: "Trieste. Accent gone when talk fast. Faster moving. Unprecedented smile. Southern accent later. Glasses transform. 1961. French--higher voice. Same auto crash motive. Farra-go, wild prison scene, ending announces film is ended." Those final words are particularly cryptic, because it's hardly unprecedented for the final feet of a movie to superimpose "The End" over the picture.

Another note on a scrap of copy paper is more coherent. I'd finally tracked down the facts about one of the first movies I can remember seeing: "The Viking." The New York Times reviewed it on November 29, 1928, so I must have just been around my sixth birthday when it came to Hagerstown. R. William Neill was the director. I also put down the name of Donald Crisp, without informing myself whether he was an actor or the producer. I copied one sentence of the review: "When the hardy Vikings shed a little blood they let the red gore be seen on their blades." This was because this was a very early example of a color movie of feature length. It must have been shot with one of those three-lens cameras which used black and white film, with a different filter over each lens so color prints could be created with dyes, in much the same way that color pictures are still reproduced for publications. I can remember those colors vividly, a few specific scenes, and my youthful sense of wonder over the inscriptions which the Vikings had supposedly left in North America.

Here's a few pages torn from a 1969 issue of TV Guide, bearing an article by Isaac Asimov entitled "NASA Goofed." It is a light-hearted comparison of the way the nation's space program was devel-

oped with the way space was explored in science fiction stories. It probably brought to Asimov a check equal in size to what he earned for first publication of a half-dozen of his best shorts and novell-ettes, but it isn't much more inspired than the average TV Guide article. If Mike Glicksohn had written it and published it in a fan-zine, at least one or two locs in the next issue would have complained that it wasn't quite up to Mike's usual standard. If Bob Shaw had read it at a British convention, his talk would have been reprinted in only one fanzine, not a half-dozen places. Maybe some day I'll find time to check out the gimmick with which the Asimov article ends: the often-repeated statement that one thing science fiction didn't foresee about the first landing on the moon was the ability of people to watch it on television back on Earth. I have vague half-memories of this very thing happening in several long-ago pro-zine stories.

What could possibly have caused me to type out and preserve a fourth-rate poem and place it into this box? It starts: "In gloomy tones we need not cry / How many things there are to buy! / Here is a thought for you and me-- / The best of things in life are free!" Did someone I know well write it and I copied it off just for friendship's sake? Or is it the lyric for a song which someone had asked me to copy off and I never turned it over to the individual?

Evidence of how long ago I safeguarded stuff in the box can be determined from this clipping. It's undated and contains full details on new postal rates, which I obviously wanted to have at fingertips for future reference. The new rates were six cen's for first class mail and five cents for post cards. Unsealed greeting cards required four cents postage. On the back of the paper are some classified advertisements, including one for used cars whose latest model listings are 1967, so the item can't be more than a decade old.

Here's a form letter from the Discount Book Shop in Washington, also undated. The proprietor was furious because the Washington Post had refused to publish pictures of two buttons in an advertisement for "the new Button Art Form". Moreover, WGMS, a good music station in Washington, had refused to transmit the store's statement about the situation. The messages on the buttons that caused all the trouble were "Black Power" and "God Is Alive in the White House".

Another clipping, this one from a religious publication. A firm which specialized in making lp's of church choirs and such non-professional groups charged only \$1.95 per record for a minimum order of 100, and additional copies of the same pressing were only 65¢ each. Undoubtedly, costs are up since then, but I interpreted this as proof that fandom could create its own lp's in small editions at prices which would almost guarantee good sale. But to the best of my knowledge, the only really fannish lp's ever issued are those containing some of the Noreascon proceedings.

I wonder if I ever thanked Russell Chauvenet for the postal card which I put into this box? He had taken the trouble to look up for me a batch of the titles of Cornelia Meigs' books, after I'd expressed in print somewhere my fond memories of them. Curiously, all my travails at flea markets, book sales, garage sales and such phenomena down through the years have brought only one Cornelia Meigs book to my collection. Apparently the people who owned them as children liked them as much as I did, and either read them into tatters or left instructions that they were to be placed in the coffin, too.

I can remember the purpose of another manuscript note, fortun-

ately. I'd meant to write an article on the inappropriateness of the music that is frequently sung at big weddings. The Schubert Ave Maria, for instance, was originally written to a German translation of a Sir Walter Scott poem. I thought it boded ill for the spouses to hear at their nuptials someone warbling a melody whose lyrics included passages like "Thou canst save amid despair, / Banished, outcast and reviled, / The flinty couch we now must share, / The murky cave's heavier air. / We bow us to our lot of care." I also jotted down one phrase from O Promise Me, "Love unspeakable," and a reminder that the two wedding marches most often played at these rites come from an opera in which the marriage is never consummated and incidental music to a play about fairies.

I believe this letter is authentic, although we never were able to make sure at the newspaper office where it arrived. It was signed with the name of an area Italian resident. It went like this, in awkward but legible handwriting: "Mister paper man you make a my little bambino michalo much sad. your paper say sure a snow michel mass day so i buy my little bambino sled an tel him Saint Nicholas say snow michel mass day now michel mass day over and no snow. my little bambino have sled an no snow so what he do. he say papa did Saint Nick get a sick an not make snow. wat me a tel a him if you no a say in Paper it a snow i would not a got him sled. you got a me in truble with my michalo. ples see we get a snow soon so my little bambino get happy again" The signature follows all this. In the same envelope is a poem contributed by someone else, a patient at an army hospital in this general area. It begins: "The cooks are half baked / Just like some the beans they Bake, / And the kitchen helpers are all on a spree / and don't shoot the mess Sgt. / For he is half shot already."

Did I copy these definitions from some dictionary or did I write them down because someone had asked me to try my luck at the impossible task of creating definitions which everyone will approve? In pencil I scribbled: "A periodical that is written and edited by science fiction and fantasy enthusiasts and that is frequently prepared by mimeographing", and "a magazine devoted to the exploration of popular interest in the personalities of the sports and entertainment world (as movie, radio, TV)." Under these lines are the laconic two words "space opera" and another annotation: "Sat & Mon after Labor Day 9-5 Sat now noon" so I must have done the writing at the office and used the slip of paper to take over the telephone the new fall schedule for some office or institution in the Hagerstown area.

The bottom of the box is significant because I used it for some kind of mailing list, perhaps for non-FAPA recipients of Horizons or for Christmas card purposes. There are a lot of celebrated fans listed there, but also a few whom I can barely remember, like Alvin Fick and Larry Williams. This must have been a very long while ago because Nancy Rapp was still Nancy Share and still living at Danville, Pa., Les Nirenberg was a mere fan residing in Toronto, and Vinç Clarke hadn't lost interest in fandom. I don't suppose many fans are old enough, other than me, to remember when Peggy Rae Pavlat had an address in Lansdale, Pa., Les Gerber was a student at Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster, Pa., and Norm Metcalf was stationed at Tyndall Air Force Base in Florida. Here are the names of Bob Lichtman and Don Durward, their addresses both including the "Los Angeles 56" zone designation that became attached to an entire generation of Los Angeles fans. There must be about 40 addresses here, and I think only Ethel Lindsay is still at the same one.

The Worst of Martin

Satyric

No. 1
September, 1943
Edgar A. Martin

Sans recourse, this neck o' the hinterland has been lacking in sustained activity for megaparsecs. And with a twinge of shame for our perennial silence, we have enjoyed the varied slantivities of the confraternity. Our vector diagram resolves and modulates to the minor mood of the book reviews. We have been utilizing these various resumes and tips from the fanzines as a reading list and hereby make belated acknowledgement. . . A certain quantity of the slanolytes seem to be as actively in search of nervous dyspepsia as we. Eight hours a day, or more, six days a week; followed a couple of nights per week with ye olde search for higher education; and then Sundays, of course, wherein we must put in a full day on a part-time job; and what paltry midge of tempus is left is demanded by study and walks with the baby in search of a pretzel. . .

One just can't leave YHOS with an unsoundable translation in his brain: etaoïn shrdlu. Rugged individualist or otherwise, the accent is on the last syllable as witnessed by the part of the first quintain as follows:

An old linotype went askew
With its naked machinery in view
It made love to the press
In the state of undress
Saying gently: "Etaoïn Shrdlu."

We're high man to date. The die is caste. . .

And now H. C. Koenig will bash his head against the temple slan-but mat three times in an ecstasy of erotic hysteria and hiss: "What an unhintable abomination." Let him gaze again at WOWZY WAMBLINGS (What a title.) afore his vivisection; for has he not now found the culmination of eons of search? I quote:

"Well, don't sit there like an ass," hissed Abby.

At last, for him only, a hissable hiss.

GUTETO, ADULUX BESKAN: can't read either of them. 'Tis probably a blessing to the old eyesight anyway. . . From all indications there would seem to be sufficient peoples in any and every country who can converse in English, French or Spanish to attend to any wanderer's wants. If there is any intelligent person in your foreign neighborhood he will know one of those three. The majority haven't yet learned their own tongue, much less the code of the dilettante: Esperanto or Dawnish. . . Now here's an idea to make a fortune for yourself. Print a heavy volume in gibberish. Call the language "Slanish", or the like. The book is free, distribute thousands to your friends and enemies. A few days later, after your tome has been entitled first and finally as illiterature; distribute, also free, glowing reviews in English. Testimonials wherein Dr. Speer, FAPA and Dr. Ashley, SLAN, endorse the scientific advancement of the text, the cerebral ramifications of the sophistry, the rollicking racy satire of the interlineations, or the erotic beauty of the Finlay illuminations, etc. Then, you see, sir, then, you sell unexpurgated translations at \$25 per chapter.

Al in the Family

Al Ashley suffered one of the oddest fates in fandom's history. He attained almost equal fame in two incarnations. First, there was the Al Ashley who was one of the most active fans in the nation during most of the 1940's. Then there was the totally different Al Ashley who appears in countless anecdotes written and told by several Los Angeles area fans, particularly Burbee and Laney, after his gaffiation and eventually after his death.

Gradually, the second Al Ashley has become the better known one, as older fans vanish and are replaced by newer ones. Anyone who entered fandom during the past quarter-century had little knowledge of the real Al Ashley, unless the fan had access to old fanzines or was friendly with quite superannuated fans who had known Al personally. I doubt if anyone has reprinted an Al Ashley article for the past three decades, while the humorous items about the mythical Al Ashley have occasionally returned to circulation in reprinted forms.

I never met Al. But I think I received every fanzine he published, I must have read most of his material in other people's fanzines, we corresponded off and on over the years, and I can't find much in common between the two Al Ashleys. It occurs to me that I might accomplish several things by a selection of reprints of the writings of the first Al Ashley. It should acquaint fans who were not yet active in the 1940's with the way he wrote. It should draw the attention of others to the difference between the two Al Ashleys. If by chance there was some never-revealed mystery about the original Al Ashley's writings, maybe these pages will inspire someone in the know to make it public. It occurred to me that someone else may have written everything published as coming from Al, which would explain how all the material published about him after he was no longer aware of what was being written is so incompatible with all the things published under Al's byline. But this seems most unlikely, on further thought: I would surely have heard some hint about such a secret at some time during the past 35 years. If it's true that that the real Al Ashley was totally unlike the fictional Al Ashley, I might restore some of the reputation he once possessed in fandom through the reprints. Finally, a few items I'll republish here possess historical significance for one reason or another.

However, I've not attempted to choose only a few items which represent Al at his very best. I'm trying to be fair about it and recreate the first Al Ashley, not yet a third Al Ashley. The real Al Ashley wouldn't have won a fan writing Hugo if such had existed in the 1940's. He wasn't the most brilliant stylist, the deepest thinker or the most popular fanzine writer. But he was one of the good ones and should be remembered as such. I didn't ask permission from anyone to do this reprinting because I didn't know whom to ask.

Al's longest lived fanzine was En Garde. He published it for FAPA and probably some other fannish friends during a period of about four years. At the time, Al was part of the Slan Shack family. At two locations in Battle Creek, Mich., the family included Abby Lu, his wife, and some adopted members like Jack Wiedenbeck, E. Everett Evans, Walt Liebscher, and others at various times. There is one built-in difficulty when I reprint from En Garde. Al and Abby Lu were listed as co-producers of the fanzine and much of the material was unsigned. I've tried to choose only material which it seems safe to attribute to Al. Some of these items contain internal

evidence pointing to him as the writer. Others seem to have come from Al for stylistic reasons. He often wrote in a slightly stilted, overly elaborate manner, just as I still do. Abby Lu's contributions seem a bit more conversational and boiled down. It's conceivable that some of the contents of En Garde were genuine collaborations.

Let's start with something unassuming in nature. It's Al's tale of a fannish gettogether in the spring of 1943, published in the sixth issue of En Garde in June in the 24th FAPA mailing. I'm reprinting the entire thing, and the three-dotted paragraphs were that way in the original.

The Midgicon

Early on the morning of Easter Monday, the Ashleys and the Perrys hove themselves from their downy beds, hiced a hasty breakfast, and hied themselves to the depot. The train for Chicago was due to arrive. Chicago has lots of bookstores, and they had saved a little money. Wherefore, they had resolved, the twain should meet.

Dalvan Coger had planned to go along if possible. We had waited all the week before for word from him, but neither word nor Dalvan made their appearance. We had finally given him up. So we entered the station...and there sat Dalvan, looking cool and calm in good old Sam McGee fashion. The ensuing flurry of chatter disclosed the fact that he had been way up in the northern part of the state the day before. He wired his mother to meet him at the station in Jackson with some money and a clean shirt. When his train pulled in there, she handed the stuff through the window to him and he came on to Battle Creek, got off, and waited for us.

The trip was uneventful. We indulged in the usual pastimes of reading, playing games, sleeping, and annoying the other passengers. Then came Chi. We bobbed to our feet, bounced off the train, and bounded up the stairs to the waiting room. Walt Lieb-scher, Frank Robinson, and possibly Bob Tucker were to be there to meet us. We looked in vain. Just as we were ready to fare forth alone and get lost, Walt appeared out of nowhere. He said Frank was downstairs waiting for us. Somebody went after him, and then we set out for the Bus Depot to find Tucker. He wasn't there, so we waited and ate another breakfast. When he appeared it turned out that, unknown to any of us, he too had been at the station watching for us to arrive.

We tramped from one bookstore to another. We spent the whole day at it. We spent a hell of a lot of money at it. When we had all the books we could carry, we simply left them all at the store we happened to be in, with instructions to ship them to Battle Creek. Then we started in all over again. Books can sure get awfully heavy. How glad we were that Dalvan was along. He usually brought up the rear of the procession--and most of the books. He also answers to the name of Dobbin now. At noon we entered a corner restaurant. It was full. We waited about half an hour. Walt, Abby Lu, and Earl and Helen Perry finally got a table. The rest of us still waited. We managed to fend off complete starvation by foraging a little food from the other diners when they weren't looking. Finally we got a table too. After a suitable interval a waitress deigned to notice us. Being strangers, we hollered at Walt to find out what those at his table had ordered, then followed suit. The whole meal was about the equivalent of a good ham sandwich. Everything had some weird foreign name and we are forced to

the conclusion that some people have the dangdest tastes.

Fairly late in the evening we decided it was time to seek a hotel. We found one, and Frank left us there to depart for his home in the South Side. We got three double rooms. Somehow the clerk got confused and only charged us for singles. We kept quiet about it, being strangers and not wanting to show our ignorance. Walt had to leave too, as he had to be in Joliet to work the next morning. We all collected in our room to discuss this and that. Slan Center came up and was pounced upon eagerly. (Error. Frank and Walt didn't leave until later.) The financial schemes and architectural designs to be found in the fan-imagination are positively amazing.

About nine the next morning that insomniac, Earl Perry, came banging on our doors and telling us that a new day had arrived. Wherefore we should arise. We were prompted to argue the matter, but eventually gave in.

After breakfast we set out for the museum. Frank was supposed to meet us there. A bevy of beautiful high school gals appeared a block or two ahead of us. Tucker, Dalvan and I unconsciously hastened our steps, leaving Abby Lu and Helen some distance behind. Now and again remorse would assail us, but the lure ahead kept making us forget the ladies behind. We arrived at the museum and had quite a wait for them to catch up. Frank wasn't there. We tried to reach him by phone off and on all afternoon, but to no avail.

Several times while going through the museum, Helen and Abby Lu strayed off, but we had little trouble finding them. The Hall of Man has an understandable feminine appeal. It contains some remarkable statues.

When it came time to leave we headed for the entrance. Reaching it we discovered Abby Lu was missing. She was not in the Hall of Man this time. In fact nobody could remember seeing her for the past half hour. Arranging to meet again in ten minutes, we set out in different directions to find her. We really covered the place in that ten minutes. Tucker finally found her down in Egypt among the mummies. We gathered at the entrance again, and just as we were about to leave, spied Frank preparing to pay his admittance fee. The gestures we made trying to tell him to save his money must have convinced the attendants that we should be under the care of another type of attendants.

Frank had mayhem in his eye. While we had been enjoying the Field Museum, he had been through the Museum of Science and Industry in the South Side three times looking for us. After that he had looked over most of the rest of Chicago. Poor Frank. Tucker offered him a free copy of LeZ to mollify him, but had to raise it to a year subscription before peace was restored. As we started down the steps my hat blew off. So did Earl's. We set out after them, dodging in and out among the columns at the head of the steps. The two hats were very playful, but finally remembered the saying about birds of a feather and decided to get chummy. Earl and I, each intent on his respective hat, naturally collided. This seemed to cause much merriment among the rest of the gang.

We headed back for the hotel, stopping enroute to purchase a cheap suitcase in which to carry what books hadn't been shipped. Earl and Helen had to get back to Battle Creek, but Abby Lu and I finally decided to stay over another day and run on down to Joliet with Tucker and Frank to spend another evening with Walt. Dalvan was undecided for a time, but eventually decided to accompany us.

We packed our stuff and headed for the elevator. How we all managed to get on it is a mystery. When it stopped on the main floor we swarmed out. Dalvan tripped, went into a beautiful swan dive, then executed a grand finale by skidding seventeen feet across the lobby on his chin. There was a great deal of applause and he had to take a number of bows but modestly refused an encore. The suitcase he had been carrying soared off on a flight of its own, but was caught by an alert bell-hop. This was unfortunate as it is customary in the city of Chicago to pay ransom to a bell-hop for the return of your luggage.

We checked out without further incident and set out to see the Perrys to their train. Right in the middle of LaSalle street on an el cross-over the handle of that cheap suitcase decided to give up. As it only contained a couple hundred pounds of books, it was obvious we had been cheated. But we swallowed our indignation and with true fan resourcefulness attempted to devise a substitute handle. Several strangers even joined in the spirit of the occasion. One helpful soul thought we should harness a number of the ubiquitous pigeons to the load and let them carry it. Tucker grabbed at a length of wire strung within reach, but discovered it was already occupied carrying a sizeable load of current. A cop in the street below began to get worried about what was going on. Doubtless he had visions of saboteurs planting bombs to blow up elevated trains.

Bits of rusty wire and odds and ends of rope and string were finally twisted into a handle of sorts. On reaching the station we wrapped a couple religious tracts around the string and thereafter managed very well. The Perrys left. Then we left on a bus for Joliet where Walt met us.

Walt's mamma had a swell spaghetti dinner for us. While we were doing justice to it, sirens started screaming. "Ha!" we thought, "a jail break!" It was suggested that we have fun by all going out and dashing frenziedly up and down back alleys and across lots. This would serve to confuse the cops and make the chase more interesting. But, alas, just as we started out we discovered it was only an airraid practice alert.

We spent the evening in Walt's room listening to his records, envying his originals and his books, gagging on some of his unpublished manuscripts, and other fan sport. Then we found a hotel and adjourned to there. Abby Lu was sleepy. Presently she slept. The rest of us gathered in Tucker and Dalvan's room and had a bull session. Conversation drifted around to things psychopathic and Walt, Tucker and I went all out for the discussion. Dalvan enjoyed it all but didn't say much. But Frank...ah! For him the gentle veil was stripped from Life to reveal it in all its shuddering reality. Slowly his eyes grew glassy and a dazed expression spread over his face. It is doubtful that Frank can ever again be shocked.

The next day we headed for home. And for the next few weeks we lovingly fondled our booty. Ah, books!

Actually, Frank must have been even more shocked a few years later when he suddenly achieved fame and fortune for a novel as no fan-turned-pro had done since Ray Bradbury. Most of the other individuals mentioned in the travelog soon drifted out of fandom without leaving much trace, with the obvious exception of Tucker; LeZ was his fanzine, Le Zombie. I think this article is a good example of how big a thing was represented by a small clambake of this type, in the

days when fans were fewer and traveled less often. It's typical of a hundred similar detailed accounts of gettogethers which today wouldn't qualify for more than perhaps a line or two of mention.

The Slan Shack idea mentioned here was described at considerable length elsewhere in that issue of En Garde (a fanzine title which sometimes appeared with an exclamation point at its end, sometimes not, so I'm not taking the trouble to include it here). The entire article deserves inclusion in the anthology which someone will someday presumably publish in order to preserve in one place the seminal and most famous fanzine writings of all time. I'm going to omit here the first portion, which philosophizes about the differences between fans and people. I'm also deleting the final paragraphs, which don't describe the proposal itself.

Slan Center

When Niel DeJack and Dalvan Coger were here at our place just before Niel went into the army, a discussion of Slan Shack came up. One thing led to another. Finally, we rather timidly advanced an idea we had been toying with in our own mind for some time.

Why not buy a square city block, build it up, and inhabit it only with Slans?

Stated thus baldly, the idea is rather startling, and one is inclined to classify it with the most unreal of fantasy. Yet it is possible of accomplishment!

Suppose a group of fans decide they like the idea, have faith in their ability to make it a reality, and are willing to back up that faith to the tune of several hundred dollars. The idea was conceived here in Battle Creek. There is plenty of work here, and even during the depression there was less unemployment than in most towns around it. Without going more than two miles from the heart of the city, an excellent location for the project could be found. In fact, there are a great number of reasons for selecting Battle Creek for the site of the Center, but we won't go into all of them at this time. Let's just suppose it will be located here.

The first thing the fans would do would be to come here, rent a room or apartment, and start working at whatever job they found most suitable. Having become established, they would next select a lawyer and an architect. A corporation would be formed, and each would hold stock to the extent of his investment. A suitable square block could probably be purchased for from three to five thousand dollars. Then an ultra modern group of homes, apartments, housing units, or whatever you wish to call them, would be built around the block. In the center, formed by the square, (in the collective backyards, if you will) a large communal building would be constructed. This would serve as a meeting hall, library, publishing headquarters, central heating plant, and even an electric plant. If desirable, there could even be a small machine and woodworking shop for those who enjoy such hobbies. While each unit of the project would be distinct, the complete group of structures would be designed to form a pleasing architectural whole.

The Corporation would own the whole thing. Each fan would pay a certain amount for his living quarters just as if he were paying rent. In return he would receive additional stock. When his total stock equaled the valuation of his dwelling unit, he would be in the same position as though he owned it. His payments would then drop to some minimum amount to cover upkeep and utilities, and would continue thus for as long as he wished to remain. In the same way a fan determined to remain single could enjoy the results

of, in effect, owning his own home, yet it could be merely a two or three room apartment, or even a single room.

A Board of Directors, elected yearly, would handle the affairs of the Corporation. A general meeting of Stockholders would be held as often as proved necessary. New Stockholders would be admitted only after a vote of approval showing a sufficient majority. Some sort of Grocery and General Store could be set up by the Corporation, and some Stockholder selected to manage it and to be paid by the Corporation. In fact, other commercial ventures could be tried and might prove useful in keeping all Stockholders employed at all times. But the first mentioned would be especially advisable in that it could supply the group plus the adjacent neighborhood.

For the purposes of introducing this idea, we need not go into all the desirable features of a cooperative venture. Similar ventures have been successfully tried before. Sweden has especially demonstrated the advantages of this method. The mass buying power alone is no insignificant item. The pooling of Slan intelligence should produce amazing results. And the whole thing is simply a matter of applying an already successfully demonstrated principle to our own peculiar needs.

Financially the plan is feasible. After the war startling new building materials and concepts will be forthcoming, and intense competition will bring prices away down. Ten to twenty fans with three to five hundred dollars each could swing the thing easily. The whole block of structures would not have to be attempted all at once. What buildings proved necessary could be put up first, then more could follow later. But the longer one dwells on the advantages of handling the thing through a corporation the more possible it all appears.

Would you enjoy the advantages of owning your own home?

Would you like to have fellow fans for your neighbors?

Would you like to live just a little cheaper than the rest of the population by availing yourself of the power of mass buying?

Have you ever declared a wish that there was a convention every week, and that you could attend?

If you have, the thing to do is start pulling for Slan Center.

Slan Center must necessarily wait until the war is over. But now is the time to discuss it and start making plans. Now, while incomes are large, is the time to start accumulating the money to get it across. Our presentation of the idea here is sketchy in the extreme. Many details we have already considered, but not set forth here. Many, many more will occur as the idea is thought about and discussed. Some fifteen Slans have already discussed the plan with us and all have declared themselves strongly in favor of it. All have been willing to risk the necessary money to make Slan Center a reality. Now what are the reactions of the rest of you?

This is clearly the closest approach to the second Al Ashley that we're likely to find in the writings of the first Al Ashley. But I might mitigate the excesses in the Slan Center presentation by reminding younger fans of several matters. Better men than Al overlooked the fact that inflation would hit the nation after the war. The failure of Slan Center to take into account fans' habit of moving constantly from one city to another can be blamed in part on the fact that this sort of mobility wasn't as prominent in 1942 as it became a decade or two later. I tried to recite in All Our Yesterdays some of the otherwise responsible people who gave at least limited cred-

ence to the Fans are Slans notion, and it mustn't be imagined that Al was the sole proponent of that fallacy. If he is to be laughed at for proposing an idea which fandom never adopted, he must also be credited with foreseeing certain tendencies in home ownership which mundanes have turned to in the United States since 1942.

In the previous FAPA mailing, Al had published separately from En Garde a four-page parody on Edgar Allan Poe, entitled The Stefan. He apparently also did the illustrations for it, moderately amusing ones doled out at the rate of one for each stanza. The poem had been inspired by Claude Degler's coming to Battle Creek. I'll restrain myself to quoting just a few stanzas, with the hope that somebody will someday reproduce the whole thing, sketches and all, by electro-stenciling:

Waiting not for invitation,
With no slightest hesitation,
In there stepped this strange creation
From some far, benighted shore.
Not the least obeisance made he, --
Not a minute stopped or stayed he,
But with manners worse than shady,
Plunked himself upon the floor, --
Sprawled himself upon the carpet
Spread upon my chamber floor, --
Sprawled supine, and nothing more.

Then this creature's try at smiling,
Merely ended up in riling
My attempt at reconciling
Such as he upon my floor.
"Though I see thou art no craven;
Though," I said, "there's 'welcome' graven
On my door, you'll find no haven
When you interrupt my snore.
Find some other fan to bother!
Go, but fast, I do implore."
Quoth the Stefan, "Nevermore."

"Much I marvelled this ungainly
Fan to hear discourse so plainly,
Though his answer little meaning--
Little relevancy bore;
For one must admit that, surely,
None could be so downright churlly
As to fail to leave right early,
Or such urging to ignore.
But these thoughts were rudely shattered
When the Stefan's raucous roar
Once again quoth, "Nevermore." ...

Then, in sudden inspiration,
I recalled my invitation,
In some fannish publication,
For all fans to use my floor;
Never dreaming they'd come leaping,
Interfering with my sleeping, --
That they might come swiftly sweeping
In upon me by the score, --

Or that such a thing as this was,
Might take root upon my floor, --
Parking there for evermore.

Al seems to have had artistic ability. The poem's sketches were meant as caricatures, but En Garde had beautiful covers, and the colophons indicate that Jack Wiedenbeck wasn't the sole begetter of them. The En Garde in this same 23rd FAPA mailing attributed the design of these covers jointly to Jack and Al. Jack cut the masks and Al wielded the airbrush, according to this note, with the help of various other fans at times. There has never been anything quite like those airbrush covers, which also appeared on issues of The Fantasy Amateur while Al was the organization's official editor and on one or two other Battle Creek fanzines. They possessed the one virtue that most fan art lacks today, simplicity. In recent years, only Bergeron and Rotsler have consistently demonstrated this sort of ability to do so much with so few elements in fanzine illustrations. The airbrush covers were sometimes in one color, sometimes multihued. I don't know how they managed to make certain lines virtually sharp while retaining the fuzzy outlines in other areas of these covers, but the contrast gave a certain distinction to the covers, over and above their excellence of design and execution. I've kept all those issues in envelopes and I don't think the inks have faded a bit after more than one-third of a century.

That mailing's issue of En Garde had on its cover a small primitive man chiseling marks into a stone, down in the lower left hand corner, while various sizes of blue circles, some containing red nuclei, descend upon him from above and to the right. The name of the fanzine is in huge shadow-type lettering which somehow doesn't intrude on the illustration but seems a necessary part of the design. Inside the issue is a lead article which may seem to have an odd message today. But some day I'd like to do a thorough survey of old fanzines, to see if I've just imagined my memory that Campbell during the golden age of Astounding received almost as poor a fannish press as he did late in his editing career. Here is Al on this topic in March of 1943:

The Elastic Limit

It was sometime in February, 1926 that Hugo Gernsback sent us a print of the cover of the first Amazing Stories, with an announcement of this new magazine to be devoted entirely to science-fiction stories, printed on the back. How many of you can appreciate our feelings from then until the first copy appeared? We shall probably never again reach a peak of anticipation as high as that which we reached then.

That Amazing arrived. Nor were we disappointed. It merely whetted our appetite for more...and more. When it appeared on the stands, we counted out our twenty-five cents with trembling fingers. Reverently we carried it home, and were soon poring over it with avid eyes. But, alas, too soon it was read from cover to cover. Then we were faced with twenty-nine dismal days of torture, waiting for the next issue.

Most of that early science-fiction was pretty crude. But even as this crudity began to force itself upon our consciousness, the quality of the stories commenced to undergo a slow, but continuous, change for the better. At first those simple, obvious plots and scientific ideas were sufficient to send our imagination soaring in the most gratifying fashion. Then, as the effect began to wear off,

along came E. E. Smith, and Campbell, with their epics of cosmic scope. Our slightly jaded fancy revived, took off like a rocket, and was soon bumping against the ceiling. The stupendous possibilities and concepts suggested by those stories stretched our imagination to a point where it seemed almost unbearable. Each story seemed to have reached the ultimate, yet each succeeding story surpassed the one before. Without doubt they became, as Doc insists, pure fairy stories. But they gave our mind and imagination a work-out such as they never had before.

Then, for a few years, science-fiction went into a slump. Perhaps it was only natural. Maybe it was a good thing in a way. One may build up one's muscles with exercise, but the exercise must be broken with periods of rest to be effective. So with the mind, and the imagination.

The science-fiction slump continued longer than was really necessary or desirable. But finally Street & Smith took over the defunct Astounding Stories, revived it in determined fashion, and caused the future of science-fiction to assume brighter hues than ever before. A genuine touch of quality commenced to creep into the stories. "Thought Variants" and "Novas" appeared at intervals. Once more our imagination spread its wings and soared aloft; this time with increased vigor, and to find its "flight ceiling" much higher than it had previously been.

From that time to the present, the evolution of science-fiction has been slow, but steady; a steady upward climb. Much has appeared that was mediocre, or even downright deplorable. But those magazines that have attempted to feature the better fiction in this field, have offered us stories with ever-improved writing, and ever-increasing ability to stir the imagination.

Yet, today, there is a growing clamor that something be done about Astounding, still the leading exponent of the best in science fiction (although others are now crowding close upon its heels). They say Astounding is slipping. They point to various stories as proof of this statement. Our first reaction to such charges was one of surprise. We had noticed no such slipping. So we decided to investigate, study the problem, find, if possible, some reason why a growing number of fans seemed to find these recent stories unsatisfactory. We did!

In the early science-fiction stories, long scientific dissertations were considered necessary to justify the more fanciful parts of the tale. But this was gradually eliminated to a great extent. The reader was considered capable of assuming automatically the various scientific bases upon which the future projections were made. More time passed. The broader aspects of Astronomy, Physics, Chemistry, Geology, Biology, etc., became worked to death. Writers began weaving their yarns about some single, more or less obscure, scientific principle. Finally even this source approached the point of exhaustion. It was then that the writers turned more and more to the less exact sciences of Psychology, Politics, Economics, etc., and their possible future trends.

About this time, many of the fans began to complain that the stories were slipping. Their complaints indicated considerable uncertainty about the exact reason for their dissatisfaction, but dissatisfied they were. The stories built upon these less exact sciences were, of necessity, more subtle. Consequently their stimulus to the imagination was also more subtle. Can it be possible that the imaginations of some fans are too gross to be moved by these

present-day stories that the natural evolution of science-fiction has produced?

The science-fiction of today stretches our imagination further than we would have believed possible ten years ago. Our mind can envision concepts far, far greater than it could in 1926. Nor do we sense any sign of an approaching limit to this growth. We find the stories of today utterly delightful, and more thought and imagination stirring than any that have appeared so far.

Fellow fan, has your imagination reached its elastic limit? Do some of the stories of today elude your mental grasp? Has your mind and imagination failed to keep pace with the evolution of science-fiction? Do you think Astounding is slipping?

I should point out that Al often used the editorial first person plural when he wrote in his old fanzine. It was a habit which many fans, me included, adopted in that era. And although it has nothing at all to do with either Al Ashley, it has just occurred to me that this was the last FAPA mailing I received and read before I became a full-time journalist. The postmark bears the date of March 11, it took just four days to travel third class from Battle Creek to Hagerstown, and the postage was 14 cents for a bundle about as large as the larger recent FAPA mailings.

The 22nd FAPA mailing, which had gone out in December, 1942, includes in The Fantasy Amateur a long message from Al as official editor. This has historical significance in one paragraph:

Koenig suggested that a mimeoed list of the contents of the mailing be included in each envelope, enabling the member to check whether anything had been left out of his mailing. This matter was taken up with the President. He considered it impractical. I am inclined to agree with him. Most of the FAPA mags come in rather late, or even at the last minute. However, I am willing to attempt it on such occasions as it proves feasible, should such occur. If no lists show up, you may draw your own conclusions.

Koenig was H.C., the elderly New York City fan whose job gave him the ability to do what no fan known to me has since enjoyed: his secretary seems to have taken his dictation and done most of the mechanical work when he felt like publishing a fanzine. Jack Speer was the president at this time. Despite Al's pessimism about this radical suggestion, he did include in this same mailing the list of fanzines included, not in The Fantasy Amateur but in a single-sheeter entitled The FA Lean-To. I suppose someone else would have started to list mailing contents eventually, if Al hadn't decided to take on the extra chore. But his introduction of the custom must have eased the task of determining in later years what quite a few mailings contained without tedious comparing of mailing comments in later bundles.

I can't resist the urge to reprint something in this mailing which may or may not have been written by Al. It has been often discussed and quoted in part down through the years but I don't think it has been available in complete form since the December, 1942, issue of A Tale of the 'Evans, E. Everett Evans' FAPA publication. It sounds to me like Al's prose. But regardless of whether he or Evans or someone else wrote it, it's a masterpiece of its sort. A great politician was lost when the author, whoever he was, decided not to follow up in the mundane world his talent for saying one thing and meaning another, as you will read on the next page:

Announcement

A great many fans have been temporarily lost to Fandom due to becoming members of the Armed Forces, or having their time completely taken up in the War Effort.

E. Everett Evans spent ten years in the Navy, part of it during the last War. Believing that he had amply contributed his part in the past, we have all been happy in thinking Evans would be one of the few fans certain to be spared to us. His age and state of health made this seem highly probable.

The unforeseen has a persistent habit of occurring. It now becomes our sad duty to announce that it will be impossible for E. E. Evans to take part in fan activities for an indefinite period--probably for at least a year or two. The nature of this enforced absence makes it impossible to reveal any details at this time, or, probably, at any future time. It further precludes any direct communication with Fandom for as long as this situation prevails.

The suddenness with which all this took place left EEE little chance to plan for his absence. However, he did express certain wishes. Chiefly, it is his hope that the fans will all cooperate to carry forward the various programs he has inaugurated, and that on his return to active fandom he will find the bigger, better, well-organized fandom that is so dear to his dreams. EEE has unselfishly devoted an enormous amount of time and no small amount of his finances to fandom. Let's keep that fact in mind and demonstrate how well we can show our appreciation.

Evans' mail now goes to Al Ashley, and future communications should be addressed to 86 Upton Ave., Battle Creek, Michigan.

By the time the 27th FAPA mailing went out, the Degler situation was making it easy for many fans to fill up their fanzines' pages. In the En Garde which went out with the March, 1944, FAPA mailing, Al consecrated three pages to his version of the historic events on the occasion when Degler thought he was excluded from a Michicon and considered it an incident which made hostilities justifiable. I'll skip a few preliminary paragraphs and pick up the article at the point where the real narrative begins.

The Little Man Who Wasn't There

In June of 1943, we purchased Slanshack. It was occupied by tenants who had been renting from the former owner, but they assured us they would be out inside of a month. Expecting to move shortly, we told Walt to come on up and sleep on that famous living-room floor at 86 Upton until we got possession of the house. But instead of one month, things dragged along for five of them. It finally took a little legal urging to get possession. So, with the gang expected to start arriving Saturday afternoon, we started moving Friday noon--moving three full van-loads of stuff--and the whole thing was complicated by the fact that the former tenants were moving out at the same time. In fact they didn't get all their belongings hauled away until late Friday evening. So much for that part of it.

Now when Jack Speer stopped off here on his way back from IA, he could stay only a few hours. But he promised to return for a longer visit if we cooked up some sort of Michicon. Shortly after this we got word from Tucker that he'd be up for a long-promised visit for a week. Because of travel conditions we had definitely decided there would be no Michicon in '43. Contributing to this decision was the fact that so many members of the Mid-West FFF were

either in Service or clear across the continent and unable to attend. But with Tucker coming and Speer willing to, something had to be done. We finally decided to stage a private get-together to inaugurate Slanshack. By special invitation we chose a group we thought could make it to Battle Creek, and would constitute a congenial gang for the two days to a week they would be here. But due to a misunderstanding, Tucker announced it in Newscard as the regular Michicon. On the face of it this shouldn't have made any particular difference. If it had been a regular convention held at some hotel, it wouldn't have. But after all, there was a limit to the capacity of Slanshack. Then there was the matter of calling it a Michicon. At least to us, that name stood for the annual Mid-West shindig. However, we let the name ride, and even used it on the autograph booklet, though no Mid-West business was transacted at any time during the affair.

All of which brings us up to Friday evening. The house was jammed from one end to the other with furniture and unpacked cartons of belongings. Three big van-loads is a lot of stuff. Well, we all took off for a restaurant, and after eating returned to tackle the job of trying to straighten things out enough so we'd have something that a lot of imagination might construe as a place to sleep for the night. We returned--and found Degler. Degler--hungry and tired and not a bit too proud to beg. He had some weird notion that Abby Lu could drop everything, and by means of a major miracle whip up a meal for him out of that mess. Such blind, ignorant faith was almost touching--almost. The touch came later.

Frankly, I was rather at a loss to know what to do about the situation. The CC bull the guy had been spreading, and the way he'd been carrying on other places, had got all of us pretty disgusted with him. Everywhere he'd been during the previous year he'd managed somehow to spread dissension. His printed reports on everything were always distorted. Nor had his several former visits particularly endeared him to us. Here we had a nice group arriving with prospects of a good time and no friction. Was this arbitrary rule of open house for anyone claiming to be a fan so inviolable that one must risk spoiling a gathering of a score of fans merely to give an unfelt welcome to one uninvited individual? And when that individual arrives not only uninvited, but unexpected, twenty-four hours too early, and at a time when none of us were in any mood or position to welcome anyone, can any stretch of ethical concept demand that we greet him with open arms?

I finally decided in the negative. Being owner of Slanshack, I knew the others were waiting for me to handle the situation. I called Degler assie and tried to explain things to him. But I'm afraid he mentally brushed aside anything I said. He claimed to have received an invitation to come, whereupon he rushed posthaste to get here in time. As nobody attending the affair sent such an invite, no other fan has ever admitted to doing so, and as Degler failed to produce the invitation for our inspection, we could only conclude that it existed nowhere but in his imagination. I told Degler that none of those present, or to be present, approved of his recent activities, or his Cosmic Circle guff. I pointed out that everybody would be a lot happier if we were absent from the gathering. But somehow he wasn't impressed by my frantic logic. He didn't even have the decency to show a touch of discouragement. He bounced right back by demanding to know whether I actually intended to exclude the Indiana FFF from the Mid-West Convention. I

patiently tried to explain that it wasn't a regular Michicon, and why it wasn't. But it all appears to have gone over his head. All he seems to have got out of my explanation is the screwy notion that the Mid-West FFF had died or been abandoned (witness the so-called revival under Jenkinson as announced in one of his sheets).

I spent half an hour or more of much needed time trying to get some comprehension of the situation through Degler's skull, but all I got for my pains was his voluble but unintelligible attempt to sell me a bill of CC goods. Finally I told him I had to get back to work, and pointed out again that more fun would be had by all if he failed to attend. Degler still seemed unable to believe anyone could be such an unbeliever as to spurn Superfan and his great Mission to fandom. But just in case the impossible was happening, he cast about for other methods of achieving his objectives. He began telling me what a swell guy he'd always thought me, and how he'd always supported the NFFF, and still did, and what a swell mag Nova was, etc., ad nauseum. In an abused tone he related his tale of overcoming insurmountable obstacles to get here, and told how much he'd planned on seeing Tucker to discuss certain things with him. It was very pathetic--or would have been if he'd been a better actor.

I told Degler for the severalth time that the fans weren't due until the next afternoon, and that if he came around then, providing Tucker wanted to talk with him, I certainly had no objections. I even volunteered that I might discuss things with him at greater length if I had the time then. Whereupon I turned back to the job of straightening things up. But Degler followed around at my heels like a hungry hound. A desperate gleam came into his eyes. He began speculating aloud about how he was going to manage to eat and sleep with the mere 60¢ he had to his name. When I ignored him he came out baldly and asked me to loan him a few bucks to finance a room and his meals. The cost of the moving and attendant expenses had pretty near strapped all of us. We just hadn't any money to spare. Then he decided we could at least put him up for the night. I asked him to look around and tell me just where he could be put. In fact we were going to be damn lucky if we managed to rig up a place for ourselves to sleep. Degler got more and more desperate. He started wondering aloud for my benefit about just what he could do. He supposed he could sleep in the depot--but then, they probably wouldn't let him. Of course there was the bus station--but it might not be open all night. I assured him it probably would be, but he didn't seem quite convinced. His plight became so piteous under his frantic flow of words, that I'm afraid I entertained thoughts of weakening against my better judgment. But Walt and Jack got me aside and strengthened my resolve. As they pointed out, giving him money then would simply insure his mooching presence for the next few weeks, or until we refused to tolerate him longer. Mooching can be reduced to an art, and Degler had obviously made great progress in this direction. Before he finally left, Degler tried to borrow money from everybody in the house. He left muttering bitterly about "Exclusion Acts".

Friday morning he showed up again. Abby Lu was the only one present at the moment, the rest of us being across town after a few odds and ends we'd left behind. He told her he'd wired home for some money, and that he wanted to see Tucker. She reminded him that Tucker wasn't due until late in the afternoon. So he left again, saying that he'd be back later. That was the last we saw of

him.

Degler certainly wasn't made to feel he was WANTED, for he wasn't. But he definitely WAS NOT EXCLUDED!

I don't think too much glossing is necessary. The various FFFs were spinoffs from the NFFF which encouraged the creation of regional subgroups. Newscard was a newszine which was published on a postal card. Nova was an imposing and expensive Battle Creek fanzine which was creating a major stir in fandom during its brief life just then. Something is wrong with the chronology, obviously. I suspect that the "Friday morning" in the penultimate paragraph really means Saturday morning. Al then consecrated most of the next two pages to musings inspired by Degler's expectation of hospitality, and suggested that fandom needed to revise its code of ethics into one that most fans would accept. I'll let someone else reprint that article. Instead I'll turn to the September, 1943, En Garde, with a pleasant narrative of another fannish expedition.

Psychopathia Slanis

Perspiringly, I tooled my '42 Chevrolet cab along the angling streets and alleys of the sprawling metropolis of Battle Creek. It was Sunday, the busiest day of the week for the cab business. But I consoled myself with thoughts of the two days I was to have off starting the next day. When I chanced to remember Walt and Jack and Abby Lu, and how they were lolling about taking life easy, I would turn my thoughts away and let them dwell on the prospective utter bliss that would be mine, sleeping in until noon on Monday.

Came noon, and I dropped in at home for lunch. I heard the startling news. It seems that Walt had idly mentioned that it would be fun to go to Detroit. By the time I arrived it was all set. Essaying some feeble remark to the effect that this was so sudden, I was rapidly drowned out by a great flapping of lips, and sent sputtering back to work.

Six o'clock quitting time came. The hour following was somewhat confused in my mind, but its end found the bunch of us watching the Twilight Limited pull into the station. There were about two or three hundred thousand soldiers, as well as most of their relatives, also bent on boarding that train. But what chance has the Army against a group of determined civilians? We selected a likely looking coach--and, by gosh, we boarded it. Surprisingly, we found seats immediately. We were on our way.

It was a lovely coach, air-conditioned and all that. There was only one drawback--it was an awfully hot evening, and the air-conditioner had broken down. Everybody got busy throwing up windows, but there was a catch in that too. The windows were double, and the outer one wasn't intended to open. We simmered gently.

By and by, Abby Lu and Walt set out to see if they could discover a Club Car. Hour after hour sped by, or so it seemed. Finally they returned. The best they could discover was a Diner. As it was obviously Jack's and my turn, we set out to seek nourishment too. Our coach was near the front of the train, but I think the Diner was just passing through Battle Creek when we reached it. Before we left to go back to our coach, we had the cook pack us each a good lunch to sustain us on the long trek back to our seats. Of course we had to stop off here and there along the course of that hike, and, needless to say, we formed some wonderful friendships. But we shan't bore you with a recitation of the details. After all, such affairs all follow a general pattern. Anyway, we

reached our coach just as it was pulling into Detroit.

Locating a hotel room didn't prove as difficult as we expected. We got two nice double rooms at the Book-Cadillac for only five bucks each. It being Sunday night, the town was rather quiet. We went out and roamed about for about an hour, had some spare-ribs, barbecued over a hickory fire, and then retired.

Came the dawn. Came nine o'clock. So we headed for the second-hand book stores. Jack has a brother living in Detroit. He called him the night before and told him of our general plans of spending the day in the book stores. We had just entered the first store we had found--when in walked Jack's brother. He said, "Oh, here you are." Just like that. And Detroit is the fourth largest city in the U.S. He stayed to talk for five or ten minutes, then had to get back to his job. We proceeded to go through the fifty-some-thousand volumes with a fine tooth comb. It was virgin territory for a buyer of fantasy. We discovered a couple dozen choice tomes. The prices on them were very low, but we put on an act, anyway. Made a great to do about going through them in a final sifting to find just what few we would actually purchase. Pretended an amazing lack of enthusiasm about it all. Whereupon the proprietor offered to discount all we would purchase. He cut the prices on all of them, some as much as 33%. Naturally we took them all, and everybody was happy.

And so it went, one book-store after another. Then we went in Hudson's, Detroit's biggest department store, looking for remnant books. While there, it occurred to us that finding a rest-room might be a good idea. Floorwalkers pointed the way, signs directed the seeker, and we walked what must have been miles. But the dang thing certainly was elusive. Abby Lu and I lost track of Walt and Jack, but we kept looking and finally found it--only to discover it was only for the ladies. Well, I waited outside for Abby Lu. Who should come out a few minutes later but Walt and Jack. They were kinda half-running, and looked decidedly sheepish. It developed that they had finished resting and were combing their hair before new arrivals pointed out the error of their ways.

We stopped someplace for lunch. Walt ordered some fancy-name salad. It was served in a sorta small-sized dishpan, and consisted of an unbelievable mound of coarsely-chopped foliage. An incipient compost heap, as it were. But Walt devoured it all with apparent relish. The rest of us munched our human fare, and by watching closely, discovered the sideways jaw motion we deduced that Walt should exhibit. We have since decided that, when Walt gets a little older, we'll buy a farm and turn him out to pasture. There has been some talk of calling the farm "Wise Acres".

We decided to take No. 45 home. It would get into B.C. about one o'clock Tuesday morning. And the way we figured it wouldn't be too crowded. Somebody else musta figured different though. There just weren't any seats left. Finally some kind-hearted gent gave his to Abby Lu, and Walt, by some means we are still unable to fathom, managed to get some soldier to give up his seat to him (Walt). But Jack and I had to stand halfway to Battle Creek.

By two in the morning we were settled for slumber. But suddenly I came wide awake again, laughing. It had just occurred to me that Walt had only four hours until he had to get up and go to work. The rest of us could sleep till noon. That ol' last laugh!

Obviously, not the greatest fan writing, but I think there's con-

siderable educational value for younger fans. There really was a time when fans rode trains to go from one place to another and the trains were frequently crowded. And there was such a thing as a quiet night in Detroit and it was possible to go out into that Detroit night with minimal chances of not returning safely to the hotel.

Meanwhile, back in the fourth En Garde, produced for the winter FAPA mailing in 1942, Al told us some more about himself:

Beyond the Portal

A friend of mine has confessed upon several occasions that within five or ten minutes of going to bed at night, he is sound asleep, and a complete hiatus of his consciousness follows, to be broken only by his awakening in the morning. The word "confessed" is used deliberately. At first consideration, such sound and undisturbed sleep would seem something to be sought diligently. To me it is otherwise, and its admission seems the confession of a lack or incompleteness somewhere in one's being. How frequently it has been deplored that man is doomed to waste one third of his life in slumber! But--must that portion of life be WASTED?

Nightly, upon retiring, we face a mysterious portal. Beyond lies the world of Sleep, the realm of Dreams. Awaiting us as we cross the threshold is a land of thrilling romance, wondrous achievement, high adventure. Who among us could fail to enjoy such fascinating interludes in the humdrum of daily existence? Yet it appears there are many who seldom or never experience this pleasure.

Science informs us that all humans dream. It suggests that those who claim otherwise merely suffer an inability to remember, upon awakening, the events of a dream. It tells us that dreams are an activity of the subconscious mind, giving expression in often distorted fashion to our fears and inhibitions. Or, perhaps, the dream is only a rehash of some past experience that made a deep impression upon us. In any event, I fail to entirely agree. While such may be true in many cases, Science itself admits to the incompleteness of its knowledge of the subject.

During childhood, I experienced most of the usual types of dreams: repetitive dreams, dreams of levitation, of frustration, of embarrassment. I have often experienced death in my dreams from a variety of causes too numerous to mention. Such dreams are all too common. It was at the age of seventeen or eighteen that I first noticed an occasional realization of the fact that I was dreaming, even while still doing so. I also discovered that it was sometimes possible to awaken from a dream, then go back to sleep and take up the dream where I left off.

My curiosity was aroused. As time went on I experimented with these possibilities in a fumbling sort of way. Still, despite the fumbling, a facility for this sort of thing was slowly acquired. The consciousness of the fact that I was dreaming became more and more frequent, and eventually almost invariable. In step with this grew the ability to deliberately awaken from a dream, usually when it had taken an unpleasant turn, and upon returning to sleep, to resume the dream, starting it off in a more pleasant direction.

Parallel to all this, but eventually contributing to what dream-mastery has been achieved, was an ability to visualize. As with so many others, I found no better time to think about whatever intrigued me most at the moment, than that immediately preceded-

ing sleep. This time of relaxation and minimum distraction was very favorable to any attempt at prolonged visualization. In time it became possible to form a mental picture, walk around it, consider it from all angles, and even to study one small detail after another without losing in any way the complete visualization. The picture could be manipulated, simplified, made more complex at will. Appropriate movement could be given to it and maintained without further conscious direction, if desired. Planning some device, course of action, or other thing became easier and faster to do mentally than with the aid of pencil and paper. It was all dependent on the ability for sustained visualization, which grew amazingly with practice.

On continuing to engage in this entertaining and useful pastime, it became noticeable that sleep would often catch me in the midst of such a mental picture. Thereupon the visualization would merge with or even become the first part of a dream. I pounced on this discovery with delight and proceeded to investigate it fully. Here was an opening that might lead to an ability to dream what one wished. Experimenting with this possibility, I found that transition state between complete wakefulness, and sleep, to be the critical point. The prolongation and smoothing out of this half-awake state proved very important to the success of assuring that the ensuing dream would be of one's conscious selection. Practice made this state and its prolongation easy to achieve.

Just what I have finally succeeded in doing is hard to define. Perhaps it is some form of self-hypnosis in which the conscious mind is the operator and the subconscious mind is the subject. Perhaps, too, I have partially broken down the normal barrier between the conscious and the subconscious. But, speculation aside, as I slowly saunter through that portal opening into the realm of dreams, my adventure is already determined. I bestow on my starting visualization a quality of natural and automatic movement. Slowly and smoothly the waking dream becomes one of sleep. Gradually I release my conscious control and let the subconscious with its typical irrationalities take over--but never entirely. I have learned to follow the dream with a small thread of consciousness. By a slight prod here, or a little conscious change there, the dream-adventure can be, and is kept on the path chosen for it. No longer is it necessary to awaken and start the dream anew. Awareness of being asleep and dreaming, and the ability for conscious control are ever present and continuous. Normal deeply-grained inhibitions and notions of proper behavior no longer dominate, and may be changed to suit the fancy. Ever present is the realization that unpleasant consequences which might follow some act in waking life, need not obtain here, and one may act accordingly. Fears and frustrations no longer dominate my dreams. Dream-awareness makes former embarrassments susceptible to rationalization. That common dream of being pursued and finding one's flight constrained as though wading through molasses, never troubles now. The Dream-realm is entered expectantly and joyfully. I have come to look forward to it. Truly, I have discovered a New World.

The wasting of one third of life in sleep is indeed horrible. I don't waste it. I spend it in search for adventure that one is prevented from making when awake, by the necessity of earning a living. However, there probably are possibilities in dreams that have not come to my notice. Can any who read this offer further avenues of exploration? Or are you one of those who never dream?

I wonder how many fans ever experimented with dreams, and with what results. Any data will be appreciated, new possibilities welcomed with open arms.

In the 28th FAPA mailing, midway through 1944, Al led off En Garde with a proposal which makes more sense than you'll think it does when you have just finished reading what follows. It's been a long time since we really wondered if we should use some word other than fans to refer to ourselves. Lots of misunderstandings could have been avoided if during World War Two we really had settled on Al's proposal or on some other to avoid the same designation that is bestowed on hobbyists in many other fields.

Pro Tem

Fapadom seems to be currently engaged in a frenzied search for some suitable substitute for the term "fan". Catching the spirit of the thing, we of Slanshack have dug our pipes and magnifying glasses out of hiding, donned our double-visored caps, and set forth upon the same frantic quest. Furthermore, our ineffable deductive faculties and perseverance have brought their inevitable results.

Such terms as "stefnist" and "fantast" have been offered to fill the undoubted need for a substitute, but closer consideration brings out their hidden lacks. Our substitute must be a short word like "fan". If it is not to begin with, it will be rapidly shortened in the course of usage. "Stefnist" would thus become "stef"--a word we already have; "fantast" could only be shortened to "fan"--the word we are trying to escape because of its undesirable connotations. Another thing, both these terms possess that damnable "f" that has made fandom a league of sputterers. As a result we are forced to conclude that the terms so far offered are noble suggestions, but they somehow miss being quite the term we need. One then begins to wonder whether another angle of attack on the problem might not be more productive. Thus wondering, one progresses to action.

As Robert Heinlein brought out so well in his Denvention speech, fandom's most striking characteristic is the "time-binding" ability--the ability to view the past, present and future as one. The past and the future are nearly as real to us as the present, and we evaluate nearly everything from this viewpoint. But when we attempt to reduce "time-binding" to a three or four-letter, one syllable word, we run smack into several varieties of brick walls. Remembering that all good little English words are derived or made up from Latin roots or something, we quickly grab our Latin dictionary and thumb through it feverishly--to no avail. Momentarily stumped, we try thinking again. Beside this time-binding viewpoint there is also the fact that probably the majority of our sf and fantasy literature deals with time in one way or another. A story may be laid in the distant past, far in the future, some nearer location in between, or in any of a number of parallel pasts or futures. It may even deal directly with travel in time. It appears that "time" itself plays a large part. The Latin word for "time" is "tempus". That shortens beautifully to "tem"--the one syllable word we've been seeking.

But let's not get excited about our success yet. Our word meets the test of shortness, and its derivation is pretty sound. However, there are other things to consider. Does it explain what

we are to an outsider? No, it doesn't. Still, could any other term that satisfied the rest of the requirements? The outsider or non-fan who could grasp any explanation of what we fen are with any degree of understanding, would be a potential fan who had not yet discovered fandom. One who could not understand a lengthy explanation would scarcely be helped by a one-word one. To such a one we must ever remain a mystery. And if such a one must be answered with something that will serve to satisfy his curiosity and retain his good opinion of our sanity, he can be told that old story about our being interested in the hobby of amateur publishing. It looks like we may not have to worry about the word being self-explanatory. We proceed to other tests.

Fen have a penchant for combining words, often with a telescoping effect. They love alliteration, and they also have a penchant for punning. Does our word "tem" meet this test? Let's try it.

We have tems or temz for the plural form, and the feminine naturally becomes temme. The combinations of temag and temzine are obvious and euphonious. Tempest occurs to us and we have no difficulty in naming him. Ha! This really begins to look promising! We search for nice alliterative temzine and column titles--and lo, we find them in abundance! Tem Times....Tem Tales....Tem Talk....Tem Topics....Tem Tattler....Tem Type....Tem Titles....Tem Titters....Temprattle....Temportents....To-tem....Temtorial....gosh, there's a million of 'em! Some tem could even put out a hyper temzine and call it System. Then all the rest of the tems could try to "beat the system"! Egad! What possibilities! But to go on, we have such terms as Temart....Temartist....Tempic....Tempotation (shades of the Foo Foo Special)....Temiscience (for the state of being completely posted on tem history and affairs)....Temarticle....Temeeting....Tempotentialities....is there no end to this? By the use of the letter "s" between two consonants when prefixing Tem, the #1 Face becomes the Mainstem! Tucker, the "kept korpse", would become Mortem. One might even say that a fan who had become a dogfan had gone to the Temnation bow-wows. One can go on and on! Just picture a horde of tem marching down the street to the strains of "It's a long long way to Temperary...."! Surely we have found the word we've been searching for!

Play around with this substitute term, fellow tem. Think of all its possibilities. Think of the fact that most of the usages of the term fan have been worked to death--have become so trite that when new tems come along and rediscover them, we are unable to suppress our groans. Then think of all the new, fresh possibilities the term Tem opens for our exploration. Then plug for TEM, the TERM OF TOMORROW! YEA, TEM! YEA, TEM! YEA-A-A-A, TEM-M-M-M!

Al underlined most of the tem-derived terms he thought up, but I've been impious enough to avoid all the extra work in this reprint. The mention of the kept korpse derives from Tucker's term for himself, based on the first fake Tucker obituary and Evans' financial help with Le Zombie.

I should have dug out some Ashley material published in non-FAPA fanzines. But my files are sketchy enough to make this too strenuous a project. So we'll keep this within FAPA, and end with samples of Al's mailing comments. I'd written something in Horizons about my fondness for fiction by Theodore Roscoe in Argosy.

Al commented:

At last! In me you have found a fellow lover of Theodore Roscoe. But are you aware of the sad part about it? Perhaps you read of the very recent death of the writer who uses the pseudonym, Max Brand. Well, alas, he was also Theodore Roscoe, as well as George Challis and a number of other top names. His longer tales were the ones I liked the best. Besides those you mentioned, there was one of Germany invading some Balkan country. The queen was a pacifist and she arranged that the invading armies be welcomed with open arms and flower-strewn boulevards. This so delighted, but confused and disarmed the soldiers that the whole invasion fell flat on its face. It sounded very convincing--at least at the time. Another was a Voo-Doo story of Haiti, and a terrifying flight down a mountain attempting to escape some zombies. Roscoe had an uncanny knack of creating a situation wherein the only possible explanation was an utterly fantastic one. He would build it up until you were just about to accept that unreality, then point out a perfectly normal explanation that you had overlooked. But before you could quite subside to normal he'd introduce something to abolish that normal explanation and throw things into an even more fantastic state. He would keep this procedure up until you didn't know just where you were, and even the final normal denouement left doubts in your mind. The guy could pile suspense upon suspense until the reader well-nigh went mad with the strain. It will be a long time before Roscoe is equaled.

Al's use of Slan as a synonym for fan had caused a minor eruption in the Futurian Society of New York. He replied to a member's fanzine in this way:

Issue must be taken with the subtle distortion involved in the remarks about my use of the term Slan. I have never stated that fen were supermen, or mutants, and have used the term Slan not in the original sense, but in a special sense to indicate the differences between fen as a group, and the average man. Further, I have taken pains to make this distinction clear. Degler's conception of himself and, perhaps, some of his supporters, as the first of a super-race, all started in 1942, or earlier,--long, long before I ever made any sort of use of the term Slan. The Futurian penchant for insisting on defining "Slan" in the original, and only in the original way, regardless of how it has been used subsequently, is as absurd as the implication that Degler derived his "superman complex" from me.

And in the light of what happened later, Al's mailing comments on an issue of Fan-Dango, Laney's FAPA zine, are noteworthy:

I'm afraid you veer somewhat in your further thoughts on Slan Center. Perhaps you'd have done better to stop with the first ones. If you have a feeling that I'm a bit impractically idealistic, it is possible you may see your error after we move out there and you and I can meet in person. After all, I've been hacking for some time, and I never was one to turn his back on life when it appeared a little seamy. Also, it could be that LA fans are not representative of fandom as a whole. Not having met many of them I wouldn't know for certain, but the fen who live around this part of the country, or have stopped in in passing, have never indicated any inherent inability to live like normal humans, aside from their wider variety of interests, and perhaps a slight tendency to natural bohemianism. If they have any particular psychoses they have apparently learned to tuck them in instead of letting them dangle for the world to stare at.