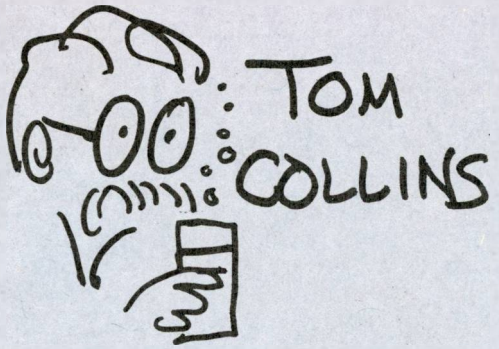
IMAGINE A PURPLE AND GOLDEN AND CRIMSON UNIVERSE, WHERE EVERYTHING MAY HAPPEN ...



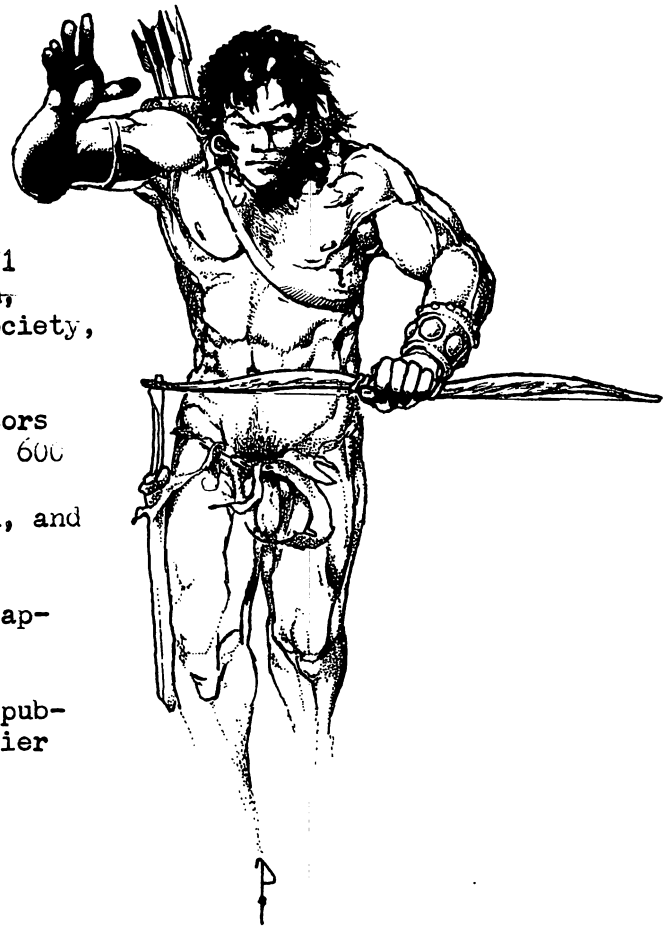
THE ONLY TIME I ever talked with August Derleth was in 1965 when I was trying to find out the address for Arkham House. I asked the telephone operator for information for Sauk City, Wisconsin. That took some doing, but finally the operator there answered, and I asked if she had a number for Arkham House. "Oh," she said, "That's Mr. Derleth, number 11 (or some such number), just a minute," and before I could stop her she had made the connection.

A voice answered "Arkham House," and I asked who was speaking, was it Mr. Derleth? In a deep, hollow voice the reply echoed, "This is Arkha-a-m Hous-s-s-e!"

The contact was slight, and over the years I have continued to be among the least of his customers. It isn't at all clear to me how I came to be the one to attempt to do "something nice" in Derleth's memory, nor is it clear I have made a success of the attempt. I could easily wish for more time, more talent, better typing, more artwork and better proofreading. (There may be times when the reader is convinced there was no proofreading.) What I could not wish is for more generous assistance from the contributors herein, who responded so kindly to the stranger who importuned them.

Some of them knew Derleth as a teenager, some as an older man. Some feuded with him; to others he was almost a father who helped to shape their lives and careers. Sometimes they knew him but slightly, and many never met him at all. Their judgements are often contradictory, and sometimes outrageous. I suspect that not even their dates agree.

But I think these varied tributes combine to produce a multi-faceted picture of the man which is essentially. It is a kind of mosaic, in which one article provides a detail or memory another does not, each complementing the others, interlocking into a kind of unity, so that by a process of summation we are able to see clearly what no one author is able to put into focus, a complex and talented talented man, a genius whose love for life and appetite for work were as outsize as his frame, a serious writer who gave up everything in behalf of his friend, and thereby gained immortality.



IS:4 October, 1971
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As an experiment, and in order to supply collectors with this special August Derleth memorial issue, 600 copies have been printed by long-suffering Bruce Burchsted. Of these, 350 are for sale at $3 each, and 250 copies hors de commerce.

A special announcement concerning subscriptions appears on page 40.

This magazine, now completing its first year of publication, was named by Michael Bacon during happier times.

Omnia mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis.

CARTE BLANCHE

In Alphabetical Order:

More...

The inside back cover is an Arkham House broadside from Rick Meng, and inside the front cover is--me!

*The Larry Niven story is reprinted from APA-L 315 by his kind permission.

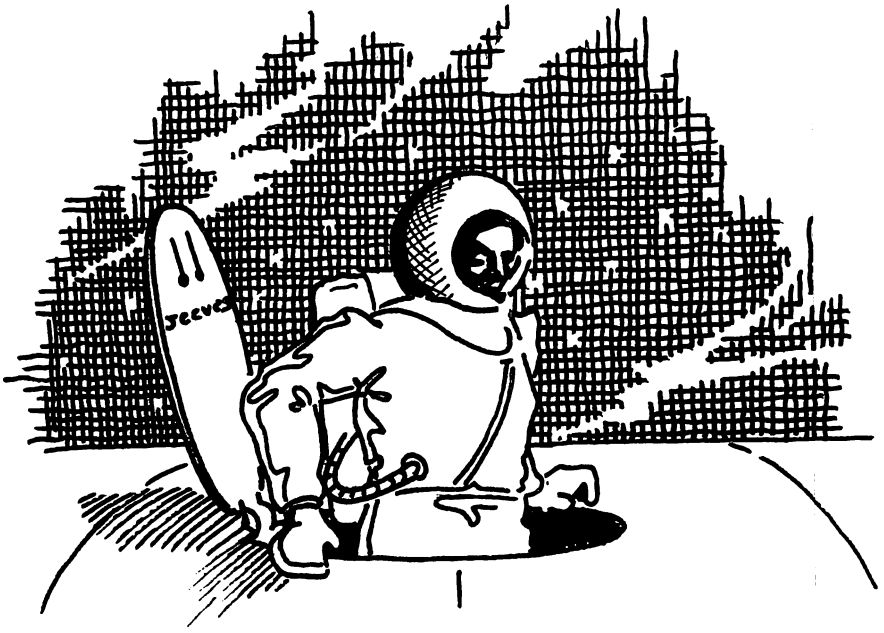
Robert Bloch revised his remarks to the LASFS directors August 13 from a transcription I made of a tape Tom Digby supplied. Avram Davidson's remarks were dictated over the telephone while I was in the Bay area on vacation, and Rick Meng's article was dictated into a casette. The drawing by Harry Morris originally appeared in "Nyctalops" four, and the Derleth portrait is on loan from "Nyctalops" five, which is imminent. The illustration of "Cthulhu Rising" by Dany Frolich is meant as a teaser for Meade Frierson's forthcoming "HPL."

Art Credits:

Terry Jeeves--5, 63. Bill Rotsler--7,99, 19, 25, 29, 37, 57, 61, 62, 64, 65, 66, 79. Freff--15, 16, 45. Tim Kirk--10, 72. Mitch Zygmont--31, 55, most of the titles, the border on page 2, and the back cover. Harry Morris--39. Dany Frolich--75. Helmut Pesch--front cover, 3, 42, 46, 48. Joel Beck--54, 67. Kelly Freas--the heading on page 2.

The Joel Beck illustration on page 54 appears in his new "Soft Core Pornography Coloring Book," available for $2.50 plus postage from Apple Mary Publishing Co., Box 275, Point Richmond, Calif. 94807.

The initials are from the Dance of Death Alphabet by Hans Holbein the Younger, ca. ca. 1523. Those, and the other elaborate decorations throughout are from the wonderful Dover Handbook of Renaissance Ornament.



TWO GREAT EDITORS

By ROBERT BLOCH

IN VIEW OF WHAT has happened in our little microcosm in the last six weeks, I decided that instead of making a formal speech I would talk about two people I had the pleasure of knowing--John Campbell and August Derleth. I feel there are times when it is perhaps good to remember some of these people who are gone from our midst, remember what they meant for us, what they did for us. I'm not particularly noted for my sentimentality, but I decided tonight I was going to throw away all the Harlan jokes, and I was going to talk about these two men....

First, John Campbell. I don't have to tell you the place that Campbell occupied in the science fiction world. He occupied a particular place in my little world, too. I never wrote the type of science fiction that John Campbell would publish. As a matter of fact, I never submitted a science fiction story to him, nor did any agent of mine at any time during all those years. When "Unknown" (later "Unknown Worlds") came on the scene, I did submit three stories, all of which he published. But I had this long-standing agreement with John Campbell. I would never submit a science fiction story and he would never reject one. It worked out well for both of us.

I didn't meet the man until 1952, in Chicago, but after that I saw him quite a bit at various conventions. When my wife and I went to England in 1965 we attended the world con there. It happened to be the first time that my wife had been exposed to this particular form of masochism, and she didn't quite know what to expect. She knew, of course, who John Campbell was, and who several of the others were, but she'd never met any of them.

I remember walking into the banquet hall, and as we came in, Peg Campbell stopped me at the door and said, "Are you speaking today?"

I said yes, they'd asked me to say a few words.

"Well, I do hope you insult John, she said, "because if you don't he's going to be very disappointed."

My wife looked at me, and we went in. I got up to talk and insulted John and he was happy about it. My wife said, "She really meant it, didn't she?"

I said, "Yes, this is what he expects."

That's the kind of relationship I had with John Campbell. I never had much interest in Campbell the public figure, or the "great white father" as Peg sometimes referred to him. I was more interested in him as a human being. I have memories of the convention in Detroit and going with Campbell out to Dearborn, where Henry Ford had amassed a tremendous collection of artifacts, memorabilia, of Thomas Edison, the Wright brothers and other inventors and innovators. It was an unforgettable experience, for this man was able to point out things, not like a museum guide, but like someone who had an intimate acquaintance with each and every object and its purpose and history. He didn't lecture: he would turn casually to something and out would come a complete, well-rounded, comprehensive encyclopedic history or description of it.

As I say, these memories are personal. But because they're personal I had to take a good long, hard look at the image John Campbell had when he passed away some five weeks ago. I asked myself, what has this man meant to our field? To some of the people now entering the field, not very much. John Campbell didn't mean very much, I think, to people who feel that in science fiction Michael Moorcock is God; J.G. Ballard is the Son, and Judith Merrill is the Holy Ghost. But to those of us who have been around a slightly longer time, Campbell's achievements are quite consequential.

In the period between the late 1930s and the mid-1940s Campbell introduced new concepts into science fiction and a new style of writing. He didn't necessarily discover, but he certainly guided the work of some of the great names of the field. John Campbell's influence on Robert Heinlein, the early Theodore Sturgeon, Isaac Asimov, Henry Kuttner, Catherine Moore, A.E. Van Vogt, and many others was profound and lasting. During the last decade he brought forth and cultivated the talents of more of the all-time greats of science fiction than any other editor, any other time, any other place. He did so because he was an innovator, because he had a very, very perceptive, keen intelligence, because he knew how to speculate.

A speculation is a conjecture. Is the moon made of green cheese? Is Andy Warhol an artist? Is Walt Daugherty really Forry Ackerman's father? Not all speculations are necessarily valid. I think a lot of Campbell's flights of fancy in his editorials were an outgrowth of the speculation that he bestowed, in the form of story ideas, upon many, many writers. In recent years a new breed of writers came into the fold of what is now "Analog." And again Campbell is responsible for providing them with ideas, sometimes even with story content. In some cases, I suspect if he hadn't done so these writers would have their complete works confined to lavatory walls.

Now Campbell was not, as none of us are, perfect in every respect. He had his faults, his prejudices, his crochets, his penchants, but he admitted them freely, at least personally. It is difficult for me to look at this man without thinking in terms of the over all influence that he cast over science fiction for a third of a century. To those of you who may doubt what John Campbell has meant for the field, I merely pose one question: can you honestly, truthfully name one science fiction editor who has brought forth more writers, has developed a magazine to a greature stature than John Campbell?

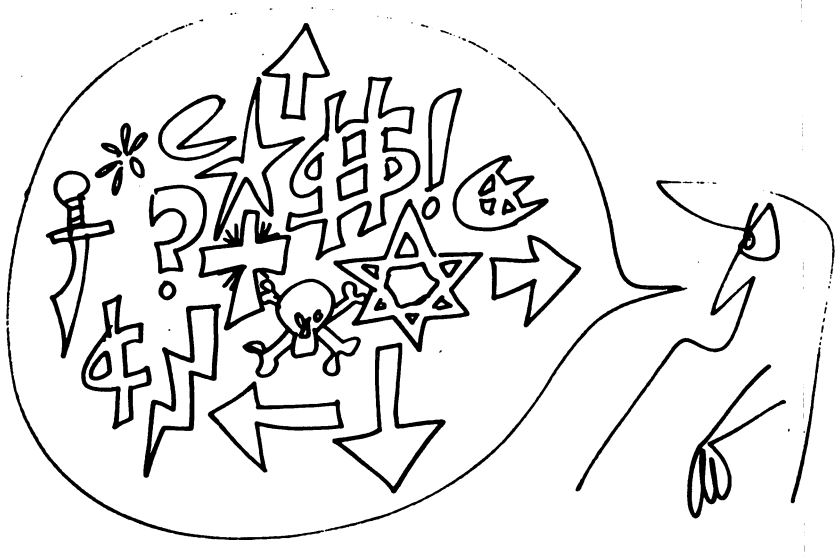
Now the other gentleman I wish to speak about is, of course, August Derleth. I first came into contact with August Derleth in 1933, at which time I was introduced to him by correspondence through the efforts of H.P. Lovecraft. I didn't meet him for about two years. On another occasion and in other circumstances I have described that meeting, going out to Sauk City on a bus, coming into this small town, seeing this burly man in his early twenties, living in a large, rather ordinary wooden farm house on a side street of his community, wearing a velvet smoking jacket, though he didn't smoke. That impressed me.

I was impressed, and I was more impressed as years went on by Derleth's prodigality, the fact that he wrote for so many fields. He was a critic. He was a poet, he wrote weird fiction, he wrote pastiches, he wrote detective fiction, he wrote regional novels, essays, commentary; all seemingly effortlessly. I discovered that he worked twelve to fourteen hours a day, and what was left of his time was allocated to various pursuits and hobbies of all sorts. He slept, perhaps, five or six hours a night.

All of these things impressed me, but I wasn't really aware of the kind of man that Derleth was until our mutual friend Lovecraft died, and Derleth decided that together with Donald Wandrei, his friend from Minneapolis, he was going to launch Arkham House to publish Lovecraft's work.

Now this was in the depression. There were no published works of fantasy, with the exception of two anthologies edited by a non-fantasy writer in the United States. The only fantasy books that were published or had been published lately were little English reprints of "Weird Tales" stories called the Not at Night series. There were no paperbacks. Nobody would touch this material, but Derleth was bound and determined that Lovecraft, who couldn't get published by any hardcover firm in his lifetime, was going to have his work appear in book form.

So he launched Arkham House. By this time he had built a home of his own, a very handsome home on the outskirts of the village, across the street from the local cemetary. I think he liked the idea of having fresh flowers every day. He had some money from a mortgage loan for home improvements. He allocated some of this money toward the publication of the first Arkham House volume, The Outsider



THE TEACHER

and Others. He put out twelve hundred copies. The advance price was $3.50, which was outrageous to most people, and he sold only a few hundred copies in advance of publication. It took him four or five years to sell out the entire edition. Meanwhile, to meet the bills, he put together a collection of his own work, published that, and put the royalties back into Arkham House. Since then Arkham House has published over a hundred volumes. At no time has Arkham House been out of the hands of the bankers. There's always been a loan. And every bit of money that's come out of Arkham House has always been ploughed back in so that other writers could be published.

This was a one-man operation, something that Derleth took on in addition to his regular 16 hour a day schedule. But as a result, Arkham House is responsible for book publication of Slan, at a time when nobody was touching science fiction in hard covers with a ten foot pole; it published the first collection of Ray Bradbury, the first collection of Fritz Leiber, the works of many other fantasy writers who otherwise would have been doomed to vanish into obscurity. And eventually, as a result of World War II, Arkham House caught on to a certain extent, so other small publishers got into the act. Soon there were a dozen houses issuing and reprinting both fantasy and science fiction. If it hadn't been for Arkham House there is a great possibility that neither science fiction nor fantasy would ever have cracked the hardcover barrier. And it's doubtful if many paperback publishers would have taken the plunge. We owe a great deal today to the fact that Derleth was willing, in memory of a friend, to pledge not only his financial resources, but his physical resources over a period of thirty years.

But this is only part of Derleth. He was an unusual human being, and during those many years that I lived in Milwaukee I came to know him well. Derleth loved life. He loved good food, good drink, good conversation, music, and many of the things which today are accepted, but which were not accepted at that time. In the 1930s Derleth was collecting comics and comic strips. I remember the first time I took Henry Kuttner and Catharine Moore to visit him. We went out to Sauk City and sprawled on the floor of his large den, looking through stack after stack of bound, folio-sized volumes of Sunday comic strips dating back to the 1900s. He must have had a room full of those.

He was a great jazz fan, in the days before rock, with a tremendous record library. He also did something that was a little unusual. Today we dress comfortably if we wish; we don't have to wear shoes or neckties. But in the 1930s this was unheard of; if you were to get up before a PTA or teachers' organization or college group as a lecturer, you dressed the part. Not Augie. Augie threw away his tie, put on jeans, an open shirt, sandals, and said "take me the way I am."

He was completely natural, completely outspoken. Again, like Campbell, he wasn't perfect. He had the out-size ego that goes with outsize talent. He had no patience with people who were lazy, who were sloppy in their work or in their thinking. And again, like all of us, he had his prejudices, but he always had the courage of his convictions. It was remarkable how, through the years, he managed to keep abreast of every development in writing and editing.

He started out as a regional novelist, but as time went on he became so well known as a publisher that his own writing took a secondary place. There is, of course, a Solar Pons organization dedicated to the detective pastiche of Sherlock Holmes that he created. Some of his work has received a good deal of critical attention. But I'm saying that for the past fifteen years or so August Derleth was a name that was primarily synonymous with Arkham House. And

perhaps that is the way he is going to be remembered. If so, it's not a bad way to be remembered, for no man in the field of fantasy contributed more than Derleth did.

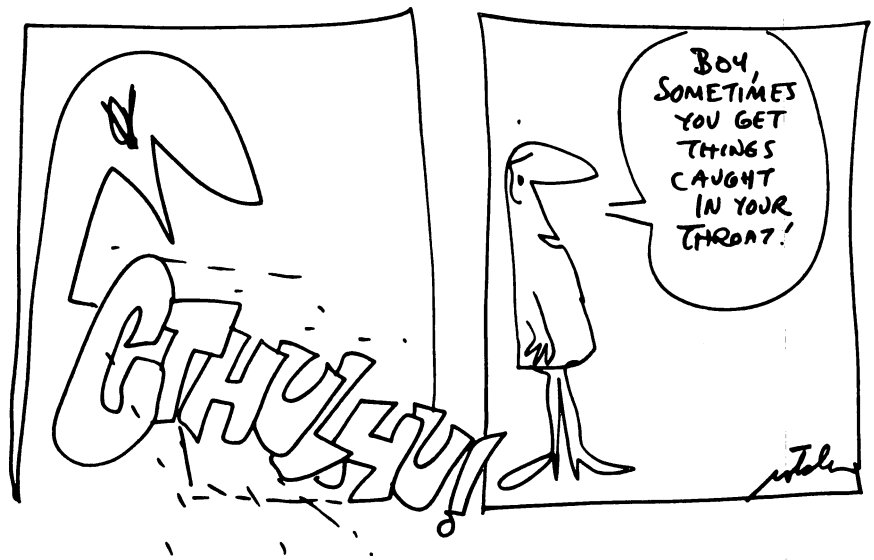
To many of you, what I've been talking about is ancient history, much of it occurred before your memory began, in many cases before your actual birth. Today there's a new breed of editor. There's a new breed of anthologizer. There's a new type of writer, a new type of story. I think, because of the nature of science fiction and fantasy today, we're not going to see anyone like John Campbell emerge. We're not going to see anyone like August Derleth emerge.

The day of the one man show, the individualist who is able to implement his thinking and create a new movement all by himself is, I believe, over with. There are too many commercial considerations. I don't think anyone could start an Arkham House now. I don't think anybody could assume the editorship of a major science fiction magazine and have complete command today because of the influences of the market and distribution which have changed that picture.

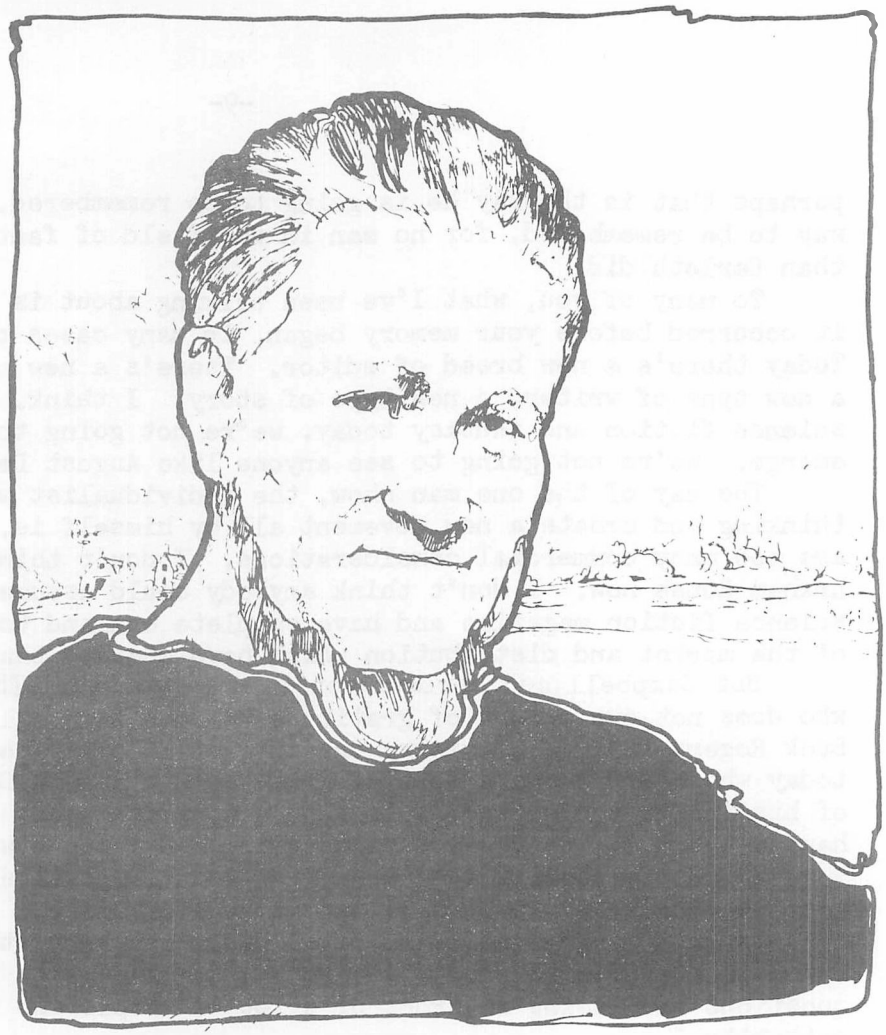
But Campbell and Derleth won't be forgotten. There is not a writer today who does not owe a debt of gratitude to John Campbell for elevating the field from Buck Rogers-ism and gimmickry to a higher literary level. There is not a writer today who doesn't owe a debt of gratitude to August Derleth for enabling so many of his fellow professionals to find a certain amount of enduring fame between hardcovers. Now that's a serious note, and I don't want to close that way.

I want to close with a memory of John Campbell sitting in a room, a drink in his hand, laughing at himself and at some of his own ideas with a group of chosen friends, and saying, as he so often did, "You know, this is all I ever wish for, to be in a room with people I like. I don't want to be out there answering those questions and posing in front of a lot of people who think that I'm some kind of authority."

And I think of Augie walking into my house, wearing sandals and his open shirt and his big grin, saying, "Ya got a drink for a genius? Then take it yourself!" TheseThese two were human beings above everything else. They were human beings who, I believe, meant a lot to this field. I remember them fondly, and I hope you will too.



A Portrait of August Derleth



By PETER RUBER

EXACTLY TEN YEARS AGO I was the inexperienced editor of a pallid and financially distressed literary magazine pretentiously called "The Gasogene," named after a seltzer-making device no self-respecting English Victorian household was without. Unknown to me at the time, I had a sympathetic subscriber named August Derleth who wrote and asked--when he had read a notice in the third issue that I planned to suspend the publication after the fourth (a merciful extinction) --if I would like a short article by him entitled "The Beginnings of Solar Pons."

I knew very little about August Derleth except that he was credited with having written a hundred books or so, and the only writings of his I could vouch-safe having read were a slim handful of Solar Pons detective stories I had come across in an old Ellery Queen anthology and in some current issues of "The Saint Mystery Magazine."

It was about that time, too, that I had commenced work on a biography of Chicago bookman Vincent Starrett, and I mentioned this in passing to August. This launched us on a prolific correspondence lasting nearly a decade, and it is only now that I understand how significantly our exchange had influenced the direction of my literary pursuits. His early letters were rampant with gossip about the Chicago literary renaissance of the 1920s, information that he extracted from a memory that had almost total recall. I found him tolerant and indulging whenever I made a request upon his time, and when I told him that I would be going to Chicago for two weeks in May of 1962 in order to pester the locals for information on Starrett, he suggested that I spend a few days at Sauk City. There was nothing I would have liked better.

I had already begun to realize that August was as much a literary anachronism as the old bookman I was writing about, and I set out to learn more about him. Once again I became a frequent visitor at the dust-laden bookshops on

lower Fourth Avenue. I wrote to various publishers for Derleth books stil in print, and soon I was staying awake nightly devouring his life's literary output. With some help from August I accumulated over fifty of his productions in relatively short order, and I wasted no time cornering friends and subjecting them to harrangues about my latest "discoveries" and cursing them all heartily for having a peasant's taste in so-called "best-seller" triviality foisted on the public, by what August frequently referred to as the New York Litarary Mafia.

The great hulking man who met me at the railroad station in Madison was not quite what I had envisioned from a few dustwrappers on some old books. He stood just short of six feet and weighed somewhere around two hundred and twenty pounds, with an enormous head squatting on a bull-like neck. He had a high, broad forehead of intellectual proportions; skin that was creased and leathery; tightly-drawn lips that emphasized an arrogant jawbone. He had powerful arms that dangled loosely as he lumbered toward me like a giant bear, and hands easily twice the size of mine, with stubby, fat fingers. I wondered how he could type without striking a half-dozen keys at one time. He was incongruous to the man I had only met through his writings, who often wrote poetry and observations about nature as delicate and sensitive as a flower petal. His first words to me were: "My God, boy, you look ghastly." His voice boomed stentoriously as if placed inside a cavern, and he chuckled and snorted as if I had missed a private joke.

He drove to Sauk City with his sandaled foot glued to the gas pedal. I asked him if the car had brakes. He laughed. "Crawl into the back seat if you're nervous. I've already wasted an hour picking you up when I could have been hunting for the morels. We've had more rain than is usual this time of year."

Every May, August took an escape from writing to hunt this mushroom of connoisseurs, gathering thousands of them and stringing them up to dry so he could feast off his cache with relish for another year. For two weeks every May Donald Wandrei, a writer of occasional macabre stories, would come from St. Paul, and together they would hie to the mountains, armed with baskets and notebooks of lore on the morel they had acquired over the last thirty years. The morel grew only during that month near the base of elm trees having reached a particular stage of decay. The ground must be damp, but too much rain was disastrous, for they grew overnight and could perish within hours. 1962 was

not proving a "vintage" year, and August spoke with a disappointing sadness of our hiking the next day.

His Walden West had just been published the previous fall and I asked him how it was selling. "About as well as I expected it would. It's much too meditative for a world raised on television. Even the critics are being stupid about it. I don't think the book got more than two or three really intelligent and perceptive reviews. The rest were fatuously comparing me to Thoreau which, if it wasn't so obvious, I would have to say was shrewd of them."

I asked him if he was bitter because of the comparison or in spite of it.

"They missed the point, the damned fools, they missed the very thing that was right under their stupid noses. I didn't write the book over a period of fourteen years to imitate Thoreau's Walden. I tried to show with the little talent I have that every person no matter how important or unknown has a private Walden of his own--a burden or a joy or whatever that makes him into the person he is.

"Man is basically a lonely person who has to find comfort in the company of other lonely people because he is either too ignorantly blinded or selfish or insecure to pay much attention to his roots. Man has become too restless to create change for its own sake, to look for something that might make him a happier person for an illusory hour or two. Don't read into this that I am against change--it is as necessary as eating and sleeping. But don't throw aside the old values, and more importantly, your pride and your heritage. The older I get the fewer people I meet who are still imbued with a sense of humor and capable of laughing at themselves. That's what I found important enough to say, and a lot of other things I had a need to write down."

He seemed pleased that I liked his Sac Prairie stories better than his detective or macabre fiction, although he was quick to say that "my effectiveness as an artist has been diminished by my human sympathy, my horror of violence --little of that's in my books." His statement came to mind several years later when I ran across an "Esquire" piece about August and two other regionalists by Sinclair Lewis, who wrote:

"If he is writing a love story, juast as he has managed to coax you into some interest as to whether she will or she won't, he has to interrupt the tale to give you a bulletin on the growth, at that moment, of the anemones, buttercups, hay crop and crab apple trees, to record the twenty-seven of thirty-nine varieties of local birds that have now arrived from the South, and to list the stars visible that evening. Whoever gave Derleth that Manual of Astronomy for Tiny Tots did him a grave mischief....Yet, if August Derleth could ever, by some unusually strong magic, be persuaded that he isn't half as good as he thinks he is, if he would learn the art of sitting still and using a blue pencil, he might become twice as good as he thinks he is--which would about rank him with Homer."

I recalled his words, as I said, because very often in his historical novels about Wisconsin's fight for statehood in the early 19th century, important events like Indian battles, murder, arson and other assorted violence were always shrugged off with the barest possible space and he would break off to describe the flight of a hawk.

When we reached the outskirts of Sauk City, August cut over to Water Street to show me the house he was born in, and a lot of other houses that were already familiar to me through his books. He spoke peacefully as if they were the most important places on earth. We spent the next two hours traveling to Blackhawk Lookout, Wright's Valley, Ganser Hills, the Mill Bluff, Hiney's Slough and the many other landmarks along the Wisconsin River that feature so prominently in his stories that his Saga formed a lasting impression on me. me.

What I liked then about August's writings, and which has grown into a firm conviction so many years after my youthful indescretions, was his quiet, unpretentious story-telling style. It didn't matter whether I was reading one of his prosaic Gus Elker tales in Country Growth or Sac Prairie People, or his darkly brooding novelettes in Place of Hawks, or one of his countless tales of the macabre like "The Return of Andrew Bentley;" there was an elegant, poetic flow of words that held me spellbound from the first page to the last. He was a master of superb characterization, with a keenly-honed insight into the frailities of human nature, and his portraits of the men and women who lived along the banks of the Wisconsin River in the Sac Prairie of his fiction--how they had come to terms with life, love, hope, tragedy, courage, violence, irony and greed--were more understanding and compassionate than any books I had ever read before.

August wrote his share of stinkers, but what author hasn't? Sweet Genevieve he inscribed to me as "Wisconsin Corn," and The Shadow in the Glass as "my dullest novel." He dismissed his macabre and detective stories, with only a few minor exceptions, as utter bilge. He wrote them to make money, he explained, and because they enabled him to live fairly comfortably so he could be free of obligations, enjoy hiking in the wilderness, and write his Sac Prairie epics which gave him the greatest pleasure.

In later years, when I got to know him better through our letters, innumerable telephone conversations, our visits, and when our lives became more enmeshed in joint literary ventures, the paradoxical quality of August manifested itself more severely and we we were frequently at odds. One time, when my youthful zeal was bursting with ideas of things I wanted to write about, he cautioned: "Don't turn out another Derleth who stands near the top at building up a quite minor talent into an impressive monstrosity." On another occasion I sent him a carbon of a literary profile I had written and he said: "You know how to write, but your organization stinks," and spent a page and a half tearing me to pieces.

A further episode comes to mind when, after reading a particularly galling piece of ultra-liberal drivel in the "New York Times Magazine," I wrote a twenty page letter that I duplicated and sent to whomever irritated me at the time (including the author of the Times piece), and August commented at his acerbic worst. Somewhere in my files the letter still sizzles. When I protested that he had been a bit harsh, he replied that that was my problem. I think letters like that served to temper my own feelings about criticism and writing more than I could hearn from any textbook or classroom.

August was always fond of controversy, especially if he was at the hub of the gossip. When life became intolerably mundane he would seek out lecture engagements to break the monotony of his work. He loved nothing better than to bait the sewing circles who attended his lectures, or the students and would-be writers who flocked to his occasional seminars at the University of Wisconsin. His lecture fees ranged somewhere between $200-300, depending on his mood. If the occasion demanded that he wear something other than his wrinkled slacks, jersey pullover shirt, bright socks and sandals, he would send a printed card stating that the group could have his services as a lecturer in any dress form; and he listed $50 for a suit, $25 for a jacket, $10 for a white shirt, $5 for a tie, and so on. If he didn't think he could have malicious fun with a certain audience he would jack up his fee astronomically to discourage them.

August also had a penchant for writing letters to newspapers and to public officials when they said things that irritate him. He would sometimes write letters to newspapers and to public officials when they said things that irrita-

ted him. He would sometimes write letters simply to stir up a furor and the Capitol Times, for whom he was literary editor for thirty years, gave him all the space he desired. As Ted Olsen, a fellow writer in Wisconsin, observed in a recent issue of the newsletter published by the Raconteurs: "August could be rude, tactless, and have damned little regard for other people's feelings. And unfortunately it was this side of him that was most emphasized by public exposure. His acts of kindness and generosity--and they were many--were usually private and anonymous."

August was a "roaring exhibitionist," and on occasion he practiced his pukish humor on himself--particularly when he reviewed some of his own books. In 1941, when he published through New Directions a slim volume of erotic verse, And you, Thoreau, he reviewed the book under a pen name, thoroughly lambasting the author. Then he replied with an air of injured innocence attacking the critic, and for weeks kept the incident alive with pro and con letters.

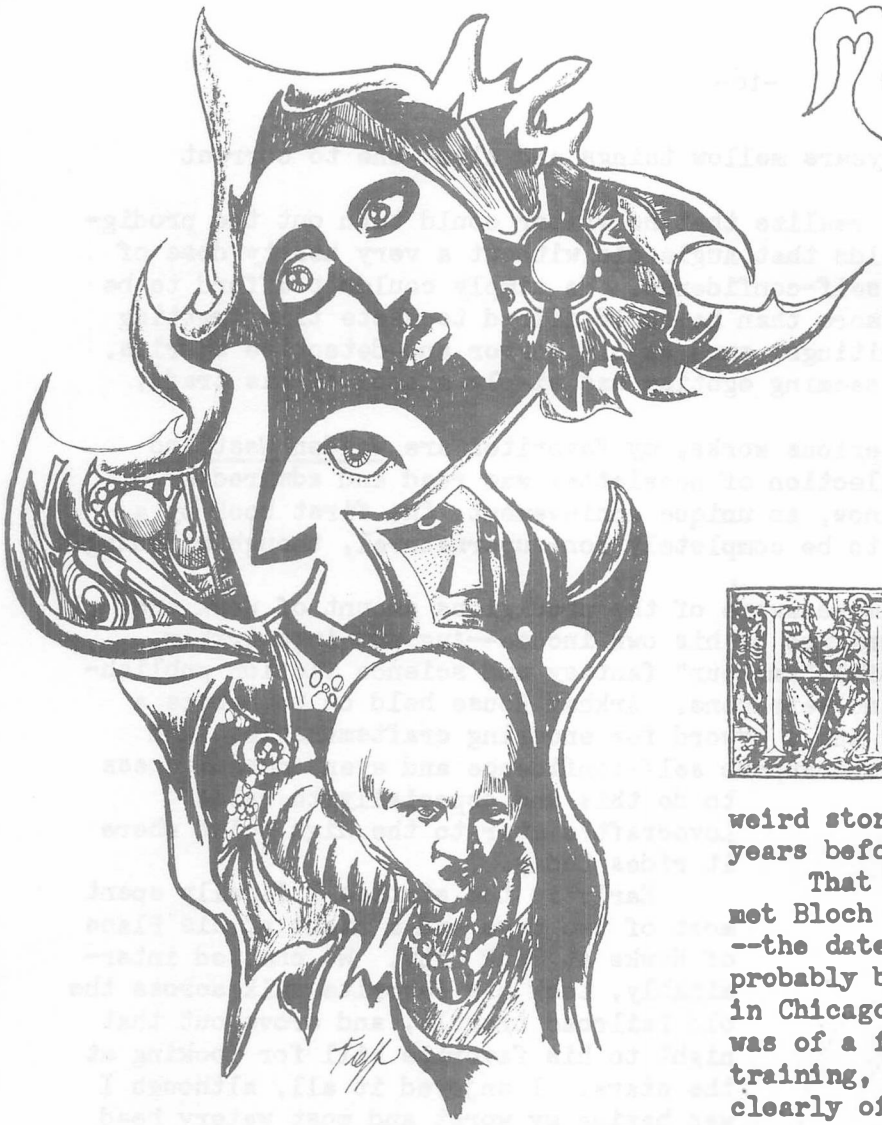
When The Shadow in the Glass was published, he attacked the book as being mercilessly dull, and urged readers not to waste their time with it. The publisher, Duell, Sloan & Pierce, was rankled by this unwanted publicity, but the Associated Press picked it up as a feature and the book sold fairly well in spite of the author's own criticism.

More recently, in 1969, August sent me the manuscript of another historical novel, The Wind Leans West, which we planned to publish under my Candlelight Press imprint. He had written the novel some fifteen years earlier under interesting circumstances I shall write about on a later occasion. He discouraged me from reading it because it was as dull as his biographical novel of Nelson Dewey, Wisconsin's first governor (The Shadow in the Glass), and probably the most pedestrian thing he had ever written. I told him I fell asleep after seventy pages, and it surprised him that I didn't yawn after the title page. The book was duly published and Publish ers' Weekly" afforded it an enthusiastic review. "Best Sellers," "Library Journal," "Milwaukee Journal" and the others panned it, but praising the historical accuracy of the book while relegating it to the textbook shelves. August began his review in the Capital Times by quoting the PW piece in its entirety, and then followed with his expected dunning, saying "there's no accounting for taste." Needless to say, the sales were better than we expected.

In the last two or three years our relationship changed. While I willingly accepted him for what he was, he still criticized me snidely now and then to keep me on my toes. I never failed to spot the humor, as he knew I would. That was August, and after so many years I really wouldn't want him any other way. We had become businesslike. Due to his instigation I put myself into hock over my ears and formed a publishing company specializing in regional and literary books, and August was the center of it, helping me to distribute certain titles through his own publishing venture, Arkham House.

I needed him because I could sell his books without having to promote them, and he needed my outlet to take up the slack in his own publishing output because other publishers no longer found him profitable. Save for anthologies and juvenile books, it had been that way for twenty years, and bit by bit we began to resurrect some of his old masterpieces and launch them into print. We did Wisconsin Country, Collected Poems; and newer pieces like The Three Straw Men, A House Above Cuzco, Return to Walden West, which stirred up a lot of critical interest. He sent me others which I haven't published yet which are equally good and deserve to be recognized. August always predicted that if he had any coming into his own to do, it would be after he had left the mortal coil--which is the American way.

Continued on page 82.



My Contacts With Derleth

By FRITZ LEIBER

H. P. LOVECRAFT made August Derleth and myself aware of each other by circulating to members of his circle--Bloch, Kuttner, Derleth of course, and perhaps others--manuscript copies of one or more of my weird stories and a few of my poems three years before anything of mine saw print.

That was in 1936. Next summer I met Bloch and Kuttner in Los Angeles. Next --the date escapes me--I was introduced, probably by Bloch, to Derleth, most likely in Chicago. My first impression of Augie was of a football lineman a touch out of training, thick-shouldered, smiling--a man clearly of great constitution and energy, whose geniality and friendliness more than cancelled out the impression of vast self-confidence bordering, it struck me then, on conceit, or at any rate a firm conviction that he stood first--"first among equals," like a Roman emperor.

Next came the wonderful information that Aug and Donald Wandrei were organizing Arkham House simply to put out the huge Lovecraft collection, The Outsider. I ordered two copies in advance, received them in the midst of WW II, and eventually sold one for $25.

Then in 1947 I was deeply beholden to Derleth for publishing my first book, Night's Black Agents, containing "Adept's Gambit," one of the stories HPL had circulated a decade earlier. Much later, this collection was the first Arkham House book to go into paperback.

And at about that time, or a little later, I wrote a longish article, "A Literary Copernicus," about Lovecraft's stories and style, for the Arkham book, Something about Cats, later following it with a couple of articles on the same topic for The Dark Brotherhood.

But at about the same time--now I can confess it--I became somewhat resentful of what I now had come definitely to think of as Derleth's conceit. What chiefly touched this off was his writing and publishing of posthumous collaborations with Lovecraft. Though hardly looking at them then, I wrote them off as inferior stuff. I was particularly piqued by Derleth's assertion that he had learned to do Lovecraft's style perfectly. I kept this opinion of mine strictly to myself.

But--thank the gods!--the years mellow things and allow one to correct faulty judgements.

First I came gradually to realize that no writer could turn out the prodigious amount of work in many fields that Augie did without a very hearty dose of egotism and a heart brimful of self-confidence. He simply couldn't afford to be modest and mock apologetic, no more than he could afford to waste time fretting over and polishing his minor writings, such as his horror and detective stories. I now suspect that much of his seeming egotism was simply a tool of his trade, consciously employed.

Incidentally, of all his serious works, my favorites are Walden West and Place of Hawks. The latter collection of novelettes was read and admired by Lovecraft and is, as far as I know, an unique achievement: the first book by a member of the Lovecraft Circle to be completely non-supernatural, though brooding with eerie atmosphere.

Second, I became more and more aware of the prodigious amount of work and good business thinking--and sacrifice of his own income--Aug put into Arkham. All over the country other hopeful "amateur" fantasy and science fiction publishers burgeoned for a few years and were gone. Arkham House held on to become a fully accepted publishing house and a byword for enduring craftsmanship. And once again, Aug simply had to have superb self-confidence and even combativeness to do this and especially to raise Lovecraft's star to the high point where it rides today.

Early in the sixties I finally spent most of two days and a night at his Place of Hawks at Sauk City. We chatted interminably, took his favorite walk across the old railroad trestle, and drove out that night to his favorite hill for looking at the stars. I enjoyed it all, although I was having my worst and most watery head cold of the past few decades. Perhaps because of this, Aug lectured me mildly on my smoking.

That evening I was driven to a Chinese-American restaurant where I had a moderate though excellent dinner, while watching somewhat bug-eyed as Augie casually and methodically chomp down two salads, the biggest steak in the house, all the fixings and dessert--and then insist the waitress serve us the egg rolls she'd forgotten he'd ordered as appetizers.

An anecdote or two. A then-successful Chicago fantasy publisher suggested his house be amalgamated with Arkham. Aug replied, "No, I'd never team with you. You send telegrams and use airmail stamps."

Aug was asked to sign a petition for an airfield for Sauk City.

"Never! But I'd contribute money for an anti-aircraft gun to shoot 'em down!"

What a man!

My Friend Derleth

By RODERIC MENG

Y ASSOCIATION WITH August Derleth began in the summer of 1960 when I was fifteen years old. I was downtown in Sauk City one night when he saw me and asked me to go for a ride. I knew who he was and so promptly agreed. In retrospect, that ride turns out to have affected every day of my life since.

He wanted me to help him with his work and with Arkham House. In addition to packing books after school and at night, I was to take care of his yard. He lived on ten acres of property just outside the village limits, and the lawn mowing, leave raking and burning and cleaning up after windstorms with all the branches that came down was a significant piece of work. In addition I was to act as chauffer, since driving was not one of Derleth's loves. He also explained that it would be useful to him if I would take typing in high school as soon as possible.

Since I was mowing lawns at the time I jumped at the chance to take such a job, to say nothing about working for such an important man. The atmosphere of employer and employee disapeared shortly after I started working there. I used to kid him that he was the aristocrat and I the loyal servant. In fact, our personalities fit together well. I began to be indoctrinated into his way of thinking and the way he lived.

He seemed to be a great example to follow. There were many important things in our relationship not connected with our daily operations. That first ride we took was the first of hundreds of rides together in which we watched the stars or the satellites go over, and in which I came to share some of the love of nature which is such an important part of his writing. Girls were also very important to me, and often times he provided advice on how to deal with those creatures.

What he said my responsibilities would be pretty much turned out to be the case. I did take typing in high school my sophomore year and got to be pretty good at it. He took advantage of it and put me to work typing manuscripts, ninety per cent of which were always Lovecraft letters. I typed Lovecraft letters until I thought I had grown up knowing not only August Derleth, but H.P. Lovecraft as well. It was just amazing. I thought that job would never end.

I graduated and enrolled at the University of Wisconsin which I attended for four and a half years. When I went away to college he still needed someone to take over the responsibility of packing books, which is a daily chore. He tried several young fellows, including my brother, for different periods of time. I came home on weekends and at Christmas so I was still an employee of Arkham House, even though I was at the university thirty miles away.

In high school I had already learned from him that you can't do everything in this world, you have to make some choices. While I wasn't an avid athlete, I still had the normal boy's interest in basketball, etc., but I quickly gave them up, not because he forced me to, but because I had to make the decision of either working for him or playing basketball, baseball and football.

It wasn't too hard for me to make that choice, and by the same token when I went to the university I realized I had a good thing, a job pretty much suited to my own hours but one that I couldn't ignore from summer to summer. I gave up a

number of social activities, not staying around the campus on weekends, but coming back to Sauk City. It wasn't a sacrifice though. Yes, I packed books and did a lot of typing, but quite often I drove him to Madison because he wanted to see a movie and go out to eat--the two luxuries he allowed himself. It was a varied job, and those trips were among the benefits.

Two highlights of my working with him were longer expeditions, one in 1965 and the other in 1966. In 1965 I drove him to the East coast. The last time he had been there was about 1943 or so since he didn't leave his homeland too often. I drove him to New York, where he met with a couple of associates from Duell, Sloan & Pierce, which was publishing some of his books at the time. We stopped in to see some Arkham authors who lived out there, and went up to see Walden Pond in Concord. It was something like a two week vacation, and all I had to do was drive and eat good meals and take in all I could.

The following year, as soon as I got back from school, we took his two children (which he was awarded after he divorced his wife in, I believe, 1958) to California. One of the highlights for them was that they got to see Disneyland twice. Two of the important people I met during the visit were Ray Bradbury and Robert Bloch. We attended a few parties while we were there, but mostly stayed away from that and took in a lot of sightseeing. On the way back we stopped in Yellowstone.

I graduated in January, 1968 and, since I had been thinking about what I was going to do about my military obligation, got into a reserve unit at once. I stayed working for Aug until I got called up to go to basic training in July. During the ten years I had been working there we had both been thinking what it would be like for us not to be around one another any more. I wondered what it would be like having a new job, and he must have though about my not being there to help him.

You might wonder why I didn't consider staying there. He neither encouraged nor discouraged me from staying, but I guess we just assumed I would not. While Arkham House had been doing better and better over the years, he just didn't think he could afford to pay me the competitive wage I could demand by going someplace else. But it wasn't only money. Neither of us was sure, I think, that it would be the best thing for me to automatically stay at Arkham House when I graduated. We both felt I should at least get out and try something else.

I had a bachelor's degree in business administration and was accepted for a management training program in Milwaukee. So as soon as I got out of basic training I moved there, about a hundred miles away, and stayed two and a half years until May, 1971 when I came back to be with Arkham House and August Derleth full time.

I worked there for ten years as a helper, not as an editorial assistant. There had never been any attempt to introduce me to all of the facets necessary to take it over; that was what we were going to begin doing in May, when I came back full time. I was going to learn the whole shot, and really, I guess I know everything except the literary or editorial end. We would have had a beautiful relationship, with me handling all of the business angles, and with him only taking his time for editing and publishing what he wanted to publish.

It was just a godsend that I came back May first. My original intent had been to come back August first. You can imagine what that would have meant to me, to come back then and have him gone before I returned. I was at summer camp during the two weeks before he died, and I never did see him. I left on June 18th for Ft. Leonard Wood, Mo. and I got back July fourth, the day he died. The last time I saw him alive was the 18th, but I did talk to him Saturday night, July 3. He seemed tired that night, but there was no indication, just more of the same way he had been feeling that whole month.

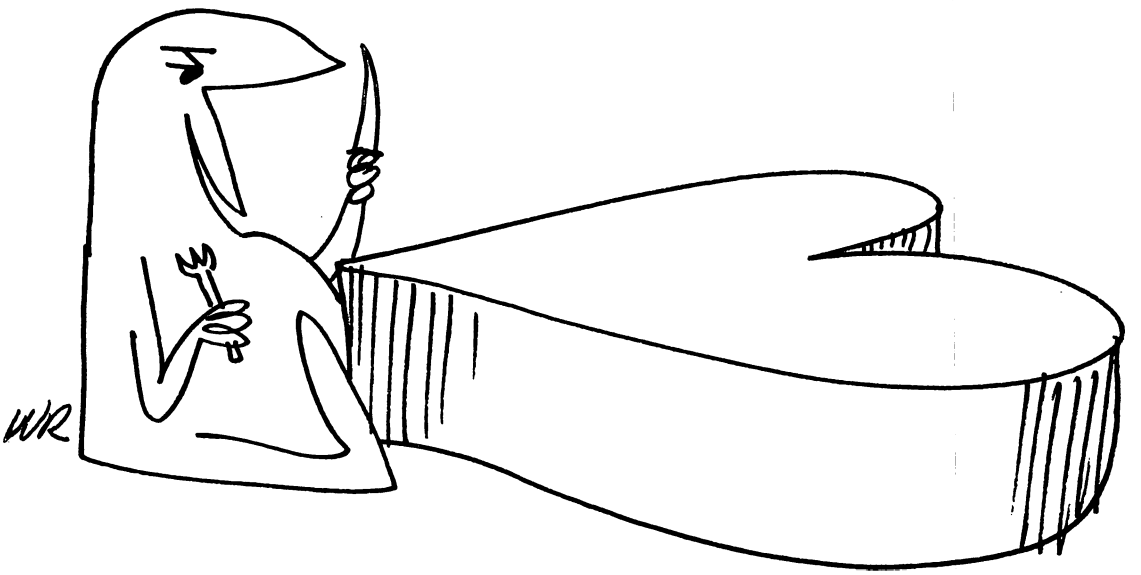
How did he have time for it all? He was an author, a poet, a publisher, a book reviewer. He taught at the university and lectured, and last but not least he was a father. This last role was probably the most important to him. It's been said before; he was a dynamo, a factory, easily ten people in one, and he did all these things not one at a time, but simultaneously. And I know how it's done, even though I can't do it. He said, "It's not because I'm a genius, but because I have discipline." Only through discipline can one get that much out of oneself.

Discipline and the importance of time were impressed on him when he was a young boy by a favorite nun at a parochial school he attended. Discipline was the very key to his whole being, and explains why he was able to get so many things done. Both qualities are emphasized in the essays of Thoreau and Emerson, particularly in Emerson's essays on "Self Reliance" and "Responsibility." Responsibility was yet another quality that August had to a superhuman degree. He was responsible to a point that I thought superceded the requirement at times.

August started writing, as you probably know, at age thirteen, and sold his first story at fifteen. It started then, his careful use of time, and was in practice when he was 62, right up to the time he died. When he was writing his juvenile novels like The Moon Tenders, his children were very young, and the only time of the day when he could do his creative work without interruption was from 4 o'clock in the morning until 7, the time they got up for school. He did this every day. He was genius enough to be able to turn out books of that sort in three weeks in first draft for the publisher, but the discipline is still there.

He was the same way about time, being punctual. Where some people start getting a little worried or up tight if someone is a half hour late, with Aug if you were three minutes late you were likely to hear about it. He was a martinet when it came to time, and rightfully so, since it was his most precious commodity. He always told his children "waste my money, but not my time; you can always get the money back."

One thing that was very important to him was nature. I said he got up at four to write; he got up at 5:30 to go on hikes. He'd go walk down the railroad bridge and the marshes to listen to the birds and make his observations and notes. He'd sit there and write poetry. The only "vacation" he



took was in the month of May, when he would hunt mushrooms. Of course, that was in addition to running Arkham House, and meant that instead of working fifteen hours a day he would work eighteen. Then every day in the month, unless it was raining too hard, he would be out hunting mushrooms. He was an expert at hunting the area, and probably had done it for thirty years. He knew just where to get them, something a lot of local people would have liked to find out, but of course he never told them. This was hard work. I went with him, and I was 36 years younger, but it tired me out, so I don't know how he managed.

Derleth was a big man, physically as well as in stature. He was almost six feet tall and his weight, I'd say, was a good 225. He was an excellent physical specimen, barrel-chested, very husky, rugged looking. But he also had a unique warmth and kindness; his eyes told you what kind of a man he was.
fifties when he first went to the hospital. The long stay was in 1969. It started out to be not much more than to have his gall bladder removed. They didn't think they had got it all, a stone had passed or something, and one complication led to another. He developed a fever and infection; he had an abcess around his lungs for awhile. He was in the hospital for 87 days, and I was certain at one point that he wasn't going to make it.

When he left the hospital he weighed 170 pounds. This would make me look heavy, but it made him look like a skeleton. Naturally he was weak when he got home again, but he was right at his desk. There wasn't any recovery or transition back to the old August Derleth, although he did walk around with a cane at first. It was like, "Well, I'm home and I've got to get at this mail." It was pretty well stacked up, but not as bad as you might think, because his daughter, who was 15 at the time, did a wonderful job of opening the mail, filling orders, and seeing that the books were shipped.

I was in Milwaukee during this seige, but I went to Madison every weekend and stayed with him, going from there to Sauk City and taking care of what I could. But there was still a hell of a lot of things that only he could do. Slowly, slowly he gained his health back. His weight came back faster, and the doctors told him flatly they wanted him at 190. I knew this was impossible, but figured if he stayed at 200 or 210 it would be wonderful. Well, he didn't.

This weight thing, after the doctors got a hold of him, was a curse for him. It was frustrating because there really wasn't anything he could do about it. He could rationalize that he wasn't eating anything he wasn't supposed to, or that he wasn't eating too much, but somehow the scales always seemed to gang up on him and he was more than he should be. Finally he just quit telling me because I razzed him, I suppose, too often about it. Whether he was overweight or not he was back to looking like the August Derleth everyone had known before, which was a good thing to see happen after watching him dwindle away in the hospital.

He got out in November and went mushrooming in May. For a while there he felt he was in excellent health, even better than ever, but in about 1971 he started to get tired. We didn't know whether it was physically or mentally, but the day was trying for him. He would sometimes tell us it was other things, but he pretty much had to admit to himself that something wasn't right. Something was wrong, and he just couldn't carry on as he did 20 years ago. That was something that bothered him, especially with the memory of having spent three months in the hospital just two years before. I think he would rather have died than go back to the hospital for another 87 days. He wasn't a "good patient," and it was a traumatic experience to have to lie there watching that much time go by.

It was difficult for him to face the fact that he wasn't what he used to be. It wasn't that he had a death wish, though, because he often said he hoped he

could live long enough to hiss his children into their majority. He almost did that. His daughter is now 17, and his son 15. It bothered him tremendously that he had to miss so much work. He was always an incredibly busy man, not finishing one thing and going on to the next, but doing five things at one time. After he left the hospital he got back on the treadmill fast, but it was almost like a feverish rush to finish things. He worked on projects he had planned for a long time, trying to round things out. Arkham House published, it seems to me, a hell of a lot after his illness. I think he wanted to build Arkham House up and have a good stock if he did die.

I suppose this leads me into saying what plans we have for Arkham House now. Most of our plans are included in the broadside (inside back cover) which we sent to fans who wondered what the hell happened for two months after his death when we couldn't ship any books. As I said, he was planning things, getting things ready. In our newest catalogue he has a list of books coming out, and our immediate plan is to finish the plan he left us with. That will last us a few years I'm sure.

Some of the things he had listed were things he hadn't even started, things like HPL: Notes Toward a Biography. The Watchers out of Time is another one I'm not sure about. To our fans in the outside world it seems we should know by now, but there's more than Arkham House involved in the transition since July 4, and it doesn't make it any easier that his children are still minors. We do have a nice stock list built up; there are about eight Lovecraft titles, and we certainly are going to finish the selected letters series. I think there will be five volumes of that. No one around here is an experienced editor. Don Wandrei was not just a correspondent, but a very good friend. His services are available to us, and I need not tell you how comforting this is, for the time being at least, until we find the unknown in the equation.

Aug thought of himself as a contemporary Thoreau. One of the things he liked to be remembered for was Walden West, which came out ten years ago. There was a sequel called Return to Walden West which came out in 1970, and a third one, The Annals of Walden West, was supposed to come out, but I don't know how far along he got on it. He lived on the outside of Sauk City on heavily wooded property, and was very close to the pulse of Sac Prairie--as his novels testify--at the same time he was above it.

One of his favorite quotes from Thoreau is the one that's going to be put on his monument: "I wish to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, to see if I could learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover I had not lived." This quotation is in the introduction to Walden West, which he considered his best work. I am convinced Derleth lived the way he wanted to, when it came time for him to die he hadn't accomplished all he wanted to, but it was more than most men do. Even though he had plans that were not finished, by the time he died he had lived, and far more fully than most of us ever will. His was a simple life, a life alone, not parties and television watching and football games, but being out in the woods or in his studio working.

I have tried to get across the idea that my admiration and respect for him was first of all for August Derleth the man. He was, in my eyes, a man worthy of such respect that he was a wonderful friend to have. I had secondly the admiration everyone had for him as a creative person, as a very dynamic and talented fellow. But my experiences with him were as a friend's would be, and now sometimes I am looked upon as more than my experience with him enables me to be--I am looked upon as his successor, the next in line. That is true to a degree, but mostly my experiences were mostly those of knowing him as a man and true friend.

DERLETH AND THE STARS

By HIS ASTROLOGER

LATE JULY, 1969, August Derleth told me that his doctor had arranged for him to enter a hospital in Madison, Wisconsin on August 5 for gall bladder surgery. After having agreed to this date, which was dictated by his doctor's schedule, hospital's bookings, and August's lecture and teaching program, he asked me to give an astrological judgement as to the suitability of that date. A bit of afterthought, but let's have some fun.

I welcomed this opportunity--I had for many a year wondered what made that amazing, that incredible character tick. I set up and progressed his horoscope to ascertain his prospects for his "personal" year, i.e., Feb. 24, 1969-70.

As you are probably aware, "local" time is plus or minus the Eastern or Central, etc. time, by an amount depending on how far one is from the meridian--e.g., 75° W., 90° W. etc. This is "local mean time"--the "average" time. Astrologers use Greenwich Mean Time, based on Greenwich Observatory in England, the 0° meridian. Actual solar time varies from the conventional or Greenwich Mean Time. I, and some other astrologers, consider it self evident that if there is anything at all in astrology, the figure should be calculated with reference to actual solar noon, not some average or conventional convenience-assumption.

The plus or minus is, at some seasons, as much as 16 minutes. This makes a difference of four degrees in the mid-heaven determination, the M.C. degree. In a great many instances, four degrees, plus or minus, make no important difference in ordinary delineations, analyses. You will, however, note that the first degree of Aries (0°53') is rising--is the "Ascendant," the ascending degree of the ascending sign. Ignoring the minus 13 min. 35 sec. correction to convert L.M.T. (local Mean Time) to true solar time would have put (roughly) 3° Capricorn at M.C. and put Mars into the IX House.

A planet in the IX-VI-III-XII is not as powerful <u>in manifestation</u> as is one in the X-VII-IV-I. It is instead latent, or you might say it operates through the "unconscious," a background influence. With his ferocious drive, a self-destructive drive, August Derleth could not have had Mars in any "weak" house.

The time given, 8 a.m., is in the "round figures" which were almost universal in my time and his. I have not rectified his horoscope. This is done by calculating, on the basis of his age at death of father, at date of marriage, at birth of daughter, birth of son, etc. what August's birth time probably was in fact, rather than the given 8 a.m. It is unlikely that I will undertake any such task. I do not have the data, and also I do not have the heart for the job.

The chart on the next page is transcribed from my work book. Natal is in black, the inner markings. Progressed Feb. 23, 1969-Feb. 24, 1970, his 61st year, is in red, the outer markings.

The basics were good: Progressed Sun, harmonious to Natal Sun; Progressed Venus, harmonious to Natal Sun; Progressed Venus, harmonious to Progressed Sun. With such a nice foundation he'd have nothing but the routine annoyances of all hospitalization!

I noticed some things which were not quite so auspicious. Glance at the natal chart (inner circle) and see that Jupiter, who rules health and healing, is in the VI House, that of health. At August's birth Jupiter had been "retrograde." Let us not dally to explain astrological jargon, and an <u>astronomical</u> impossibility. Call "retrograde" a hindrance and carry on.

August Derleth.

name Not Rectified

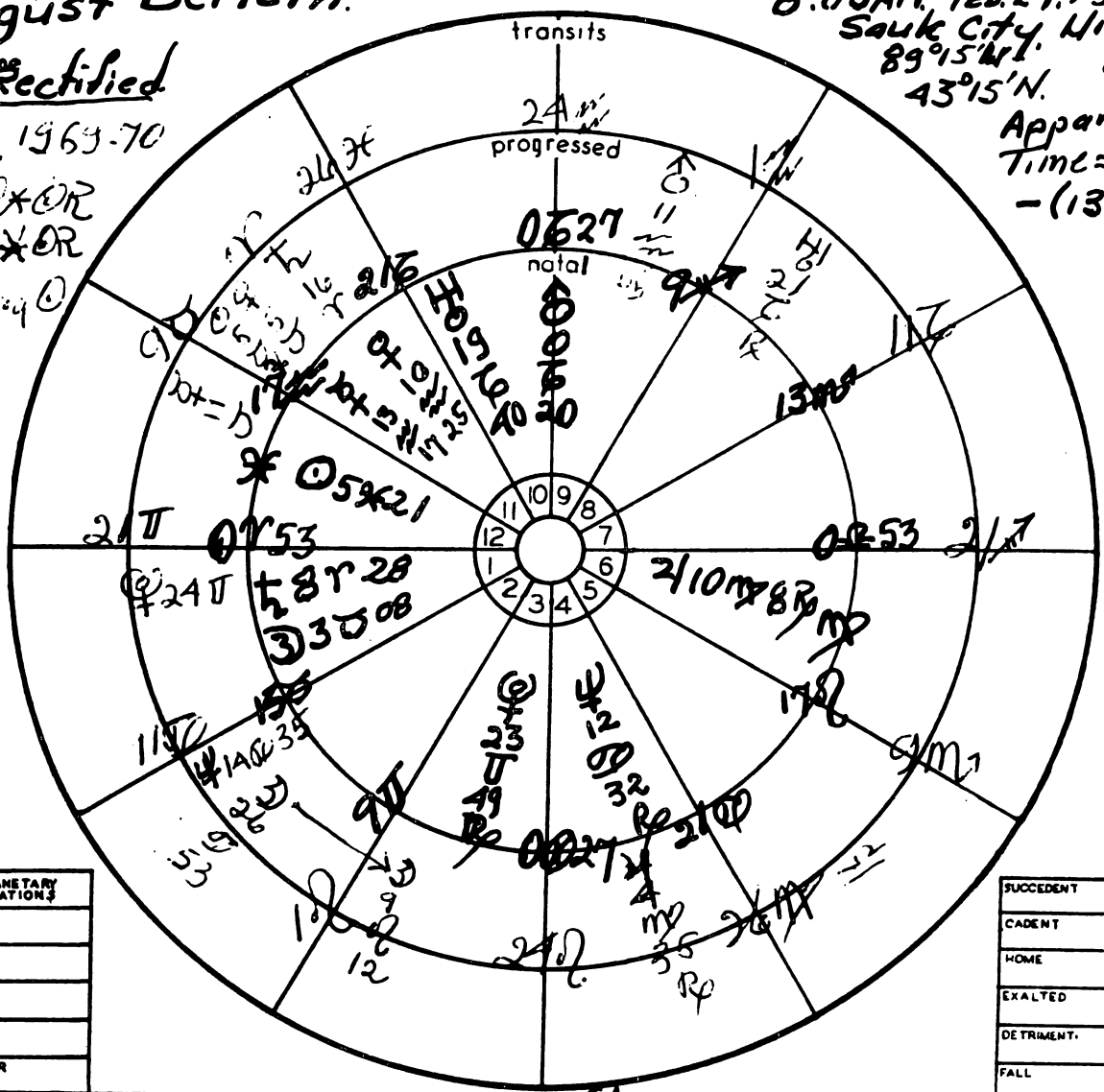
Prog. 1969-70

Prog ☽ ✶ ☉ R

Prog ♀ ✶ ☉ R

☌ Prog ☉

8:00 AM. Feb. 24. 1909.
Sauk City, Wis.
89°15' W. date
43°15' N.
Apparent Time = LMT − (13m 35s)



PLANETARY LOCATIONS
FIRE
EARTH
AIR
WATER
ANGULAR

SUCCEDENT
CADENT
HOME
EXALTED
DETRIMENT.
FALL

long.	decl.	☊	⊕	m.c.	asc	☽	☿	♀	☉	♂	♃	♄	♅	♆	♇	year	month	☽ prog. aspects	transits
		☊														1969	Mar	26 ☉ 53	
		⊕															Apr.	27 ☉ 55	
		m.c.															May	28 ☉ 56	
		asc.															June	29 ☉ 58	
	8N55	☽						□	✶	△	⚻						July	2 ♌	Eclipse.
	14S53	☿						☌				✶					Aug	3 ♌ 01 □ ☽ R.	☽ ✶ ♃ Aug 27.
	16°27	♀										✶			⚻		Sept	4 ♌ 03 Eclipse	☽ 27 ♉ 27 □ ♅ Sept. 25
	9°21	☉							✶	☍				△			Oct.	5 ♌ 04	
	23°37	♂															Nov.	6 ♌ 06	
	9°08	♃											△	✶			Dec.	7 ♌ 07	
	1°N18	♄												□		1970	Jan	8 ♌ 09	
	22°26	♅												☍			Feb	9 ♌ 12.	
	2°34	♆																	

16°N05 ♀

In his "retrogradation" Jupiter had moved to 4°35' Virgo. At some time past Jupiter had been exactly in "opposition" to the Sun. "Opposition" is adverse. And, in August's chart, the Sun rules the VI House. The tenant, Jupiter, clashing with the landlord! This clash began about 1956.

Mars, progressing to 11°5' Aquarius, has gone almost a degree beyond a mildly unfavorable aspect (quniconx, 150 degrees) to Natal Jupiter. This minor aspect, which one ordinarily ignores--after all, a grown man cannot use a measure shorter than a yardstick!--did have a peculiar significance, this once at least.

Mars signifies, symbolizes, represents--pick your own word!--desire, energy, self-assertion, mental and physical force. This much applies to every horoscope. But August has Aries rising, and Mars is the ruler of Aries. Thus Mars, his "personal" star, his astrological symbol, his "ruler," has moved to a mildly adverse position in relation to Jupiter, health.

Begin to get it? Mars, August himself, has been over-taxing himself, expending himself, and to a destructive degree. This aspect was exact the previous year. I suggest that forces set in motion, as Mars (i.e., August Derleth) approached the mildly unfavorable relationship with Jupiter were critical That the present need for surgery was the result of over-doing things the previous year, which of course was only the climax of many years of over-driving.

August's year might indeed be rich and rewarding. But that did not preclude a sticky time of it, undergoing surgery. Then, his question was, specifically, "Is August a favorable month?"

(1) See chart, Progressed Moon, August: a square with Natal Moon. That month is out! You're asking for a rugged session. Tell the knife-artist to set a better date.

(2) August 27, an eclipse in 4° Pisces opposes, is adverse to Progressed Jupiter, in 4° Virgo. I remind you that Jupiter rules healing, health. He is in the Progressed IV House, that of termination, end of the problem, beginning of new problem. Death, that nasty word which every Occidental fears to use, is among the IV House subjects. This was a nice package for September!

(3) September 25, an eclipse, Moon 2° Aries, square Natal Mars at Midheaven. October is as bad as its immediate predecessors.

I suggested to August that his ailment might be more fun than surgery and/or hospitalization. Thinking otherwise, he went with the doctor's program. He spent 87 days in the hospital--August, September, October. Twice he was written off as expended.

The list of complications was impressive. It included some, if not all the standard foul-ups, infections and disasters built into hospitals. I do not have the itemized list he wrote in his first letter after discharge. No doubt it is over-securely filed, according to custom. But my diary entry for Nov. 14, 1969 reads, "August Derleth--letter--87 days hospital. 4 operations. pneumonia. Collapsed lung.--hepatitis--peritonitis--pleurisy--yeast disease--On critical list one month. Still wobbly and uncertain on feet...."

The ascertainable fact is that "minor surgery" nearly killed him, and that hospitalization lasted ten times as long as normal expectancy.

I must now tell you that I did not anticipate any such disaster, any such approaches to death. I simply did not like the look of things. I did not have a premonition. I did, as I squinted at the Lunar progressions, have a dark, depressing, squeamish moment, and the though flashed through my mind, "If this silly son of a bitch dies, I will be most awfully sad and sombre about it."

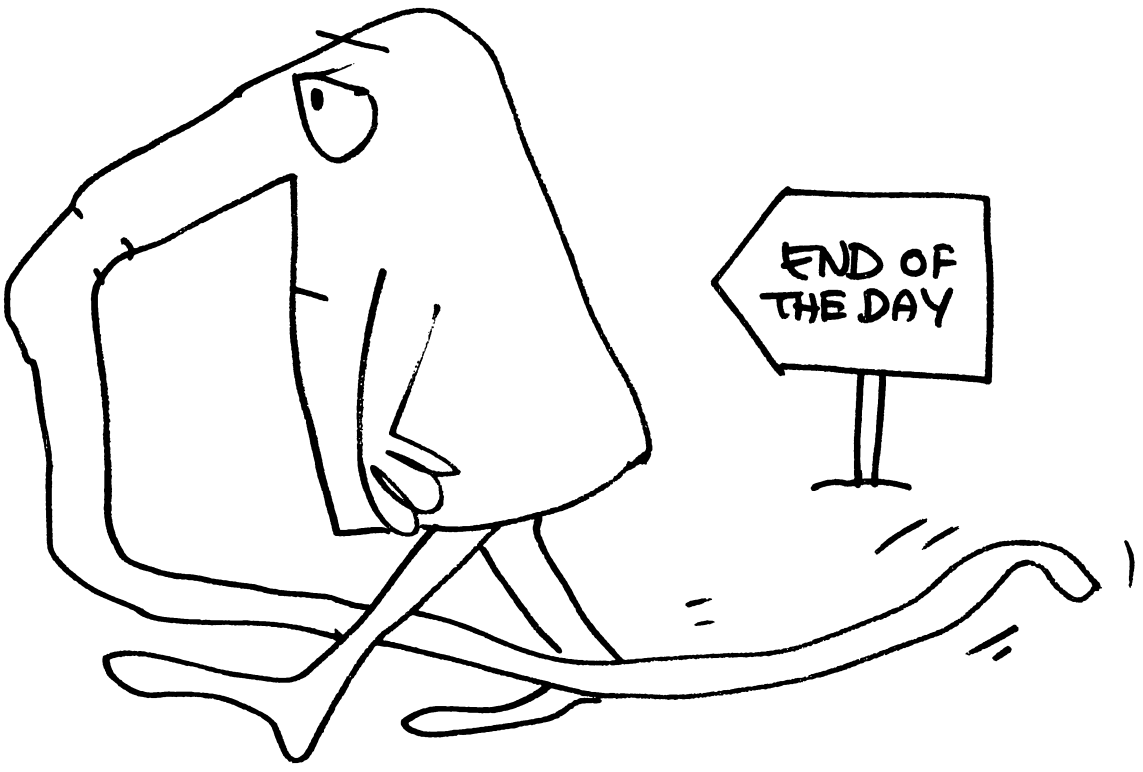
This was only for a moment.

My report to him was bland and conservative. Since he was going to go through with it regardless of what I said, why read him a horror story? Under the circumstances, even my mild little micro-horror thing, however short of the actual facts, would have been improper. On the other hand, no one in his right mind ever tried to get August to change his mind. Let him alone, and he may, finally, see the light quite on his own. Futile to try to frighten him. Can't be done, not that bull-ape, over-grown blacksmith's apprentice.

I do not have a carbon of the report I sent him. Several weeks ago, I mailed all the carbons relating to this astrological task and to its successors to the girl I call The Important Lady. She had shared the original writings with August. Because of his death, she no longer has access to his studio and the files.

Mid-1970, there was to be more surgery, this time for hernia, described as "ventral." August, impressed by the 1969 prediction, wanted an opinion. I said, "Such and such indications don't please me too much, but in view of your gripings about trusses, girdles and general annoyances, I can't realistically advise you to wait two or three years until all is idyllic." I did not tell him that this time, as I surveyed his progressed 1970-1 (February to February) chart, I did not have that flash of darkness, death, bereavement. The query simply did not seem as urgent or critical. I do not know why. Perhaps because it was anti-climatic! Astrologically, the situation no doubt had improved, but remember that on the face of things it was really not all that bad.

The way it worked out: the longest ventral incision a surgeon of 30 years experience had ever made. Ten days after surgery, August wrote that he was at home, doing well.



An interesting side-line query: how does August Derleth add up, how closely does the man-in fact agree with hhe one described in the natal delineation?

Here's a glimpse:

Mars, exalted in Capricorn, at midheaven, rules Aries, the Ascendant. Had August been a soldier, he would have been a general, and a good one, too. The way he met life and people is described by Mars.

Uranus in the X House--August had indeed the individualism, the creativity, the far-sightedness which that planet indicates.

Saturn rising, only a few degrees below the horizon: ambition, hard work, self-seeking-ness, never overlook a chance to further that tremendously important August Derleth!

Moon in Taurus: and you should see the Moon not only as physique, but as instincts, emotional pattern, all influenced by the down-to-earthness of Taurus, the stubbornness of that sign, the strongly physical expression of that sign. There is also Taurus as the home of Venus, beauty loving, in his case, the beauty of the earth. Read his Wisconsin scenes. Hardly a page which does not give us beauty-of-nature, of earth.

Sun in Pisces: sensitivity, versatility; the poet infusing the earthy, the grasping-ambitious, the conquering-dynamic, the far-sighted egotist.

Note too, Venus and Mercury shoulder to shoulder in Aquarius, X House, and the home of Uranus, altruist as well as autocrat.

He advised me to count on little from "Witchcraft and Sorcery" magazine. "Can't last. Can't pay enough to get <u>good</u> writers." And then sat down and did an original for May, 1971 issue. Pure strain altruism! The time and money he poured into that non-profit enterprise, publicizing his friend and mentor, H.P. Lovecraft--who but an utterly impractical and idealistic person, a dreamer, could have undertaken such a task in 1939? And he carried on year after year, with the assistance of Donald Wandrei of course, that most rugged business of all, editing and publishing the <u>Letters of HPL</u>.

Then, the Important Lady: though there was no marriage, the relationship was in effect, just that. This began, he told me, in 1968. Back-tracking I find that Progressed Mars had moved in conjunction with Natal Venus, in his year 1968-9. The stars do not quibble about conventions or legalities. They relate to the realities of life. So, note the VII House, with Libra on the cusp, that is, ruled by Venus. This does <u>not</u> mean that the girl is a Libra native. Symbolically, she is "mental-elegant-unconventional, with harmony and beauty as her ultimate criterion." I'll not complicate this by going into the Fifth House (impulse, the heart, romance) but, she fits very nicely indeed.

I now glance at her chart: the sign on the cusp of her VII House symbolizes August quite accurately as her "opposition number." I must abstain from giving any details and confine myself to saying that he and she were indeed well met. No doubt at all that the hero of the literary success story had much to offer the small-town girl so many years younger than he. No doubt either that she, tremendously important during the final three years of his life, revealed a galaxy of theretofore unrealized gifts and talents, worthy of all that he had to offer. She was the crown, the seal and signature of his life.

I applaud his good taste and his good fortune. That he and she were separated so soon was tragic. It is too soon for me to say to her that it is better to leave too soon than to linger too long. This I have learned, having lived long and experienced much, but this is not a knowledge to be grasped by the young and newly bereaved.

For the time, I brush aside my hard-won experience, and join the Important Lady in her sadness about my friend's death.

The Keeper Of The Flame

By FRANK BELKNAP LONG

THERE IS A BRANCH OF literature which has never ceased to be in danger of not receiving its rightful due for close to a century and a half, perhaps longer, both in America and in Europe. It is the literature of the strange, the wildly fanciful, the terrifying and, very often, the supremely beautiful. I'm not sure, but I believe it was Matthew Arnold who said that enduring works of art become imperishable through the persistent praises of the "passionate few" at first, sometimes for only a while, but usually for a number of years before their greatness becomes universally recognized.

This is particularly true of those high flights of human imagination which provide us with rare and resplendent visions of worlds lying just beyond the borderlands of the known, with their high mountain peaks gleaming in "the light that never was on sea or land."

There is something about such visions that often eludes the most discerning of critics, men and women who bring to an appreciation of the best that has been thought and felt in the realm of realistic fiction--as that term is commonly defined--a perceptiveness with which it would be impossible to quarrel. Why this is so I do not pretend to know. But it seems to be true, and it is especially puzzling in view of the fact that almost all of the English poets, and such "mainstream" novelists as Henry James, E.M. Forster and William Faulkner have excelled as well in the realm of supernatural horror and pure fantasy.

I will cite just one example. The last stanza of Keats' "Ode to a Nightingale" may well have attained the highest level of lyrical magnificence in English poetry--not even excepting the last stanza of "An Ode to a Grecian Urn"--and its beauty is shiningly strange, unearthly, unforgettable. The ages seem to fall away and we are back with the Grecian Gods at the dawn of the world. "Magic casements opening on the foam of perilous seas in faery lands forlorn" surely has much in common with Lord Dunsany's "Idle Days on the Yann" (which Yeats once said would have changed his entire literary career if he had encountered it in his early youth) and, yes, the very best of Poe, H.P. Lovecraft, Ray Bradbury, Robert Bloch and Clark Ashton Smith (more so in his early poetry than in his more widely known stories, memorable as these are.

In the realm of pure fantasy and supernatural horror the "passionate few" have been fewer than in any other branch of literature. For the past thirty years August Derleth had been the chief American guardian of this rare, imperishable flame, and that is the highest tribute that I could pay him, on a non-personal level.

On a more personal level I can only say that I have lost a friend whose like I never will see again and his passing has left a void which nothing, I fear, will ever fill.

Doctor Parker's Agent

By DEAN W. DICKENSHEET, B.S.I., P.S.I.

HEN THE NINTEEN-year old August Derleth wrote to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle to ask if he intended to write any further Sherlock Holmes stories, it was an action any one of us might have taken. When, receiving a noncommital reply, he circled a now-unknown date on his calendar with the notation "In Re: Sherlock Holmes," it could be ascribed to youthful enthusiasm and self-belief. But when he sat down on that date and wrote the first Solar Pons story, "The Adventure of the Black Narcissus," he installed himself in a place unique in American letters.

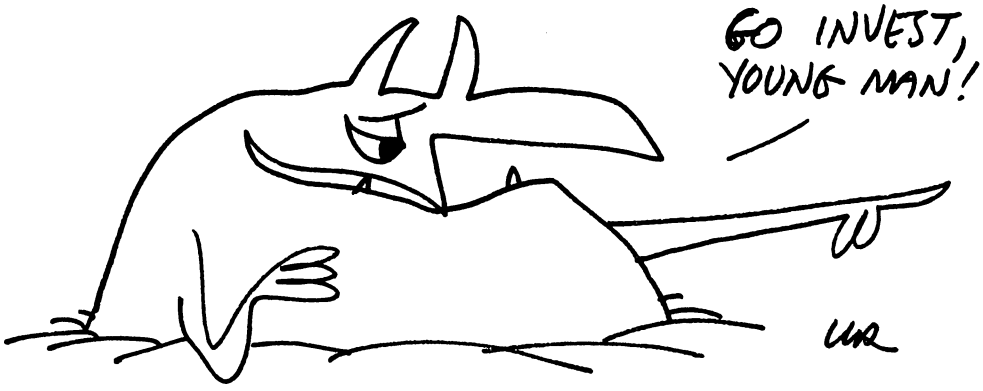
Sir Arthur thought even less of the then young Sherlockian scholarship than he did of Holmes as a character. He honestly believed that he had made Holmes too inhuman and featureless to provide any basis for external consideration. Derleth, however, brought the fire of the enthusiast to his authorship, and herein lay the basic difference between the burgeoning field of Sherlockiana and the body of Pontine researches which were to come.

I shall not here attempt to describe the records of the work of Solar Pons as recorded by Dr. Lydon Parker, save to note that there are, in collected form, six volumes of short stories, comprising 56 stories, two short novels, a volume of marginalia in two forms and a curious chap-book novelet. Derleth had published a handful of stories in the pulps of the late '20s and early '30s, and then had lost his market. He revived Pons to provided "The Adventure of the Norcross Riddle" for Ellery Queen's The Misadventures of Sherlock Holmes. He founded the curiously assorted firm of Mycroft and Moran, an imprint on his other presses, to publish the Pons volumes. (Mycroft and Moran published a few other excellent and unusual works of detective fiction, notably the first American edition of William Hope Hodgson's Carnacki The Ghost Finder). But all this is a matter of record.

It is his relationships with his readers which I shall discuss here. He was scrupulously fair in his dealings, charging the least possible prices for increasingly desirable books. He developed, often brilliantly, his readers suggestions as to what untold Holmes adventures should be the subjects of pastiche. But it was in his reactions to the inevitable "Praed Street Irregularism" that he was, in a way, the most admirable of all.

For August Derleth neither rankled at the mock-critical approach to his creations nor held himself distantly aloof. He rejoiced in them, revelled in them, and participated in them. When letters were written to such publications as "The Baker Street Journal," Derleth replied in the same mock-scholarly style. In addition to the Irregularish introductions in his collections (written by such Sherlockians as Vincent Starrett, Ellery Queen and Anthony Boucher), these books contained a putative chronology of the Pons adventures by Robert R. Patrick and a biographical note on Dr. (Cuthbert) Lyndon Parker by Michael Harrison

Continued on page 82.



A Day In Derleth Country

By LIN CARTER

TOWARD THE MIDDLE of June, 1971, my wife and I flew to Minneapolis to attend a local science fiction conference held annually there, called the Minicon, to which I had been invited as guest of honor.

My wife Noel had gone to college in Minneapolis and was eager to revisit the city and look up old friends, while I had never been to the Twin Cities before. So we decided to take a few extra days and do a bit of traveling and sight-seeing, stopping off for three days in Chicago on the way home.

We ended up visiting the midwest for eight days. I had been much too busy during the first half of the year to take anything remotely resembling a vacation. For one thing, I had been working night and day for the past four months on a major writing project; this was a full-length study of H.P. Lovecraft, of those of his friends and fellow-writers who had contributed to the literature of the Cthulhu Mythos, and of the Mythos itself. After all this work I was ripe for a rest and a bit of new scenery, so this trip became our vacation.

It was Noel who pointed out that August Derleth lived not very far from Minneapolis (as the airplane flies). Although I had been exchanging letters with Augie Derleth for the past seventeen years, we had never met. This looked like the perfect opportunity to do so. My travel agent informed me that the nearest city to Derleth's home town--Madison, Wisconsin--had an airport and was only fifty minutes flying time from Minneapolis. After a little juggling of schedules and hotel reservations, we decided to fly to Madison after the convention, spend the day of June 22 with Derleth, and fly out that evening for Chicago.

Derleth was delighted at the idea, and promised to meet us in Madison and drive us to Sauk City. He and I had been in almost constant touch the past four months while I had been researching my book on lovecraft. We had exchanged endless letters of questions and answers, long phone calls almost weekly, and he had recently taken the time out of his busy schedule to read and criticize the first one hundred and four pages of my Lovecraft manuscript.

Our plane arrived at Madison at 11:40 a.m., and Derleth and his secretary, Caitlin, met us at the gate. I recognized him instantly; he was exactly what I had expected him to be: a huge, burly man with a tanned face and graying, close-cropped straight hair, with twinkling eyes and an affable grin. He wore a short-sleaved bright red sports shirt, open at the throat, and slacks. He had lost a lot of weight during his recent serious illness and hospitalization, but was still a large man. Kay was an attractive, dark-haired girl in her middle or late twenties.

After lunch in the airport cafe, Kay drove us to Sauk City. The drive took about an hour and we chatted all the way. Noel, an Arkham House collector and Lovecraft buff, was as eager as I to meet Augie Derleth. She told him about the Victorian dolls-house she was working on, and was very impressed, having mentioned casually that the house was supposed to be the home of Sir Lionel Barton, at his appreciative chuckle and knowing comment that there should be a dacoit or two lurking in the shrubbery. (Sir Lionel is a character in a couple of the earlier Fu Manchu books, and of all the scores and scores of people who have seen or heard about the dolls-house, Augie was the only one who recognized the name.

Sauk City is a small, neat, pleasant town filled with handsome old farmhouses; we took a circuitous route, Derleth pointing out the homes of several real-life people who had served as models for leading characters in his Sac Prairie Saga novels. These would have meant more to me but I have never read his regional fictions; he did, however, point out the vacant lot which was the site of his weird yarn, "The Lonesome Place," which was disappointingly prosaic and unscary by daylight.

Place of Hawks, the home Derleth built for himself and his family, lies far back off a country road a mile or so outside of Sauk City proper, behind a screen of pine trees. It's a big, comfortable place, built of wood and fieldstone, nestled under tall pines, with seclusion and quiet and privacy. Derleth's two big, friendly dogs met us as we got out of the car, tails wagging, and his mother, a serene, hosiptable woman whose warm smile and unlined face belied her eighty-six years, greeted us at the door.

Augie took us upstairs to the long, low-ceiling room on the second floor that served him as his study and writing room. The walls were lined with bookss; an enormous fieldstone fireplace took up much of one wall; tall French doors opened amidst thick pine boughs. A crescent-shaped desk covered with neat stacks of manuscript, correspondence and notebooks was backed into one corner. While Augie showed my wife a couple of his recent books of verse, I roamed around exploring the bookshelves and stumbled upon his collection of the sculptures of Clark Ashton Smith, which stood in a row along the top of the bookshelves. There were nearly forty of them, ranging in size from about two inches to six inches in height, and they were carved from a wide variety of minerals.

Derleth told me he had the largest collection of Smith's sculptures in the world, by one piece: the runner-up was George Haas of Berkeley. He was particularly proud of owning Smith's very first sculpture, a gaunt head called "The Outsider." (In recent letters, he and I had discussed Smith's sculptures, for I had been trying to buy an example of Klarkash-Ton's work in the recalcitrant medium of stone, but neither Carol Smith nor Roy Squires--whom I had asked--were willing to sell me one; Derleth, before the day was over, raised the question by offering me not one but <u>two</u>, a matched pair of lava bookends titled "Treasure Guardians" which he was willing to sell as they were larger than the rest of his pieces and he was less fond of them. I bought them on the spot and carried them home by hand. As he gave them to me, Derleth ruefully commented that now he

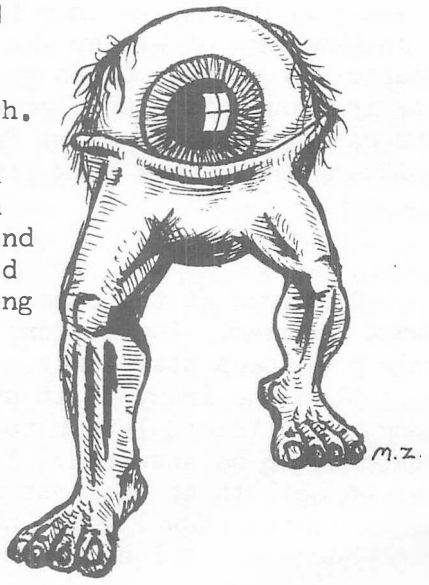
had the second-best collection, and George Haas the largest.)

We talked for hours, mostly about books, including the collection of my macabre verse that Derleth wanted to bring out with the Arkham imprint under the title of Dreams from R'lyeh. At my request, he dug out some rare Lovecraft manuscripts for our perusal, including the hand-written and illustrated "Rhode Island Journal of Astronomy" H.P.L. had done as a teenager. He also showed us around his study, which was actually a suite: the second room, with desk and "back-up" typewriter, held his magnificent collection of American comic strips, including a framed Walt Kelly original signed to him. Derleth recounted how he had been one of the first to see the potential in Kelly's work, back when he had been a contributor to "Animal Comics" in the days before "Pogo." A third room was given over to Derleth's odd hobby of picking, drying and selling a succulent species of mushroom called morels. Augie remarked that during one stage of the drying process morels exuded an odor identical with that of male semen, which occasioned a few ribald jests.

He took us on a house tour. His sixteen-year-old daughter, April, met us clad only in a bikini and a suntan after a day of swimming. We also met his son Wally, about thirteen. Derleth's home was rustic and comfortable, all knotty pine panelling and stone fireplaces and rag rugs. The bulk of his superb collection of books was kept in one large room of the finished basement. That's where we ended up for another long conversation, with me prowling the shelves and coming up with exciting finds like autographed things by M.P. Shiel and Arthur Machen. Augie kept his dual collection of mystery fiction and supernatural horror down here, as his Arkham collection and file of his own published work fills the shelves of his study to overflowing.

We discussed mutual friends. I conveyed to him the greetings of Evangeline Walton, who had been our guest on Long Island recently, on her way home to Arizona from a trip to Greece and Crete. Derleth, of course, had published her weird novel Witch House, which had been brought to his attention by bookseller/publisher Ben Abramson, while I had published her novel The Island of the Mighty in the Ballantine Adult Fantasy Series, it having been brought to my attention by Paul Spencer. Derleth told us a lot about his plans for forthcoming books, the new novel he was working on, The Watchers Out of Time, which was to be the latest of his posthumous collaborations with Lovecraft.

After we explored Place of Hawks, he took us on a tour of the grounds. There is a sort of gravel-paved courtyard ringed in with sheds and outbuildings and dominated by an enormous tree about two hundred years old, whose trunk is encircled by a rustic wooden bench. One outbuilding is the Arkham warehouse, filled with wooden dollies piled high with cartons of books; you have to weave your way through these stacks of Arkham House books by means of narrow aisles. The further end of the warehouse is filled with a long counter stacked with flat, unfolded mailing cartons and pads of mailing labels. Here are kept the books that have just come in and those that are in very short supply, and from this counter the orders are filled. Noel and I took the opportunity to buy twenty dollars worth of books, mostly Solar Pons titles which Derleth promised to inscribe to us and mail later. These were quite



likely the last few books he ever autographed, and we received them two days before of his sudden death.

The afternoon was wearing on; we made our farewells to his mother, and Derleth drove us into town for cocktails at the home of his secretary. Then we were his guests for dinner at an excellent steak house. We lingered over the meal and martinis, but eventually he had to drive us into Madison to make our flight to Chicago, which was scheduled to leave at 8:10 p,m. All in all, we spent about eight hours as Derleth's guests, and a more genial, affable, friendly host could hardly be imagined.

Derleth's great-grandfather had been a French count, and the people of Sauk City treated him with all the deference of a local squire. I noticed, in the restaurant at dinner, one waitress was called over to serve him: she knew just how he liked his steak (dry, with all the juice poured off), and the particular brandy he wanted with his coffee. Noel and I were amused at the way he was treated by the people of Sauk City, all of whom seemed to know who he was by sight. Obviously he was the local celebrity.

We also noticed that the nearness of death was continually on his mind. He brought the subject up innumerable times during the day. Showing us unpublished book-manuscripts slated for future publication under the Arkham House imprint, he remarked that "in case anything happened" he had enough manuscripts on hand to keep the House going for two years or so. When I happened to remark that I was sorry not to be able to meet Rick Meng, the young man he had recently hired to relieve him of most of the routine publishing chores, Derleth idly said that he was grooming the young man to take over things "when he was gone."

After a hearty dinner, while he and his secretary lingered in the airport waiting to see us off, he was troubled by a touch of indigestion. But to him it was perhaps a warning sign of another heart attack, and his genial good humor flagged, worrying about the slight discomfort. It was very much on his mind that another attack could carry him off at any time. This hearty, strong, powerhouse of a man who, as a novelist, teacher, publisher, poet, lecturer, book reviewer, had pushed himself without rest for dozens of years, had held up under a crowded workload that would have exhausted two ordinary men, but his stamina had failed him at the last, and he knew it.

Thirteen days later he was dead.

On the morning of July 5th I went out to get the morning paper about 7 a.m. I was planning to go into the city to do some business at Ballantine, and since I am the sort of writer who generally works all night and goes to bed when other people are getting up to go to work, the only way I can visit the office during working hours is not to go to bed at all. That morning I brewed a cup of coffee and sat drinking it on my front porch, idly leafing through the paper. The obituary in the New York Times caught my eye: the headline read--

AUGUST DERLETH, PROLIFIC AUTHOR

I stared at the page, my eyes widening in unbelieving horror, and looked away, stunned. For as long as I could remember, Derleth had always been there, only a postage stamp away. Now he was no longer there, and never would be again.

Then the irony of it struck me: I had spent the night composing a very long, complicated letter to him, filled with questions--questions which now would never be answered. I had planned to carry the letter into the city with me, to mail it at the post office midway between the offices of Ballantine and of my agent. Now I would never mail it.

For even as I had been writing the letter, Augie Derleth was dead.

What We Owe To Arkham House

By JACQUES BERGIER
(Translated by Tom Collins)

P. LOVECRAFT DIED March 15, 1937. It is probable that his name would have stayed totally unknown and that modern fantasy would not have developed if his friend August Derleth had not perse vered. For thirty years (and more, but I am relying on the descriptive booklet, Thirty Years of Arkham House, and hoping there will yet be a fiftieth anniversary) Derleth has sacrificed everything--money earned elsewhere, his health, and a large part of his time--to keep alive both the works of H.P. Lovecraft and also the literature of the weird and supernatural. At the end of 1969 Arkham House had published 98 volumes, and now it must have gone well over a hundred.

At the time of Lovecraft's death Derleth was already an American regional author who was known and appreciated. He is actually on his hundred tenth book: regional novels, poetry, detective stories, pastiches. He is also the editor of numerous anthologies. In March, 1937, when Lovecraft died, Derleth had only one thought: to make his work known. The most important editors in the United States promptly turned it down. According to them, there was no market for fantasy, the public wouldn't like the stories, it wasn't a commercial venture--all the classic responses editors have, they're the same on either side of the Atlantic. So Derleth decided to start a publishing house, and dug up some money.

He continues to pay for it: Arkham House has already cost him several tens of thousands of dollars, which is a lot for a man who makes his living by the pen. Derleth's perserverance and generosity are really extraordinary. Everyone can be generous for a brief moment, but generosity over a period of decades is a rare phenomena.

This is a chapter from Supernatural Horror in Literature: II, a sequel to the Lovecraft essay which Jacques Bergier has translated into French. Some footnotes by Fred Patten and Tom Whitmore will be found on page 77.

The Derleth epic recalls a story they tell about G.K. Chesterton. During the Boer war, as a protest against English colonialism, Chesterton grew a long beard which looked like the one President Kruger wore. When interviewed by reporters, he said, "This is proof of my perserverance and resolution. You don't grow a beard in a fit of anger."

Just as you don't grow a beard in a moment of anger, you cannot publish a work of literature in a fit of generosity. It took a continuing effort and such a heavy responsibility that we heard all too often Derleth was back in the hospital again.

Of the few people who aided him, it is necessary to mention Donald Wandrei, the writer, and Lovecraft's two literary executors, his aunt, Mrs. Annie E. Phillips Gamwell, and Robert Barlow. And it is also necessary to mention the psychiatrist/ science fiction author, David H. Keller. If that list is brief, that of the dishonorable who have attacked Derleth is interminable. He found himself with a considerable number of detractors who kept insisting that Derleth was enriching himself from the body of Lovecraft, even though each year Derleth had to put money that he earned from other sources into Arkham House.

The name "Arkham House" came, of course, from the cursed and imaginary town of Arkham which Lovecraft invented. The first book they published, at the end of 1939, was The Outsider and Others by Lovecraft. They printed 1268 copies for lack of money to print more. You could get the book by subscription for $3.50, or by normal sale after it appeared, for $5. Unfortunately, I did not send the $3.50 because of the currency controls brought into France with the declaration of war in September, 1939. Upon my return from the concentration camps in 1945 I at once wrote for a copy. At that moment the books were selling for almost $500. Actually, in 1971, you can still find opportunities to pick up a copy of The Outsider and Others at auction if you are willing to pay the price. Of course, that hardly profits Derleth who, for four years, painfully sold for $5 each 1268 copies he had to dispose of.

He was urged to continue with his publishing house. After much soul-searching he issued a collection of his own stories written in the style of Lovecraft, Someone in the Dark. He ended up, in 1944, noticing that there was a small market for the weird and supernatural, and he learned by experience that he was now able to sell printings on the order of 2,000 copies, and sometimes 3,000. The sale of paperback and film rights saved him from complete ruin, because obviously an operation of this kind is not the brainchild of someone with a living to make. He would have been a patron of the arts, but this strange America where you find foundations to encourage everything else, never found the millionnaires' riches to create an August Derleth Foundation. It is a great pity.

While we wait, the rare book markets have made a fortune from Derleth's efforts. They resell at prices running to twenty dollars, books which they bought from him for five, and certain editions have brought as much as a hundred dollars. With the successive devaluation of the dollar, Derleth has had to raise his prices, which now run about $7.50 a volume. They are still remarkable investments.

A certain number of titles are envisaged for the decade to come, says Derleth proudly. Thus, by dint of hard work and sacrifice, he has saved for posterity all the weird and supernatural fiction produced in the West in our time.

Of course, he started with Lovecraft: The Outsider and Others, Beyond the Wall of Sleep, Marginalia, Something about Cats, The Shunned House, poems

and four volumes of letters. The unpublished work of Lovecraft being exhausted, Derleth then issued some anthologies containing Lovecraft alone, and some volumes containing some works of his which Derleth completed, or works in the Lovecraft vein. The most recent volume of this sort is Tales of the Cthulhu Mythos, notable for containing an unpublished story by the celebrated English writer, Colin Wilson.

At the same time, and since 1942, Derleth began publishing the major contemporaries of Lovecraft. Some are comparable to Lovecraft, others even surpass him in the quality of their writing and imagination. Such was the case of Clark Ashton Smith, the American sculptor whose complete work in prose and poetry has now appeared from Arkham House. Smith, whom Lovecraft greatly admired, is both more original and a better writer. He was born in 1893 and died in 1961. He will continue to be known as a poet and sculptor, but his fiction is not less important on that account. One could even say that Lovecraft, Robert E. Howard and Clark Ashton Smith are the three greats of American fantasy in this century.

There are six volumes of Smith's prose published by Arkham House. They constitute the collection of his prose work, which consists entirely of short stories: Out of Space and Time, Lost Worlds, Genius Loci and Other Stories, The Abominations of Yondo, Tales of Science and Sorcery and Other Dimensions.

Smith is less taken than Lovecraft with purely physical horror. It is always danger to the soul which interests him. One of his most beautiful stories, "The Gorgon," carries as epigraph this admirable verse from Shelley:

> Yet it is less the horror than the grace
> Which turns the gazer's spirit into stone.

Alienation is a theme which is always present in Smith's work. One of his best stories, "The Chain of Aforgomon," is about someone the universe is in the process of forgetting and who is being effaced from history and universal memory. The story ends with this sentence, "Somewhere, out of space and time, an exiled phantom has written these words, but I do not seem to remember the name of this phantom."

Smith's stories take place in imaginary realms. One of these was a purely imaginary Medieval France that Smith called Averoigne. Another was the fabulous empire of Hyperborea that is otherwise found in tradition. A third is the last continent of earth, in an extremely far future, a continent he called Zothique. He never wrote a mediocre story, and when he was in form he wrote several of the finest short stories in world literature. For example: "The Gorgon," "The City of the Singing Flame," "The Chain of Aforgomon," "A Rendezvous in Averoigne," "The Hunter from Beyond" and "The Eternal World." He is equally noted in American letters for his translations of Baudelaire, which are fully comparable to the original.

Unlike other writers in the genre, he did not lack a sense of humor. Some of his stories are masterpieces of wit and satire. For example, "Schizoid Creator," in which he explains the existence of evil in the world by the fact that God is schizophrenic.

Smith is, for the moment, totally unknown in France, but the present editor envisages publishing his work, the first volume to appear being Other Dimensions. It is certain that without Arkham House the work of Smith would have fallen into oblivion. They would have unearthed it a century or two later--a remark I won't repeat, but which will apply to all the other authors I am going to talk

about later on in this chapter. Such is the case, for example, with Frank Belknap Long.

This author is uneven, and sometimes in his current work, commercial. But he started by writing absolutely admirable stories like "The Hounds of Tindalos," probably one of the ten most terrifying and significant short stories in all literature. It's theme is nothing less than the myth of The Fall:

"A terrible and unspeakable deed was done in the beginning. Before time, the deed....The tree, the snake and the apple--these are the vague symbols of a most frightful mystery."

The entire story would be quoted, but I don't have room. The central character finds a drug which permits him to travel in spirit through time, and attracts the attention of frightful creatures, the Hounds of Tindalos. Long also knew a truth almost impossible to put into words, but which explains the whole human drama. It is an admirable work. Arkham House published it in a volume of the same title in 1946. This volume contains several stories almost as good. Later, Arkham published a short novel by the same author, The Horror from the Hills, which is also remarkable.

Among the other American authors unveiled by Arkham House Donald Wandrei must be mentioned. He was a co-founder of the firm, and had an anthology, The Eye and the Finger, in 1944. In 1965, Arkham House published another collection of his, Strange Harvest. Wandrei, on the border of science fiction and horror, is a thoroughly remarkable writer. His novel, The Web of Easter Island, also issued by Arkham House, is translated into French under the title Cimetière de l'effroi in a dishonorable and incomprehensible translation (Fleuve Noir.)

If Wandrei is known solely via Arkham House, Robert Bloch, Lovecraft's friend and disciple, became famous when he moved beyond it. He was discovered by Alfred Hitchcock, who made a well-known film from his novel Psycho. The French title of the film is Psychose. Since then, he has worked in radio and television and writes less. Arkham House published his story collection The Opener of the Way in 1945, and another anthology, Pleasant Dreams, in 1960.

As an author, Bloch is more modern in his style than other Arkham House writers. His direct style, without superfluous adjectives, compares with that of Hemingway or Salinger.

His most celebrated story, if not his best, is found in The Opener of the Way, and is called, "Yours truly, Jack the Ripper." It has been broadcast hundreds of times on radio and television in numerous countries. The plot is terrifying and extraordinary: the murders of Jack the Ripper were ritual murders, sacrifices to two Dark Ones who granted him immortality in exchange. He lives now, among us. It is a fine tale, but I prefer his "The Manniken" because of this surprising sentence: "Can we be sure that our conception of reality really exists? A frightening knowledge not revealed to one man in a million...."

Bloch is now known; he is a world-wide celebrity, but each time he writes on the Subject of Arkham House, he does so with a certain tenderness.

It is Arkham House which, in 1947, discovered Bradbury, who has since become the darling of the intellectuals. At that time Bradbury had a talent, as shown by the stories collected in the Arkham House book Dark Carnival, and in particular by The Small Assassin. Since then, Bradbury has become an American intellectual writer like so many others. What he writes now has no value, and I do not think his work will survive.

One cannot say the same about Carl Jacobi, a Minneapolis reporter who writes

little, but with a remarkable, personal tone. Arkham has published two collections of his stories, Revelations in Black, and Portraits in Moonlight. They are preparing a third, Disclosures in Scarlet. Jacobi is a totally original and extraordinary writer, but little known. On the other hand, Fritz Leiber and Robert E. Howard are famous, and justly so. I long ago spoke of Howard in Admirations and so will not repeat myself here.

Leiber is especially known in France for his novel The Wanderer, published by Laffont, and as a Hugo winner for his novel The Big Time (le Rayon Fantastique, and for his large volume of stories, Le Cycle des Epes, which appeared from the Club du Livre d'Anticipation. These are all estimable works which I am very fond of, but I prefer the author's first book, which was published by Arkham House in 1947 under the title Night's Black Agents.

It is the latter collection which contains "The Dreams of Albert Moreland," about a chess player who plays against an extraterrestrial creature for the safety of the universe, and who loses and disappears, but who may continue to play: "If the game isn't definitely lost, if the payment of the penalty hasn't yet begun, Albert Moreland may be playing still, somewhere behind the black clouds in the sky. The central idea of this volume is that the big cities in which men live now are coming more and more to secrete their own ghosts and to create their own horrors. All the tales in the collection are astonishing, and the more time passes, the more "modern" they become.

There isn't enough space for me to speak of the other American authors discovered by Arkham House, or the two periodicals edited by Derleth, "The Arkham Sampler," which no longer exists, and "The Arkham Collector," which does. I pass immediately to English authors.

Literature of horror and the supernatural of British origin is less in evidence at Arkham House. The first English author they offered was William Hope Hodgson, in 1946. Thanks to myself, he is now launched in France with the publication of La Chose dans les Algues (Planete), and La Maison au Bord du Monde (Club du Livre d'Anticipation). Arkham published The House on the Borderland and Other Novels in 1946, Deep Waters in 1967, and Carnacki, the Ghost-Finder in 1947.

Hodgson was killed in 1918 during the war; those who knew him say he was ignorant of fear. One can, with little simplification, define Hodgson as an anti-Conrad who, as a maritime writer, profoundly detested the sea. The world ocean was people with horrors for him, but he also sensed the terrors of the future. His best book, The Night Land, is set in

an ill-defined future some millions of years after our time, during earth's final days.

After Hodgson, Arkham plunged into the past to publish, in 1945, all the stories of the 19th century writer, J. Sheridan Le Fanu. Le Fanu is well known, actually, because Roger Vadim made a film of one of his stories, "Carmilla," under the title "Et Mourir de Plaisir." Sheridan Le Fanu believed in writing science fiction in the modern sense, and thought that electro-magnetism explained all the super-normal phenomena. Experience has not confirmed his views, but on the contrary, he is now attributed with anticipating psychoanalysis. Putting theories aside, he remains an ageless writer of great value. His best story is probably "Green Tea" where this marvelous sentence is found: "The doors opened which had stayed closed, and the mortal and immortal were prematurely known."

The next Englishman they published was A.E. Coppard, in 1946. With Henry James, he is one of the rare "difficult" writers of horror and the supernatural. The obscurity of his style has certainly lost him some readers, but he is a good writer of the genre.

In 1946 Arkham House began to preserve the work of the great English contemporary fantasy and supernatural author, H. Russell Wakefield. In that year they published The Clock Strikes 12, and in 1961, Strayers from Sheol. Other volumes are awaited. Wakefield is a classic English writer who tells his stories of phantoms because he **saw them himself**, and who tried in vain to live in a haunted house in which there had been five suicides. After the sixth, that of a servant, he left in his turn.

He does not think modern parapsychology, with its quantative methods, can ever explain this mysterious field. Rather, he thinks of the borders which are invisible to us, but which are ruthlessly guarded. His style is the grand English classic style.

After that, Arkham House published several volumes of English authors too well known for me to discuss them here, such as L.P. Hartley and Lord Dunsany. (I spoke at length of these latter in Admirations II.) In 1949 came a volume of the Great English writer S. Fowler Wright, The Throne of Saturn. Wright was a noble writer, running counter-current to his time, and an admirable stylist. It was he who wrote, in a story from the volume in question, "Because all men die, but few live." In 1954 Arkham preserved for posterity another little-known Englishman, John Metcalf, with The Feasting Dead. Metcalf is one of the masters of pure horror, always causing the reader to close the book without being able to continue. He is one of the rare authors with whom that happens.

The next English author they discovered was totally unknown at that time; he was 18 years old. That was J. Ramsey Campbell, whose first book was called The Inhabitant of the Lake and Less Welcome Tenants. A disciple of Lovecraft and that era, Campbell has since perfected his own original style and is certainly a writer of considerable worth. The Englsihman after that was a celebrity, Colin Wilson, with The Mind Parasites, 1967, and appearing in French in Editions Planete. The next volume was in 1968, a very little known work of Arthur Machen, The Green Round. I don't have space for all the anthologies of original stories, of which Arkham has released a dozen which will hold their own with the best weird tales.

Certainly our debt to Arkham House is immense. This book, among many others, would not have been possible without the courage and perserverance of August Derleth. May he go on indefinitely....

The Last Necronomicon

By LARRY NIVEN

THERE HAS NEVER BEEN anything like the student riots of 1973, before or since.

1973 was the year Ace brought out the paperback version of the Necronomicon. By February there were stacks of the slim volume in every bookstore in America. Ballantine immediately brought out an "authorized version" at a slightly higher price. The Ballantine version included a George Barr cover (the reproduction techniques did not satisfy George Barr), a short introduction by the author, the mad Arab Abdul Alhazred (obtained by one of the simpler spells in the Necronomicon), and a much longer introduction by Lin Carter, which bulked out the book considerably.

Unfortunately (fortunately?) neither edition was particularly accurate. The ace version had more misprints; but most of the errors were due to mistranslations accumulated through several languages and several centuries of time. The publishers and distributors could not possibly have guessed how many millions of readers would try to use the spells in the old book. Otherwise they might have taken more care with the more dangerous spells. Or they might have burned the book.

By July, every student revolutionary in the U.S.A. must have had a copy.

Strange things happened during the Peace Riots at Miskatonic University. Professors disappeared. So did Long Hall, with all of its students. Every professor who attended the July 23 faculty meeting was turned into a giant frog. And the students who, on July 29, forceably occupied the Administration Building with the aid of a toothy, shapeless, gigantic ally, vanished from the Administration Building along with that ally, leaving unbelievable quantities of blood behind.

Student leaders accused the faculty of using counterspells. They were wrong. The faculty did not themselves try to use the Necronomicon until August 4, because August 4 was the day they and the National Guard forced

their way into the Library. The faculty had enough sense to use the hardback editions. All previous casualties among the students must be attributed to spells which misfired.

There were misfirings among the counterspells, too.

In general, the beings summoned by the students were the Great Old Ones, Cthulhu and Dagon and Yig and others who were also revolutionaries of a sort. Those the students called the "establishment" appropriately summoned the Elder Gods--and found them even more difficult to control. Of those combatants who survived the Miskatonic Riots, these are typical:

The National Guardsman who threw down his gun and proceeded to worship Cthulhu. The huge, ancient, inhuman priest seemed to accept the Guardsman's worship; at any rate, he turned away.

The Sophomore who threw rocks at Nyarlathotep until the Crawling Chaos broke into great booming laughter and let him go, after making some humorous changes in the Sophomore's physiology. The Sophomore is now a Senior and a hermaphrodite who wishes to remain anonymous.

The aqualung equipped Professor of Languages who tried to attack Dagon in the Olympic-sized swimming pool. The elemental swallowed him, but the professor survived inside, attacking the elemental's stomach walls until Dagon gave up and disappeared from around him.

Far more typical are the ones who did not survive. Today the Elder Gods remain in control of most of the campus of Miskatonic U., though the Great Old Ones still hold the Co-op, Derleth Hall, and most of the Physical Sciences. Several million copies of the paperback Necronomicon have been burned, by Presidential order, despite the attacks of liberals who see this episode of book burning as the final step toward Neo-Nazi domination of America.

But I've managed to save one for myself, hidden in a place which is not of normal space...and if I hear any more snide comments about the Earth rotating wrong way round in Ringworld....

As an experiment, subscriptions for the next four issues of IS will be available at $6. Subscriptions and individual copies will not be available after January 1, 1972, and this offer will not be repeated.

The next issue should contain the following articles: An omitted section of R.A. Lafferty's novel, The Devil is Dead; "A Psychic Looks at Drugs," the first of a series; fiction by Thomas Parkinson, noted poet and critic; a look at Ringworld by Flieg Hollander and Jay Freeman, who find something amiss; Ewan MacColl's "Yankee Doodle," a brand new poem by Edward Lear; a psychiatrist writing about possession and entities; "Me and the White Rabbit," about sanity and other myths; a report on the writer's conference at Tulane, by Grant Carrington; Lovecraft's horoscope analyzed by E. Hoffman Price; sociologist Edgar Z. Friedenberg on life in Canada; a manifesto on communes; and more.

Future issues will contain new material by Luther Norris, R.A.W. Lowndes, Dr. John Watson, Bill Blackbeard and others. Fiction by Horatio Alger, O. Henry, A.E. Housman, Vincent Starrett and Christopher Morley. Articles on Sherlock Holmes, the Victorian detective story, spy novels, faith healing, homeopathic medicine, comics and science fiction.

All Best To August Derleth

By JOSEPH PAYNE BRENNAN

BEGAN CORRESPONDING WITH August Derleth about twenty years ago. I believe, in fact, that we first had a brief exchange of notes nearly a quarter of a century ago, but I am unable to locate these early letters and therefore I can't ascertain the exact year.

Since I had published a few stories in "Weird Tales" shortly before the demise of that memorable magazine, Derleth was familiar with my name and with some of my work.

He published three of my books; not long before his death he accepted the manuscript of a fourth, a collection of short stories to be entitled Stories of Darkness and Dread. He also published my work, both prose and poetry, in many Arkham House anthologies.

Over the years we exchanged hundreds of letters and brief notes. This was a mixed business and personal correspondence. We wrote frequently when there was no business to discuss. We were both devotees of poetry and horror stories, though we both did work in other fields as well. To some extend, we shared similar health problems. We were interested in many of the same authors and magazines. Our social and political viewpoints frequently coincided. There was a great community of interest.

Our correspondence, however, was occasionally spiced by heated and even acrimonious exchanges. Derleth held strong and often unyielding opinions. I myself was stubborn and sometimes harshly critical in matters of small lasting importance. Consequently there were wide gaps in our correspondence. But it always resumed, sooner or later. In spite of our periodic rows, I came to lean more and more on Derleth the individual, and on Arkham House the publishing firm.

Today, nearly twenty years after they first appeared in magazines, stories from my first Arkham House book, Nine Horrors and a Dream (1958), are still being reprinted in anthologies and translated into other languages. This is also true of stories published in the Arkham House anthologies.

Besides introducing my stories to the book-reading public, Derleth always strongly championed my poetry. He brought out one book of my general poetry, The Wind of Time, under his Hawk & Whippoorwill imprint, and another book of weird and fantasy poems, Nightmare Need, under the regular Arkham House imprint. Contrary to rumors, neither of these books were subsidized by me, either in whole or in part. Derleth bore the entire production and distribution expenses of both books. The two volumes sold out quickly and returned a modest profit to him, after royalty payment to me.

Derleth once wrote that he thought some of my poetry would still be read long after many of the "name" poets of today were forgotten. I have always treasured this comment.

Some of his letters to me concerned his personal life and they were often amazingly frank. I am sure, moreover, that he knew I was preserving the bulk of his correspondence. Only a handful of his early letters were mislaid, and they may yet turn up.

I learned of Derleth's death early on the morning of July 6th. I felt

Continued on page 71.

AVRAM DAVIDSON:

ARKHAM HOUSE WAS, in a way, founded for the purpose of publishing Lovecraft's The Outsider and Others, Beyond the Wall of Sleep, and Marginalia. I purchased the first two when they were published, in about 1940, and kept them for many years, finally sending them to auction by mail for some worthy fannish purpose. Dick Eney, I believe, bought them for $30. Mint copies have sold for $300.

During the sixties when I was review viewing for F&SF, I said, concerning one of the so-called Lovecraft-Derleth collaborations that Lovecraft was a twitch who had ill-used his talents and that August Derleth was too healthy and sane successfully to collaborate with him. They don't make eldrich horrors in Sauk City the way they used to in legend-haunted Arkham, I said.

87 different kinds of abuse came down on my head, mostly from Lovecraft-loving fans with an average age of 17. Mr. August Derleth's letter, on the contrary, was good humored, and whilst acknowledging that I was not entirely wrong, suggested that perhaps I was not entirely right either, that there was an other side to Lovecraft. I now acknowledge this to be so. About a year ago I contacted August Derleth about the possibility of Arkham House publishing the remaindered edition of my book, The Phoenix and the Mirror. He said that the conditions of his health and the burdens of the regular publishing work of Arkham House ruled this out for the immediate present, but he suggested that I mention it again in the future.

Alas that this future was not to be.

AUGUST DERLETH:

LITERARY PAUL BUNYAN

By EMIL PETAJA

STRADDLING WISCONSIN like some rough latter day Titan, August Derleth was indeed huge, in every way. He was possessed of giant thoughts and concepts and carried them out with spectacular success. He was a big man, oversize physically, and he admitted it. But the giant was mainly inside his capacious mind, in his swash-buckling stature as a renaissance man and creative genius. August Derleth was a one-man corporation for writing, editing, publishing and marketing an astonishing number of books and periodicals. One need only mention Arkham House and Mycroft and Moran, and the name of August Derleth is both. When somebody, someday, decides to unearth and list the mountain of literary work with which Derleth was associated, the task will be a long one.

In one of his more recent letters to me, dated 12 January 1967 (August's way):

"...a five week lung virus infection (which kept me in a fever and took 25 lbs. off me, no loss) plus a mild coronary, which hospitalized me for a month. I got out 12/26, rather weak, but I got right to work--150 letters to answer, six weeks of journal to catch up on, two book mss. to ready for a publisher--and now I am about to tackle the final 35 pages of Vincennes, which is where I was when I was laid low. Then I have three other things to do, only one a full-length junior novel, the others less long, by Mar. 1."

And again:

"Just coming up for air from Vincennes, with the deadline coming up faster than I would like it to. I did manage to get off my other book, the Wisconsin

profile, and have it approved--so that is one off my back; now when this one is done, Ill have to do only a short horror tale, an opera libretto, a chapbook for Columbia, a new junior novel and the first Solar Pons novel."

The thought staggers an ordinary writer like me to my knees.

Incidentally, the opera libretto he referred to is for The Gable Window (see The Survivor and Others), done for a professor of music at Northwestern. This, among the avalanche, has perhaps had less publicity and might not be known to the hosts of his admirers.

This brief appreciation must needs be subjective, since I am not about to attempt anything of the prodigious scope needed to really do justice to the productions of August Derleth.

When I was a freshman in Montana State University, I wrote a fan letter to Derleth (among others to H.P. Lovecraft, Clark Ashton Smith, Robert E. Howard, Seabury Quinn, and others). I got back a brief, friendly note and a nice snapshot of August; he also suggested that perhaps since I was asking favors of generally underpaid writers it might not be amiss to enclose a stamped self-addressed sed envelope. I never forgot!

Hannes Bok met August in the early 1940s. He was very taken with him and particularly pleased when Derleth asked him to create a dust jacket drawing for Smith's Out of Space and Time, one of the early Arkham House productions. Hannes went to work on it with his usual earnest attention to detail and giving the best that was in him. He shipped the picture to August by parcel post--and the dear Postal Department promptly lost it, for good!

After waiting as long as he could, Derleth finally wired Hannes that he had to have something immediately. Hannes stayed up all night redoing the picture from sketchy notes and memory. It was a rush job, so this ought to be considered when viewing Bok's first d.j. for Arkham House. August had the grace to allow Hannes Bok to work as he pleased on the commissions that followed (Skullface, Lurker at the Threshold, The Hounds of Tindalos, etc.) although August was always a man of decidedly individual ideas.

Most of my contacts with this literary Paul Bunyan were of course by letter, as were nearly everybody else's. August didn't travel a good deal. If you wanted to see him you looked up Sauk City on the map and then went there. Also, he was far too busy creating and publishing to give much time to fandom conventioneering. Others might lap up the fannish applause at the conventions, science fiction or whatever, but August Derleth had better uses for his time.

Knowing of my friendship with Clark Ashton Smith, and that I was a photographer by profession (and only part-time writer), he found out about the various candid pictures I had taken of Smith in Auburn. He wanted to see some. I sent him three of the best and he wrote back enthusiastically, "They are splendid & I consider them the best pictures of (Smith) I have ever seen." He used one on the back d.j. of Smith's Tales of Science and Sorcery.

Since I had been one of H.P. Lovecraft's correspondents, August asked if he might Xerox my letters from Lovecraft for his Selected Letters volumes. I was glad to oblige. I also furnished him a copy of my sonnet "Lost Dream" which was dedicated to HPL, and which August printed in Marginalia. Lately he saw my article on "Weird Tales" in the Promethean Enterprises production (San Jose) and asked if I could furnish him with a blow-up of the snapshop Farnsworth Wright sent me in 1936 of him and C.C. Senf, the "Weird Tales" artist. August had never seen this snapshot and wanted to use it in Selected Letters of H.P. Lovecraft, Volume III. Hopefully you will find it therein.

August was delighted to hear about my Bokanalia Memorial Foundation, and said he would be very happy to give us publicity in the "Arkham Collector." On at least one occasion he made a special effort to squeeze in a notice after the final deadline.

In March, 1966, he wrote me that he would be in San Francisco in June, following his visit to Los Angeles, where he received a special myster writer award for his Solar Pons stories. He asked if I would be kind enough to arrange accommodations at a good motel for him, together with his two children, April and Walden, and his friend Rick. He wrote me in his usual exacting detail:

"We are leaving Los Angeles the morning of June 14. The children want to see Sequoia and I want to take the coast road. That means cutting in through Monterey and Salinas to get to Sequoia, and we'll not be in San Francisco then until the 15th (April.) We'll be there (San Francisco) at least 2 nights....

"Let us then count on getting together the night of the 15th." Followed an invitation to join them for dinner that first evening at a restaurant I would select.

Since he would be here such a short time, and since this was only his second visit to the West Coast in over twenty years, we knew many of his friends would wish to see him. My friends, Lester and Ethel Anderson, and I arranged a party the second evening. August mentioned several people he would particularly like to see and might not otherwise, including Carol Smith Wakefield (Clark Ashton Smith's widow) if she were in the vicinity, Poet Stanley MacNail, Anton and Diane LaVey, and others. He left the rest to Les and I.

The party to honor August Derleth was held in the Anderson home. Anthony and Phyllis Boucher, Ed and Loriena Price, Avram Davidson, Poul and Karen Anderson, and many others attended. It was a convivial affair, one to long remember.

But perhaps my own selfish satisfaction in August's San Francisco visit lies even more in that first evening, when I had the great man all to myself. There was time before, during, and after dinner to ask all kinds of questions and bask in the magnetic glow of one of the most remarkable men I ever expect to meet. A fixed high point in my life.

When I heard that he had been released from the hospital finally, after a long seize of illness, I wrote him a hopeful letter congratulating him on

his recovery from his recent operation. He blasted me as follows:

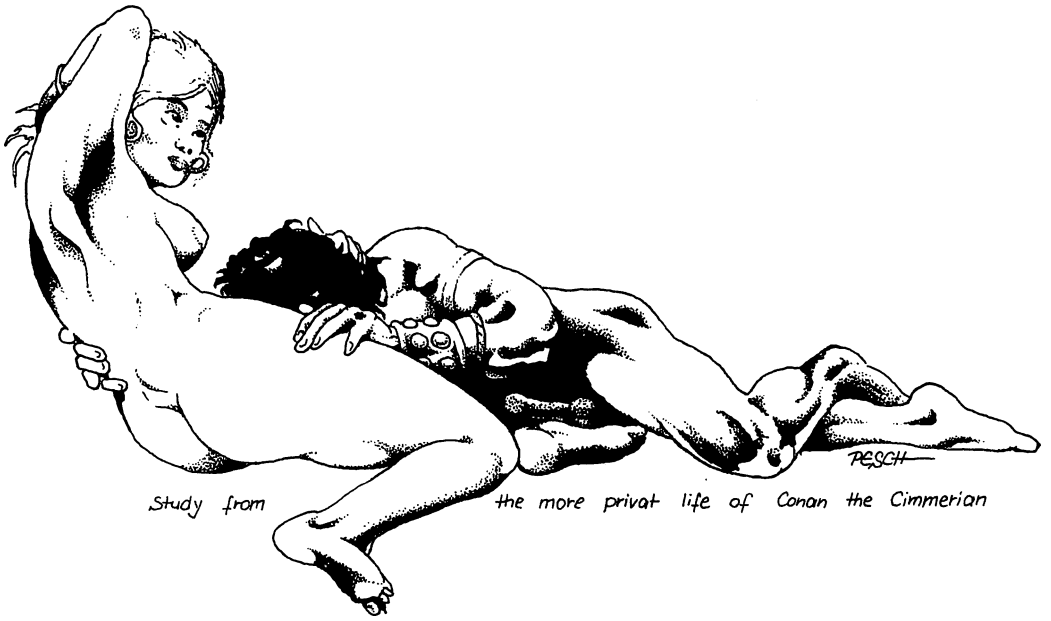
"Recent operation, indeed! I had 4, was in hospital 187 days, fought off pneumonia, repaired a collapsed lung, had peritonitis, pleuritis, moniliasis, hepatitis, proteus--well, you name it, I probably had it; on the critical list 45 days, my family was told I would die, but another of the 12 doctors I had said I was 'a tought old bastard' and he proved to be right." Followed a friendly inquiry about Bokanalia and what had I been up to lately!

August Derleth was truely tough, inside and out. He hung on to life tenaciously for almost two years following this medical catalog of sturm und drang. He asked me for a short story for his forthcoming original anthology, Dark Things, taking time to discuss in some detail what he wanted. August always knew what he wanted and was specific. Promptly followed a contract and then a check. Besides everything else--his inner poetic nature, his gourmet love for wild mushrooms, his passion for Thoreau and what he stood for--August had a business-like promptness that was dazzling. If you wrote him about anything at all worthwhile, the answer was immediate. Never any shilly-shallying or indecision or artistic temprament. He unerringly put his finger on every flaw.

So there you have one man's notion of this Wisconsin phenomenon, striding across the north country with the big pine trees bristling between his giant toes. He chuckled at having one of his latest volumes of poetry "banned in Sauk City" because it was a bit much. He was anything but a prude. He swore a blue streak when it was indicated. He had little use for hoity-toity pretensions; none at all for phonies.

August Derleth learned and became everything he had to become, to accomplish all of his amazing feats of literary freewheeling. We can hope most earnestly that the heart of his life, Arkham House, will go on and on, to ever bigger and better things.

But we can never hope for another August Derleth.



Early Collaborations

By MARK SHORER

IN THE FOREWORD that he wrote (we both signed it, but it was really his writing) for Colonel Markesan and Less Pleasant People, published by Arkham House in 1966, August Derleth gave the essential details of our collaboration in the summer of 1931, the results of which he brought together in the volume just named. Well over forty years later, I cannot remember the collaborations during high school to which he also refers, but I do remember a collaboration that preceded all the stories in Colonel Markesan. The result was an odd piece, but not exactly weird.

At the University of Wisconsin in 1927-1928, when he was a sophomore and I was a junior, we were both enrolled in a "creative writing" course offered by Professor Helen C. White. She was a brilliant renaissance scholar and later a successful historical novelist concerned with Roman Catholic subject matter. She was also a lovely lady and sometimes a very vague and dreamy one.

The sessions of that class, which contained some compulsive talkers and a number of mildly erratic avant-garde types, sometimes struck Aug and me as hysterically funny, as Helen White, in her airy way, tried to keep it from flying to pieces. At any rate, we got together and wrote a little one act play which parodied a meeting of the class, and we submitted it to her as fulfilling a week's assignment.

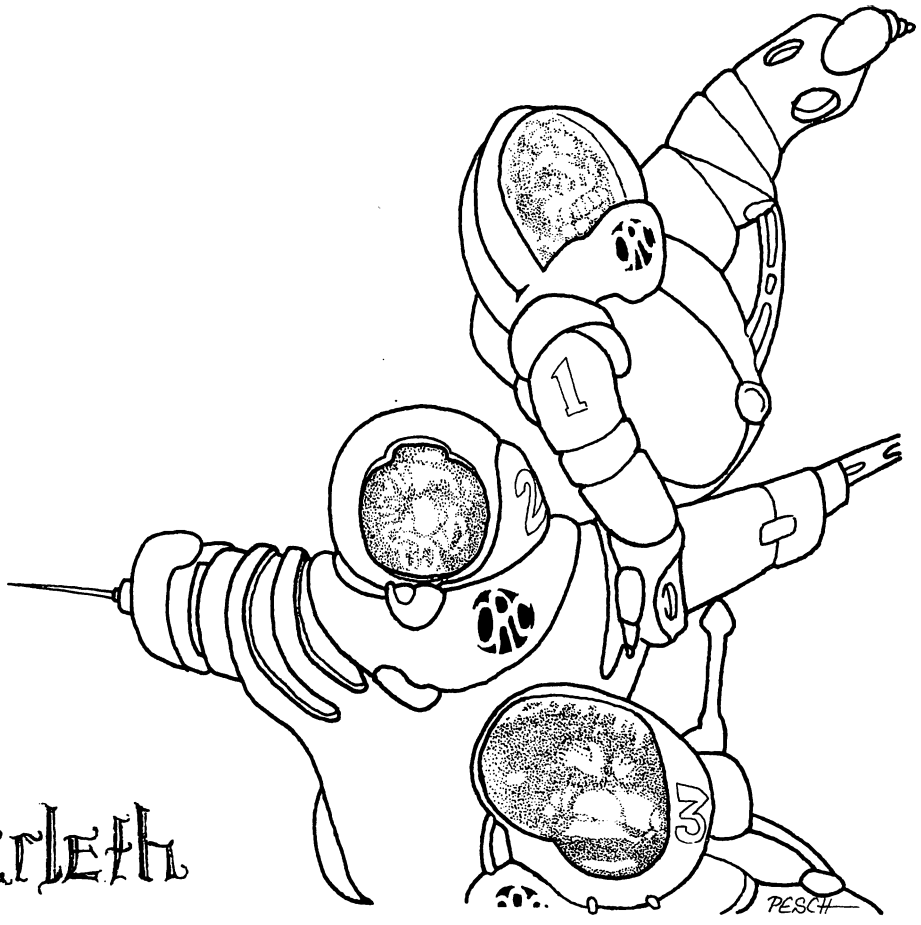
All I remember of it now is that it opened with the teacher drifting into the room and saying, "I think that I am returning all of last week's papers today," and then handing out three of about twenty papers, and settling down behind her desk as though she had indeed returned them all, whereas she had probably absent-mindedly misplaced seventeen of them. Then it went on to take off characteristic failures of communication between some of the students and that dear teacher. I wish that I could remember more.

I did write Aug not so long ago, at the time of Miss White's death, to ask if he had a copy of the thing, and he replied that he was sure that he did, somewhere, and he'd hunt for it. But I guess I'll never see it now. Anyway, Miss White found it entertaining and gave us an A- on it, the minus for our brash impertinence, no doubt, or perhaps because we weren't as funny as we thought we were.

Our later collaborations, in that summer of 1931, were not always so blithe. What Aug does not mention in that foreword is the frequent clashes of will between us, often noisy and on one occasion, at least, violent. The point is that Aug had a much stronger will than I, was in no way frivolous as I was, possessed infinitely stronger powers of self discipline. He could sit down and bat those things off like nothing; I could not. He knew that he was going to be a writer; I didn't. But he was certain that I could be if I only would be.

And he almost literally forced, by the power of his will, those pathetic first drafts out of me, often when I wanted to be somewhere else than in that wretched cottage on the river where we worked--up at a roadhouse in Wisconsin

Continued on page 82.



In Re: August Derleth

By ROBERT A.W. LOWNDES

IT WAS IN SEPTEMBER, 1931 that I first came across the name; August Derleth, on the contents page of the October issue of "Weird Tales." I was on vacation in Newport, Rhode Island, cut off from my beloved magazine collection. The new issue of "Amazing Stories" had not yet appeared, and the October "Wonder Stories" would be waiting for me at the Post Office when I got back to Darien, Conn. It would be several days yet until the first Thursday of the month, when "Astounding Stories" would come out, and "Wonder Stories Quarterly" would not be due for a couple of weeks yet. I'd never bought a copy of "Weird Tales," though I'd seen ads for it in "Amazing Stories." I knew that there was a serial by Otis A. Kline running--in fact, the cover illustrated part four. And on the contents page of this issue, along with names like Robert E. Howard (which meant nothing to me at the time), was one of my favorites: Edmond Hamilton, with a story called "The Shot from Saturn."

Did I want a magazine filled with disreputable fiction about supernatural and anti-scientific, superstitious matters? Really? I put the copy back on the shelf...then picked it up again. It was so neat-looking, with its trimmed edges, white paper, good artwork and attractive body type. I bought it.

The Derleth story was a short-short, "The Captain is Afraid," and no masterpiece, although competent. But I knew now that I wanted to keep getting "Weird Tales." In The Eyrie, readers raved about H.P. Lovecraft's "The Whisperer in Darkness," which had appeared in the August issue, and in this October number, there was a short story by the same author, entitled, "The Strange High House in

the Mist," which I found very moving. There was also a short-short story by Clark Ashton Smith, whose interplanetary fantasies I'd read in "Wonder Stories;" however, "The Resurrection of the Rattlesnake" was hardly memorable.

I missed the next issue (November), but picked up December, because there was another story by Edmond Hamilton ("Creatures of the Comet") as well as a lead-off by Howard--I'd liked that lead-off by him in the October issue, "The Gods of Bal-Sagoth." Then, in December, 1931, the January, 1932 issue appeared with a fine cover based on Smith's "The Monster of the Prophecy." And in this issue there was a much more memorable story by August Derleth: "Those who Seek." Other short stories would follow in later issues, but it was not until I read "The Lair of the Star-Spawn," in the August, 1932 issue that I was really hooked on this writer. I had no idea at the time that I was reading a tale of the Cthulhu Mythos; I only knew that it was a wonderful story, and that I wanted more. I had begun to appreciate the Derleth touch even in rather minor weird tales.

In 1934 or '35 I picked up a copy of Derleth's mystery novel, Murder Stalks the Wakely Family, and found it readable enough. Then came the winter of 1936/37. I'd just started writing to H.P. Lovecraft, had received two letters from him, and had written my third to him. I was in a CCC camp in West Cornwall, Conn. at the time. Weeks passed, and there was no reply--had I offended him? Was he too busy? He'd mentioned in his last letter that the doctors had him taking various kinds of nostrums. Had he died? Alas, that was the answer.

There had been a goodly number of memorable Derleth tales meanwhile, such as "The Return of Andrew Bentley," "Colonel Markesan," and "The Satin Mask," and one heard that he and Donald Wandrei were trying to arrange for a memorable edition of Lovecraft's best stories, and a selection of his letters; but it was not until I picked up the March, 1939 issue of "Weird Tales," which contained "The Return of Hastur" that I found another tale definitely in the Cthulhu series.

Later in that year, "Weird Tales" carried an announcement that a large volume of Lovecraft stories, The Outsider and Others was in the process, and was being offered at the pre-publication price of $3.50; it would be $5 thereafter. We know now that this was a tremendous bargain--but I was back in the CCCs again, and we received $7 cash a month. The food was good and ample in supply; the army took care of us, and the work was not oppressive--but $7 a month was just enough to keep me in magazines, postage, and an occasional beer or soda. I wonder how many young lovers of HPL could not take up Derleth-Wandrei's very generous offer for similar reasons in 1939.

I'd had my first letter from August Derleth earlier in the year, when I'd run some rumors about a hassle over the rights to Lovecraft material, between Derleth-Wandrei and Robert Barlow. The letter stated that what I'd published in "Le Vombiteur" was actionable, as there was no such hassle; arrangements were being made amicably, but the tone was courteous enough to let me see that a simple retraction and correction (and no more of the same) would be acceptable. Naturally, I followed Mr. Derleth's request.

Thanks to Hannes Bok, I obtained a copy of The Outsider and Others in 1940, with Finlay's dust jacket, for $5; and when Beyond the Wall of Sleep came out later I was employed and able to buy it. In fact, I started collecting Arkham House editions, and reviewed some of them in "Future." Eventually, in one of my spells of revolt against science fiction and fantasy, I got rid of them, and did not obtain replacement copies (without dust jackets) for anything like the original price, although I could sell my copies at a handsome profit now. "Weird Tales" was no longer the magazine I'd loved while Farnsworth Wright was editor, although I did

pick up a copy now and then, and particularly enjoyed the Derleth pastiches--although the best of them seemed to be his novel, The Lurker at the Threshold. I just picked up the softcover edition and re-read it, confirming my original impression.

Then, in 1950, when "Future" was revived, I began following science fiction again, and getting books for review. Derleth and I disagreed on various matters, but amiably, and I'd gone on to his Solar Pons stories through my interest in the Baker Street Irregulars. I started buying some of the BSI special publications, and the late Edgar W. Smith, who was publisher of them (and the "Baker Street Journal") was the sort of generous gentleman who would slip in a bonus book with your order. One of these was Three Problems for Solar Pons.

Throughout this period, as the Arkham House books kept on coming out, while other small fantasy publishing ventures flared and then died out, the anti-Derleth propaganda was growing. He was accused of charging outrageous prices for reprints of Lovecraft material (and his right to it in the first place was considered dubious); he was criticized for sheer exploitation of the name "Lovecraft" to sell stories he had written himself, which had no more of HPL in them than an idea in the letters or from the Commonplace Book. August Derleth was presented as a bloated egotist who was making a fortune on his one-time friend and mentor.

Well, there's no question but that AD was a positive thinker when it came to the subject of August Derleth, his talents and virtues. And it is true that a number of stories signed Derleth-Lovecraft have as much actual Lovecraft in them as an extra-dry martini has vermouth. But the fact of the matter is that AD was not making a fortune out of Lovecraft exploitations, nor again did his reputation, where it counted for actually making enough money with other writing to keep Arkham House going, depend upon HPL. He earned every penny he got from his use of Lovecraft--either the name or the hints for stories; but his own reputation as an author, and his earning capacity, would have been no less high had he never done a thing about Lovecraft except write a few stories for "Weird Tales" in the Mythos orbit.

H.P. Lovecraft is now a real name to a much more wide-spread public than he ever was during his lifetime, and this is due to the fact that one man--August Derleth--kept HPL in print between 1939 and the present, and never ceased in a wide variety of efforts to spread HPL material around. Why shouldn't publishers who wanted to reprint HPL material be required to pay for it--even if some might technically be in the public domain? When the whole matter is weighed in the balance, Derleth's virtues stand high, and the sins become miniscule.

I began hearing from him more or less regularly between 1963 and this year, when "Magazine of Horror" got under way. Some of my readers wanted me to reprint Derleth's very first story, "Bat's Belfry," which appeared in the May, 1926 "Weird Tales." He was willing, provided that I make it clear that this was the first attempt of a teen-ager, but I could see that he was far from eager. Actually, "Bat's Belfry," while faulty in some respects, was as good as many other stories running in the magazine at that time, and better than a discouragingly large percentage of the material. He could not share my enthusiasm for "Those who Seek" either, although he didn't so much seem to mind that being reprinted.

I never did get around to running "Bat's Belfry," but "Those Who Seek" was favorably received when I ran it in "Startling Mystery Stories."

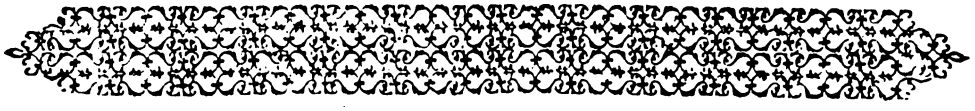
I know that he would have liked me to run more Lovecraft and more Clark Ashton Smith; and toward the end, I did begin running CAS more regularly, since the readers definitely liked him. But it was the wide range of other material

that Arkham House controlled which I needed, and which Derleth was willing to let me run at much lower fees than he would have charged (and was charging) other publishers. He knew that this was an extra low price operation on my publisher's part and a labor of love on my own. He was ever patient when checks were a week or so late, and helpful in mentioning my publications in his own newsletters.

Perhaps he wondered at times why I neglected some of his better authors; but I suspect he realized the truth--it was not lack of interest on my part, but lack of money. I had to run a good amount of public domain material in order to keep costs down; it was also wise to run stories which many readers asked for, even if we both agreed that some of them were less good, to put it mildly, than stories by Arkham's literary names.

I never met him, nor talked to him on the telephone. Perhaps it's just as well; we might not have gotten along. In general, I dislike the big-ego type of person. Exceptions exist, of course, where I have known the party for many years and have come to be fond of the person behind the false front, where time has shown each of us the other's worth, and neither has the slightest need to put the other down.

H.P. Lovecraft is not the greatest author who ever lived, but his stories have made a difference in the lives of increasing thousands who have read them. August Derleth, both in his tireless championing of HPL, and in his own projects, has done something of the same. For all the things you can find wrong in this world, just the same, it's a little better than it would have been had there never been an August W. Derleth.



RAY BRADBURY:

What can I say? That he came along in my life at just the right time and put up with my "youngishness" (I was only 25) and my silliness, and encouraged me and gave me my first book publication with Dark Carnival. I shall always remember his patience and kindness and great help. I am sorry that he is dead. But I am glad that he made it into his sixties. There was a time there, ten years ago, when I feared he would leave us much too soon. I would have preferred, of course, that he remain around another 10 or 20 or 30 years. Let us be content that the books he published, and the good influence he had, will remain in the world for a long while. All hail Derleth. Thank God, I rededicated Dark Carnival (October Country) to him in its new edition a year ago so he could see my affection!

July 20
New Year's Day
Apollo Year 3

The Publisher of Slan

By A.E. VAN VOGT

N HEARING OF AUGUST DERLETH'S death early in July of this year, I was reminded of my several associations with this remarkable, able man.

The way I heard of his passing is of interest. The phone rang. The grief stricken voice of Luther Norris said, "Van, Augie is dead." I said, "Thank you, Luther." I meant thanks for letting me know. That was the afternoon of the day it happened.

I met August Derleth for the first and only time a few years ago, when Luther Norris, aided and abetted by the Sir Alvin Germeshausens, formed the Praed Street Irregulars. The purpose of the society was to worship at the shrine of Solar Pons, the Sherlock Holmesian detective created by Derleth. I joined this organization at its inception and have been a member ever since.

At the time, Derleth, who was seated in a kingly place of honor in the Germeshausen mansion, bestowed his benign signature on membership scrolls, including my own. My conversation with him then, and a few days earlier at a party at the Robert Bloch's beautiful home, totaled less than three minutes. There were just too many other demands on Derleth's time.

Thus entered August Derleth as a physical being into, and exited from, my physical life.

Yet this was the man who, in 1946, took the risk of publishing the first post-war hardcover science fiction novel: Slan. It was my own first published book; and I was fortunate that the publisher was Derleth. The man operated with total integrity. In fact, the word might well-be over-integrity.

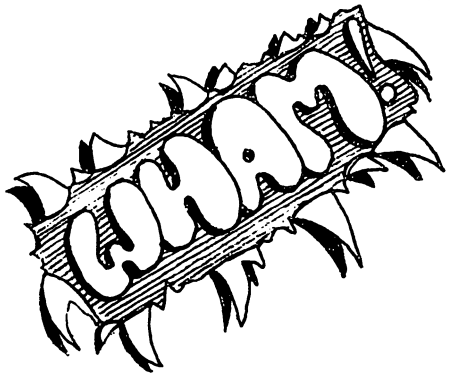
For example, in 1949 Derleth had written me requesting permission to print an additional 2,000 copies of Slan. I received his letter at a time when, through the good offices of Raymond Healy, Simon and Shuster offered me a contract for the book. I wrote Derleth of this great opportunity; and, although his contract could have been binding on me, he promptly and good heartedly released the rights to me, thus enabling the book to go forward to its considerably greater success.

Meanwhile, Derleth suggested that he issue a collection of my best sf stories. I agreed at once, and devised the title Away and Beyond. A few months later I received a letter from Derleth stating that as a result of a conversation with Pellegrini (of Pellegrini and Cudahy), he had generously made my collection available to P and C for hardcover publication. His stated reason to me: such a publication would be of greater benefit to the author than the original Arkham House plan. Derleth received not a penny for this turnover.

Naturally, I took advantage of his good will. Pellegrini and Cudahy subsequently issued the collection in two section. The first was titled Destination: Universe, and the second Away and Beyond. In 1953, when I went to New York, I had lunch with Sheila Cudahy, who in private life was Mrs. Pellegrini. Very sadly, her husband had died a year earlier; and she thereupon joined the firm with Farrar, Straus and Company.

These were my sole business dealings with Derleth. And what can I say

Continued on page 66.



AUGUST DERLETH AND THE COMICS

By BILL BLACKBEARD

BEFORE AUGUST DERLETH turned a page of Weird Tales" or opened a single Shilling Sherlocker, his lifelong capacity for appreciation of the bizarre and fantastic in art had already been aroused by the unique, lovely and widely scorned comic narratives spread through the newspaper pages of his World War I Wisconsin youth.

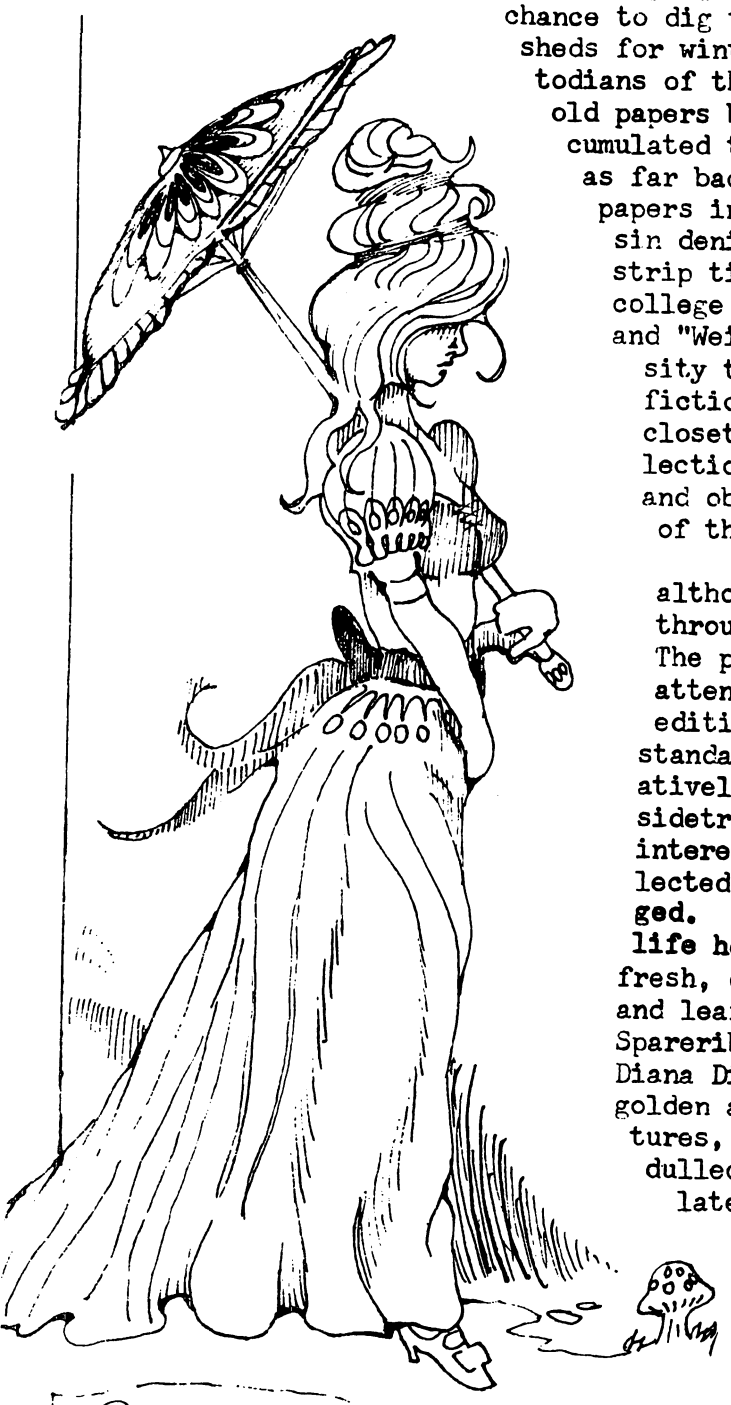
Long before he had the slightest inkling of the dark and eldritch visions thronging the mind of a young recluse in Providence a half-continent away, the barefoot August was belly-flat on the Sunday livingroom floor with what were then called the funnies, absorbing the light, mercurial, and very non-Lovecraftian fantasies set forth with the graphic mastery of Windsor McCay in Little Nemo in Slumberland and the charming whimsey of Johnny Gruelle in Mr. Twee-Deedle. (Freshly out of his stiff church clothes and full of Sabbath dinner, the Derleth boy gulped at the fresh air of Outcault's Buster Brown, Dircks' Katzenjammer Kids, and Dwig's School Days every week, as he did daily with the long and short of slapstick art in Fisher's Mutt and Jeff and the exquisite brick ballet of Herriman's Krazy Kat.)

And, before the future author of the Solar Pons tales ever thrilled to a Conan Doyle account of Holmes and Watson swaying through a London particular in the coffin confines of a hansom cab, the grubby-finered August had revelled in the mock-Holmesian adventures of Gus Mager's delightful Sherlocko the Monk....

In short, like Ray Bradbury, Harlan Ellison, Ted White, Jim Harmon and other writers later noted for their energetic activity in the fantasy fiction field, Derleth was an avid comic strip devotee from his first wide-eyed glimpse of a zip-POW! panel. The comics, brightly-hued leaves of genius shed all too sparsely

through the dark-columned forest of turn-of-the-century journalism, opened fresh, continuing worlds of fantasy for the young Derleth to explore beside the older, book-limned lands of Grimm, Anderson and Carroll. Like many before him and since, the fascinated boy taught himself to read from the comics before he set foot in a classroom. And, perhaps most important in our latterly view, Derleth first evidenced the literary, anthological and critical interests which were to characterize his life in his early response to comic strips.

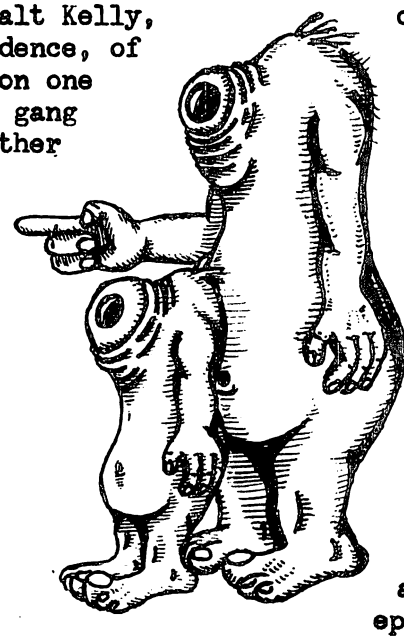
From his pre-teen days, the young collector saved every daily and Sunday strip he could find. He plagued relatives and his parents' friends for a chance to dig through old newspapers stacked in their woodsheds for winter kindling. He persuaded the gnarled custodians of the city dump to let him examine bundles of old papers before they were burned. In time, he accumulated thousands of comic pages of all dates, some as far back as the 1890s, many from far, exotic newspapers in New York and California mailed to Wisconsin denizens, and he filed them all dutifully by strip title and date. By the time he was ready for college in the mid-1920s (and had discovered Holmes and "Weird Tales" and much else: his major university thesis concerned the development of fantasy fiction in literature), Derleth had filled two closets from floor to ceiling with his strip collection, and the pages of six notebooks with facts and observations to be used in a projected history of the comic strip.



This work was never written, unfortunately, although Derleth mentioned it now and again through the years as a definite work in progress. The pressures of Arkham House editorial work, attendant correspondence, and his own writing and editing (largely to finance Arkham House) understandably prevented his seriously tackling so relatively esoteric a work. But, though it was often sidetracked for long periods of time, Derleth's interest in the comics--at least those he had collected and studied through his boyhood--never flagged. Several times a year over the decades of his life he would manage to sequester himself with the fresh, carefully-kept pages of his old favorites, and leaf again through Swinnerton's Jimmy, McManus' Spareribs and Gravy, De Beck's Married Life, Condo's Diana Dillpickles and other treasures of that first golden age of the strips. The best of these features, like any other works of real worth, never dulled for him or became shallow and archaic in later re-reading: as with Kelly and Eisner in our time, McCay and Gruelle held up for Derleth; Herriman and De Beck remained as much fun for him to pursue anew as Barks and Gottfredson are for us.

But the active writer and correspondent Derleth had become by 1930 lost interest in most strips after the 1920s. The big, full pages of slapstick and wild, often brilliant draftsmanship of earlier years were the great and lasting accomplishment of comic art for him, while the divided, reduced comic features of the 1930s and later, the quickly dominant advent of serious adventure strips after 1930, and the frequent deaths of so many old talents coupled with their replacement by lesser artists, generally depressed him. He preferred to look away, to keep his eyes and interest--perhaps a little like Sam Moskowitz in science fiction--on the work he had loved in the past. His long-planned book, certainly, would have dealt primarily with the first four decades of strips, and it was this limited aspect of the work, perhaps more than anything else, that must have made him realize that the book, close as it was to him, would have been a loss as a writing or publishing venture.

Occasional bright new talents that reminded him of the classic artists did engage his enthusiastic



of the past, such as Walt Kelly, interest and correspondence, of course. (Kelly, in response, placed Derleth's name on one portrayal of the recurrent swamp boat used by the gang in Pogo.) And he made lasting friendships with other collectors and afficionados in the strip field. So wide was his correspondence in this area that he had a special stationery--illustrated with episodes from a classic strip of the 1910s by his long-time artist friend, A.D. Condo--The Outbursts of Everett True--printed for use in writing to these individuals. (True, an irrascible hulk of a man, endeared himself to comic fans of the time by wreaking direct and overdue physical violence on an enormous variety of deserving public nuisances: smokers on buses and in theaters, door-to-door salesmen, practical jokers, tax collectors and similar types who would have made the Lord High Executioner's list in The Mikado. Derleth often claimed, and I believe it, that Condo never drew a dull True episode; certainly all that I've seen of the fierce True's rough-and-ready treatment of social malefactors is as soul-satisfying to look at today as it must have been to Derleth fifty years ago.)

He sought out and wrote to many of his childhood favorites, too (Condo being one of the first he reached), and made a particularly close friend of the late Clare "Dwig" Dwiggins, best-known to us as the creator of Nipper, by far the best of the many "kid" strips of the 1930s. With "Dwig," Derleth collaborated on an excellent children's book in the 1940s, Oliver the Wayward Owl, which he published under his Stanton and Lee imprint, as he did a 1945 288-page collection of Dwig's panel strip of the 1940s, Bill's Diary. Derleth's 12-page introduction to this latter book, in which he discuses the full range of Dwig's brilliant work in the strip field, from Sunday pages to daily four-panel continuity to single panel daily work, all dealing with the rural adventures of kids in the Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer tradition (one of Dwig's early Sunday strips was actually about Huck and Tom, in fact), constitutes the longest single piece extant by Derleth dealing with comic art.

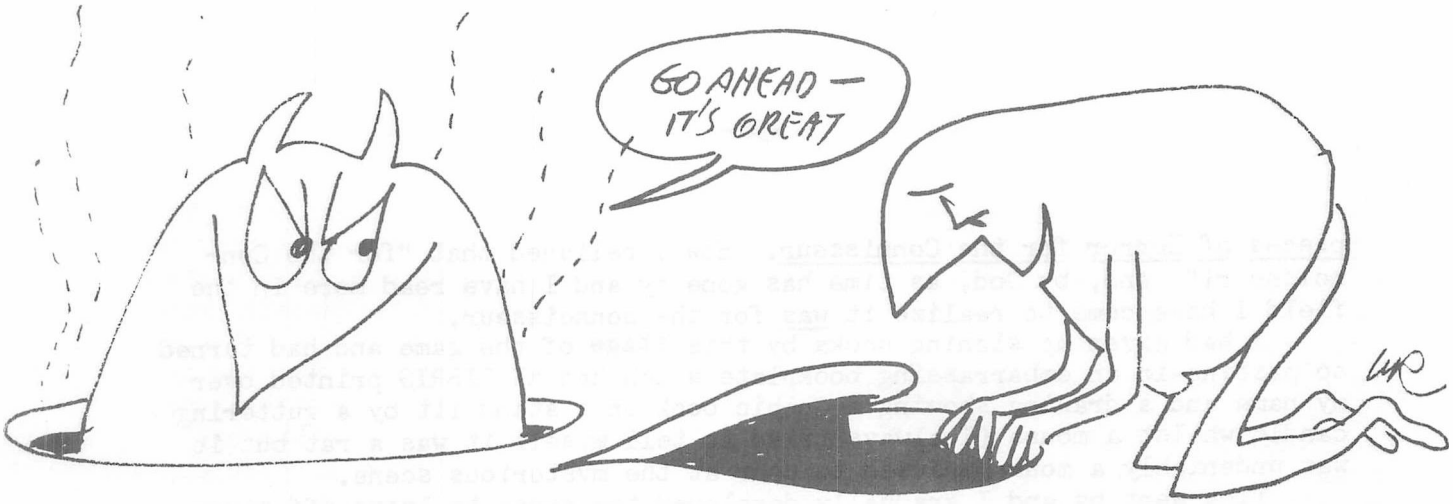
Its good sense, sound critical assement of the work of Dwig and other cartoonists, and enthusiastic readability suggest that Derleth's now-lost book on the comics would have been a moving, memorable work in a generally ill-treated field. He might have had more to say in a collection of Condo's Everett True strip he had long planned to publish (he first contacted me in 1970 at the San Francisco Academy of Comic Art with regard to the loan of a run of the early True strip for use in the book, indicating that it was nearling practical realization at that time), but this anthology and any text it might have had are apparently lost now with Derleth, Arkham House, Mycroft and Moran and Stanton and Lee all in a row.

Derleth seems to have discussed strips little with Lovecraft and other members of the Lovecraft correspondence circle, at least so far as one can judge from HPL's late 1920s letters to Derleth in the Selected Letters (II), and he probably took the relative unconcern with comics in the fantasy fandom of the time (an unconcern that prevailed in the early, subsequent decades of science fiction fandom as well) for granted. A pity: one would like to have had HPL's opinion of Herriman and Segar, Howard's of Crane and Foster and Raymond, and Smith's of McCay and Gruelle (always assuming, of course, that the willy-nilly distribution of strips across the country would have matched the given authors and artists), but this is data that may never have existed in writing--or, if it does, is data we may never see now that Derleth and his projected plans for subsequent collections of the letters of Lovecraft and others in the circle are gone forever.

The disposition of Derleth's long-cherished strip collection and of the notes for his history of the comics is unknown to me. He made some tentative inquiries to me about the Academy and its facilities for receiving and caring for donations of material in early 1971, but his death put an end to what might have been a very welcome addition to the Academy archives, assuming that he might have come to alter whatever earlier disposition he had indicated for this material in his will (assuming, even, that there was a will). I hope to trace the strips and the notes in due time, in order to discover such items as the Derleth collection might contain that I have not yet seen or studied, and to read (and possibly transcribe for the Academy files) his critical and historical comments on the field.

He is gone now, with all of the men he admired on those newspaper pages of fifty years ago--McCay, Opper, Dirks, Gruelle, Fisher, Herriman, De Beck, Segar, even Dwig and Condo--all but the incredible James Swinnerton, of course, who still draws and paints in Arizona at the age of 97, looking back on the art and narrative form he created so unknowingly on the San Francisco Examiner art staff in 1893.

The art of the comic strip as Derleth knew it is nearly gone from the newspapers now too, replaced by a melange of slovenly, make-shift features whose chief purpose is to fill out the continuing ghosts of what used to be richly enjoyable Sunday comic supplements and daily comic pages--but that is another story. Derleth might have told part of it, had he lived. It would have been worth reading.



To August Derleth

By GAHAN WILSON

THE FIRST ARKHAM House book I ever owned was Marginalia by H.P. Lovecraft. It, like almost all of the Arkham books, is printed on paper called Winnebago Eggshell, and is bound in a shiny, ebon cloth named Holliston Black Novelex. I have always liked the sound of Winnebago Eggshell and Holliston Black Novelex and I always liked the idea of August Derleth's pointing out the kind of paper and the kind of binding cloth used at the back of each and every book as it's a nice example of his consideration, really, his anxiousness always to give credit where credit was due.

On the end leaf of the book, in a small, cramped hand, is my signature of long ago. Now, thanks to years of practise and a considerable increase in confidence, my autograph is a bold, theatrical one, but those were other days, and that was another Wilson. He tries, though, I see. There is an attempt at flair in the "G" (only I have just now made out a faint curve of ink under it which indicates a faltering start), and I like the casual placement of the dot over the "i," but, by and large, it is the signature of one who holds the pen too tightly and is timid of what he signs.

The purchase of the book represented a bold step for me. I had, up to then, invested only in paperbacks and pulps with a rare second hand find or economy hardcover. Outside of those bits and fragments to be found in my stack of "Weird Tales," the only Lovecraft I had on hand was a twenty-five cent Bart House collection and a ninety-five cent hardcover printed by the Tower Mystery division of World and discovered by me lurking incongruously in the corner Walgreen's Drugstore. It was edited with an introduction by August Derleth.

I bought more Arkham House books after Marginalia and more anthologies with introductions by August Derleth. An early example of the latter was a lovely collection bound in red and called Sleep No More. It was a source of joy and sustenance to me and it had the delicious subtitle, Twenty Master-

pieces of Horror for the Connisseur. How I relished that "for the Connoisseur!" And, by God, as time has gone by and I have read more in the field I have come to realize it was for the connoisseur.

I had given up signing books by this stage of the game and had turned to pasting in an embarrassing bookplate which had EX LIBRIS printed over my name and a drawing showing a Gothic book on a stand lit by a guttering candle whilst a mouse (I always tried to tell myself it was a rat but it was undeniably a mouse) paused to peer at the mysterious scene.

Time went by and I gradually developed the sense to leave off signing Mr. Derleth's books, or to paste plates in them. I even began to keep the covers on them as it had dawned on me that they wore out a little slower that way, though I have never tried to keep them in what dealers call mint condition. I don't think it's possible to read a book with any affection and leave it in mint condition.

Then, one magnificent day, several years after the magnificent day when Mr. Derleth and I began correspondence, he rather timidly asked me if I would do a cover for an Arkham House collection of Lovecraft stories. He named a smallish price and apologized for it. It never seemed to have crossed the good man's mind I would have willingly paid him a number of times that price to have bribed him to give me such an honor. I accepted at once, needless to say, and got the drawing off to him within the week. It was typical of him that the check for payment came almost by return mail. He was one of the most considerate men I have ever encountered.

I would like to say, here, that the above-mentioned correspondence gave me the chance to express my gratitude to Mr. Derleth for his anthologies, his stories, Arkham House and his general work in the area of the macabre. I am happy to say I took the chance. There are a number of people I always meant to thank and never did and now it's too late. With Mr. Derleth, at least, I managed to meet a tiny bit of my obligation.

Anyhow, there they are, Mr. Derleth's books, signed by me, bookplated by me and, praise be, one with a cover by me. Then there are those with pages accidentally bent, some with a bit of debris left between the pages such as a crumb of tobacco from my smoking days, and here and there may be found a faint thumb smudge bearing my prints. I can remember buying this particular one on a particular Autumn, I remember that one as being a comfort during a lonely stretch, I can't for the life of me remember when I got this one here, but I wouldn't be without it now.

So now Mr. Derleth is dead and there will be a few more books of his from Arkham House and then that will be all. He wanted to give us more than he was able to in the end as a list of planned publications in "Thirty Years of Arkham House" shows. It is a fine list, a stylish list--the sort of list you expected of him. I will miss ver much reading all those books which now won't become a part of my life. I will miss more than I can say the generous man who wanted to give them to me.

A Personal Tribute

By RAMSEY CAMPBELL

S MOST OF YOU MUST know by now, August Derleth died on 4 July of a heart attack. I find it difficult to communicate the effect this news had on me. Derleth himself used to recount how, when he heard of Lovecraft's death, he walked into the hills behind Sauk City to give himself a chance to adjust to the facts. Derleth had met Lovecraft, and I had never met Derleth, yet I can't think that Derleth was so nearly stunned in 1937 as I was last month. It seemed impossible that he was dead. So much vitality can't just vanish like that. A couple of years ago a rather macabre rumor was abroad that Derleth had died after an operation; it wouldn't have been Derleth if he hadn't risen up to reply to his backlog of 500 letters, none the worse for the operation nor the rumor. But this time it was the truth, and even Derleth couldn't ignore it. That's what death means.

I don't intend to go into his immense output of work here; there will no doubt be enough bibliographies forthcoming in the future. In any case, his best work was not in the fantasy field, although he brought some poignancy to the Cthulhu Mythos in "The Lamp of Alhazared," and wrote an occasional good traditional ghost story. Otherwise, suffice it to say that up to the end he was dealing with hundreds of correspondents--he used to maintain that he replied to any letter within a week, and I'm sure that was so--running Arkham House virtually single-handed, writing a weekly column in the Madison Times, writing novels, occasionally producing short stories, editing "The Arkham Collector" and various anthologies, participating in the social life of Sauk City, lecturing, reading, listening to music, going to the cinema. Who else among us would have held out for so long as he did? "Working a 16-hour day never hurt anyone," he wrote (of himself) to me recently, "but worrying about it does." And Derleth wasn't the man to worry. Perhaps he summed himself up best in 1942, when he wrote to 20th Century Authors: "I enjoy life, and nobody takes me seriously, thank God!"

Of course his vitality infuriated many people, especially those who mistook it for egoism. In fact it proceeded from egoism, but surely few attitudes are healthier for an artist. One can imagine the snarls of malice with which the more uncreative greeted his statements in that same 1942 edition of 20th Century Authors. Who other than an intolerable egoist would say of himself, "It is possible that I am perhaps the most versatile and voluminous writer in quality writing fields today" ? Or, of his own Sac Prairie Saga, "It is perhaps the most ambitious project ever undertaken in the history of literature"?

But, if these statements were true, and it seems probable they were, why should he have suppressed them? Derleth never believed in being blind to one's own talent, and I must say that I can't think of a healthier attitude. Too much talent may be lost by listening to the ill-considered diatribes of unqualified critics and to one's own doubts. Derleth's other major virtue was self-consciousness. In Contemporary Authors he described himself as "little

more than the primitive storyteller who had a place at his tribal fire." That may seem to contradict what he said in 1942, but it doesn't: It simply gives a picture of the whole artist.

And the whole man? A book would hardly be adequate to that theme. I can only touch upon a few of those aspects of Derleth which impinged upon me in the decade or so during which I knew him. Of course I knew him first as a critic, as which he was perceptive and compassionate, although he was never unduly kind when that might mean passing a bad flaw in a story. I remember, at the age of 14, taking some time to recover from his description of a passage in the first draft of "The Church in High Street" as "ridiculous and exciting the reader to jeers rather than terror." But of course he was right. (I think it does no harm to admit here that the published draft of "The Church in High Street" was extensively revised by Derleth, so much so that it should really be described as a collaboration: the last three pages were virtually written by Derleth from my material.) And the proof, if any is needed, is that under his tutelage I discovered my own style and themes.

As our correspondence progressed I filled in the picture of Derleth suggested by our first exchanges: a man whose outlook and philosophy were nobody's but his own, an anti-clerical Catholic, a liberal conservative, by his own description a latter-day Thoreau. He could display a wicket turn of phrase. When Henry Miller's Tropics were running into legal trouble in this country, Derleth commented: "I sometimes think that people in England are expected to fuck in the dark."

He was disarmingly honest about his hack-work; his last few "Lovecraft collaborations" were each written in a Sunday afternoon, but it is to his credit that he made no claims for them. I can't say that he influenced my personality, since too many of his attitudes were the opposite of mine. He saw no reason to show compassion to the Moors murderers: "hang them, no questions asked," was his comment. Yet he wasn't closed in most of his attitudes; Last Exit to Brooklyn shared his bookshelves with Walden; Debussy and the Beatles both found a place among his records.

Certain writers of fantasy have been described as "larger than life"--Robert E. Howard, E. Hoffman Price--but I can't imagine that they could have been larger than Derleth. Perhaps the best expression of the man could be found in his weekly diary in the Madison Times, where pastoral visions would give way to comments on the latest Ingmar Bergman; bucolic comedy would shade into political asides. There was a whole man. Kirby McCauley, who gave me the sad news, described it as "the end of an era." And I don't think it was the era merely of Arkham House.

The I And I

By FORREST J. ACKERMAN

TOM COLLINS APPROACHED me at the 29th World Science Fiction Convention, September, 1971, and asked if I would write something about August Derleth for this Memorial issue. I was glad of a second chance since I had meant to (voluntarily) write something for "Luna" or "Locus" (or both) but had not found the time. I I frequently say, nowdays, that I am a quart bottle into which the world is daily trying to pour a gallon, and I go to bed each night dissatisfied because of the three-fourths that has spilled over, usually into limbo.

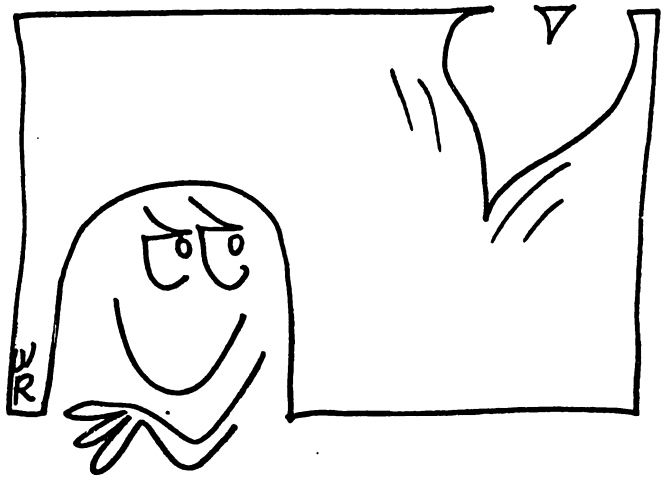
I do not know in whose company I will find myself in writing about August Derleth, but it may be that I will be the least of the lot as far as having known him well. That I can lay no claim to.

But perhaps I saw a side of him seen by but few. It was not a pleasant side, in fact it filled me with righteous indignation, but the time of anger was long past during his lifetime and perhaps it would serve some useful purpose to report it from a perspective of years.

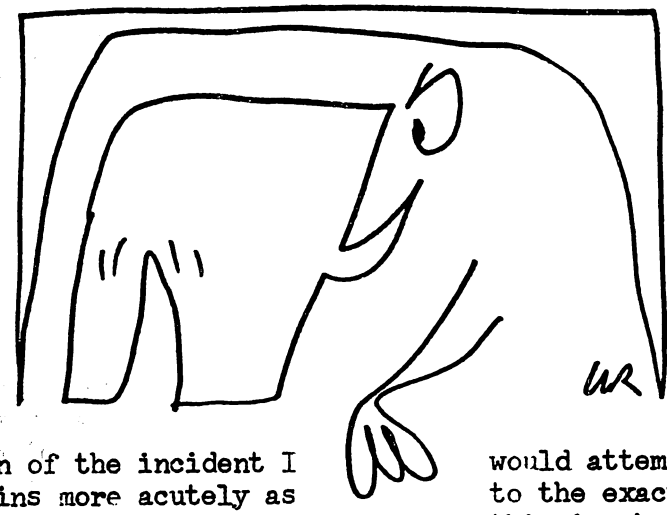
It happened 17 years ago. It almost caused the non-publication of pro-mag "Science Fiction Digest" #1, and the blackening of my name as a literary agent.

It concerned my client S. Fowler Wright. The English author's masterpiece, the alien-qualitied far future novel The World Below, had been my sci-fi favorite since my childhood (only Childhood's End) equals it as an adult) and it was one of my life's great satisfactions for me when, on my first trip to England in 1951 I was able to meet the author. At that time, as I recall without consulting my records, I took on a certain measure of representation of his works. (I clearly recall that I sold first hardcover publication rights in America to his Spiders' War.)

Three years later I had a very happy relationship with Chester Whitehorn when he was launching "Science Fiction Digest," for I had been a co-



editor on the early 30s fanzine of the same name, and also a science fiction digest had been a dream of Wendayne Ackerman in the early 50s (a true digest, which Whitehorn's SFD was not). My editorial cup ranneth over when, out of 12 stories selected for the launching issue, 9 were by clients of the Ackerman Agency and one by myself! Additionally, I supplied a feature article, "Interplanetary Man," by another giant of a client, Olaf Stapledon.



Impending disaster struck when I received an anguished telegram from a bewildered editor, friend Whitehorn informing me that he had been informed in no uncertain terms by August Derleth that he, Derleth, having published "The Rat" in The Throne of Saturn, controlled magazine rights to said story and Forry Ackerman had better butt out pronto or all hell would break loose.

That's about the sum and substance of it. For a Moskowitz history or a Warner in-depth discussion of the incident I would attempt to dig out records or cudgel my brains more acutely as to the exactitudes of the matter. But substantially, I would say, this is what happened: I told Whitehorn to go ahead with publication, said that I had written authorization from the author covering the agenting of the story. Which, if I said so, I did. Presumably I even sent him proof.

This did not satisfy Derleth.

Poor Chester became a hockey puk between the legendary immovable force and the irresistible object. Derleth threatened that if he didn't receive the payment for the story (it had already been sent to me), he would hold up issuance of the magazine and ruin my reputation with every publisher in the sf and fantasy field. He was furious and I was--fiery Forry.

I had already taken my commission (a big fat $5, probably) and dutifully forwarded the author's share to Mr. Wright. I didn't feel it was right, the way Derleth was pressuring me, but time was of the essence and, with poor, innocent Chet Whitehorn caught in the crossfire, I acted against my principles and my will to get the editor off the hook.

Out of my own pocket I sent Derleth what I regarded as "blood money," admitting no guilt, only buying time to get this damn mess straightened out and, incidentally, get my money back.

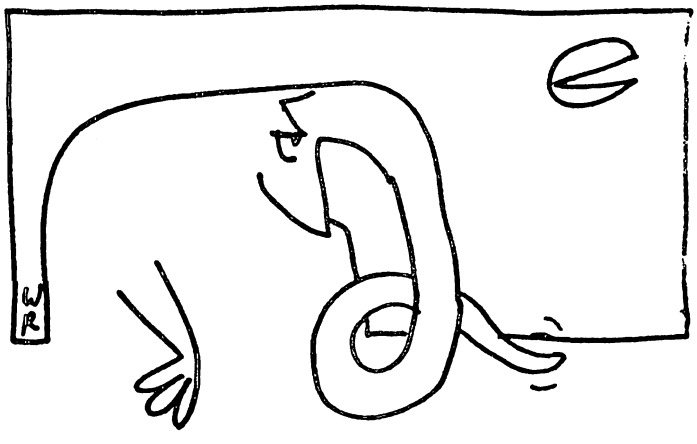
Incidentally, I never did get my money back.

Derleth, in the end, turned out to be right.

Which is not to say I was wrong.

Wright was wrong!

He--particularly as he was a lawyer--should have known better. But I am prepared to be charitable and say he was very old...and alse, he felt he had moral right on his side.



Wright finally admitted to me that Derleth was within his rights because he, Wright, had signed a pernicious contract. pernicious contract. Perhaps he had forgotten about the fine print when he gave me the go-ahead to sell magazine reprint rights to his stories in America.

Having admitted he was wrong, Wright nevertheless neglected to re-imburse me for the

story for which I had paid him--and also paid Derleth! So he ate his cake, even if it was taken away from him, which of course could only happen in the fantasy field.

I could never find it in my heart to feel too miffed with S. Fowler Wright. He was an old man and, in any event, the author of one of the novels I hold in highest esteem in the whole time stream of science fiction.

After the hot exchange with Derleth, I was cool toward him for some time to come. Like Lovecraft before him, I don't think he need have attacked me with such vigorous vehemence, that he should have believed better of me than that I would try to wrest rights in an Arkham House property away from him for five bucks. But...so be it.

When, some years later and not so many years ago, August Derleth himself came out to Hollywood for the creation of the Praed Street Irregulars (the Solar Pons Society), there was no rancor. We did not speak of the past, and I was present along with Bradbury, van Vogt, Bloch, Leiber and numerous other luminaries in the field, and received an investiture as "The Grice-Paterson Curse" on that august occasion at Ivory Towers, the storied home (five storeys, to be exact!) of Sir Alvin Germeshausen.

Later, in my own home, with rare candor and good humor, Derleth inscribed his various Arkham House collections for me. It may be of some interest to current readers and to posterity to have the author's own evaluation of his works. In alphabetical order, as he took them from my shelves, they are as follows:

Dark Mind, Dark Heart--"a fair anthology"
Lonesome Places--"perhaps my best collection in the field"
Not Long for This World--"not one of my better books
to be taken in small doses"
Over the Edge--"a grab bag"
Someone in the Dark--"the first and perhaps the best of the lot"
Something Near--"not the cream but the skim milk--"

If I was not a great Derleth reader or great Derleth friend, I was certainly a great collector, referring to his lasting memorial, Arkham House. I bought my copy of The Outsider at the pre-publication price (then considered a gamble) of $3.50 and have lived to see this superstar among collector's items soar to 100 times its original value.

I would have wished for August Derleth at least another quarter century of productivity. If any of you feel that I have told you more about myself than about August Derleth, I am sincerely sorry, for the spotlight belongs to him at this point, not to me. I am glad we were longer friends than enemies.

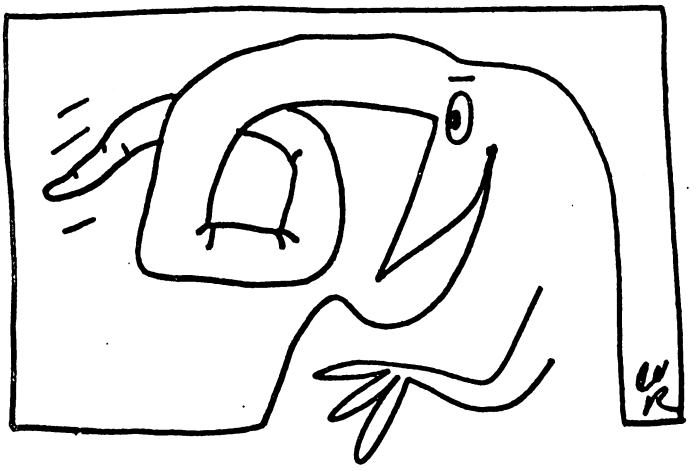
A Unique Writer

By HARRY WARNER JR.

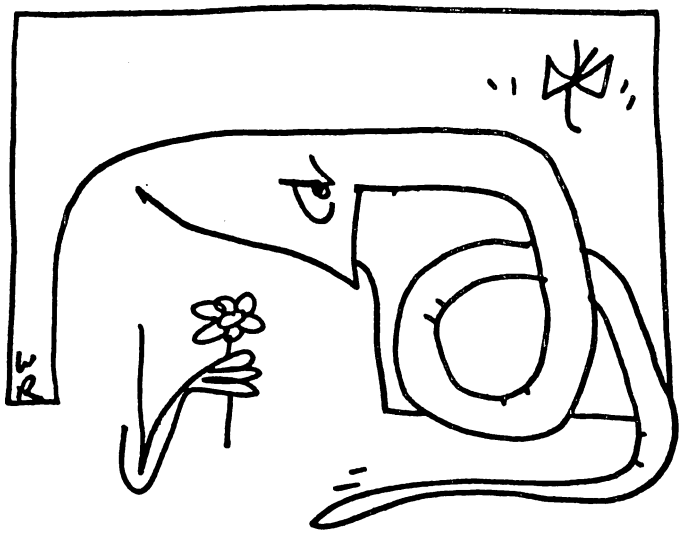
OU THINK YOU KNOW quite well the accomplishments of the big names in science fiction and fantasy. Then one of them dies and you think a little harder about what he did, and all of a sudden you realize how unique he was. I know of nobody who possessed such a double literary personality, and achieved equally in the fields of letters concerned with the most mundane sort of life in rural America and with the furthest-out worlds of fantasy, weirddom and the outre. The pity of it is that most readers knew August Derleth well in only one aspect or the other. Only the people who are fans of August Derleth can appreciate the unprecedented way in which he kept his two literary selves distinct and nevertheless gave to both the mundane and fantasy fields of literature similar things of value.

I can think of people in other fields who demonstrated similar unlikely combinations of creativity. There was Mozart, for instance, who wrote divine, unworldly pure music in symphonies and string quarters and operas and also wrote letters of such charming vulgarity that almost two centuries elapsed before some of them appeared in all their frankness in English translation. Goethe wrote of metaphysical and philosophical things while he attempted to apply the scientific attitude toward technical subjects. But Derleth alone attained genuine fame in both diametrically opposed fields of realistic writing about the most ordinary things and fantastic stories and publishing about the least ordinary matters.

There are some common traits that hold true in both facets of Derleth's creativity. One of them is his lifelong preference for staying away from the mobs. He was rarely seen at gatherings of fans or professionals in the fantasy world. If he'd attended worldcons and SFWA banquets, some of the coolness that occasionally developed between him and certain individuals might have been avoided. But his comparative seclusion in the fantasy world might have helped him to achieve his remarkable continuity: almost a half-century of uninterrupted activity as correspondent, author, editor, propagandist, and anthologist in the fantasy field.



Sinclair Lewis said it best, with regard to Derleth's similar behavior in the mainstream or mundane literary world. "He has not trotted off to New York literary cocktail parties or to the Hollywood studios. He has stayed at home and built up a solid work that demands the attention of anyone who believes that American fiction is at last growing up. He is a champion and a justification of regionalism." Wisconsin benefited as much from Derleth's behavior as Lovecraft did.

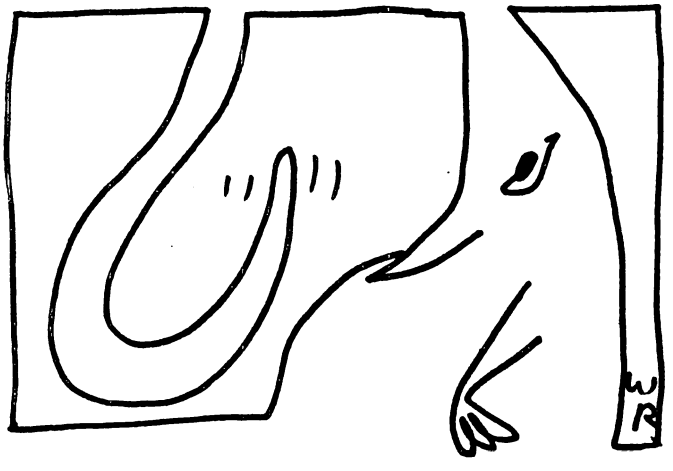


Then there's his productivity in both sides of his creative coin. It is enormous. I don't know what the final tally was, but the jacket of Wisconsin Country published in 1965 lists it as Derleth's 110th book. There were books of short stories, novels and journals about the countryside and people he loved in Wisconsin, and there were anthologies of other men's fantasy and science fiction, works in the Lovecraft tradition, other books containing his poetry, a series of children's stories, countless others.

And then there was Derleth's altruism in both literary fields. In the mainstream books, it was writing done for the sake of the people around him. When you read those non-fantasy books by Derleth, you get the impression that he is attempting to make you love the real and fictional characters in them because they deserve that love. Nobody in fandom needs to be reminded of what Derleth did for Lovecraft, a writer who without Arkham House might be forgotten today, but now seems on the verge of making the roundabout journey into the status of a classic American writer that Edgar Allan Poe achieved. France has taken up Lovecraft and it was recognition in France that caused the United States to reassess Poe to his true worth.

The next time you're in the public library, look at the pictures of Derleth that are on the jackets of many of his books. Most of them are unretouched, semi-candid photographs. Even the jackets that contain a formally posed portrait are illustrative of the honesty of the writer because he never seems to have made an effort to appear more than he was: rather stocky in build with a face that belongs to a man of the people, not an aesthete. Instinctively, you wonder if he might have had another body and face, one that would appear as fantastic and weird as the August Derleth pictured on the mundane works is down to earth. He didn't, and the fact that he was very human is the reason why he occasionally got engulfed in hassles with fans.

Most of these were connected with his efforts on behalf of the Lovecraft estate. As early as 1937 there was the threat of a lawsuit over a 25-copy edition of some HPL poems issued by Corwin F. Stickney. His long and succesful struggle to keep Lovecraft correspondence out of fanzines exasperated several fans down through the years. Maybe more personal contact between Derleth and fandom would have made things fo smoother. But if Derleth was too strict about the Lovecraft manuscripts, fans were too critical of his behavior on



other occasions. Unforgivable was the way fans criticized Derleth when they suddenly found themselves faced with a $100 asking price for The Outsider and Others, the first Arkham House book, after the edition which Derleth had gone deep into debt to publish finally sold out.

Fans are as human as Derleth was, and I imagine that his death will produce much the same reaction that occurred when that book sold out: sudden new interest in the topic. I don't envy the task faced by anyone who decides at this late date that he must own all the Arkham House books. It might take as long to collect copies of every release in good condition with jacket at sane prices as it took to publish them. We'll also probably see new editions of Derleth's fantasy fiction and some critical aurveys of it. My advice is to concentrate on the Derleth fantasies which are not directly in the Lovecraft tradition, if you collect the fantastic fiction he wrote. The Lovecraft imitations and the stories which Derleth created from HPL sources impress me as his least successful fiction, simply because only Lovecraft could write properly the fiction which was so intimately connected with his own particular subconscious and personality.

Meanwhile, if there's to be a special Derleth fandom, it has a lot of work ahead. I don't think he was as brilliant a letter writer as HPL, but there must be a vast quantity of correspondence which should be preserved if only for its informational content. Derleth made a staggering quantity of appearances in mundane magazines; fortunately he loved to write long lists of publications to which he'd contributed when he provided biographical information, so creation of checklists is simplified. There was a limited number of Derleth appearances in fanzines. Even the Arkham House catalogs were collectors' items.

But I hope that a lot of fans will pay another form of tribute to Derleth by reading some of his books about Wisconsin. Even if you know nobody in Wisconsin and never intend to go to Wisconsin, you might learn from those books to take another look at the people around you in the real world, and to appreciate their mundane qualities, just as Derleth did with very similar real people in the area he loved best.

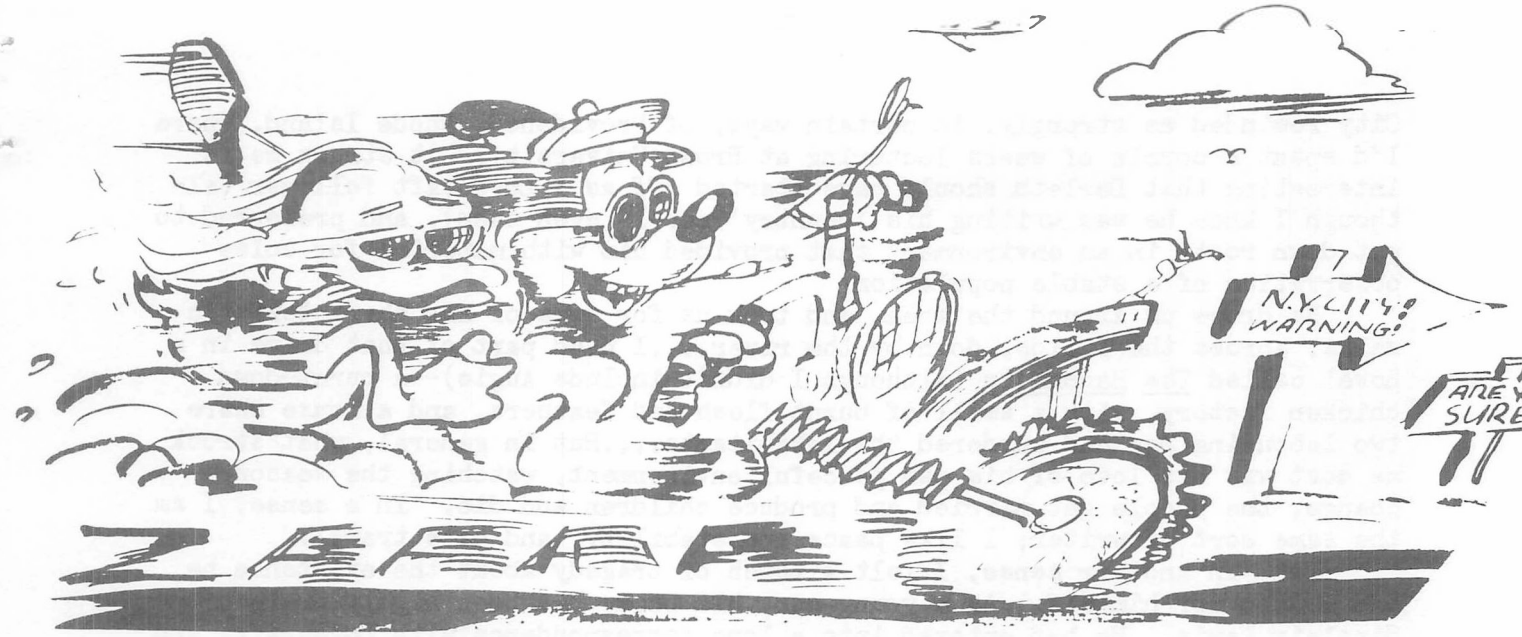
A.E. VAN VOGT:

about them and him, except to express my gratitude and my admiration.

Derleth had a fine feel for the English language, and in some of his letters to me he expressed his ideas about handling certain types of description and action. I suppose all publishers must make up their minds about a uniform grammar and syntax; but my impression was that Derleth's language sensitivity and conviction was an author's concern and interest, and not merely a publisher's.

For my money, his succinct use of the English language showed at its best in the Solar Pons stories. These pastiches are models of good writing to me. Short, to the point, not a word wasted--outstanding is the word.

From a letter Derleth wrote me a few years ago, it became obvious to me that Arkham House was really quite a small company, definitely a labor of love. I benefited from that labor when it first began. I keenly regret the untimely demise of the many-talented man who created that company and maintained it. He had his very worthy place in the world and in the field of letters.



A Touch of Tragedy

By COLIN WILSON

MET AUGIE DERLETH on only one occasion. In 1967, I was driving from New York to Seattle with my family, to take up a post at the University of Washington: we made a special detour through Wisconsin to meet him. Sauk City proved to be a small town, little more than a village. The man at the garage directed us out to Arkham House, a couple of miles beyound the town. It proved to be a weird looking structure, set among great trees, and I remember thinking it would make a good scene for a Cthulhu story.

Derleth was bigger than I'd expected, over six feet, with a huge jaw (he told me he had had some disease of the bone). He made an immediate impression of good nature and kindness. He wasn't married--I gather the marriage ended in disaster--and his mother kept house for him and the children. He ran the publishing business from the house, and there were piles of books everywhere. I was greatly impressed by his collection on murder, which was superb. Since he was also a book reviewer for a Wisconsin paper, the house contained more books than I've seen in any except my own.

We stayed in Sauk City overnight and the following day, spending most of this time with Derleth. He took us down into the town for a meal, and it was immediately apparent that he was a kind of hero in the place--people shouted "Hi Augie" across the street. I had read a couple of his Wisconsin novels, and some of the Sac Prairie journals: he took us around the old houses where some of the scenes were set, and introduced us to the people, who seemed pleased to be in one of his books. Sauk

City reminded me strongly, in certain ways, of Providence, Rhode Island, where I'd spent a couple of weeks lecturing at Brown University: it struck me as interesting that Derleth should have started off as a Lovecraft follower (although I know he was writing his 'country' novels even then), and preferred to put down roots in an environment that provided him with material for colse observation of a stable population.

He drove us around the area, and took us for some of his characteristic walks, across the fields, down by the river....I used part of that drive in a novel called The Hedonists (although I didn't include Augie)--a burnt-down chicken factory, with a smell of burnt flesh and feathers, and a house where two labouring men had murdered the inhabitants....But in general, what struck me most was his love of his own peaceful environment, watching the seasons change, the people get married and produce children and die. In a sense, I am the same sort of writer; I like peace and stability, and hate travel.

Yet, in another sense, I felt a touch of tragedy about the existence he had chosen for himself. As a young man, his books had been highly praised by Sinclair Lewis. He had entered into a long correspondence with Lovecraft, and I feel that he romanticised the business of being a writer. And modern America is hardly the place for that kind of writer: if you want to make an impact, you live in a big city and observe the rat race, and constitute yourself a "social observer." Derleth, I felt, belonged to an earlier period. He would have been happy among the Transcendentalists on Brook Farm. He felt a certain nostalgia about the 19th century, the age of pioneers, and men like Thoreau and Emerson and Whitman. He loved the foggy atmosphere of the Sherlock Holmes stories, or the coiling mists of Lovecraft's Dunwich and Arkham. With his natural friendliness and love of the country, Derleth was somehoe out of place in this literary era.

He was not a major writer--I think that perhaps his training as a writer in pulp magazines had given his language a certain lack of discipline--but he was a unique writer, belonging in the same tradition as Robert Frost, Edgar Lee Masters and perhaps Benet. I suspect he was a more important figure than Lovecraft, more of a heavyweight. (I meant to write a long essay on his Sac Prairie novels, but have still not progressed further than notes, although I have read many of them.)

His output was, of course, tremendous, largely because he had to keep his publishing house floating. And all these things about him meant that he worked pretty hard for far less recognition than was his due. His Sac Prairie novels are as memorable, in their own way, as Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha saga, but his temprament was so kindly and un-violent that they lack the general air of neurosis and obsession that makes Faulkner "contemporary." I think he had faced this, accepting that, if recognition ever came on a large scale, it would come late, as with Frost. He had chosen to be the big fish in his small pond of Sauk City, not out of a desire to be treated as a celebrity, but with a wry recognition that his best qualities were "unexportable."

I have often wondered why he put so little sex into his books. Before I met him, I assumed that this might be because he was a natural puritan, like Lovecraft; but my two days with him dispelled that notion. He could be sexually frank, even Rabelaisian, and the same quality appears in some of his letters to me. He may have felt that Wisconsin--and Sauk City in particular--might disapprove of a more open attitude to sex in his books; I don't know. If so, it was a pity, not because more sex would have given his books a wider sale, but be-

cause it was an aspect of his literary personality that he left unexplored.

I have explained (in the preface to The Mind Parasites) how I got to know Derleth. I have discovered the stories of Lovecraft in about 1960, and I wrote of their peculiar quality of imaginative violence in a book called The Strength to Dream. Derleth had written the introduction to the Lovecraft volume; so when I came to America in 1961, I wrote to him to ask how much of Lovecraft was in print. We swapped friendly letters--and books--for a while, and he suggested casually that if I ever felt like writing a story in the Cthulhu mythos, he would like to publich it. I found the idea attractive. I had been pretty critical of Lovecraft's actual writing in The Strength to Dream--largely because my own mind works in the same way as his; I suppose I'm also a romantic, a lover of books, a student of philosophy and occultism. It struck me that one of the chief defects of the whole "Arkham School" of writing is its tendency to look backwards to the 19th century: it is completely free of specifically modern intellectualism; you wouldn't dream that Sartre and Camus, or even Eliot and Joyce, had existed.

What I wanted to do, rather vaguely, was to bring Lovecraft up to date, to create a post-existentialist mythology. The result was The Mind Parasites. And in the best Lovecraft tradition, I introduced Derleth himself as a character, although I made the inaccurate prophecy that he would live to be 90 or so. The book was basically serious in intention--about "original sin," in fact, but I liked the tradition of parody. It had some moderate success in both England and America, and people still write to me to ask if I really believe in the existence of the parasites. Later, I decided to do a second volume in the same manner; this became The Philosopher's Stone, basically about Time travel and Shaw's theme of living to be 300, but I again used the Cthulhu myth.

I still intend to write another "horror story"--I'd like to do one about vampires this time. I mentioned this to Derleth a few weeks before his death, and his last note to me has the postscript, "How about the new story?"

Physically, Derleth reminded me of a great, good natured bear. What I would not have suspected merely from talking to him was the sharpness of his observation of people, an observation that reminds me of Balzac. This, in my opinion, raises him well above the level of any other writer in the Arkham school. The books by which he is best known to most readers--his Arkham tales and the Solar Pons mysteries--were obviously not his best; he had started to write them when young, found there was a market for them, and continued to write them when they had ceased to stir his imagination. This meant that he failed to give all his energy to what should have been his life's work, producing the Human Comedy (or Yoknapatawpha saga of Sac Prairie. But the best books of the series have a life of their own, and I think they will live.

WADE WELLMAN:

MET AUGUST DERLETH only once--in August, 1964. He was slightly brusque in manner, but I found him innocent of the egotism which was so often charged against him by his critics. He seemed to me to be a scholar of great refinement, with a wide range of interest, although his main concentration was on American literature. His greatest love was poetry. Over the years he published five of my poems in a 1961 anthology, Fire and Sleet and Candlelight.

He was a man of outstanding intellect and of great talent. Unfortunately, he was forced to expend most of his talent on writing done simply to earn a livelihood, although in his later years he developed a philosophical attitude about this, and wasted no time on needless lamentations. He never mourned greatly that he had been unable to find time for a real magnum opus. As a young writer he was considered to have immense promise--his correspondent and contemporary, Robert Ervin Howard, expected him to become one of the greatest U.S. authors of this century, and it might well have happened if he had not been plagued by financial problems. His versatility and prolificacy were indeed remarkable.

He published many stories by my father, and the two authors had a pleasant correspondence for about three decades, but they never met personally. I admired him very much. Incidentally, my favorite stories by Derleth were "The Metronome" and "The Lonesome Place"--particularly the latter--and I would like to have this opinion recorded.

MANLY WADE WELLMAN:

e who knew August Derleth were shocked and saddened by his death. It came too soon, it would have come too soon no matter when it came.

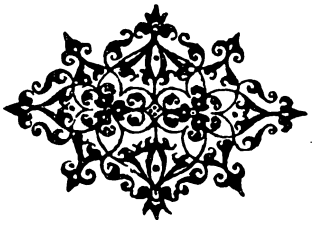
He was my friend and my publisher; and it is hard to be both those things at once to a writer. Augy was a man of great heart. He could be savage, but he could be warm and kind. Probably it was hard for him to get to be the good man he became--it's pretty heady to be a successful writer in your teens. He was proud back then. Some thought he was vain about turning out those reams of publishable stuff in such short spurts. Sinclair Lewis wasn't the only one who felt Augy might have written more greatly if he'd been slower at it. But that's just a theory. Nobody really knows.

Augy wrote a short story in ninety minutes, a book in seven days, and let the world know about this fast performance. But I don't think he was ever a hack, not even when he was so young and so sure of himself. All his writing was the best he could do. No writer can be better than that.

With me, he was particularly insistent on gathering and re-working the short stories about John with the silver-strung guitar, and making them into the book Who Fears the Devil? Whatever Augy might feel about his own writing at full gallop, he urged lots of work to make the book come out as it did. He felt it might be a worthy book, long before the folklore experts decided to take it up and say nice things about it. As I write, it's being made into a motion picture, high in the haunted Carolina mountains where it happened, where most of it was written. I'm on my way up to watch the shooting as soon as I finish writing this. I'm sorry that Augy isn't around, maybe helping me watch. He'd rejoice about it. He could be sharply critical, but he couldn't be jealous. He was as happy for a friend's good luck as for his own.

As he grew older, he was unweariedly kind to young writers. I've heard from some of them about that. They're hard hit by his death, those beginners he helped, and they should be.

He'll be missed as a good writer, a true friend, a fine, useful editor and publisher. Who'll take your place, Augy? And why should anyone take it? We don't take one another's places, do we?



JOSEPH PAYNE BRENNAN:

completely crushed. I was unable to concentrate on my job. I couldn't eat or sleep properly. I found it impossible to do any creative writing for weeks. Even as I read his obituary in the New York Times, I experienced a sense of disbelief.

On July 7th, the day after learning of his death, I saw the familiar Arkham House envelope in my mail box. It contained a short note from August, written on July 2nd and postmarked on the 3rd. Along with the note was a check for the use of my story "Canavan's Back Yard" in Alfred Hitchcock Presents Stories to Stay Awake By, an anthology to be published by Random House later this year. "Canavan's Back Yard" had made its first appearance in Nine Horrors....

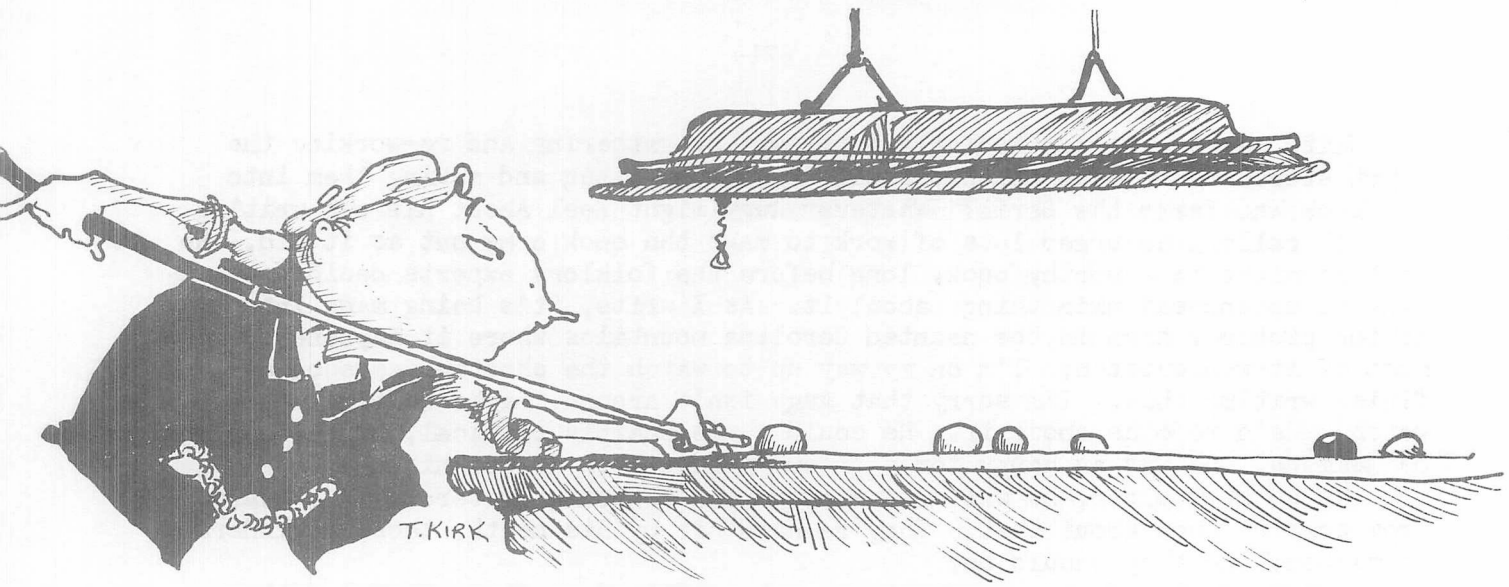
In this last note, Derleth asked for some new poems for "The Arkham Collector," mentioning that issue number ten was just in but not yet distributed. He mentioned also that the Arkham House anthology, Dark Things, which contains my story "The Peril that Lurks Among Ruins," was on its way from the bindery and that author copies would be mailed shortly.

He revealed that he had been in the hospital and that he was now home "entertaining an invasion of bronchial pneumonia," adding that he was "heavily medicated."

This was to be my last note ever from August Derleth. His final words to me were, "All best."

And "All best" to August Derleth. I am convinced that his work and influence as novelist, short story writer, poet, editor, anthologist, publisher, columnist--and correspondent--will live on for many years to come.

Time will make the final assessment; I am sure it will be a high one.



Letters to the Editor

Dear Mr. Collins, 14 Set. 71

Well, it's a great pity that your letter came when it did, for unfortunately my husband is away, doing what soldiers do "for Queen and Country" as it goes. I could reach him in the field with a letter, but the time limits you impose, to say nothing of his circumstances, make me believe that he would be hard pushed to give any sort of fitting answer--he would not have access to his letters, books, etc., and he will be away for well over a month.

However, Brian has asked me to look after any correspondence I can while he is away, and so, for what it is worth, while I know little of Brian's correspondence with August Derleth, I know much of his regard for the man. My husband has in fact recently written a letter to Roderic Jeng on much those lines, and I know that in that letter he purposely played down his gratitude and affection for August Derleth. He feared that his very deep feelings on first hearing of Derleth's death might, because of their extremes, be translated as insincere flattery.

The truth is that though he never met the man, he valued him greatly as friend, mentor and (perhaps a touch point, for they did not always agree) critic! Brian was, in fact, shattered by Derleth's passing--and especially since, on the very same day he received word of it, he also received Derleth's book Sac Prairie People, which I have before me now and which is signed: "For Brian Lumley--one of my better books, August Derleth."

Perhaps the best way of making it plain how much Brian esteemed Mr. Derleth would be to point out that while my husband never reads any book more than once (except for one or two stories by H.P. Lovecraft, from which he can quote paragraph after paragraph without taking the referred volume from its shelf) he has not put Sac Prairie People down since it arrived--and this is

not simply his appreciation of a great author, for as often as not he is not reading, merely sitting with the book in his hands....

I am sure Brian would gladly contribute to any further project you may have in mind, and equally sure that if you think it is worth it, he would not mind your printing of this note in absence of a worthier letter from his own hand.

Gail Lumley

★★★

Dear Mr. Collins:

I have heard August speak of you several times so your name is not unknown to me. I personally do not feel the time is right for me to write anything. There have been several similar requests. Grief does not leave room for objectivity.

In answer to your questions:

August has two children, April is 17 years old, a senior in high school. Walden is 15 and a sophomore. They are now living with my husband and myself and our 6 yr. old daughter.

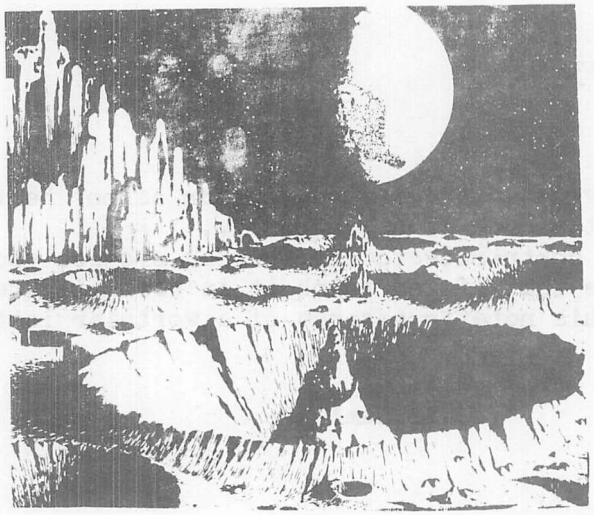
August had several secretarial positions filled--typing mss. mostly. Since 1968 I typed, filed, drove him to his lectures or any place he went out of town--due to his hypertension it was unwise for him to drive. My husband and I knew August socially as one of our dearest friends. I knew him first in 1957.

His was a most complex personality--few people were deep enough to see beyond what he particularly wanted them to see. Thus there were many misinterpretations of him. August was a rare man--he believed in his principles and <u>lived</u> by them. He believed in accepting responsibilities.

August had strong political beliefs--not leaning towards one party but towards a particular man he felt could do a good job. He did not take an active part unless he felt his name would help a cause or situation he felt very strongly for, or very strongly against the opposition. In his earlier years he was more involved in community, school and government business, but he found out a basic lesson of life--people do not appreciate help. The bad judgement and follies of man seemed less inviting than the wonders of nature.

There was nothing he did not know about the current and past political scene. He could and did predict results off the tip of his tongue. He was an expert on all forms of nature--including man and his behavior patterns. He predicted self-destruction for man, unhappily but insistently.

Kay Mulcahy



Meade Frierson
3705 Woodvale Road
Birmingham, Alabama 35223

Dear Tom:

It was a pleasure to mee you at worldcon; sorry you had to leave early. I did get the Kirk piece we were both interested in, but it presents a problem in reduction beyond the capacity of the speedy-print place to which I will hie myself in the morn to have prints made for eventual publication. Here's a print of the Dany Frolich "Cthulhu Rising" piece I told you about. Dany is a fine New Orleans fan artist who will be producing more Lovecraft matter for my own one-shot zine, HPL, which should be out early in 1972. The price will depend in part upon the printing process to be used, part offset, part mimeo ($1) or all offset ($1.50).

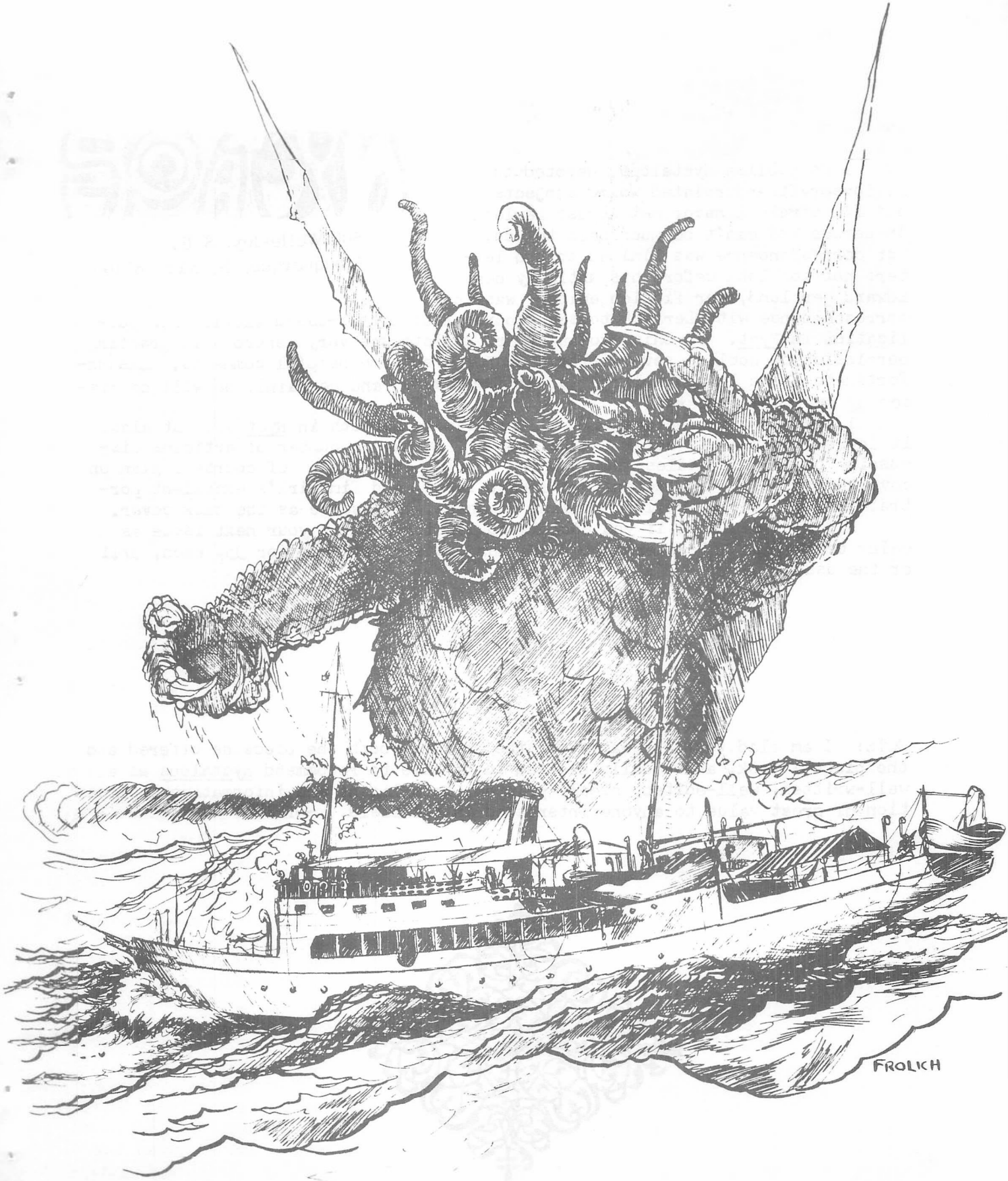
I don't know if I got a chance to introduce you to Steve Fabian at Noreascon, but before we left I was delighted to receive his drawing from "The Whisperer in Darkness." Steve hails from Vermont and in the introduction to the story Lovecraft describes odd objects found floating in the flood-bloated rivers near Steve's home, so it was a natural for him to illustrate. The mood is sensational, and I've obtained Fabian's commitment to do a series of them from HPL's best stories.

This HPL art project has been on the drawing boards for some time, but it really took the contacts made at Noreascon to make it gell. I just got in some excellent work done by Herb Arnold (dust jacket artist for Arkham's Dark Things), who is commissioned to do some illos for the zine--he is the most enthusiastic of my artists. I have one in now from comics artist Robert Kline, and underground artist "God Nose" Jaxon liked one of my HPLish comic scripts and will illustrate it. He'll aso do a couple of HPL scenes.... A retired philosophy professor is doing a piece on HPL's philosophy, and Manly Wade Wellman has offered reprint rights to a short story he dedicated to Lovecraft, but I am afraid it might still be in print somewhere, in which case I really should decline.

Anent Derleth, you may not realize that one of his publishing projects before the HPL revival (which, rightly or wrongly, I date from '64 on) was "Hawk and Wippoorwill: Poems of Man and Nature," a nicely printed (as what by Derleth was not?) 36-40 pp journal which lasted for five volumes of two issues each. My own contributions are in Volume 4. The publications had nothing to do with Arkham House, of course, but represent just one more facet of this fascinating person.

His acceptance/rejection letters were terse and to the point. When I wrote in 1969 to profer to "The Arkham Collector" some HPLish verse I had understood that he had died (no doubt misinterpreting some mention of his heart attack around that time). In his reply, accepting a piece which was published in TAC 6, he simply said, "I'm keeping The Gate in the news for eventual use in The Arkham Collector. Many thanks. But where did you get that 'late Mr. Derleth' bit?"

Meade Frierson


FROLICH

Dear Thomas:

500 Wellesley, S.E.
Albuquerque, N. Mex. 87106

I do publish Nyctalops (devoted to H. P. Lovecraft and related weird subjects), but I'm afraid I never met August Derleth in person and can't be much help to you. Our correspondence was limited to two letters not too long before his untimely death. Edward Berglund, our fiction editor, was in correspondence with Derleth to seek approval of Mythos-based fiction for publication in Nyct. In this exchange, Mr. Derleth was very generous in granting permission to publish several items and offered some helpful comments. His unfortunate death leaves a large gap **in the field,** and certainly he will be missed by everyone concerned.

I had hoped to include several tributes to Derleth in Nyct #5, but alas, it looks like this is not going to happen. We have a number of articles discussing the Mythos tales, but nothing on him personally. Of course I plan on covering his death in the editorial next issue, and Tim Kirk's excellent portrait of Derleth, which I am willing to share, will serve as the back cover.

I'd appreciate it if you could also mention Nyct in your next issue as being devoted to HPL--over forty pgs. per issue--available for 35¢ each, 3/$1 or the usual.

Harry Morris

NOTE: I am glad to thank Harry for the artwork--both the piece he offered and the piece I took, and equally pleased to be able to recommend Nyctalops as a well-written, well-edited, nicely printed, intelligent and informative publication of great value to anyone interested in the field. --TJC

Dear Tom:

I barely had time to grab your letter before returning to work this afternoon. What with LASFS tonight, an L.A. Con committee meeting, the LASFS Board of Directors Meeting and various other commitments for the next few days, I don't expect to have much time for letter-writing, so I'm trying to answer this now at work. I assume you'd rather a hasty reply now than a neat reply in a week.

"He found himself with a considerable number of detractors who kept insisting that Derleth was enriching himself from the body of Lovecraft, even though each year Derleth had to put money he had earned from other sources into Arkham House."

Incidentally, I have heard the same charge recently made against Emil Petaja in regard to his "living off" Bok's name "now that Bok is no longer around to receive his own credit," despite the fact that the circumstances are almost identical. Petaja is putting his own money into keeping Bok's name and reputation alive, not living on any great sales of Bok's art.

Fleuve Noir is a paperback publisher that specializes in s-f and fantasy.

Le Vagabond has to be The Wanderer. The only other novel he's won a Hugo for is The Big Time, which was about time travel and had lots of shadows, so I assume that's A L'Aube des Tenebres, which is literally At the Dawn of Shadows.

Le Rayon Fantastic is another French paperback s-f series, now defunct, I believe. Le Cycle des Epees translates as The Cycle of Swords, and it's an original French collection of three of Leiber's Ace collections of Fafhrd/Gray Mouser stories, all of which have the word "swords" in the title. It was published by the Club du Livre d'Anticipation, the French s-f book club, bound in amethyst silk, with colored endpapers and illustrations by Philippe Druillet, with a separate folded map of Nehwon. It's still available for $7.50 or $8.

La Chose dans les Algues translates literally as The Thing in the Algae, but Hodgson never wrote a story by that title that I know of, although there lots that that description would fit. I assume it's a French retitling of one of his short stories.

Fred Patten

NOTE: The main problem in translating came in trying to return passages to the original English after they had been put into French. In most cases, the original was available, but sometimes it was not, and I did what I could. In one case at least there is no such sentence in the original, Tom Whitmore wrote in answer to a hasty query. He added the following notes:

The price of Outsider is $150-$300. Other Arkham volumes in that range are Out of Space and Time ($125), Lost Worlds ($100), Beyond the Wall of Sleep ($125) and The Shunned House ($175). Several are up around $80 and many around $50. Yes, all of Smith's volumes, consisting entirely of short stories, were printed by Arkham. There is also a volume of his own, The Double Shadow, printed in Auburn, Calif. (1925?)

Neither Fred nor Tom is responsible for any atrocities which appear in the translation. Their help was invaluable

Their help was invaluable, but neither Fred nor Tom is responsible for any atrocities which appear in my translation. --TJC.

Dear Tom:

Of course there was a reason for my lack of correspondence, and of course you won't be able to guess it)bet?). On July 1 I started serving in the German Armed Forces. But before you start to be sorry for me, I am able to tell you further that on August 13 I was acknowledged as a war resister, and by Sept. 5 I will be a civilian again. So I have just had a short vacation, sleeping until I could not sleep any more, lying in the sunlight, painting, drawing, and now I can draw a deep breath and say "I'm back again."

In Germany, fortunately, a law exists that nobody may be forced to perform those duties required by membership in the fighting services if his conscience doesn't allow him to do so. Though nobody can tell you definitely the meaning of the word "conscience" you have to undergo some kind of a trial, may be rejected in the first instance, turn to appellate courts, while behind your back information is flowing through unknown official channels, to and fro....All's well that ends well.

Now I will have to perform a substitute service, also called civil service (though I don't know if the meaning of the word will stay the same during translation), in a hospital or something like that for the rest of those one and a half years I am condemned to serve anyway by our constitution. I hope I will get a chance to work with spastic children or youths or at least in a psychiatric clinic. It won't be easy, of course, but I prefer a constructive service rather than playing with tanks and machine guns. And there is another reason: I am an artist. I hope I will be able to work a bit as an artist, too, even if only in "work therapy." And what else should I ask for?

I am sure you will agree with me. War is not healthy, you know....

Well, though I talk about some odd circumstances, your letter found me in a rather happy state of mind. Everything is all right, and Sol 3 (if I want to believe the discovery of a tenth planet between the Sun and Mercury it may be Sol 4, but never mind) is still turning around its own axis. Besides, since August 30 I am ninteen years old; congratulations will be appreciated.

Some comments on the drawings:

The (ahem!) studies for Conan: Here you are! There is nothing more to say.

The Servants of Sauron 2: This is taken from the panels of a rough copy of a planned comic strip, "The Rise and Downfall of Sauron Two," which will be published by a German fanzine in the beginning of '72 or even earlier. I don't know if you will like it, it's a style I never used before.

The Guardian (Der Wachter): will be published by "Procyon," a German fanzine I once did some drawings for.

Also, since someone else asked me, "Helmut" sounds like "hell mood" (there aren't any analogies to my state of mind!), and "Pesch" rhymes with "trash" (there aren't...well, never mind!)

Helmut Pesch,
Tank Grenadier in state of repose

NOTE: Helmut is also U.S. correspondent for a new English-language German newszine, published irregularly at $1.80 for ten issues. Write: Tellus International SFCD-News, Gerd Hallenberger, D-3550 Marburg, Alter Kirchhainer Weg 52, WEST GERMANY.

The first issue reports he has just sold his first professional story, "Eden" to an anthology, Liebe 2002--Erotic Science Fiction.

Dear Mr. Collins:

During the last several years my own activities have been somewhat curtailed due to a severe heart attack which I experienced late in 1968. However, I'm working full time and trying to write a little evenings and weekends. It's not easy. Due to my illness and other problems, Macabre has been published very irregularly, but I have every intention of going on with it, barring further illness.

I have a story in the last Arkham House anthology, Dark Things, and another coming sometime in "Alfred Hitchcock's Mystery Magazine."

Joseph Payne Brennan

NOTE: Joseph Payne Brennan's magazine will be of interest to all devotees of weird fiction and poetry. One dollar ought to bring at least one issue, although there may be some delay. The address is 26 Fowler St., New Haven, Conn. 06515.

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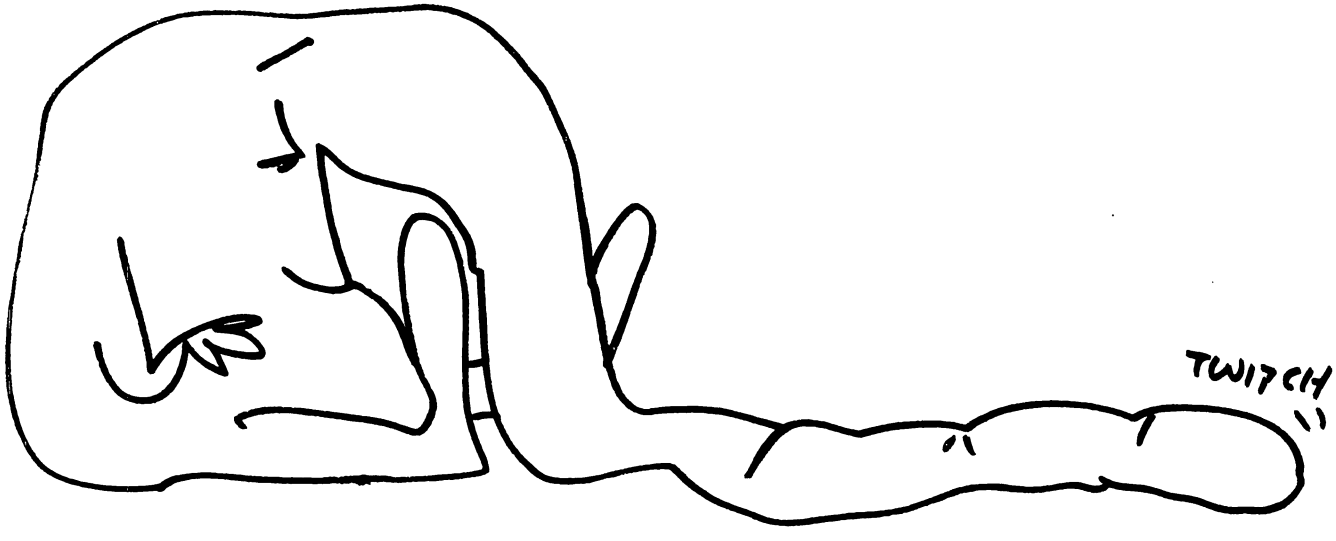
Dear Mr. Collins:

Not being of the literary profession I make my marks on paper and wood and canvas. For forty years we were friends and worked together. As a young man he had his sights set and kept a straight course toward his goal. Nothing deterred him. I shall miss him greatly. This area shall never see his like again.

Frank Utpatel



Dear Tom,

I regret the delay in getting at the Derleth horoscope script. There was a concentration of annoyances and irritations and losses of sleep--the details would be dull reading. Facts remain, you'll still be getting this copy somewhat late!

Writing on astrological matters is difficult. One tries to make things clear and comprehensible--and writes page after page needlessly. One seeks to be concise and--ends up quite incomprehensibly. I have a few pages of stuff which I am now going to translate into English. I am not addressing an American Federation of Astrologer's meeting, nor writing for one of the star mags.

(The opening) is not intended to insult your intelligence. However, the country is so crowded with cocktail hour astrologers, masters of Tarot, experts with the I Ching, that I felt it to be in order if I briefed you on a few fundamentals. "Oh, you're a Gemini?" some bright or stupid creature tells you, and many of these "low grade psychics" are at times right. Even when correct, these folks have said something quite meaningless.

They ignore that approximately every two hours of every day a different sign is on the eastern horizon--daily, all 12 basic types are born--each modifying the sign in which the Sun is for a period of about 30 days. Just as bad, they ignore that in the course of those 30 days, the Moon has passed through all 12 signs. Thus, every 2½ days, the Moon's passage from one sign to the next introduces a variant.

"You're a Gemini!" So what? Which of the twelve Lunar signs do you manifest? After THAT has been decided, let's figure which sign was on the horizon at the moment of your birth.

This disposes of cocktail hour astrologers. These basics will enable you to cope with all the experts who come to tell you a thing or two.

E. Hoffman Price

★★★

Dear Tom:

Here's the reminiscence on August Derleth that I promised you.

The thing to remember when publishing an amateur journal of any sort is that this is a hobby, not a job or obligation. If you let it run you instead of your running it, it will become a monster.

Bill Danner has kept his fanmag Stefantasy under control for over 25 years now--he started it in 1945 for the Vanguard Amateur Press Association, then kept it going independently after VAPA folded up. Sets all the type and prints it himself. He publishes, as he says on the cover, for the helluva it. Stefantasy may come out twice, three times, four times, or just once a year, any year. There is no schedule. He doesn't take stuff that has to be published this month or else twill go stale.

Why not continue IS on that sort of basis? If you must get something out now and then in order to maintain APA membership, then a four-page thing now and then will do it--and IS if, as, and when it's convenient for you.

Robert A.W. Lowndes

Dear Mr. Tom Collins: 11 September 1971

Many thanks to you for your letter. Thank you particularly for thinking of me in the context of your memorial to August Derleth. I never met him, sadly, but of course I corresponded with him for a decade or so. As it happens, I have already written a tribute of sorts for a British fanzine, Shadow, and this includes most of what I can (at the moment) say about him. In due time I shall be able to sort through my files of letters from Derleth, at which time I hope to be able to write a further tribute quoting from these letters.

As Shadow has very little circulation in America, I am enclosing my copy of the article, which will be appearing here early next month. Please feel to quote as much as you need, or indeed to reprint the whole of the article. In addition, here are a few details which I omitted from the article, and which you may quote:

When he read the first draft of The Inhabitant of the Lake (which, apart from being more heavily influenced by Lovecraft's style than the published version, was set entirely in Arkham country) Derleth recommended me to base my technique not on Lovecraft, surprisingly, but on the more restrained method and style of M.R. James. He also insisted that dialogue played an essential part in any good horror tale (except, presumably, many of Lovecraft's).

These suggestions formed the basis of my later work, apart from improving the Inhabitant tales. Oddly, Derleth could never accept one of my later tales, "The Scar," which he found "unpleasant rather than horrible." More oddly, he refused on economic grounds to publish an Arkham House edition of Mervyn Peake's novels (which nowadays, I should think, would make as much money for AH as the later Lovecraft volumes.

Something which I should have said in the article, although it's self-evident, is that without Derleth I should probably not have made it as a writer. Certainly his combination of encouragement and criticism was exactly what I needed.

His last project in which I was involved was More Tales of the Cthulhu Mythos, for which he was soliciting contributions at the time of his death. If the writers involved, whoever they were, would care to complete their contributions, then it seems to me that no better memorial to Derleth could be devised than the publication of this anthology, edited by one of the writers and with acknowledgement to Derleth. If you are in close touch with any of these writers, perhaps you could ask them to let me know if they are interested.

Ramsey Campbell

★★★

Dear Tom:

...As for the lamented August Derleth, I saw him only twice, back in the 1950s: once at a Con and once when I stopped overnight at his house in Sauk City. But we corresponded a lot and did quite a bit of business. In my dealings with him I found him always reasonable, courteous, and considerate. Perhaps the vact that I fully respected his rights to the Lovecraft material had something to do with it.

Sprague de Camp

PETER RUBER:

I wouldn't like to see his Sac Prairie Saga become a faded relic to be recalled as a footnote in the history of things. I, for one, will not let it happen, and I hope that there are others who share this feeling. There will be a revival--or should I say a continuity. I think he would have preferred it that way.

In summing up, Sinclair Lewis called him a "factory." Other critics have alternately called him a "hack," and "artist" and "genius" in the tradition of Thoreau. He was all of these things. He was an original, and individualist. He was irritating and charming. Tactless and helpful. He was the most damning paradox I ever met, and his death ended a literary era we are not likely to see again. I am proud that I knew him.

★★★

DEAN DICKENSHEET:

(the latter attempting to explain the tendancy of the narrator to lapse frequently into American colloquy).

An enthusiast-published volume of marginalia, Praed Street Papers (later reprinted in altered form by Mycroft and Moran as A Praed Street Dossier) contained much material written by, and provided by, August Derleth. When the admiring, if somewhat tongue-in-cheek Praed Street Irregulars were formed, Derleth happily accepted the sinecure post and title of The Agent. And perhaps he even humorously avenged himself, for the eccentrics in the chap-book The Adventure of the Unique Dickensians seem to be much less collectors and enthusiasts of Dickens than of Holmes, or perhaps Pons.

Now August Derleth, like Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, has gone to what one writer, speaking inaccurately of Sherlock Holmes, has called "A Better Strand." There will be, hopefully, one last thin volume of Pons' adventures, then no more. But the Praed Street Irregulars, like The Baker Street Irregulars, will endure. I sincerely hope that Sir Arthur can share August's laughter at our most respectful tom-foolery.

★★★

MARK SHORER:

Dells, dancing, or drinking beer with our friend Karl Ganzlin, in one of the local saloons. I don't mean that he broke my spirit; rather the contrary, he built it up. And built up, too, my own capacity for self-discipline, such as it became.

I think that I owe him something that it never occurred to me until now to acknowledge. I acknowledge it now--too late.

TO OUR PATRONS --

By now most of you probably have heard about our loss at Arkham House, the death of August Derleth, owner and editor, on July 4, 1971. It is not difficult to imagine the immediate complications confronting us, as well as those of the future, for while we have competetent and devoted people who are ready to serve AH, there is no replacement for that "dynamo" that made AH what it was to you.

However, the first and most important thing I want to say is that AH will continue to operate; this is for certain. As for all of the future publications as announced by Mr. Derleth and detailed in our latest catalog, I can not be as certain. Publishing new works is not the question, but "what" and "when" are, and we are asking for your patience and cooperation in this area.

The following books...

are now in stock -- and are being shipped as soon as possible (we have an extensive backlog of orders to fill):

Derleth DARK THINGS @ $6.50
THE ARKHAM COLLECTOR #10 @ 65¢

are now in process at the bindery and will be shipped promptly upon arrival

Lovecraft SELECTED LETTERS: III @ $10.00
Lumley THE CALLER OF THE BLACK @ $5.00
Smith SELECTED POEMS @ $10.00

will undoubtedly be published, but we are uncertain for a specific date:

remaining volumes of SELECTED LETTERS
Derleth THE CHRONICLES OF SOLAR PONS
THE ARKHAM COLLECTOR: VOLUME ONE

The announced publication schedule for the remaining books should be disregarded. Certain books, such as the SELECTED LETTERS series, will definitely be published but not necessarily as announced. Others will probably never make publication for obvious reasons, such as HPL: NOTES TOWARD A BIBLIOGRAPHY. Therefore, while I am in the business of taking orders for books, I am hesitant about taking advance orders at present for books that can't be promised at this point. We are already making preparations so that THE ARKHAM COLLECTOR can continue, which is essential to those patrons who wish to be kept in constant touch with publication schedules, new titles, changes in the order of coming books, low stock books, etc., information that is especially critical now. So we intend to keep you abreast of AH plans, hopefully through TAC. For those patrons who have placed advance orders with AH, please do NOT write to inquire about non-delivery, etc.; AH will continue to fill those orders at once as soon as they arrive from the bindery. If you have an advance order for a book that will not be published, you will be notified.

It is certainly understandable that many of you were disturbed at the apparent break in AH's fast service; but until the estate was commenced, August 11th, no shipments could be made. I hope this "broadside" has helped to answer most of your questions, it being virtually impossible to answer each inquiry separately; I want to thank you for your patience and understanding through this trying period at Arkham House. However, in the future AH will definitely resume its prompt service and follow the basic policies it has in the past.

Sincerely

Roderic Meng

Roderic Meng
General Manager


EERRRP!
UUUUK!
YUM YUM!