

A  
FANZINE  
FOR

W.M. DANNER  
HARRY WARNER  
LARRY T SHAW  
MARION ZIMMER BRADLEY  
NORMAN G. WANSBOROUGH  
LEE HOFFMAN  
G.M. CARR  
NAN SHARE  
TED & SYLVIA WHITE  
MOLDY MORT MORSE  
CURTIS D. JANKE  
REDD BOGGS  
RICHARD H. ENEY  
LYNN HICKMAN  
GREGG CALKINS  
STAN WOOLSTON  
BOB PAVLAT  
BILL EVANS  
FM & ELINOR BUSBY  
SAM MARTINEZ & Co  
G & N CLARKE  
MAL ASHWORTH  
DAN McPHAIL

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and anyone else who'd care to cast an eyeball in this direction.....

COMMENTARY 

DANNER: Bill, it was exactly twelve days ago that I sat down to whip off some FAPA comments for this mailing, and had worked my way through roughly two paragraphs of notes to you when the N fell off the typewriter. It was most discouraging. The day being Saturday and the weekend being that of Labor Day when all good fen should have been in Detroit (only I wasn't and I'll bet you weren't either) I couldn't call for repairs until Tuesday and they couldn't send a man until this Monday past. It was sad.

Speaking of the sartorial splendor of cowboys, there was a cowboy fashion earlier this century that I've never seen duplicated on TV or in the fillums, although it was quite popular at the time: wooly chaps and a broad-striped (horizontal stripes) turtleneck sweater, plus boots, Stetson, etc.

On riding horses: in all my years on and off of horses I have never been saddle sore in the region popularly assumed to be the seat of this problem. Soreness was always in the thighs and joints and came from using underdeveloped muscles. This may be because I didn't often bounce up and down, slapping myself on the posterior with the saddle at every stride of the horse. I can believe them when they say that there are more horses around now than in the pre-auto days (depending on the size of the feral herds and whether or not they're counted). I suspect there certainly may be more using horses. Except in a few parts of the country, horses weren't all that common. The guy who'd be the average car owner now wasn't an average horse owner then. Horses were expensive and somewhat of a luxury item unless they were used for gaining a livelihood. In urban areas they were expensive to feed and not easy to keep. In rural areas they took up pasturage that could better be used for feeding more profitable beasts. Nowadays a great many people keep them in ultra-suburban backyards, board them in stables, etc., and with the popularity of dude ranches and park hacking, there are a lot of them earning their keep as hacks. When I was working in Kansas a few years ago, I was surprised, on visiting a large sale barn, to see great numbers of draft animals bringing good prices, so I guess they're still being used too. And there are a surprising number of working horses here on Manhattan: park hacks up at Central Park, the carriage horses there, police horses, and draft horses which pull vegetable carts through the city streets (some of these are stabled on the third floor of a building just south of Greenwich Village, a block from my old Sullivan St place).

Little did you think, I suspect, that those pushmobiles would "grow up" to be the latest racing fad of the country -- Karts. Did you ever suspect that they'd be sticking engines in the things and grown men would be scooting around specially-built tracks on the things?

Speaking of color tv, I trust you're up on the new Land color business? To me, this is one of the most exciting developments in years. I'm having trouble fighting off my training in Newtonian color theory, but I'm working at it. What I want to see is more research into the physiological aspects of the Land business. And I'm eager to see an experiment or two for myself. Some of us keep talking about setting one up, but so far haven't gotten around to it.

I am tempted to go into long tales of the Volkswagon which I know

personally, but am restraining myself lest GMC think I am off on another hobby horse, which seems to upset her unduly.

I'll try your suggestion for combating the static electricity on my mimeo paper. The idea of this basement being lacking in humidity is a shocking one, but I suppose it's possible. During the summer the pipes running overhead in the kitchen (steam, water and sewage) sweated so that the linoleum is eroding.

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WARNER: Your comments on art were most interesting. I have recently been doing a lot of thinking on the nature of art and am subsequently interested in seeing statements on the subject by others. All these rambling about childhood activities make me feel that the first twenty odd years of my childhood were comparatively dull. Things have picked up lately, though. Speaking of meeting friends in far away places, there I was in the Elizabethan Room of the Gore Hotel in London... the guy I ran into there had been a classmate of mine in High School in Savannah, Ga. He was, at the time, stationed in Germany.

"Pa was forced to be a hobo  
Because he played the oboe  
And the oboe, it is clearly understood  
Is an ill wind that no one blows good."

--Sylvia Fine (?)

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SHAW: Enjoyed the PAVLAT REPORT muchly, but lack comment.

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BRADLEY: Bloch most enjoyable, as usual. Balance of zine also enjoyable.

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WANSBOROUGH: Glad to see you're still with us, Norm. Your mailing comments are a little obscure in that you don't give much of a clue about the part of any given zine that you're referring to. One needs to go through your comments with the commented-upon zine in hand, to make heads or tails out of them.

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HOFFMAN: The word is, of course, Go-Kart, not go-car, and you are an ignorant oaf for not knowing better. The designation GO-KART is also a trade name, and the general designation for these little beasts is Kart, but on the other hand the GKCA isn't limited to Go-Kart brand Karts, and --well, it all gets confusing. And besides I've just made myself slightly ill from the vapors of this patent typewriter key cleaner. Ghod, how awful! ... (later)... I've just disposed of about 3/4 of an hour, trying to rid the typer of this foofooist scent, so I could get close enough to it to get back to this FAPazine. I've gotten it approachable, but hardly free of the aroma. Take warning, the stuff is called CLAR-O-TYPE. I've been using it for some time, and haven't had this trouble before, though, so perhaps it is not that the stuff is by nature unsociable. Perhaps it just fermented, or something.

G.M. CARR: I certainly have no objections to an editor answering the letters he publishes, but I do find your method of inserting answers somewhat disconcerting. However, this isn't a big enough point to raise a rumpus over. Enjoyed reading the letters and your answers but will restrain myself from joining into your many controversies as I'm older and wiser than I was once and have realized the futility of some things. Rather not get my corpuscles into an uproar by banging my brain against stone walls. Ah, will you ever forgive me for having sullied the hallowed pages of FAPA with blatherings about something you didn't dig? Would you bear with me if I got onto a hobby horse that you did dig? (Suggest some...I might find them interesting.)

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SHARE/BRADLEY: "The Faces of Woman" is not very good. Is this the fault of the stenciller or the artist?  
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WHITE: I'm surprised you found an apartment in NYC, in the Village and all that. I hope you'll enjoy the ultra urban life and all that. Has GMC really approved THE VILLAGE VOICE? Jean Shepard and all?  
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MOLDY MORT MORSE: Grr to your duplicating. I had a hard time trundling through this. Some places I couldn't make it at all. Ah yes, those balmy evenings in N'Orleans! Well I recall the incident you refer to. The disc jockey we were looking for was Bob Poole, but the one we found was someone else, I forget who. Remember the radio station that was closed and someone glaring at us when we rattled the gates? Remember Paul Cox walking up to Rich Elsberry and asking him if he were Lee Hoffman? Them was the good old days.  
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JANKE: Your magazine and your lovely duping thoroughly enjoyed. I'm sure someone else will note for you that "Acres of Clams" is from a folk song. For GMC's sake I will forebear to reproduce the song words here, but if you're really that interested, write and I'll copy them off for you. (It isn't all that interesting, though.. the song, I mean.) Thank you very much for your comments on my Essay. I fully intended it to have broader applications than those immediately identified, and I appreciate your having mentioned the fact. Certainly, help yourself to any of my arguements you'd care to.

I pulled down the old mimeo a few hours ago and gave it a cleaning up and a new ink pad. I hope that all this labor will result in easier operation. Well, you'll be seeing the results as you read this, I hope. I don't have anything fancy in the line of duping equipment, but then if one's machine has the basic elements and they're in decent order, they should give legible work. (Ghosh, I remember how I ranted about bad mimeo work in my early days as a fan, and then later became quite guilty of it myself.) The real secret of good duping, I think, is well-cut stencils. And there I have fortune on my side. Albeit, my typer is an elderly one, given to throwing rods and such occasionally, it is an IBM with a fairly even touch, fairly clean keys and fairly

decent type (in my opinion, at least) and it gives me pretty good stencils to work with. It's my opinion that many of the people who have trouble with duping equipment just don't understand how their dupers work and therefore don't know what approach to take in trying to coax out readable copy. This mimeo, by the way, is a venerable fan instrument, having been the machine employed by Bob Silverberg at one time. He gave it to me a few years ago and I've been getting good mileage out of it ever since. It is labelled PILOT (house label for Goldsmith, an office supply outfit here in NY) but is basically the same as the Speedoprint model L which I used for many a year before I got this one. The Model L, I traded to a friend for a beat-up banjo. It's still his property but is presently residing under the table where upon I keep the Pilot. I'd set it up and have two machines (and two color repro) except for the fact that the handle isn't working, and besides, I haven't got room in this hole for two mimeos.

I'd like to go into more detailed comment on this INVOLUTIA, but can't at present. I will say, though, that I like your method of handling mailing comments. And, in general, thoroughly enjoyed the entire mag.

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BOGGS: This RETROGRADE is a joy to behold. Duplicating is beautiful, and beautifully employed. The discussion of letter-zines, and all is quite interesting. Comments on Chaplin excellent. A FAN'S LIBRARY educational. I look forward to further installements of the LOG OF THE HONEYBEE, and hope that you'll keep the auto-minded elements in FAPA informed of its behavior as well as its travels. Jim Harmon's satire on TV watching was quite funny.

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ENEY: Style Sheet, well, yes. But don't look to me for style.  
Comments: Short but fine.

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HICKMAN: As always, such lovely duping. Reprint item highly entertaining. By george, such an honor! I mean to have received two Gemzines in one bundle. I trust you were appropriately moved and put them both to good use. As I seem to be saying more and more frequently these days, I thoroughly enjoyed the mag but haven't the comments to put on paper about it.

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CALKINS: Re clothes; I, too, agree. Except for such outings as require more socially acceptable attire, I wear dungarees and T shirts (in the summer) or knit cotton turtlenecks (in the winter). These are wonderfully serviable clothes that can be washed in the bathtub and never require ironing (it may help appearances, but it isn't necessary). I am loathe to wear sheer stockings and the attendant paraphenalia, but occasionally do so when going out in company. Hardly the belle of the ball am I, but at least I'm comfortable.

A friend of mine is now on his second SIMCA. The first one which he bought second hand gave up the ghost, so he bought a new one. It is

now up on blocks in a garage waiting for a new transmission. Aside from that, all I know about Simca is that I heartily disapprove of their advertising. Which reminds me, if anyone in FAPA has occasion to road drive a CORVAIR, I'd enjoy hearing how it handles. I'm most curious as to their approach to oversteer in this car.

Thoroughly enjoyed the whole zine.

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WOOLSTON: Enjoyed.

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PAVLAT: Hooahaw for the Rotsler cover. A friend of mine took one look at it and was speechless. When I told him that Rotsler was married, he asked, "To what?"

Regarding Druids, can anyone in FAPA give me some information on this subject? I've scanned a few bookstalls for data, and had a friend look through the card catalogue in one of the branch libraries without finding anything worthwhile. For one thing, I was under the impression (apparently mistaken) that the word Druid applied to a priest or official of the religion and was not the name of the religion or its god(s). Any information will be appreciated.

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EVANS: Pb discussion quite interesting. 78 rpm discs are far from dead. Hillbilly/s-w, r&r and race records are still much in production.

Yes, on Buster Keaton.

Speaking of old German notes, can anyone in FAPA give any data on Notgeld (sp?)? I've got stacks of the stuff and I know it is worthless except as souvenirs, but I'm curious about its background.

Re Coulson, folksingers, etc (if GMC will bear with me), you say "Too often, someone who can't sing with any musical value is acclaimed as a great folk-singer, simply because he knows the style." I'll accept this just as I'll accept that people are frequently acclaimed great in any of a number of fields, although the reasons for the acclamation are invalid. There are damn few good folksingers, and lamentably few great ones. Even so, what one person enjoys listening to may not always be what another person enjoys listening to. I violently object to anyone accepting that someone (folksinger or otherwise) is great solely because that person has been acclaimed as great, be it by the most noted scholars or by the public at large. I would not want to force A.L. Lloyd upon Mr Coulson or you against your will, but I'd resent your telling me that because you didn't like him, I couldn't listen to him. When I listen to his singing for pleasure, I am far from roundly disappointed. But when I listen to some of Mr Coulson's favorite singers for pleasure I am roundly disappointed. Personal differences of opinion, what? Which of us is right and which is wrong, and who has the right to decide which of us is right?

Ghod, I wish we could get rid of you-know-who and all the problems he is causing.

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BUSBY: Thank you for the introduction. Fudge-covered cabbage?  
Garlic fudge? It's a hard life.

Speaking of itty-bitty vehicles, it is a strange feeling to look up through the sunroof of a VW and see a mounted policeman's horse looking down at you.

MARTINEZ: While I have no objection to obscenity, I do object to violating government regulations where persons other than the violator may be caused difficulty.

Speaking of stf movies, has anyone in FAPA been digging the rash of Japanese horror films? Not very good, but very interesting. Strong anti-nuclear bomb propaganda. Wonder if it'll have any effect? The handling of the dubbing and resultant peculiarities of the dialogue are very interesting. Normally, I do my movie viewing via TV ( I have an anti-commercial switch, and one meets a better class of audience in one's home than in the average theater) but lately I've been wandering into these double-bill horrors with some assorted friends. In good company, they're a ball. (A thing made in Britain and labelled THE WOMAN EATER is a fascinating study in cinema psychology.)

Ah, you mention the MR CLEAN commercials. Do you find yourself having any unusual reactions to this particular set of commercials? I've discussed them with several people and they've all felt much the same way I do: particularly revolted by this specific figure. I wonder if the hidden persuader in this particular character has backfired somehow? Why else should several people have similar violent reactions to it?

BRADLEY (again - poor organization on my part): "Long, Hot Summer" quite nice.

CLARKES: Muchly enjoyed your introductions, particularly to Krazy. And "That's Show Biz" is a gem. In fact (here I go again) I thoroughly enjoyed the whole zine, but lack comment.

MALASH: Your Irish Bulls are among the finest I've ever seen. Was startled to see myself among them. I think I know which quote is from me...at least it reads like my style. Most enjoyable zine but I refuse to go into that comment again.

McPHAIL, BRADLEY & MARTINEZ: Enjoyed.

I've failed to comment on several zines this mailing, primarily because I let them wander away from the bulk of the bundle sometime between first reading and present writing. This is not intended to cast aspersions on the publishers of those zines, but reflects solely on the writer of this. I am covered with rue.



NOTE TO BILL EVANS (but open to the assemblage): back there in the comments to you, it would seem that I've contradicted myself. This is a manifestation of an inadequate grasp of the art of self-expression. I know what I mean. Sorry I haven't put it into words that will convey my meaning to others (an impossible task when you come right down to it). Haven't the energy to develop on the theme at the moment. Many apologies.

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16 Sept 59

LeeHere:

Autumn is a-coming in and the mimeo ink is stirring in my veins or something. Anyway in the past few weeks I've felt the old fanac urge stronger than I've felt it in lo, these many years. So I've bought a pack or two of stencils for FAPing and if I can ever locate sufficient funds will buy some paper, too. If you're reading this, you'll know I dug up the money somehow. If you're not reading this, I'll feel that a lot of my time has been wasted. (Sometimes I feel that way anyway.)

This old world keeps going around and it and I keep on changing, sometimes to the surprise of both of us, I suspect. Just a few more months (about nine, oddly) and I'll be entering my second decade as a fanpubber, albeit occasionally an infrequent one. GHOD GHOD, ten years!

Nine years ago I'd have thought a decade to be damn near a lifetime. Looking back on it, in some ways it was. But somehow it doesn't seem like roughly 1/3 of my life has been and gone since I scraped out that first Hoffmag. (Make that 1/3 of my life so far. I hope it isn't anywhere like over yet.)

I hadn't been in fandom very long when Joe Kennedy suggested to me that I should join FAPA, and so I put my name on the list. It wasn't long after that, either, that I got a postcard from Redd Boggs advising me that if I could supply credentials, I'd be in.

F.T.Laney was taking throne as President then. His first presidential message, as I recall, was quite inspirational.

Well, FAPAns and FAPAZines have come and gone in these past years, and sometimes I've felt like giving up my bones to the old fans' graveyard and disappearing completely myself. But I've hung on, to the consternation of waiting-listers and some of the active membership. And I'm right glad I did.

I kind of enjoy being in this old organization.

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"Get out and feel for it."  
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MISCELLANY →

## HOW MAUDLIN ONE GETS IN OLD AGE DEPT:

Having observed that I am approaching the end of a decade of occasionally intense, frequently almost indistinguishable fanaticism, I feel the urge to reminisce. I also feel that I've probably wasted as much space in FAPA reminiscing as I have riding that detestable hobby-horse, folk music. Nevertheless, I carry on bravely, in the face of all opposition.

It was in 1949 that through wrong motives I made the excellent choice of going to college -- Armstrong (Junior) College in Savannah to be exact. And among the various exams they gave me when I entered was a combination interest-aptitude test. My high score on this, something in the high 90's was on mechanics. My low score, with a decimal in front of it was in social services. Next to social services, a digit or two on the high side of the decimal came journalism. Within the twelvemonth I was eagerly battering my head against a mimeograph (try it sometimes, it's fun) turning out monthly QUANDRYs.

My first venture into publishing came earlier, though. Never one to associate myself with school papers and the like, I still had the latent urge to wander verbosely. I saw teachers in grammar school pull copy off hektographs and I wanted one. My folks finally gave me a jellypan for Christmas, during my first year in high school (age 15). It turned out to be defective, but I used it anyway.

A few years before, the kid next door and I had produced a cookbook, typed and duplicated by carbon paper, bound on the sewing machine and marketed to our mothers (from whom we got the recipes). Spurred by this success and my two associates in High School, I decided to publish a class newspaper. One of my friends had a typewriter (ours was now tucked into some corner of the attic and relatively forgotten), the other had ideas, and I had the hekto.

In the course of trying to produce our first issue, we ruined the hekto. But this didn't stop us. Our homeroom in H.S. was one of the double-sized science labs with great expanses of unused black-board space, so we commandeered a couple of panels and chalked our paper onto the board. Less rewarding financially than our originally-proposed tuppenny sheet, but rewarding in egoboo. We never asked permission to put up our bulletins, but the teacher approved to himself and didn't interfere. We ran news of the class, want ads (no charge) etc, for several months.

My next venture into the field of publications was as a "professional" writer. Somehow one of my uncles had gotten tied up with a small letterpress printer who planned to put out a magazine and make a fortune. I was hired to write for it. I did an interview with the acrobats from a circus appearing in the town, and a column of radio news (that was while I was hanging around the local stations). I got five bucks and egoboo. That was the only issue of the zine ever to see the light of day. The printer later sold his shop and moved out of the city. (The zine was about the size of an average STEFANTASY, but not so nicely done, and was priced at something like

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two bits a copy. It wasn't worth it.)

I didn't touch into the world of journalism again until QUANDRY.

It seems odd in some ways that I never got involved in official school publications. But I never fancied the idea at the time. I think if I'd gotten involved with fandom earlier, I'd probably have tied up with school papers and all such. As it was, in my second year of college, while an actfan, I planned to sign up for the journalism course. But when I looked closely at the paper and the teacher, I backed out.

#### MY LIFE AND HARD TIMES WITH SCHOOL TEACHERS DEPT:

The years of grammar school run into each other indistinguishably in my memory now. I recall only that I was oriented to think of teachers as tyrants that one feared to displease. My one year in junior high was pleasant enough, but undistinguished. I got my larnin' from the classroom lectures, rarely cracking the textbooks, and seemed to have acquired a knack of giving the answers the teachers wanted...something I now regret deeply. Oh, not that I regret giving the desired answers, but that I regret having failed to learn anything much during those years I frittered away in public school.

On leaving the seventh grade, I was thrust into an experimental class of hand-picked students who were to go through the four years of high school in three years, through special accelerated classes. This was the first of these experimental classes, and the teachers expected us to be the answer to their dreams...a group of kids eager and able to learn and ready to take on the full courses, without being hampered by slower children.

I didn't learn much there either, and I consider it my own fault, although a clever teacher or two might have inspired me more, if I'd run into one. My average dropped, until my graduating average was around 85 point something, instead of the 90 plus that I'd been averaging.

I recall a number of my high school teachers quite well: Mr MacArthur, our homeroom teacher, was a good man, and he taught us several subjects, although I don't recall now what: Ashton Varnedoe, my Physics teacher, and one of the few teachers I recall as having inspired me to any degree of thought or study above and beyond the minimum. Admittedly, physics was an interesting subject, but he managed to make it moreso.

Sumner Thorpe was my pet. She taught English Lit and I thought she was a complete and utter dolt. (She may have been.) She gushed over bits of literature that I found exceedingly dull. (My taste in literature has since improved, but I hope I never gush.) She was utterly horrified by stories by Poe that were old hat to a long-time-horror-story reader like myself. (I wasn't interested in

style, only shock effect.) So I decided to show her what a really horrifying story was. I wrote a little tidbit about a man being burned alive and going mad during the course of it. I was quite vivid in my detail, what with the flesh burning from his fingers and dripping grease and all that. She was properly horrified. Enough so that she read my story to several other classes to get their opinions. The general reaction was that it was sickening and horrible, which was just what I intended it to be, so I was quite happy. And she probably thought I was nuts. (I may have been.)

One of my English teachers had been an officer in the WAACs, and it showed. Still I managed to slip through her fingers without memorizing the required passages from Shakespeare.

It was only after I finished high school and got into college that I discovered teachers and students were not necessarily hereditary foes. The teachers there, at least the best of them and I had the good fortune to fall in with the best of them, had the goal in mind of teaching their students to think. This was a new concept to me, but one I liked. (It took me a while to catch on to what they were trying to do.)

I never did learn to spell or quote dates and Generals. I can't name the Presidents or the capitols of the states. But I've never been particularly perturbed by this fact. I'm sure that, in those two years of college, at least, I learned quite a few things a lot more important than the times and places of the major battles of World War I, or the like.

I only wish that all those years spent in public school had not been so wasted. I wish that somewhere in those early years I'd run into a teacher or two who had the time and know-how to set me straight on some of the facts of education and break down my childhood prejudices against schools and teachers. And I wonder where in this little green world I picked up all those prejudices in the first place.

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**BUT I DIDN'T WANT A BICYCLE!**

Getting my first bike was one of the bitterest disappointments of my childhood. Somewhere in those early years I'd tried to learn to ride my brother's oversized two-wheeler and had failed. I was convinced that I'd never be able to master the bikes and had put the whole idea out of my mind. (It hadn't occurred to me that I was simply too small for my brother's bike.) It was my birthday and I wanted a wood-burning set. But they gave me this bicycle.

Fortunately a couple of the kids in the neighborhood took it upon themselves to teach me to ride the thing and I finally mastered it. From then on the bike was my primary form of transportation and second only to reading and movies as entertainment. I even became president of the local bicycle club, some years later. (The other

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kids in the club ranged in age from 8 to 12. I was 20.)

I eventually got the woodburning set, too.

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U.F.D.

#### Some of MY LIFE AND TIMES WITH URBAN FREE DELIVERY

Apparently the U.S. Post Office has never officially recognized East Seventh Street. I didn't know this when I moved here, but I got my first inkling of it from the periodicity of mail delivery. It seemed to come on alternate days, in bunches, and I thought perhaps the postman saved up until he had enough mail for me to make the walk down my stairs worthwhile. I still think he operates on some theory like this, but I didn't know he was bootlegging mail to me until later.

I had written home for my folks to send a load of my junk up to me from Savannah, and I was awaiting delivery. Then one day I got a note from my Dad telling me that the trucking company had notified him that the package was undeliverable due to an incorrect address. A few days later I received a form from the trucking company, addressed to Lee Hoffman, 54 Seventh St, N Y 3, N Y (How this managed to reach me with so little information, I don't know. I attribute it to some old-time postman who used to locate the people those letters mentioned in Ripley's Believe It Or Not were meant for.) The form announced that I owed some \$18 or so storage on a parcel from Savannah. I was irate. I'd been on the lookout for this package and had been at home every day, waiting for it, ever since I'd heard my father had sent it.

I contacted the trucking company and learned that they'd never heard of East Seventh Street before, and had tried to look it up in the Postal Guide to NYC. It wasn't listed there, so they'd assumed the address was incorrect. I informed them that there was an East Seventh Street, Virginia, and #54 lay between 2nd and 1st Avenues, on it. So they cancelled my storage charge and delivered my package.

The next problem of this type came from A.B.Dick. So I advised them of the location and made it policy from then on to give the Avenues when ordered anything delivered by truck.

As to the Post Office itself: I have lived in many a place and never before, to my memory, has the postman ever rung (be it twice or otherwise) when he brought mail, unless it had postage due or was too big to fit in the mailbox. But here, the postman took to ringing every time he brought mail (since I was seldom out of bed by this hour, he served as an alarm clock for me).

One morning when the doorbell rang, I got up and went to collect my mail. There stood a boy of about nine or ten, with a few envelopes in his hand; my mail.

This kept up, the mail being delivered by this youth. And it confirmed in my mind the theory that the mail was being bootlegged in.

Parcel post deliveries are made by a guy who stands on the sidewalk in front of the building and shouts, "HOFFMAN!" When I heard this cry, I dash out and he tosses the package down the stairwell to me.

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#### A QUIET WORD OF HELL AND DAMNATION:

The price of mimeo paper has gone up again. At least here it has.

I gave up Masterweave some time ago, partly because A B Dick's White Label paper, which was much easier to handle and run through the machine, was only 20¢ a ream more, and partly because of a hard time the trucker delivering Masterweave gave me.

The trucker found this address, but considered delivery to be completed when he dumped the carton on paper out of his truck onto the sidewalk. The building super carried it downstairs into the apartment for me this time, but I couldn't see going through such foolishness every time I bought mimeo paper.

Anyway, I discovered the secret of ordering from A.B.Dick and so I returned to purchasing from them. I discovered that paper ordered on Friday would generally be delivered on Tuesday following, at this address. And it would be delivered into my living room, and not merely onto my street.

So today they delivered a carton of ten reams to me. But woe and horror, the stuff was not \$165 per ream, plus a nickel tax. It was \$1.30 per ream, plus sales tax.

Remember the Good Old Days when A.B.Dick made the great plup paper in 16 weight and sold it for just a little over a buck a ream? They had some good stencils for \$2.15 a quire in those days too.

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We were going down to a Marine Museum on the waterfront one day, and we were walking through the old part of the city, down at the tip of the island. There, in a cobblestone alley, we saw this little old man. He was grizzled and weatherbeaten, and we thought he might have been a merchant seaman. He was sitting on a box, and there was a cat in his lap. It was a large, scarred old tomcat that looked capable of holding its own on the waterfront. The old man was petting it and both of them looked wonderfully happy.

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## A VERY CURIOUS THING HAPPENED...

The other day, Mike -- the super in this building -- brought me a couple of books someone had given him to throw out. One of them was THE LONG LOUD SILENCE by Wilson Tucker. This is the first work of fiction (to my knowledge) in which I appeared. (page 126) I am eaten by cannibals.

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## IT WAS DURING THE CIVIL WAR...

The Rebels were in disorderly retreat. Many of the soldiers, separated from their outfits were just wandering. One of them, who if he actually existed at all might have been one of the Joneses from around Shelby or Forest City, N.C. (I've no way of being sure) was alone and hungry in a strange part of the land. He had nothing on him to eat but a few grains of corn and that didn't seem like enough. Suddenly he came onto a farm where a few turkeys were running around the farmyard, just the other side of a rail fence. He looked at them and at the house nearby. Then he had an idea. There was a bit of string in his pocket and a pin somewhere in his clothes. He found the pin, tied it onto the end of the string and baited it with a kernel of corn. Then he scattered the rest of the corn just inside of the fence. He put the baited pin carefully under the bottom rail and waited. A large old Tom turkey found the corn and began pecking it up. Finally the Tom swallowed the kernel of bait, pin and all. The soldier, hanging onto his end of the string, began to run, dragging the turkey behind him. The thoroughly panic-stricken gobbler squawked loudly and flapped its wings, and the soldier expected the blast of a shotgun from the farmhouse any minute. But instead a woman came out, wiping her hands on her apron, looked at the running soldier with the squawking turkey close behind him.

"Don't run, Mister!" she called, "He won't hurt you."

But the soldier didn't stop.

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## IT WAS DURING THE SAME WAR...

Another soldier, a Confederate too, who might have been a Jones, but I think he was a Ray and I don't know where they came from in N.C., was sitting on a hummock when he suddenly heard a voice say, "Get up, John." Since his name was John, he looked around but there was no one nearby. He heard the voice again, "Get up, John." And whether there was anyone around or not, he decided to get up. So he walked away from the hummock, and a moment later a ball landed right where he'd been sitting and shattered the hummock. Or so he told his kinfolk when he got home from the war.

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# DOWNTOWN LOCAL

At four o'clock in the morning there aren't many trains running. Weston was the only person on the platform in the subway station, and it seemed to him that he'd been waiting for hours in that damp man-made cave. The magazine stand was boarded up for the night and not all of the station lights were on. Those few that flickered dimly cast long, empty shadows on the concrete. And from far away came a rustling sound, as if rats were creeping within the walls.

He glanced at his watch and then looked down the long tunnel at the span of track disappearing into the darkness. As he watched, a light appeared. At last, he thought, the downtown local.

He waited, counting the seconds as the light came closer. Finally the train stopped with the second car in front of him. The door slid open and he stepped in. Only the emergency light was on, and it showed him rows of empty seats. The tattered newspapers and candy wrappers on the floor made the car seem somehow emptier than its lack of passengers did.

Even at this hour there should have been a few stragglers heading downtown. He walked through the car, grabbing at a seat to steady himself as the train jolted into motion. It was fast for a local.

He seated himself, and looked out the window at the blank walls. The emptiness of the car was depressing. The clatter of the wheels was loud and heavy.

Up ahead, he saw the dim light of a station. Someone would get on there, he thought. Just to see a face, hear a voice, would help break the strange feeling of loneliness.

But the train raced through the station without even slowing. As he passed them, he saw the faces of the people on the platform as if through a heavy fog. Shadowed, weary faces that gazed down the track, not heeding his train at all.

Startled, he got up. Something was wrong. This was a local-- it should stop at every station. He started forward. Maybe there'd

be someone in the front car. At least the engineer would be there in his little cubbyhole.

Weston pushed open the doors between the cars. And the brilliance of the lights in the first car hit him like something physical. He blinked, blinded by the glare. Slowly his eyes adjusted and he saw that this was no regular subway car. The overpowerful lights revealed no seats, no straps, no advertising placards. Simply a car stripped bare, with nothing in it. Nothing at all, except a large box, directly in front of him.

It was a wooden box, with handles on the side. He could see three handles on the side nearest him, like three black iron spiders. It looked like a coffin.

A tool box, he told himself. Of course, this was a repair car carrying tools for workmen somewhere in the tunnel...simple enough. Then he saw the curtains.

The windows of the subway car were covered with thick black velvet drapes from which hung great heavy tarnished gold tassels. He stared at them, his mind racing for an explanation.

Of course, the workmen must dress in here. Somebody's picked up a bunch of castoff drapes and put them up to provide a little privacy.

Even so, he felt ill at ease in this car. He started back to the car he'd come from. The door slid open easily and he had begun to step through when he caught himself. There was no car behind this one. Only the gaping black maw of the tunnel.

But there had been cars. At least three or four of them when he boarded the train. Maybe they'd been uncoupled, he thought. That was it! This car was a Special...that's why it hadn't stopped in the station. He'd gotten into the wrong car, and...and...but they hadn't stopped. When could the other cars have been uncoupled?

Had they come loose and been left behind somewhere in that tunnel? He had to find out. Ask the engineer. Had to do something. He wheeled to run toward the front of the car, toward the engineer's booth.

He tripped over the box.

He swayed forward, but caught himself and managed to stay on his feet, despite the motion of the train. But in stumbling, he'd jarred the lid of the box and it was now partly open. There was dim light flickering through the crack between the box and the lid.

His fingers trembled as he took hold and pushed back the lid.

The man looked up and smiled.

He was a small man, lying in the box, with his head on a dark red cushion. His arms were crossed on his chest and in each hand he held

a lit candle. The wax was dripping in little piles on the front of his shirt.

"Thank you," he said, looking up at Weston. He sat up very slowly as if he were stiff from lying still for a very long time. Carefully, he set the candles on the edge of the box. Then he leaned forward and clasped his arms around his knees.

"What is this?" Weston heard himself asking, his voice unnaturally loud.

"Please, sir," the little man said, "Quietly, or you'll wake the engineer."

"Wake the engineer!" Weston's voice was edged with panic, "Oh, God!"

"Quietly," the man repeated. He spoke softly, "Have you a cigarette?"

Weston fumbled in his pocket and brought out a crushed pack of cigarettes. He handed it to the little man.

With careful, precise movements, the man drew out one, put it to his lips, and bent to the nearest candle for a light. "Thank you, sir," he said, handing the pack back to Weston.

Automatically, Weston accepted it and thrust it into his pocket. Then he took it out again and shook out a cigarette for himself. As he put it to his mouth, the little man held up one of the candles for him to light it.

It was the familiarity of the action of lighting a cigarette as much as the cigarette itself that helped to steady him. He dragged deeply on it and thought to himself that this was some kind of a gag.

Maybe it was one of those ridiculous TV shows and any minute they'd show him the concealed cameras and give him a prize of some kind.

Oh God, yes! That was it. A TV program. That would account for the bright lights. But at four in the morning? Well, a filmed show. They'd have picked this hour when the trains wouldn't be crowded. And besides, they'd probably want to edit the show before they broadcast it. And they'd want him to sign a release. Oh, it made sense. And maybe there'd be some really good prize in it for him if he carried it off well. Maybe a new car, and then he wouldn't have to ride these damn subways anymore.

He felt better now. His hands had stopped shaking. He put the pack of cigarettes back into his pocket, hoping that the TV show wasn't sponsored by a rival brand that would cause him to be disqualified.

"I'm Jim Weston," he said, pronouncing it carefully for the microphones that he thought must be hidden nearby.

"I know," the little man answered, "I've been waiting for you for a long time."

"What for?" Weston asked. He glanced around, wondering where the cameras were hidden.

"I've got something to show you." The little man got up with stiff, awkward movements. "Come into the next car."

"There aren't any other cars," Weston said. "There were cars behind us when I got on, but they're gone now."

"Oh, not the cars behind us," the man told him, "the car in front of us." He picked up the candles, one at a time, and handed them to Weston, who took one in each hand.

"This is the first car." Weston protested. What kind of a silly stunt was this? Well, it didn't matter, as long as the prize was a good one. He followed the little man.

"Quietly, don't wake the engineer." The man pulled open the front door of the car and Weston looked through.

There was a car in front of them. There were no lights on in it, but the candles gave it form. He could see the seats, ordinary subway seats, and sitting together near the center of the car was a small group of people with their heads bent together.

"They're waiting for you," the little man said. "They're friends of yours. Go meet them."

This was it, Weston thought. The pay-off. Lighting his way with the candles, he wanked into the car, toward the huddled group.

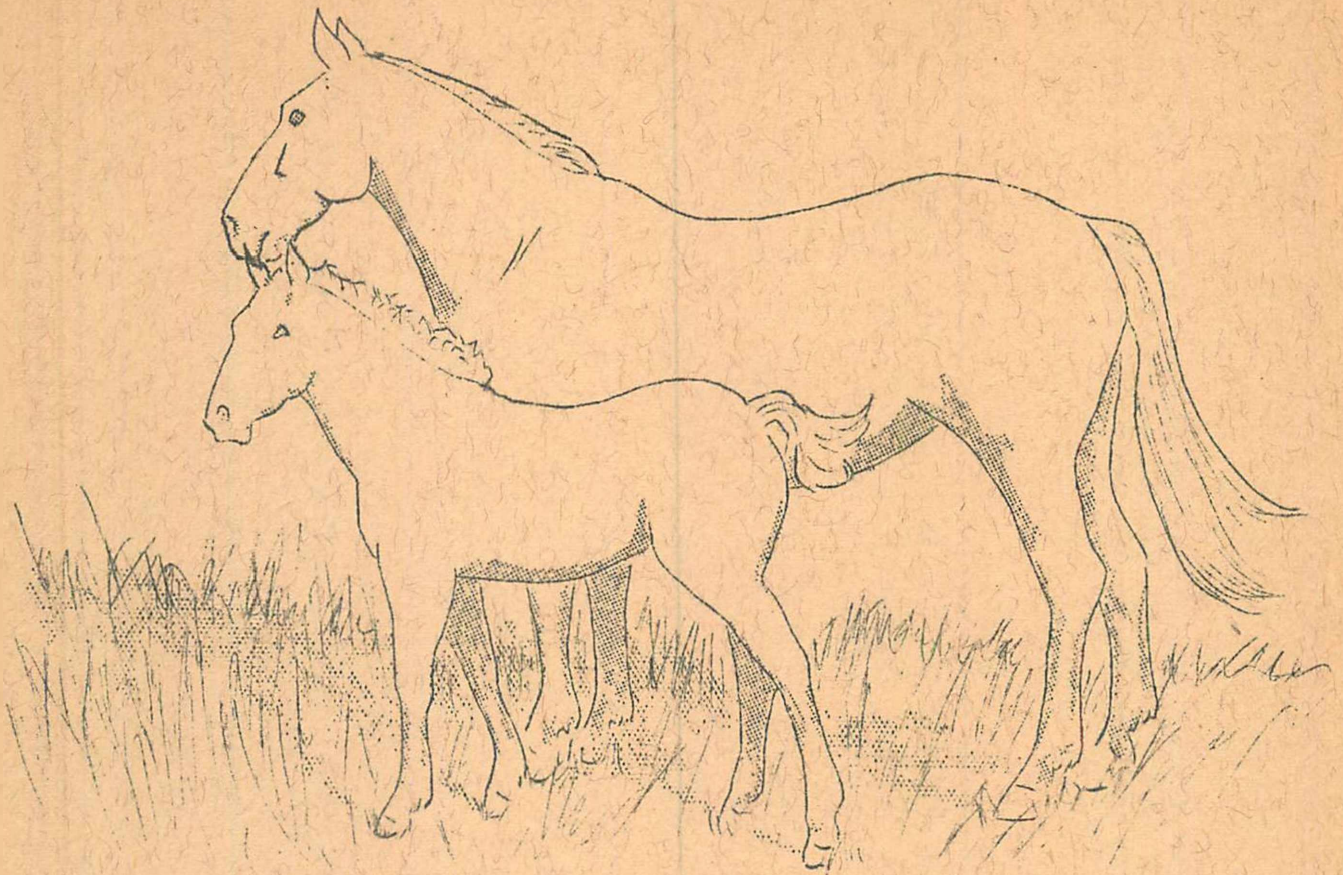
As he came up to them, he raised both candles and looked into their faces...the blank, featureless faces and empty eye-sockets of flesh-barren skulls.

He screamed.

The train lurched, its wheels shrieking as it went into a sharp curve. And faintly, as though from a great distance, he heard the little man's voice crying out, "Oh Lord, now you've done it! You've wakened the engineer!"

And the candles went out.

--LH



This is a FAPAzine, published for  
The Fantasy Amateur Press Association,  
Mailing #89, Autumn 1959, by Lee Hoffman.

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