Mercy, this decade is flying. It's already the last issue of Horizons for 1980. This is volume 42, number 1, FAPA number 158, and whole number 163. The November, 1980, issue is mostly written by Harry Warner, Jr., 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland, 21740, U.S.A., and duplicated by the Coulsons.

In the Beginning

The Fantasy Amateur: Why should there be any uncertainty over the "franking" situation? There's not the slightest ambiguity about it: it is something which is not permitted by the FAPA constitution. In its first years, FAPA was plagued by leftwing propaganda which several parlor pink members were dumping into the mailings, and that inspired the present rule that to be included, a publication must "represent to a substantial extent the work of the member" submitting it. "Franking" is simply the result of a non-member knowing a member well enough to get the rules broken. I see no reason why any "franking" should exist, and if it should continue, we should require the member responsible to pay the proper proportion of the mailing cost, and eliminate the "franked" items from the official list of mailing contents. I'm particularly baffled by Chuck Hansen who considers it "barbarous and undemocratic" to vote a waitinglist individual to the top of the line, yet indulges in precisely the same selective special granting of privilege by getting into the "franking" act. Election Ballot: I haven't heard of any writein drive, which is fortunate because there's no mention of a deadline on the ballot and that lack could create a big fuss. The meter date on the mailing bag doesn't necessarily coincide with the date it was dispatched. Curmudgeon: I managed to follow Mike's technical explanations of his printshop partway through, then bogged down in the midst of the PMT processing. This caused me to realize that I no longer have the ability to give anyone a tour of the local newspaper factory.I just haven't paid that much attention to the methods that have replaced the Scan-a-graver, stereotyping machinery, and such things. Anyway, this is a beautifully reproduced fanzine whose printed parts give me hope that the frightening deterioration in printing standards hasn't become universal yet. Esdacyos: Cy Condra's article deserves anthologizing somewhere. I can't remember any fanzine item that embodies so perfectly the experiences and attitudes of how it was to discover the pulps' fantasy and the kind of reading attitude that permitted us to enjoy so much that fiction with all its limitations. Once I found in Manhattan a used record store whose proprietor behaved much like the bookie whose second-hand magazine store Cy discovered. I wanted to buy this and that record and each time the proprietor told me it wasn't for sale. Maybe it was a front, but I suspected at the time that he might be a henpecked husband who couldn't clutter up the house with a record collection and adopted this method of owning them. '' Wilbur Scott Peacock always struck me as an ideal name for a literary man: it just sounds right. I'm glad to know more about its possessor from Larry Shaw. A few things in the reprinted part needed explanations, though: how many of today's fans know that FFF stood for Julie Unger's Fantasy Fiction Field, a newszine? I suppose the context gives the youthful reader a good chance to guess that the Vizigraph was the loc section in Planet. Detours: How could the Big Bang create a big bang? There couldn't have been

any atmosphere soon enough to propagate the big bang, leaving out of consideration the philosophical question in analogy to the question of whether your handclap exists if there's nobody to hear it nowadays. '' I can see the importance of the dispute over Shambleau's manuscript adventures. If the story was rejected one or more times before someone accepted it, the episode does further violence to the theory held by so many higher ups in the science fiction establishment: that publishable fiction can be quickly recognized as such by a pro editor. If a story as famous as Shambleau had a rejection history, this throws serious doubt on the justification for things like the Clarion workshops: the same editors who can't recognize a story's worth when submitted to them can hardly be trusted to encourage or discourage the output of those trying to learn the art of creating science fiction. '' I have the vaguest memory of a prozine story on the matter Russell brings up, how the night sky would appear if we saw the more distant stars and galaxies in their present locations. In the fiction, I think they created a picture or pattern of some sort. '' A couple of area people have been kind enough to suggest bookform publication of some of my newspaper columns . I've discouraged them on the grounds that too much of my stuff has been mauled by proofreaders, typesetters and editors and because I don't retain notes, I can't recognize all the things that got into print wrong. The Speed of Dark: There's one use for the classified want ads that Mike overlooks. They, along with the other types of classified advertising, make it possible for a lot of people with budget problems to be able to buy newspapers. Goodness knows how much the average daily would cost if it weren't for the huge sums which flows into the newspaper coffers from the fine print advertising. Yhos: I have only one complaint. No matter how much has been written about Seacon, nobody else wrote about it as Art Widner would have done if he hadn't feared redundancy. Otherwise, I found this travelog to be perfection. It tells me things about England that I probably wouldn't know if I spent a year reading guidebooks, and it also fleshes out the personality that Art has become nowadays (I keep mixing up these resurrected fans with their former selves and the two don't often coincide). One difference between the 1980 Art and the 1980 me is this thing of driving to the left for the first time. I can conceive of getting up the courage to do it if I had opportunity to practice on a particularly deserted network of back roads. But I get stomach pains and cold sweat at the very idea of tackling the unfamiliar driving custom in the heart of London traffic. '' Hagerstown Junior College boldly continues to call itself that. It's the only institution of its type in Maryland that doesn't use Community College as part of its official name. Llanathony: Social security numbers as addresses wouldn't work. So many people who get letters don't have social security numbers. The number stays the same if you move to another part of the nation so the sorting machines in the post office couldn't cope very well. And there are reasons why it's unwise to let your social security number be known to everyone. '' How will a cook using metric containers prepare food from a non-metric recipe without converting? Gritbin: It's the oddest sensation, to read about someone coming from another continent to do something in the United States I've never accomplished in all my years over here. This time it's peter Roberts eating at a McDonalds. Patronizing a restaurant in that chain is on the long list of things I've never done, along with never viewing an installment of Charlie's Angels or attending a drive-in movie.

'' This issue poses one of the biggest mysteries I've encountered in all these years in FAPA. On the second page there are irregularly shaped pinkish blots on either side of the line in italics. I've tried to think of possible causes off and on ever since I first looked through the mailing and I'm still baffled. There is no evidence of multi-color mimeography elsewhere in the issue, the hue isn't remotely like the greenish or bluish smears that sometimes appear on a fanzine's page after fragments of stencil coating have accumulated somewhere on the duplicator, it's not dark enough to be caused by an accident with the stapler, and there is no sign of pink elsewhere in the issue. A code message, a fannish allusion which is lost on me, fungus that is growing from the approximate point where the SunCon heading may have been spliced into the stencil, or what? Ego Tripping in LA: Here's a good example of why I think there should be less concern about honest political leaders and more attention to honest and competent individuals in posts which are really vital to one's life, like auto mechanics. My aunt and uncle had a recent adventure just as awful as Stan's: they had the car repaired just before leaving to drive from Florida to Maryland, and after a half-hour on the road they discovered someone had forgotten to replace a small whatchamacallit, every drop of motor oil was gone, and the last I heard, they still hadn't learned who will pay how much of the giant bill to repair damages. '' I did newspaper photography for a dozen years or so, occasionally accepted picture-taking tasks on the side with my own equipment, and all the while I had just one firm rule which I never broke: don't get suckered into taking wedding photographs. I firmly believe that even a commercial photographer suffers a week's reduction in life expectancy for every wedding he shoots. (I also had another rule which I was forced to break occasionally for job assignments but never for my own free-lancing: never do a portrait of any woman over the age of 40.) Snickersnee: I keep wondering if Bob Silverberg feels self-conscious and burdened when he cuts stencils for FAPA. He must realize that every word on them will eventually be studied and perhaps computerized by scholarly researchers when a cult springs up around him, just as everything Ray Bradbury contributed to fanzines is collected and argued over and bibliographed nowadays. '' It hadn't occurred to me that the new copyright law wouldn't save authors the trouble of renewing copyrights obtained when the limit was 28 years. Fortunately, I'll be so old that I won't even remember when the time comes for doing something about the All Our Yesterdays copyright. I Am Legend: Do I understand correctly when I assume that the San Francisco demonstration for a "nuclear-free future" was staged in the afternoon sunshine? If the participants were sincere, they certainly shouldn't have exposed themselves to that nuclear power device, the sun. '' Does Redd ever have a good think on the topic of whether he gets more satisfaction from his ability to boast that he doesn't own a television set than the pleasure he would derive from owning one and using it intelligently? What's the point in depriving himself of a set even if he used it for nothing but public television showings of the old movies he likes, thus avoiding the contamination of commercial interruptions? '' There are still small, old-fashioned barber shops in every city I know in this general area. I've patronized the same one for almost a half-century. That's a partial lie because it's been the same proprietor but he moved his shop about ten years ago to another location when the old one was

torn down to make room for a parking lot. It was a good demonstration of the shop's size when it turned out that its vanishing left room to park only one and one-half autos . Dambalia: But I did run for vice-president and win the office and run the poll my own way. I simply asked members to list their favorites in order in each category. The result was one of the biggest vote totals in recent decades. '' The Worst of Martin's continuation seems justified. One possibility is its deterrent effect. Nobody has tried to cheat a member of his membership in the two decades since Martin was expelled. And I doubt if we'd have had the admissions which one of the principals in the episode made many years later, if The Worst of Martin hadn't been there to remind him that someone still remembers. Absolutely Hysterical Apathy: I'm flattered someone thinks A Wealth of Fable is worth indexing. But I also feel remorse because I've never read through a copy of it. There might be some non-obvious misspellings of names which I could call to Joe Moudry's attention for indexing purposes. Hawaii: The urge to publish fanzines affects only a small minority of all fans nowadays. Most fans are content to go to cons or collect or attend local club meetings. Maybe we should settle upon some other term to distinguish fanzine fans from just plain fans. The interests of the fanzine fans are diverging gradually from the other fans, too. Wyrd &c.,:As I understand it, some postal employes will give book rate to any FAPA mailing which contains at least one publication with 24 or more pages. Others won't. For quite a while, even though Horizons frequently added about ten per cent to a FAPA mailing's weight, it saved the treasury money by qualifying for the book rate in mailings where nobody else had a 24-pager. '' A Maryland politician tried to get his name legally changed to Goodloe Byron after a congressman with that name died. The court refused, ruining his hope that he would get lots of votes at the next election from persons who hadn't heard about the death. '' Hitchhiker probably benefited from the glamour of the esoteric. Witness another example of the same factor in Hugo voting, the failure of several early Stephen King novels to get even a nomination, simply because they were best-sellers. There's lots of fantasy and science fiction on the CBS radio mystery hour five or six nights a week, but most fans ignore the series because it's so readily available and so much directed to mundania. Notes from Arinam: Is there really fear of the law? I've just acquired the statistics for this county's juvenile court, although now they call it the Juvenile Services Administration, just as the jail has become a detention center. During fiscal 1979 they grabbed in this county 496 kids on various charges. Well, that's the number of cases handled; there may have been some individual kids in trouble more than once, but on the other hand there were some 17-year-olds for whom juvenile court waived jurisdiction and had them tried as adults. In that year, 18 juveniles were sent to a training school, one was committed to a metanl institution, and ten were committed to a youth center. Another 17 were either fined or ordered to make restitution. So out of nearly 500 cases, 29 actually served time and a few of those in the fine and restitution group may have been old enough to use their own money instead of depending on a parent. Most of the kids who were picked up were undoubtedly guilty; at a guess, one out of ten who got caught suffered as a result. Now, that year's juvenile cases included nine kids charged with drug offenses other than alcoholic beverages, and I hardly think the number of kids in this county breaking the drug laws was as low as 900, much less nine. Sixty of

the juvenile cases involved shoplifting. There are more than 20,000 students enrolled in this county's schools, and it's beyond all reason to imagine that fewerthan a couple thousand of them indulged i this pastime during the year (national statistics show that one-twentieth of all merchandise leaving stores is stolen). Give young people the benefit of the doubt and assume that the number of other insta ces of various types of crimewas no more than twice the number of those picked up. So a conservative estimate of the number of crimes committed by juveniles would approach 5,000 in this county per year and the culprit's chance of getting locked up isn't far from one in 200. Is there any reason why the law should be feared? I don't have up-to-date statistics for the adult population here. But I suspect the odds would be almost as enormous against really suffering punishment because a much greater proportion of adults have opportunity to pilfer from employers, commit serious offenses with motor vehicles, engage in rape, and do other nasty things. Law and order simply aren't effective any more in this nation, there's less fear of the law all the while, and things may have gone too far for a reverse swing of the pendulum toward restoration of safe streets and safe homes. The Tiger Is Loose: I never watched Get Smart regularly, but I enjoyed the episodes I saw and I have a nightly feeling that I really should be watching it in reruns lest it vanish entirely from channels pickupable here. I wonder if any other television series contributed not one but two catch phrases to the culture, like "Sorry about that" and "Would you believe"? Get Smart also seemed distinctive for the regularity with which it parodied other television series and famous movies. Disinformation: I didn't back myself into a loc corner; I was put there by other fans who kept talking and drawing cartoons about my imaginary feat of writing a loc on every issue of every fanzine. I never accomplished that, I never claimed to have done it, but the myth sprang up and got me into this situation. Past, Present and Future: If Donn Brazier is still answering letters, he might be able to provide help with the Richard S. Shaver question. Shaver was a regular contributor to Donn's fanzine before Donn gafiated and Shaver died a year or two ago. '' Graham's success in finding Phil Collas is just another reminder that we haven't yet quite lost the last links with the earliest prozine years. There aren't many hobby fields young enough for that to be true. Quantum Sufficit: I intend to write John Foyster, asking if his plumber ever does out-of-town work. Eighteen months ago I finally found a local plumber who agreed to undertake the nasty job of replacing the water pipes in this house and promised to start as soon as he could coordinate a schedule with the carpenter needed to tear out some flooring and paneling where pipes run in the walls. I'm still waiting and starting to think I must look elsewhere for another plumber. '' I'm uncomfortable about reading fanzine interviews with both the greats and the smallfry and those inbetween. In short, I don't like the interview transcripts that read like a court reporter's record of a murder trial. It's much better to convert the interview into an article which will bring to the top the most significant or interesting material, sort out topics in a rational order, play down the role of the interviewer, and cut the asides that aren't relevant. Horizons: Just a few days after I finished stenciling the long article about Mark Twain, which lamented the absence of a film version of Huckleberry Finn, a Washington television station programmed that very thing, made in the 1930s with a lot of big names in the

cast. A couple of weeks later, Buck Coulson told me about a made-for-TV movie on the same novel produced in recent years. Things like that are happening to me all the time. I did lots of research into the Peter Bender who left his name imprinted on so many sidewalks around Hagerstown, couldn't find out much before writing a column on him, and ten minutes after the presses rolled, the switchboard girl at the office informed me that he was an ancestor of hers and she even owned the device which he'd used to leave his name in the concrete. Phantasy Press: Ray Palmer ruined Amazing Stories for me. I wanted desperately to see the magazine fold while he was editing it, simply because of what he'd done to it. I suppose someone else would have come along pretty soon and pandered to the lowest intellectual denominator of the readership with a science fiction magazine, if Palmer hadn't existed. But he did it, and even after all these years I wouldn't feel too much sorrow if the title died. Cognate: It's good to find someone else who admits having loved Zane Grey's novels. They still hold much of their old magic for me even though I can simultaneously remain aware of their deficiencies. '' I've grown numb to the surprises that pre-teen fans are providing us. Besides this good little item by Douglas Fels, there's a fanzine appearing regularly whose editors are only 11 or thereabouts. It's confusing, in a way, because I used to know I was old enough to be the grandfather of most neofans and now I'm old enough to be the great grandfather of these youngest fans. Conacs: This doesn't help me feel secure and cozy, either, since it contains so many revelations about phases of fandom and forms of fanac that are totally foreign to my experience. It's good there are still a few fans like M. David Johnson who link them with fanzine fandom, but the time could come when they split off completely. Drivel: The cheapest way to obtain The Chinese Doll might be in its Detective Book Club incarnation. Those volumes normally sell at reasonable prices. I think the separate publications of the novel are quite scarce. Staggerwing: Even if there hadn't been any egoboo for me, I would have liked the listing of favorite and unfavorite things in FAPA. Somehow when praise comes in this form, it seems more significant than when a compliment is buried deep in a page of mailing comments. '' Full agreement with the dislike of egoboo polls that require voters to assign specific numbers of points to things worthy of praise. I find myself totally incapable of deciding if a writer or a fanzine should get three, four, or six points out of the quantity supplied for my use. It's something like a race. I have no trouble figuring out who won the race and I can usually figure out the identity of the next few finishers before the pack starts rushing by. But I can't be sure how much time was consumed in running the race or exactly how many feet separated the persons who finished first, second and third or the exact speed the winner was running at the finish line. I rarely have trouble deciding which item or individual is best in FAPA for the year, or the order in which I think the next few places in the category should be filled. But I lack the capacity to know whether the first place winner is ten per cent or fifty per cent better than the second place entry or even twice as good, so how can I figure out how to distribute all those points? Shadow-FAPA: Sorry, but I don't feel up to trying to make comments. Almost everything is too scrappy for comment hooks, and much of the subject matter is outside my field of awareness. Starcross SF: I'm thankful I've ignored review books that have come my way. I'd hate to suffer great review expectations.

The Land of the Flea

This hasn't been a vintage season for me at yard sales, flea markets, secondhand book stores, and similar outposts of civilization. Yard sales have been a particular problem. There has been a growing tendency for yard sales to begin in the Hagerstown area on Friday, and it's hard to get away from the office at the right time on that morning. (I lack the courage to attend a yard sale within an hour of its opening and by early afternoon quite a bit of stuff has been sold.) Bad health and similar weather kept me home from yard sales on quite a few Saturdays this summer. Moreover, I failed to explore some flea markets just a bit further from Hagerstown than the rounds that I generally pursue.

Still, there were some adventures and discoveries during the first nine months of this year. What better topic could I find for consuming some pages of Horizons, keeping in mind the fact that I haven't been able to think of any other topics?

Several communities within a short distance from Hagerstown stage a downtown sidewalk flea market each summer. The smallest of the towns that undertakes such an event is Greencastle, just over the border in Pennsylvania, which can't possess more than three or four thousand residents. Its annual flea market isn't as large as those in the other nearby towns, but some arcane circumstance seems to contrive every year that I shall find there something particularly calculated to give me excitement and diversion. Once it was a fine batch of Schirmer editions of piano concertos, acquired by a dealer from a closing music store; on another occasion, the town library was cleaning out its classical record collection. This summer threatened to break this streak of good luck for me. The only thing that had briefly tempted me was a box of old newspapers, but I decided after looking through the top layer that they weren't worth the $2 price crayoned on the side of the box. Fifteen minutes later, I began to wonder if the price could possibly be for the entire boxful, rather than each old newspaper. I went back, the box was still unsold, the two bucks covered everything, and when I got the heavy box to the car and gave it a good look, I discovered I had been lucky again. In fact, I cheered myself up for the following month by rationing myself with the acquisitions, not looking at any of them except when I was feeling in need of being cheered up.

I don't quite understand why the dealer put such a piddling price on the newspapers or why someone didn't buy them earlier in the day. The box contained some things that seem in demand on a national basis, like a Philadelphia newspaper containing page after page of Hindenburg disaster pictures and stories, a 1939 World's Fair supplement of the New York Sunday Mirror, and several issues devoted to key World War Two events. Collectors in this area ought to have wanted the last issue of the Franklin Repository, a Chambersburg newspaper that was the oldest daily in Pennsylvania until it was absorbed by another Chambersburg newspaper, and several commemorative editions with lots of photographs and historical material about area towns. Most of the newspapers are from a quarter-century to a half-century old, although several were published much longer ago. Almost all of them are in very good condition as old newspapers go, capable of being unfolded and refolded without falling apart.

I found lots of things that were new to me in those issues, as well as experiencing a resurrection of almost extinct memory cells

at the instigation of issues which contain things I'd first seen when I was a tad. A special bonus was the fact that I found inspiration for a couple of nostalgia newspaper columns and know how to mine at least one or two other columns from the box's contents.

That World's Fair issue of the Mirror has any number of things which possess special interest today. One example is the fullpage advertisement of RCA for its television sets. I was startled to learnfrom this ad that those primitive TVs were projection type, just like the extremely expensive supersize screen sets which are now being manufactured. Console Model TRK-12 "provides a large picture, 7 3/8" x 9 3/4". The picture is viewed by reflection in a mirror set in the cabinet lid." NBC was offering at the time, late April of 1939, two hours of regular programming of television each week plus special pickups of sports and such things. RCA promised that the nation would soon have three TV stations in New York, one in Schenectady, and one in Los Angeles. The General Motors advertisement showing its fair display of how people would drive in 1960 contains sketches which are remarkably similar to the way highways actually developed, except for the artist's false assumption that superhighways would run through the middle of cities on stilts.

Special interest for me reposes in a supplement which a Chambersburg newspaper published in 1909 to plug the city's industrial and trade possibilities. It's possible that it contains an accurate photograph of the Warner birthplace. At least, half of one page is occupied by a picture of the Chambersburg hospital. I haven't been able to determine yet if any major changes occurred in that building in the following 13 years until I was born there. I must have been looking the other way when I left the hospital around the end of 1922, because I can't remember its appearance well enough to decide for myself. I haven't lived in Chambersburg since I was very young but I've spent enough time there in recent years to find lots of pleasure from the other photographs of how my home town looked seven decades ago. I'm also impressed by the splendid full-color first page of this special edition which a note inside identifies as having been created and printed in the small town newspaper plant. There's also a batch of photographs of the newspaper building's interior. It's hard to be sure, just looking at the pictures, but I get the impression that conditions there were roomier than in either the old or new buildings which the Hagerstown dailies have occupied in this century.

The newspaper most often represented in the box's contents is the Chambersburg Public Opinion, several dozens of whose issues from the 1930s through the 1950s are present. They provoke a number of reflections. One is the current neglect of O. O. McIntyre. It's been a long time since I've seen evena passing mention of him anywhere, even though other columnists of his period frequently bob up in books and nostalgic magazine articles. He wrote in a modified Pepys manner. His column didn't interest me when I was young, but I see now what a treasuretrove it contains for anyone interested in New York City and the celebrities who thrived there in the second quarter of this century. Some things in his writings read curiously today. You'd hardly guess that this was written in 1936 rather than in recent years: "Despoilation of Central Park continues. The north end seems entirely taken over by hoodlums, black and white, and the middle and southerly sections grow increasingly shabby. Promenaders who love beauty and solace have almost entirely abandoned the breathing space so close to the city's heart. Sprawl-

ers are permitted to lie about in shirtless, sockless and shoeless disarray. Motorists are often targets for hurled mud, stones and debris. It has much of the rowdiness of the old Five Points down town. There have been any number of holdups and sluggings in unguarded meanders in the past year. Most automobilists scoot through as something they wish to leave quickly behind."

From a McIntyre column published in 1934, I learned that the elite of New York City's traffic policemen were stationed on Fifth Avenue from Washington Square to 110th Street, handpicked for physique, "facial contour," "charm of voice" and neatness. Before the Depression, Christmas gifts to them usually exceeded their annual salaries. And McIntyre squeezed amazing quantities of tiny observations into each long column. This is just part of one paragraph from a column published in 1937 which runs to 17 inches of closely leaded eight point: "I once sat an hour in the rain in the Bois to watch Edith Wharton drive by. Disraeli interests me as much as any figure in English history... No person I know can get as incensed over political muddling as Percy Crosby. I have never heard anybody in the Bronx talk like, well, say Gregory Ratoff. Prettily named rural highway: Saw Mill River Road."

The comics in these Public Opinions have their own fascinations. It ran several strips that I followed in the Hagerstown newspapers. One is a special case. It's Out Our Way by J. R. Williams, which consisted each day of just one large, almost square panel. I don't know quite how to describe it and I've never seen it even mentioned in modern writings about oldtime comics. Williams was amusing but also poetic in a way and wise. He alternated among several sets of characters and milieus. The best, I think, were the panels in a factory. The workers aren't quite caricatures and they aren't quite photographically drawn, and yet they are uncannily evocative of the appearance and attitude and speech of laborers in a typical factory of that era. The factory interiors aren't completely drawn in but rather suggested, and this somehow achieves an almost palpable impression of a dingy real factory. One sample: a workman who has just had all his teeth extracted is being told jokes by three other laborers because when he laughs "his chin pushes his nose up and makes a ball on it". Meanwhile, two other workers are watching the proceedings in the background, only half-amused. One of them says: "You notice that th' one who hollers so much about the world bein' made a better place to live in, is tryin' the hardest to make a fool of him." Then there were the panels dealing with half-grown boys. One shows a slightly overweight youth showing two friends his room after he'd taken down all the pictures of sports heroes and replaced them with "famous big business men" and good books. His friends are skeptical; in fact, one comes out and says,"Put a pig in a parlor, it makes him more of a pig--all this won't help." Several issues contain the daily Superman strip soon after its beginning. I hadn't seen this when I was a boy. I'm startled today by the crudeness of the art, which looks terribly clumsy in comparison with the Sunday panels which I did look at either then or a few years later.

This Chambersburg newspaper typifies another matter in all the issues. It used to be like almost all the other small town newspapers of the first half of this century: jammed to the gunwales with news and with things which might be considered too unimportant today to qualify as news. By now, virtually all small town dailies and even some weeklies have imitated the big city newspapers, dropping

coverage of minor things to expand the space given to what is considered the major stuff. The August 18, 1953, issue of the Public Opinion contains 47 local news stories or local columns. Some of the columns, which I've counted as one unit in that total, cover as many as a dozen or more separate items under such headings as "letters" describing events in nearby towns and the personal mention column. At a guess, I'd estimate that half of this local material is no longer eligible for publication in the Public Opinion, even though Chambersburg remains a town with little more than 20,000 population where most persons know a respectable percentage of everyone else in town. (The particular issue I used to make my census actually has several other pages of local stuff, but I didn't count them because they derived from the town's sesquicentennial observance, the probable reason this particular copy escaped the garbage pail or boy scout collection.)

I know newspapers are supposed to keep the citizenry informed on the mighty matters of the day and that they're also intended to provide a profit to the owners. Their value as a history source is hardly a primary consideration, not to mention the shakiness of the accuracy of the history they contain, reporters being what they are. Just the same, I can't help regretting the passing in so many cities of newspapers crammed with information on the small matters which grow quite important in later years as sources of information on the way various segments of the community lived day by day, not to mention the pleasure that comes from finding an ancestor's co-chairmanship of an ice cream social preserved on microfilm a half-century later, and the philosophical significance of the near-immortality conferred on so many people who didn't do anything tremendous in their lives but have been mentioned in print a time or two. Microfilms will eventually vanish in a nuclear conflict, perhaps, and without such a cataclysm they might gradually deteriorate beyond legibility. But there's always the chance that those huge, space-consuming microfilms will eventually be converted to absolutely permanent and microscopic digital incarnations and the fact that so-and-so spent the weekend at Ocean City will live through millenia, up to the time when such things stopped appearing in the local papers.

Another real find for me was part of a Baltimore Sunday Sun from the mid-1930s. By great good fortune, included in it is one of the puzzle pages over which I spent so many Sunday hours as a boy. I wasn't precocious in many ways, but I did have a knack for the quite difficult cryptograms on this page and I also loved an unusual sort of puzzle. It consisted of one large drawing. Little numerals were placed beside various objects and if you guessed correctly the words they were meant to suggest and filled in those words in the proper blank spaces provided alongside the picture, you eventually created a rather long message. This same section ended my wondering about a small matter. When I first got interested in serious music, I read avidly a "New York letter" about concerts, recitals, and opera performances in the big city which appeared every Sunday in the Sun. Lately I'd been wondering two things: if that weekly report had been written by a famous musical journalist, and if it was as well done as I'd assumed when I had just discovered music critics. Now I know that the writer was someone I've never heard of since, and that his column was exceptional in style and content. I even think I remember this particular column after so many years.

Onemore discovery, and I promise to stop writing about this particular coup. I don't know how many hundreds of times I've read in

reminiscenses how someone goes back to where he or she grew up and finds the childhood home so much smaller than remembered, or relatives unseen for several decades shorter than they once seemed or the old home farm not as spacious as it had seemed in youth, or the schoolhouse desks incredibly small and cramped. Undoubtedly, someone or other has complained that the Atlantic Ocean doesn't look as vast on trips to the seashore as it did at the age of nine years old. So it's possible that I've achieved a unique distinction. I may be the only person in history to undergo the opposite reaction. It's a considerable responsibility and I'm thinking about copyrighting it. I couldn't get used to how big these newspapers seemed, compared with how I remembered them as a boy and young man. The metropolitan newspapers in particular seem enormous in page size. It's easy to see what has caused this unorthodox impression. The size of the typical newspaper has shrunk somewhat down through the years as a result of efforts to conserve newsprint, and most of my contacts with old newspapers has been in the form of microfilms which give no clue to the size of the original and which you'll normally run through at a low magnification for easier scanning of entire pages until you find just the item you want.

Another episode this spring and summer taught me that I don't know as much about this area as I thought I did. I was confident that I knew the location, hours, and general nature of stock at every second-hand book store and general second-hand establishments which have some books and antique dealers who include books in their stock. If anyone had told me that a used book store with a stock of a couple million volumes in that territory had escaped my notice, I would have donned my most supercilious sneer at such a prevarication. I would have been wrong. And I don't think many other persons in this general area knew about the existence of this enormous establishment. It was a wholesale firm dealing in both used and remaindered books. I might be still unaware of its existence if its operator hadn't died and the decision to go out of business hadn't been made. Its liquidation sale began as unobtrusively as its regular operation had been, intended only for dealers who would purchase in substantial quantities. A friend made arrangements for me to get in despite my total inability to sell anyone any book I've latched onto. But a combination of job problems and health difficulties prevented me from seizing the opportunity and now I'll never know what I missed by not seeing the stock when it was still almost complete. I didn't go over until the second phase of the going out of business sale had begun. This consisted of letting anyone in, but not making any effort to publicize that fact in the hope of keeping out elderly ladies who just want a Harlequin to read over the weekend.

To reach the Clifton Book Company from Hagerstown, you drive past Antietam National Battlefield and through Sharpsburg to the Potomac River. Just a couple thousand feet past the bridge into West Virginia, you turn to the right on a road which isn't marked even though the eastern panhandle of West Virginia has in general remarkably well maintained road markers. You bear to the right at a couple of Vs, also bearing no road signs. At this stage of the liquidation sale, the firm didn't even have its name visible from the road, even the driveway was hardly perceptible, and you were required to watch closely for an unmarked mailbox sitting on a medium-sized stone out in an apparent total wilderness. Intent

staring made visible the scattering of small stones marking the driveway and as you turned up it one corner of a building began to become visible. Even after you parked in front of it you couldn't see much of a structure. It's as if the rolling terrain had been specifically formed by nature several millions of years ago to provide total concealment for what is really there: several stupendously large quonset huts, a giant barn, and one or two other buildings, all stuffed to capacity with books.

The two million books which the operators claimed included, to be sure, a lot of stuff that didn't interest me: what seemed like miles of rows of textbooks, giant cartons of paperbacks, and so on. But there were still countless hundreds of thousands of other volumes and magazines. The original owner had kept his operation unpublicized except among the dealer trade because of fears of general vandalism and perhaps the larceny of some genuine rarities in stock. (A Civil War diary that had been previously been unknown to collectors and historians sold for an unbelievable figure to a dealer who felt sure he'd make a huge profit by auctioning it off.)

In one building the stock was coherently arranged by subject matter. But elsewhere, maybe the original owner had known how to find specific stuff but nobody else shared his secret. So most customers like me first concentrated on the part of the orderly building that interested them, then wandered in arbitrary fashion elsewhere. By the time I got there for the first time, those other buildings were already a hopeless jumble: thousands of books standing or falling around, equal quantities lying everywhichway in cartons which other customers had opened and rummaged through, and hundreds of unopened cartons still smothered under the inspected layers. Several persons who had driven a distance to patronize the closing out sale simply camped out a night or two on the grounds, to give themselves time to look more thoroughly for what they wanted. It didn't help that the quonset huts were stiflingly hot, every step you took stirred up another cloud of dust which headed straight for your lungs, and there wasn't nearly enough light in the structures but entirely too many bees and wasps.

It was just too much for me. I'm used to second-hand book sources with a thousand or so volumes on hand most of the time, and once each year I manage to cope with the AAUW's used book sale which usually offers around ten thousand volumes. But I quickly comprehended that one of two things would happen if I spent too much time there: I would haul home so many books that my calculations about how this house is large enough to store book acquisitions for the duration of my probable occupancy would be thrown completely out of whack, or I would suffer destructive engrams from too many decisions not to buy stuff I wanted. The situation was worsened by the incredible cheapness with which the stock was being liquidated: hardly anything cost more than 50¢ and much went for a dime. So I decided to try to restrict myself to music and to books about music. This was hard. I still don't know how I walked right past an enormous pile of Theatre Arts magazines from the 1930s and 1940s or piles of gorgeous art books. But there was so much even in this narrow field of music-related stuff that I found myself being more selective than I thought myself capable of doing. One prodigy was a giant stack of custom-bound volumes, each of which contained the music sections from dozens of long-ago issues of The Etude. This was a magazine meant mostly for music students which published in each issue several dozen works, mostly for solo piano

but also some songs, violin-piano works, and even sets of parts for works for small orchestra. Like Fred Pohl's boy who ate the world, I wanted all of them but reason prevailed and I limited myself to as many volumes as I could lug to the car in one trip without cardiac suspension. I promised myself I'd get more the next time if they weren't already sold but I couldn't find them on my next visit. Maybe someone else bought them and maybe they simply got buried in the meanwhile. I plan to make at least one more trip to make sure.

I found a good bit of desirable other music, much of it hard to come by in the remoter outposts of the nation like Hagerstown: a group of lieder by Kilpenin, for instance, and some Messiaen piano music. There were also evidences that I was too late for other stuff. I found one volume of Schumann piano music in an edition which I hadn't seen before and the other volumes must have been there at one time. I don't know what I'm going to do with the program books for Cincinnati Music Festivals which I bought, covering several years early in this century, or the index to works performed by the National Symphony Orchestra of Washington, D.C., during its first quarter-century, but I couldn't bear to think of them going to a repulping mill as they might have done. There are such esoterica in books about music as an astonishing Marxist version of how folk music has influenced the world's most famous concert music and a volume of John Cage prose in which so far I've been able to find no sentence which makes any sense whatsoever.

Meanwhile, the sale will go on for another week or so and then what remains will be sold as a lot to someone in a distant part of the nation. After that, I'll begin to wonder if I imagined the whole thing. I'm still not sure it's possible for anything that big to have been so inconspicuous.

Unfortunately, most of the money I saved by not following my baser instincts at the Clifton Book Company has gone just as irrevocably as a result of another surprise. There's a weekly "shopper" distributed throughout this area containing mostly classified ads. This free publication's rates are lower than those of the local newspaper, so it gets some business from people who don't have much of value to sell or who are uncertain whether anyone will be interested in what they have to sell. I spotted in it one week a little ad about opera records for sale. Ads like that usually represent someone's possession of two Galli-Curci and three Caruso records inherited from an ancestor. But I called the telephone number anyway. The lady who answered wasn't quite sure what was for sale but told me to drop by some evening when her husband could show me what he was trying to sell. I felt better when I learned the address, because it is in one of Hagerstown's upmost class suburbs. People who live in expensive houses are more apt to have interesting things for sale. When I got out there the man took me into the cellar and I almost asked him if I could call the police and report to them that he had stolen my records.

You see, most of my record-buying has been done by mail order, except for what I've picked up second-hand. Operas in particular aren't extensively stocked by local record stores. I don't know anyone else in Hagerstown who collects opera lps. So the only place I've ever seen most of the opera sets I own is in my own home, and the shock of seeing a myriad of those very same albums in that man's luxurious cellar was a mighty wrench to my sense of reality. I knew intellectually that these were other copies of the same sets but instinctively I felt them to be mine.

While I tried not to duplicate the work of God by making a fool of myself, the man was telling me about the records. He'd had a brother who was a bachelor and loved opera. The brother had died and this man was trying to dispose of his record collection. The dozens of sets before me were just part of the total and he'd be going after more soon. I felt kinship with this deceased brother because his tastes had duplicated mine so frequently, resulting in my confused reaction. In many cases, he'd purchased the very same recording of this or that standard opera that I'd bought. In one case, there was a doubleheader parallel: like me, he'd bought the first Boheme released on lp, had resisted the urge to buy any more Bohemes until the Beecham set came out, and had splurged on it. This kinship of tastes saved me from the temptation to spend too much on those opera sets. But I invested in three or four of them. The price per record was somewhat more than I normally will spend on used lps, but the discs were in such exceptionally good condition and the sets were so hard to find nowadays in any condition, mostly from the first few years of the lp era, that I didn't mind bending my principles. The man promised to give me a call as soon as he'd brought more of these records to Hagerstown and I paid him. Just as I was leaving, I saw in a dim corner some books whose dimensions excited my instincts. One question to the man, and I knew I was right. They were vocal scores of operas and now I was really excited.

Not many FAPA members, I imagine, are well acquainted with opera vocal scores. They consist of all the vocal parts of the opera just as the composer wrote them on separate lines, but the orchestral part is condensed into an arrangement for piano. They shouldn't be confused with full scores of operas, which contain not only all the vocal parts but also the complete instrumental parts with a separate line for each type of instrument. Though less complete, the vocal score is the most satisfactory form for most purposes, like following a performance or rehearsing an opera with singers or just playing sections of the opera at the piano. The full scores are awfully bulky, you must turn the page every few seconds, and it requires lots of familiarity or advance study to make sense of that formidable lineup of instrumental parts.

But vocal scores of operas arehard to come by nowadays. In the 19th century when there was a piano and several pianists in almost every home, vocal scores of operas sold the way paperbacks do nowadays. But the person who is interested in opera and doesn't live close to anextremely large public library has problems. The most frequently performed older operas' vocal scores are fairly easy to obtain in the Schirmer edition, domestically published and sold and therefore available for sensible prices, most of them costing a bit less or a trifle more than ten bucks. But if you're interested in an opera not offered by Schirmer you have problems. Several of the big European publishers like Ricordi, Boosey & Hawkes and Peters have official branches in the United States which import vocal scores of many recent operas still under copyright and older ones which are less frequently performed. But they've always cost two or three times as much in the United States as they do in the nation where they're produced, and the recent decline in the United States dollar has sent their prices even higher. Some years ago, I traded United States records with a German fan for some Richard Strauss vocal scores at a cost, as I recall, of less than $10 each; bought in the United States, those scores now cost from $30 to $50

apiece and certain of them mysteriously become unavilable for long periods from time to time. The situation is even worse in the case of certain operas, mostly the ones whose vocal scores are published by a firm which licenses another company to do the importing. Ravel's L'Enfant et les Sortiléges, a one-act opera which doesn't require an hour to perform and therefore results in a thin vocal score, costs $62.50. Berg's Lulu's vocal score was priced at $115 the last time I looked. I'm sure lots of enthusiasts for such operas obtain their vocal scores by borrowing from a library and utilizing an office copier but the library in Hagerstown hasn't acquired any vocal scores in the almost half-century that I've been visiting it.

The seller's brother had apparently attempted to obtain a vocal score for each opera he purchased in recorded form. This must be why the libretto booklet was missing from most of the record sets; he'd even cut it out from old Cetra sets in which it was bound to the same post which held the sleeves in the box. On this first visit and later ones, I acquired a huge stack of vocal scores that I might never have owned under other circumstances (I'd been buying new ones or finding secondhand ones at the rate of perhaps two per year). Most of them are in the more expensive hardcover binding and they show curiously little evidence of wear and tear, leading me to wonder if the original owner had been promising someday to himself that he would get around to learning to play the piano and not using his scores very much until he accomplished that. I was particularly amazed to find in the stack some really hard to find vocal scores like the one for Donizetti's little one-acter, Il Campanello, and a reasonably complete one for Rossini's William Tell. (That opera had such an unsettled history that there are different types of vocal scores for it. Music publishers have never been very scrupulous about including everything the composer wrote in the vocal scores. It's almost impossible to find, for instance, vocal scores of Verdi operas that contain even as an appendix the ballet music he wrote for French productions of Il Trovatore and Otello.)

The vocal scores didn't cost me much. I might have warned the seller about the price he was asking, if he hadn't been so obviously prosperous and if I hadn't bought such a quantity of them. But one disturbing thing became evident during my transactions with this source of opera records and scores. The shopper in which the ad had run is distributed free to more than 40,000 homes in this and surrounding counties each week, and it had run the ad for two weeks. Out of all those potential customers for the opera treasures, the man found only two other purchasers besides myself. True, thanks to the flagging willpower of the three of us, he had disposed of all but about twenty record albums and a dozen scores, the last time I was out. But it's a chilling testimony to just how much interest exists in opera in this area and presumably elsewhere in the nation outside university towns and cities large enough to have an opera company to stir up enthusiasm among the proletariat. The Met radio broadcasts are no longer carried by any station whose transmitter is closer than sixty or so miles to Hagerstown, and I wonder how much the lack of a healthy signal for those Saturday afternoon broadcasts has to do with the apathy for opera here.

The last I heard, the man thought there might be still more records and scores packed away in one of his brother's rooms which he hadn't gone through yet. Apparently the deceased gentleman was

similar to me in ways beyond the basic one of loving opera, like keeping his possessions scattered hither and yon throughout his place of residence. It seems impious to feel even the slightest form of criticism, after such a magnificent windfall came my way, but I do wish he'd taken more interest in German and Slavic opera. Everything he owned was Italian and French, except for some Mozart and one Johann Strauss operetta. I'd dearly love a chance to grab at a reasonable price some Wagner and Smetana sets which appeared during the time he was acquiring opera records.

The AAUW's annual book sale this spring wasn't as productive for me as it usually is. The organization has apparently approached the bottom of the bin in persuading people to clean out bookshelves and boxes on the attic and donate unused books for this purpose. But I was rendered happy at finding a small stack of another sort of music. They are vocal scores of a sort, too. But I'm not apt to study them or play them on the piano as much as the grand opera scores. These have more sentimental than musical value.

I might have passed them up, since they are vocal scores of the kind of operettas which were composed on an assembly line basis in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries for the use of schools, churches, and organizations of other sorts that wanted to put on musical productions but didn't have the talent or the money to tackle the famous ones by G&S, Lehar, de Koven, and other giants in the field. But I noticed a penciled name on the covers, looked inside, and instantly made the decision to buy. These had belonged to the choir and music director at the church where my mother's people had belonged, and whose Sunday school I attended until I began to fall into wicked ways. As a small boy, I had been mightily impressed by the strange situation of this choir director. She had an unannounced marriage. I'm not sure if this circumstance occurred frequently in other small cities early in this century but it was happening all the time in Hagerstown; however, the choir director's marriage remained unannounced for an abnormally large number of years. Everyone knew she was married but because the marriage had not been formally announced, everyone was forced to refrain from mentioning it to her or her husband. It went on like that for years and years, caused I believe, by opposition to her husband by someone in her family.

These operetta scores are obviously the copies she used to do the rehearsing and then the directing of the actual performances. She must have done a thorough job in getting the operetta productions together, because most of the scores had fallen apart from frequent use and are reconstituted with a strip of some sort of adhesive cloth substance at the spine. Most of them must have been put on by members of the church and its Sunday school before my time, because the director penciled in the names of the cast members beside the list of characters and I know some of those who took the part of "third boy" or "fourth girl" were complete adults before I entered the first grade. In fact, I can remember only one musical production at the church, although I probably was taken to others before I was old enough to retain them in memory. I regret to say that my memory of that one consists of only one scene, in which some sort of covering was thrown over a balcony, women of the church poked their bare legs through it while the rest of them remained hidden, they jiggled their legs in time to the music, and the audience sitting below was asked to guess the identity of the owner of each pair of legs. It seemed a quite normal form of entertain-

ment to my miniature self but at this distance, it strikes me as sort of different from the usual concept of small town church entertainment in that era.

It's partly amusing, partly tragic for me to look at these names penciled into the scores, most of which I knew by reputation at least and some of which I remained in touch with to their death or to the present. In "The Lady of the Terrace" one of the leading roles is that of Sir Gerald of Craughmont Castle, a young Irishman. The role was taken by a local resident whom I never would have guessed as the possessor of a singing voice or as able to participate in a stage production. He was a terrible mother's boy who was kept away from other children, was forced to wear his hair long when that was demeaning tonsorial style for a male, and after he grew up, got a job but scurried home as soon as the closing whistle blew and didn't leave the house again until time to go to work the next morning. Then he was drafted. Everyone thought it would be the end of him, because of inability to cope with people and circumstances he'd never known. Instead he became a good soldier, was shipped overseas, found himself a fine strapping girl for a mistress, and was very happy with her until his unit was recalled tothe United States and he was discharged from the service. Immediately he scampered home to his by now very elderly mother, hardly left her side in the years following until her death, and after that lived alone, supporting himself by washing store windows until his death in poverty a few years ago.

Other pencilings in the scores show that the director didn't skimp on her job. One solo with chorus is prefaced by her notes for the lighting: "overhead--blue and red, foots--red, spot--red." A chorus in another operetta contains as many notes on what the men are supposed to do in each measure as any Broadway production would require: left and right faces, where each foot is to go, directions in which the canes are to point, a lot of "strum" indications which I suppose meant the singers were to pretend the cane was a banjo, and sometimes the directions come thick and fast: in two successive measures of slow three-four time, the chorus members must take the cane in the left hand, strike it on the floor, raise their hats, and "extend right hand to side and across in front".

I don't know how much manpower was available at this church for musical productions. But I doubt if it had more than perhaps 500 members at that time, plus a few hundred Sunday school captives old enough to be commandeered for this purpose. There was nothing particularly unusual about such elaborate stage productions for such a church, because similar things were done by the other good-sized churches here and undoubtedly in almost every other corner of the nation. By now, it's almost a lost religious art, although two or three local Sunday schools still maintain the little orchestras which used to scrape and toot and pound through every church event in almost every congregation here a few decades back. Some of the energy that used to be released through church dramatics is undoubtedly vented today by high school dramatic and musical groups, but I rarely see the announcement of even a school production of anything in the tradition of these unpretentious operettas. I doubt if anyone has ever written a book or even a substantial portion of a book about this particular area in the nation'smusical life, the hundreds or thousands of operettas by forgotten composers which were produced on an amateur basis by so much religious groups and other organizations for several decades. I had already acquired a fairly

tall pile of vocal scores of this type of operetta before finding this latest batch. There is no point in trying to find genius in them from either the musical or the dramatic standpoint. But here and there is a tune that still sounds catchy, and I feel admiration for the way these obscure composers managed to get a reasonable amount of variety and special effects into an artform which didn't permit making severe demands on the voices or doing very complicated things in the choral parts, not to mention the need to keep each individual number reasonably short. I should also mention the covers of these vocal scores, many of which are as attractive in a modest way as the pictures that used to adorn sheet music for the popular songs of the day. Incidentally, in case anyone thinks that all the indexing and researching in the professional fantasy field has already been accomplished, this is an untouched field. Quite a few of these operettas are either basically or marginally fantasy in theme and events. Even the mundane ones occasionally contain something of fantasy importance, like a song about a weird legend or the unexpected thing I found in one operetta, a song devoted to praising the science fiction mind of Jules Verne.

I may tempt fate by writing about something else in the flea market adventures of this year. It might go away if I brag about it in the way that such things sometimes happen. The only recurring flea market in the immediate vicinity of Hagerstown is one staged monthly about three miles from here. It isn't a big one, compared with some of the extravaganzas that happen weekly or monthly in other points of the East. But normally there are perhaps twenty dealers on hand in the cold weather months and twice that number when the weather is good enough to permit outdoor selling. I've been attending regularly, but didn't often buy anything, since the bulk of the merchandise is outside my field of interest.

Then slightly more than a year ago a new dealer began to appear, always setting up indoors in a little alcove at the end of the American Legion hall where the event is staged. One side of his display always consisted of what appears to my unpracticed eye very high quality glass, tagged with elevated prices. On the other side, books, almost always in mint or nearly mint condition and bearing unbelievably low pricetags. There would be nothing too sensational about this if it weren't for another phenomenon involving the books: a great many of them always turn out to be in my particular fields of interest, like music, baseball, and science fiction. Still better, many of the books are the hard-to-find kind: books about baseball published long enough ago to have been out of print for years, and highly specialized books about serious music which rarely turn up in any condition, good or bad.

I bought lavishly each month, without quite granting the reality of it all, since the combination of low prices and catering to my interests seemed too good to be true. Sure enough, this dealer suddenly stopped appearing, before I'd had the commonsense to ask who he was and where he came from. After a few months, he was back again with even more delectable offerings. And by now, the dealer was selling books about Hollywood and the stage, as if he'd somehow learned that he'd overlooked my interest in those fields. I learned soon after that the basics about him: he comes from a Washington suburb, doesn't have a shop of his own but sells at various flea markets, but he offered no explanation of whether there was any divine participation in his making it possible for me to own a $22.50 book about French baroque music for 60¢ or a German language auto-

biography of the great pianist Elly Ney for even less. I almost asked him for a list of other flea markets he sells at, and checked myself just in time: they would be far enough from Hagerstown to cost me in gas as much as I would save in buying if I followed him around the circuit each weekend. He must have sensed the agony his absence from Hagerstown had caused me because once he advised me about his family's plans to spend a month in Florida, resulting in their missing the next flea market here. Now, however, there has been another unexpected hiatus in this dealer's selling at the nearby flea market. He has missed the last two, and the only encouraging portent I can draw from this is that it's happened before and that no other dealer has moved into that alcove as yet. There is one other thing about this strange situation that worries me. The dealer also is very strong on books about hockey, often having a half-dozen or so on display each month. Should I be buying all of them, on the assumption that providence is looking out for a future in which I'll suddenly develop an intense interest in hockey, a sport that gives me only modest pleasure nowadays? And I think I have discovered why so many of the books are in such perfect condition. I noticed on the first flyleaf of some of them the sort of indentation that is often left by a paperclip after it has been removed. Newspaper review copies of books are usually accompanied by a slip of paper on which is printed the release date for the volume and a request for tearsheets of any review. Apparently the dealer has a contact who reviews books, although I would expect any book reviewer to know enough about secondhand prices to dispose of the better quality volumes to someone who pays and charges much more.

There have been a few individual and separate surprises at yard sales this summer, even though I haven't attended as many as usual. I walked a block out of my way home from the office one afternoon to see if anything was left at a small yard sale and found a thin volume which I am very happento own, even though the sight of it made me briefly unhappy. I reacted that way to the discovery because I wasn't aware of this book's existence, strong indication that I'm not keeping up to date on local publishing activities as I should.

It's an eighty-page collection of rather weak poetry by a very strong man. Rev. Charles M. LeFew was a Methodist preacher who spent perhaps twenty years late in his life serving a local church. He had a physical handicap that would have caused many lesser men to sit back and let various forms of charity and welfare to flow in and keep him comfortable. Instead, he hobbled around in the most lively fashion doing all his religious duties and also taking on about three times as heavy a load of other community services as a completely fit man would normally undertake. He wrote poetry in an Edgar A. Guest style in spare moments. After his death, some of his friends p rsuaded his widow to dig out the scattered poems they remembered best, and this little collection was financed in one way or another. The minister had a lot of friends and they must have bought up the entire edition so fast that no newspaper publicity was sought. I almost certainly would have known of the book's existence if it had received the usual publicity.

Some of the poems are too keyed to local people and places to stand up under quotation in FAPA. I think too much of the writer's memory to reprint here the religious poetry for an audience that wouldn't understand the sincerity which substitutes for genius.

But I'd like to get one of his poems more widely distributed geographically than was achieved by this book, which must have sold locally for the most part. "Lawyers and Doctors" comes close to the quality of what used to be known as good newspaper verse, back in the years when daily papers published light and uncomplicated verse:

Some people think a lawyer
Is of tall, commanding mien,
With a head of coal-black hair,
And a brief case always seen--
Loud and blunt;
But a doctor is a little man,
With hair of silver gray;
Known by bag of pills and powders
As he hurries on his way--
With a grunt.
Truth is, both are gentlemen,
Neither fashion plate nor slouch;
Medium height and balding head,
With a dominating pouch--
Out in front.

If the minister had made it even shorter, it would have approached the nature of some oriental poetry which attains much more recognition.

With embarrassment, I must admit that one prized recent acquisition at the local Goodwill store represented a purchase that was unnecessary, in a way. It's a book I already owned. But my first copy of it vanished about a dozen years ago into the rarely explored lower layers of the attic. It was much easier to pay 19¢ for another copy than fret over the question of whether I'll ever find the other one. There's another curious thing about this book, published about thirty years ago by the state of Maryland. If you trust the front cover, its title is Department of Geology, Mines and Water Resources State of Maryland. But the spine's lettering states: Washington County 1951. And on the title page the biggest lettering is: The Physical Features of Washington County. I suppose librarians in such a circumstance trust the title page rather than the cover or spine. But throughout the book, the top of each lefthand page says simply Washington County, even though there's room for a fuller title, while each righthand page is topped by the title of a section of the book. The preface describes the contents: "The Washington County report describes the geography, physiography, mineral resources, surface waters, ground waters, soils, forests, wild life, climate, and magnetic declination. The report is encyclopedic in scope with respect to the natural resources of the county."

It sounds rather dull but it makes interesting reading in some places. Besides, having the book handy makes column-writing a little easier, because on days when absolutely no inspiration strikes, I can always patch a column together on some section of the book prefaced with a statement to readers that I'll bet you didn't know this about where you live. The book doesn't trace this county's past as far back as the alleged big bang, but it does put into rather clear language the basics about what happened here during the last few million years before the first European settlers arrived. For example: "The Potomac River and its tributaries present a problem of explanation of meanders indicating old age in an environment which is very much younger. It is furthermore difficult to understand how the Potomac River and all other streams that cross the Ap-

palachian Mountains are able to do so when the terrane between the source and mouths of these rivers is a region much more difficult to traverse than are the valleys in which the streams originate. '' The explanation is that the streams are older than the mountains and reached the ocean in a rather direct course before the mountains existed and that the mountains rose as the streams cut into them like a buzz saw into a log that is pushed into it. To accomplish this, the rise of the mountains must be slower than erosion to allow time for the river to cut the valley deeper and to avoid being dammed up or diverted. '' The meandering streams of Washington County are thus interpreted as old streams which flowed on a peneplain truncating the largest portion of the area. These streams were then cut into the peneplain as the mountains rose." As soon as I find a dictionary which contains "peneplain" I should be able to understand all that completely.

There are such other things as an interesting picture section, showing dozens of fossils that have been found in this county, an explanation of how much trouble the gradual shift in the error between true north and the way the compass points causes in retracing old surveys which didn't make allowance. The section on magnetic declination also informed me that state and federal authorities had phenomenally bad luck when they established magnetic stations around Hagerstown. The first was marked "by an ash stave" at an old school which was abandoned soon thereafter and the entire surroundings hustled back into wilderness, and the second was placed at the almshouse, where it couldn't be found a quarter-century later when the county surveyor went hunting it. There were observations at a magnetic station much earlier, in 1870, on Maryland Heights overlooking Harpers Ferry but someone overlooked the importance of permanently marking that one, too. The section on the weather made me realize for the first time why patches of fog appear so often on high ground around Hancock west of here, when there are so many lower areas which you'd expect the fog to prefer, and why some thunderstorms which hit this area provide lots of rain while another type doesn't. Most of the sections on geology and sedimentary rocks require better background in those topics than I possess. It's easier to make sense of the wildlife chapter.

But part of the material there is more fully described in another recent find, a Department of the Interior book entitled "Mammals of Maryland" which cost me only a dime at a parking lot sale in the old home town of Chambersburg. This book lists six species of mammals that have been wiped out in this area since the white men arrived: porcupines, gray wolves, martens, mountain lions, elk and bison. There's some doubt about the porcupine because one was found shot by a hunter not far from Hagerstownback in the 1960s and one dog returned from a trip somewhere with its face full of porcupine quills. It all sounds very sad, but the book quotes the writing of a couple of Virginia naturalists: "Though it is regrettable that man has had a hand in the extinction of these creatures, he is not to be blamed too much, for the ascendancy of one species and the extinction of another is a regular process of nature which has been repeated over and over again all down through the ages. Probably man did not have much or anything to do with the disappearance of wild horses, mammoths, mastodons, tapirs, wild pigs, ground sloths and camels which once roamed our lands, but they are gone nevertheless. As surely as a species of animal comes into being, it is destined to eventual extinction, whether by geologic catastrophes such as volcan-

ic eruptions or earthquakes; or by great climatic changes involving vast spreading glaciers or desert vastes, or by the hand of man. Our geologists have given us proof of all this by the fossil record in the rocks." I wish those naturalists had gone on to point out the fact that is always omitted in jeremiads over man's role in wiping out this or that species or variety of living thing: in all the ages since life appeared on this planet, there is no reason to believe that any organism except man has ever made an effort to protect and save from extinction any type of living creatures.

I was surprised to find that the federal publication includes coyotes among the mammals that are existing in the wild state in Maryland. One was shot near Hagerstown a few years back producing a fierce hue and cry about how the wilderness must be reasserting itself because nobody at that time ventured a contradiction to the general assumption that this was the first wild coyote seen here in the memory of the oldest living citizen. This book, which was published in 1969, contends that the coyote "may be expected anywhere in the state"and gives hints about why it's generally considered non-existent this far East. "Some feral dogs are so similar to coyotes that it is a difficult task for even an expert to distinguish them. The problem is further compounded because the coyote and dog may interbreed in the wild.... There does not appear to be any certain way to distinguish coyote-dog hybrids from pure domestic dogs."

The section on Maryland's bats contains such exciting and unbelievable things about their romantic behavior that I see no point in quoting them here. It might get FAPA placed on the suspect list of the postal service or create a tripling of the waiting list if word got around about the sort of fascinating facts that are to be found in its mailings. Instead, let me hastily turn to another instance in which I deliberately bought something I already owned. This was a 1963 issue of American Heritage which contains an article about one of my ancestors. This ancestor didn't exactly rank with John Adams, Susan B. Anthony, or the other mighty figures normally described in this periodical. But he sti l makes me feel sort of distinctive with the light of reflected glory. I happened across a copy of this same issue several years ago and was reading through it systematically when I happened across the article by Paul Angle, "My Father's Grocery Store". I don't think any of my relatives in this area were aware of its publication in 1963, so I bought the extra copy to give to one of them. Paul M. Angle belongs or belonged (I haven't heard of his death, but he would be awfully advanced in years by now if still alive) to my maternal grandmother's people. She was an Angle before she married and Paul M. must have been a nephew of hers or a second cousin once removed or something of that sort. I never did get the relationship straight, and once when my grandmother's sister wrote to him, his reply made it plain that he wasn't particularly interested in communicating with the Angle relations who had continued to reside around here. His people had gone west and he lived for many years in the Chicago area, becoming a quite well known historian who specialized in the Civil War.

Paul's father's name was John and he had left the section where my grandmother grew up in the late 1870s, apparently, although the American Heritage article isn't completely equipped with dates. So my grandmother probably never had much contact with either John or Paul, since she wasn't born until the same approximate time. My grandmother's father and mother had been quite prosperous, had insisted on her attending college although hardly any females did so in

that part of Pennsylvania in that long-ago time, and she deliberately gave up luxury by rejecting the wealthy suitors she could have had and marrying instead a moneyless barber who became my grandfather. Paul's father had been a grocer in Pennsylvania, wanted to get out of that business, so he moved to Ohio and became a painter, a trade which he abandoned to resume the grocery business after marrying the daughter of a grocer. The only connection with his old home which the article mentions was the fact that John imported strawberries, blackberries, black raspberries, red raspberries and huckleberries each summer from the Cumberland Valley to the Mansfield store and made them "his special care." But I suppose most of what he did and the general appearance of the store were similar to how the typical grocer and his store were in the late 19th century around here. There are several photographs, but the figures of John and Paul in them are so small that it's hard to be sure if they bear any facial resemblances to the Angles whom I knew. John looks short and stocky like my grandmother and he seems to have shared some of her characteristics in stick-to-itness and concentration.

One bright spot in my accumulating career has been my ability to steer clear of the ranks of the National Geographic Magazine collectors. When I was a boy, I used to see this publication occasionally when visiting prosperous relatives. (It sold for the stupendous sum of 50¢ per copy in the late 1920s, at a time when many of the fat and sleek slickpaper periodicals went for a nickel or a dime.) There seem to be quite a few of this type of collectors around here, if I may judge by the way they linger around the stacks of the magazine that usually turn up at book sales and in the Rescue Mission store. So I suppose it was nothing more than a desire to see again what I might have seen long ago that caused me to take an interest in a year's file of the magazine published just before the Depression when I ran across them in binders at a yard sale. The price that was asked for them was more than I was willing to pay even for the sake of nostalgia, but I left my name and telephone number with the woman, asking her to give me a call if she failed to sell them. As I suspected, her price was too high for anyone who want to the yard sale and I must have been the only person who thought of the old name and telephone number trick, because a couple of days later she agreed to let me have them at my price. Strangely, not long after that I picked up a couple of more issues from the same general period at another yard sale where they were going for only a dime each. I gather from antique magazines that even the older issues of this magazine haven't yet joined the trend toward inflated prices, but that's still less than you usually find asked for copies published only last year.

It's strange to look at something like these issues, wondering if they could be the very same editions that you leafed through a half-century ago. I wasn't really interested in far off places and people when I was a boy, but it was generally understood that the National Geographic imparted culture and taste to anyone who looked at it so I must have been interested in copies for that reason.

Of course, some of the contents inspire quite different reactions today. The December, 1928, issue contains two long articles about modern Germany. "Among the rank and file, militarism, in the old Prussian sense, appears to be on the wane," one says of German youth. A couple of pages further along is a picture which shows "Members of the National Socialist Party parade at Nuremberg" and another photograph of marching boys who appear to be eight or nine

years old has the caption: "Green as goslings now, but practice makes the goose step perfect." And the author concludes: "Renascent Germany may not have achieved that place in the sun her last ruler so vainly sought. But on her own hearth she is finding today the warming beams that radiate from national self-respect, well-being, and peace." The poor fellow was spared the ordeal of discovering what was about to happen because a note in this issue reveals that he died just a few days after completing his manuscript.

Something else of interest in these old issues is their use of color photography made by the Autochrome process, which was destined to go out of general use in the early 1930s. One of the photography magazines published this summer an article lavishly illustrated on autocrhomes which stressed the muted colors and softness of image inherent in the process while admitting that fading and shifts in color may have affected the old surviving prints. These National Geographic reproductions seem to show that autochromes had more zip and pep than that. They admittedly aren't as garish as the Kodachrome illustrations that began to appear in the 1930s but they have a much better saturation and a greater gradation of hues than the modern magazine depicted.

Now, if I just hadn't missed that book sale in Frederick the week last winter when I had to learn how to run the computer terminal, and if I hadn't imagined my brakes had gone bad on the weekend the Blue Ridge Summit library had its annual sale....

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The Worst of Martin

Meet Aloysius Quibble D. Twerp
He is an expert hectographer
Of scienti-fan papers
For the ignorant rabble
Who don't understand
His modern art, and stuff
Like no punctuation and capitals
Or nude purple half-tones of women with typewriter heads--
They think he's silly--slap-happy.
But A. Quibble D. Twerp is a genius.
He's sure of it.
He's not of this age.
A hundred years from now
People will exclaim over his work:
"He was ahead of his time."
"Genius--
"Misunderstood."
A. Quibble D. Twerp hectographs
And hectographs
Safe in ths knowledge of things to come
While the genius pours out of him
Like the dripping of gilijex from a cracked Plutonian
Aardferk's egg
Which he is, no doubt....

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