520 07 0328 -- 2125 Baxter Street 90039

Volume I: February 9, 22 AB

(Ah, but 1966 was a good year!)

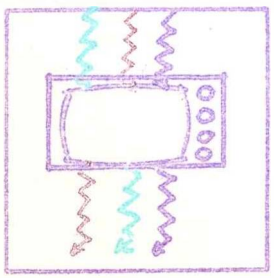
It started with the usual annual down-cycle easing up about mid-January, when the days became visibly longer. And it was also in mid-January when my penultimate house guest moved in for about four months. Annie.

Started with a phone call would I put someone into hiding for a while? She's escaped from Camarillo (one of the State-run co-educational mental hospitals in Southern California, which has housed four people known to me who have attended national conventions) and I'm a probation officer and it'd cost me my job if I put her up and they found out about it.

Can she cook? Being affirmative, I said send her up and we'll see how the bed on the back porch fits her. That was a good beginning to the year--within a month she managed to get a psychiatrist letter certifying to her sanity and in another month the committal was quashed without need for return to Camarillo, and through some skullduggery her breakup got blamed on overwork. So in addition to the ten a week spending money I allowed her, there was a bi-weekly check retroactive to termination of employment.

That was a good three or four months, Meyer. Annie was from Alabama. It gave mashed potatoes and home-made cornbread and liver gravy and broccoli and pork chops and fried chicken and biscuits with chicken gravy -- what one might call high off the hog.

She was quite restless the first month, afraid to leave the house lest some passing officer recognize her. So she read confession magazines and watched my left-handed seven-inch television set with me after dinner. (Mr. Dik Daniels, a good man, had reversed the sweep circuit for me the preceding year.) And because I was going to get one anyway, and the price didn't look as though it would drop further, I bought a nine-inch General Electric color set. She watched her programs in the living room and I watched mine in the den. Now that she's gone the color set has also been made left-handed. I haven't had the man make it the way i'd like it for the colors, so that the red, the green, and the blue broadcast impulses do not necessarily control the corresponding color gun. I see it as a twenty-four way combination rather than six-way because inbound impulses need not necessarily be used -- I assume each impulse can be arranged for outshorting without harming set.



Input	Screen activation																							
Red	R	R	R	R	R	R	B	B	B	B	B	B	G	G	G	G	G	G	*	*	*	*	*	*
Green	G	G	B	B	*	*	R	R	G	G	*	*	R	R	B	B	*	*	R	R	G	G	*	*
Blue	B	*	G	*	B	G	G	*	R	*	R	G	B	*	R	*	B	R	G	*	R	*	R	G

* -- input not used.

Annie also came in handy to provide a fourth for bridge; I believe it was twice that she held it down together with Kris Neville and Uncle Lee Jacobs.

Recently deceased: D. Patrick Ahern, collector of customs for the Los Angeles-Long Beach metropolitan area. Back about ten years ago Denis P. Ahern went to court (what with being a thorough-going politician) with a petition to have his name legally changed to Democrat P. Ahern. The court dismissed the motion as frivolous.

It was probably late in 1965 when Mr. Daniels reversed a pair of wires i;n the small television and made it left-handed. The distortion in one's thinking is rather strange. That which is most obvious is the text of commeracials, of course. My reading speed on mirror type feels like its only about 200 words per minute. Manuscripts (as contestants on What's my Line) is virtually illegible.

When text is not involved, it's the littled things that strike out. Driving, for instance. You notice that the traffic flow is along the right-hand side. Of course. It's a British movie. Or the bit of stage business requires activity with a book. The action inevitably starts with looking inside the back cover. No exceptions whatever. Well, let's face it. It would be a most extraordinary movie to include the reading of Hebrew or Yiddish.

Then again, there comes the study of whether that which is seen on my screen as normal to normal eyes, is a double negative or contrariwise the annulment of a negative to positive. The driving in Great Britain classifies to me as a double negative. Then again there's a commercial -- possibly for Chase and Sanborn -- where the aroma of coffee becomes a twining ribbon cutting across the background, words following the streamer as it doubles back on itself, circles, wavers. About half of the text of the ribbon is backwards. This I submit is a rectification.

And so there was this cemetery lot salesman that managed to sneak in to see Johnson by tying on a pair of beagle ears. But he made such a good pitch for the product that Johnson found himself listening eagerly. So how much is this lot? $40,000 -- and think, that also means perpetual care. $40,000? says Johnson. That much? When I'm only going to be using it for three days?

I was talking to Uncle Zeke the other day. He's augmenting his retirement income by writing sex short stories and novellas. He's selling some of them, too. So I said Zeke, you about ready to try another novel?

Not quite, says Zeke. Not until I get rid of "Confessions of a Water Rat."

That's just it, Zeke. Most novels are bought by women, and the ones that sell best often have the woman as the strong character. Forever Amber? Scarlett? Olan in The Good Earth...So Big...they have an impact on the buyer somehow larger than their male counterpa rts, Anthony Adverse etalia. Your "Confessions ...now, maybe you'd better consider trying the female lead.

And you will also note that the slightly bad girls make out better than the really good girls. The Good Earth may have made the Pulitzer, but the Rebellion of Mamie Stover; Marjorie Morningstar --they sell more. And I've got just the right ironic name for the heroine: Innocence. Innocence O'Reilley, tender blossom of County Cork, who migrated during the great potato famine and finally rules half the known world from backstage through her stringpulling with lovers, admirers, husbands, ex-husbands...

Oh, Zeke, you'll also notice they sell best when the girl's name is in the title. Forever Amber; Nana; Hello, Dolly.

So we will call this volume of yours, Innocence: A Broad."

And then there was this bar that started serving a new mixed drink called the "Cleopatra." That's Old Taylor plus damn near any swizzle stick.

For maybe ten years now I've been having jam sessions here. There are regularly organized groups that meet on the first, the second, the third, and the fourth Sunday of each month. The fifth sunday in months having same does not compete with other groups except on special occasions. January 9th of this year I hosted Johnny Lucas, trumpet and valve trombone; Al Reimen, slide trombone and trumpet; Frank Norman, trumpet;and Mike Delay, trumpet, string bass, flute, piano, etc., for the brass; Sammy Lee, tenor sax and clarinet; plus Teddy Edwards on drums and my sister Charlotte on piano. The living room floor is vinyl tile and the brass men quite early requested that I spread around some newspapers.

Gift for the musician that has everything: monogrammed dribble papers. Or, for the thoughtful host or hostess throwing a jam session: dribble papers imprinted with the names of the various guests, to serve double duty as place cards.

The Boy's Guide to Selective glue sniffing

idea for future follow-up with some prankster-type fellow who can obtain access to a store of genuine honest American Telephone and Telegraph letterheads, whereby we give the flack a fillip:

Compose press release. Admit to the press that we at Ma Bell's joint goofed, and when we goof up this badly please take it easy on the castigation, won't you?

Here for the past five years, at least, we've been filing piles of exhibits, averaging more than three feet high, with regulatory commissions in every state proving that all numbers are better.

No w we here at ol' Ma Bell know that we can't have our cake while we're eating it too. We can't simultaneously ~~xxxx~~ blow hot and cold-- now that we have chosen numbers we're stuck with it.

We will no longer use the all-letter designation of TELSTAR for our communications satellite. It will henceforth be known as 835-7827. The area code number has not yet been assigned.

* * * * *

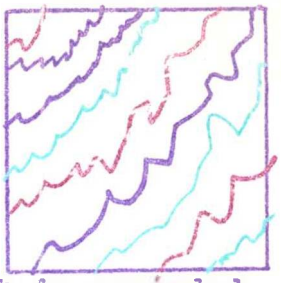
Yes, 1966 was a very good year. December damn near bankrupted me. The income tax provides that one may itemize the deductions if you wish; otherwise the payment or deduction rather is ten percent of the gross income or $1000, whichever is smaller. As a handsome single man with no dependents and no split income, my gross is just far enough over ten thousand to make it worth while to take the standard deduction in alternate years, and to pyramid all possible deductions into the other.

The odd-numbered years are the ones in which the standard deduction is taken. I therefore entered 1966 owing a couple of hundred dollars in doctor bills; the house and lot had been sold to the State for non-payment of taxes; even down to carrying over the motor vehicle license.

I left 1966 with the house and lot redeemed from the State, and taxes prepaid to the middle of next year; doctors paid in full (I rather question whether an overpayment which results in a credit balance to a doctor could be deductible;) and in addition, prescription medicins were filled in advance for several months. The December checks for deductible items ran to over eight hundred dollars. And thereby hangs another tale:

I am diabetic but not yet on insulin, since orinase (a white tablet) is sufficient to hold it under control. The most widely used test for condition involves five drops of urine, ten drops of water, a test tube, and watching the color change after the reagent tablet dissolves. Anything other than clear copper sulphate blue is not good. My color vision is not normal.

On Tuesday, January 24th, I watched a test sample run through



a rather vicious series of colors, ending in what looked like considerably more than two percent of sugar spillover. Uncle Kris Neville dropped by a short time later and I had him verify the change. As he told the story later, I just thanked him and sat down and kept on talking. Neville was worried: one of the diabetes symptoms is that the patient just doesn't give a damn. Also, that when the two per cent is exceeded for very long an amputation can occur. Going to do anything about it? No, I'm due to see the doctor the 15th of next month. It'll wait.

So there was this jam session January 29th and I took the logical precaution of stashing certain happy pills to remove them from temptation. I-n doing so I picked up a bottle labeled Miltown. The pills looked just like Orinase. So I looked further and found that elmer had committed a goof and evidently had consolidated Miltown. The jest is a good and a grim one, like the fabled New Yorker cartoon of the smiling executive at the desk with a framed trend chart in the background, the trend line making with the down slide, Kelley, slide.

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Yes, 1966 was a good year, even though December was murder. The Los Angeles County Art Museum decided that there was a little too much on hand in certain areas, and held a sale on one weekend: members of Friends of the Museum getting first choice Friday night, the remainder to be sold at the listed prices on Saturday and Sunday: those that did not sell at list price to revert to warehouse. I noticed that the sale would include netsukes. I have promised myself a netsuke ever since I read about them in the second issue of Coronet, back about the end of 1936. I went to the sale. Oh, what a fool. I blew $296.40 there on eleven pieces, of which four were netsuke.

Between 806 dollars in checks and the county museum my December cash position sure went to hell in a hurry.

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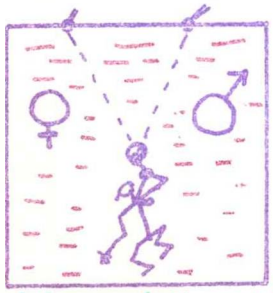
Oh, and I must also bring to your attention one of the great holiday bargains -- Frontier Airlines and its 30-day season pass.

Mother lives near McCook, Nebraska, which is about a hundred miles east of the Colorado state boundary adn south of the prolongation of the Colorado-Wyoming state boundary. She wanted to have a Thanksgiving reunion of her two sons, her daughter, and the five grandchildren. We all went.



Like, cool it, man!

Frontier has a system that extends from Phoenix, east to Omaha and to Kansas City, and from El Paso to Bismarck. The system touches down at about sixty or eighty airports and it's a glorified local. The system pass costs one hundred dollars plus five dollars tax and authorizes unlimited flying for thirty days on all flights. There are two strings to the offer: you must be a resident of some state that is not included in

their service area; and you must arrive at the gateway point by common carrier.

So I call Frontier Airlines at a number listed in the local Central directory, and after talking to the man for a couple of minutes I realize I'm talking over a leased line to a gentleman in Denver. He suggests that I use Phoenix as a gateway City. He also suggests that instead of paying that lousy bill then, why don't I fill out an application in Phoenix for one of their charge it plates?

Which I do. Auto to Blythe; short hop to Phoenix; fill out application for card. Man, there's a pushover for any con artist. I hand him the flight folder from Bonanza Air Lines, from which he takes the ticket number to satisfy the bona fides. He looks at the driver's license to prove non-residence within the territory served. Then I start pushing over Diners' etc and he pushes them back. It's a funny thing, says he, but there doesn't seem to be any place on here for credit references.

Flight to Denver with one stop on route. Sleep in motel. Plane out of Denver next morning, first touchdown McCook. (The plane's destination is Kansas City after landing at Kearney, Hastings, Omaha, St. Joseph on the way; for no extra fare I could have gone on and back). Thanksgiving and family-type things: the kid brother has learned piano-tuning by mail and plays good ragtime.

Hitch ride Saturday morning to North Platte airport. North Platte, touchdown at Scottsbluff, then Denver. Study of schedules on the way shows that if the plane is five minutes early I could add a triangle via Salt Lake City, Billings, and return to Denver about seven. It would be fun to see the Rockies and Jackson Hole and Yellowstone from the air. The plane comes through early and connections are made. Demver to Vernal to Salt Lake City. Lunch and change of planes. Jackson, Wyoming. The Grand Tetons loom over you from the ground as much as they're supposed to do. Beautiful.

At Billings with an hour to waste, taxi to the Salvation Army, buy a book for 20¢, taxi back.

Takeoff (still daylight) and landing at Casper; looking at it from the air and thinking thoughts that were long and deep and black and bitter. I think I cried. Sitdown Cheyenne (where sister and husband should by now having supper with college friends) decide against spending the night, thence Denver. Transfer to plane for Phoenix which makes six intermediate stops. Thence to motel at airport. Since morning I've been on five planes and since first takeoff at North Platte I've felt the faint shudder and then deceleration of reversed prop blades at sixteen landing points; have seen much of the Rockies (except between Denver and Vernal, when snow conditions prevented landing at Steamboat Springs) and looked

SECRET

SECRET

at that township maybe thirty miles east of Wyoming's west boundary, sixty miles north of her south boundary, where I'd been axeman on a survey party eight thousand average feet up in the summer of 1937; and in a fast mad and meaningless gesture had alit at Casper, walked in through the airport door, looked at the people for maybe a long five seconds, and walked out again...*emotion can run dark and deep and dank as when Sathanas spake with Jurgen and yet not really turned his mind away from the contemplation of a secret thought*...the tarmack was glazed sleet or I would have ran me to the aircraft that would bear me to my huddling place...THE PAD...ELMER'S PAD...THAT BEAUTIFUL PLACE WHERE TIME UNWINDS AND THE OUTSIDE WORLD MUST WARP ITSELF INTO 520'S NATURE... SANCTUARY!

Sanctuary much for listening.

After I was promoted to an associate engineer, there were a few specialized reports that I wrote for maybe half a year, and then they put me on railroad crossing protection. The budget allowed about eighty thousand dollars of City money per year, and it was up to me to determine where the expenditure of these funds would do the most good when matched dollar by dollar by the railroads. This involved luncheons in the field, and I asked about the lush fund to pick up the tab once in a while. They laughed, and handed me a bag of marbles. And then I found out that every time I pulled a boo-boo, and they found out about it, they took back one of the marbles. It was the day that I lost all of my marbles that they put me in charge of bus stops and zones.

That was two years ago; and they did not give me another bag of marbles. Now I don't know how to count my mistreaks.

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And then there was the time when the telephone rang about 7:15 one morning during the week, after I'd slept through the alarm. It got me up out of bed. "Perdue here," I said cheerily. "Who??" "Perdue here." "Listen, you bastard, what do you mean answering a wrong number? (Bang) " Well, that's one way to get up.

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And so there was this reaction to the one man = one vote edict of the Supreme Court, and the cowpasture counties of Northern California wanted to split. Some joker at the office wanted to know what I thought of it. "Well, I'm glad you asked, because I composed the snapper last week getting ready for the question. Imagine addressing envelopes to your 'Frisco friends next Christmas, like to Joe Mergelthwirker, Mott and Pell Streets, San Francisco, Baja Oregon."

He walked away.

1966 was indeed a vintage year. I notice in skimming back that one of the added attractions about the Frontier pass is that it takes long for the accounting process to unwind -- it was two ever-lovin' months later that they got around to sending me the bill. And the pass also bugged me because there in my pocket for three weeks more lay prepaid travel... if it'd been spring or fall, say, the temptation to blow another week in traveling would have been overwhelming and time would have been asked for additional vacation.

The music bit also was pretty hard hit. I was at my sister's place about April when we celebrated Johnny StCyr's release from the hospital with a session...John was in fine form. And then maybe early in June we celebrated his birthday. He didn't bring his axe. The next time I saw Johnny was at evening memorial services at a mortuary, and then the next day at the funeral.

There was a goodly number of his friends turned outfor the services, and very few of them did not go on to the cemetery thereafter. It was a warm and a good day; the services were marred only by a nut in shirtsleeves and a camera who had heard there'd be a Dixieland type parade back from graveside and bugged certain solemn people...

And I made the acquaintanceship of a very fine lady from Mensa, whom I dated perhaps twice a week for the summer. Certain of her literary work I saw, which was a textbook on the new math for the use of parents. It was quite well done: there were not more than two constructive suggestiona that I could make for the entire text. Which is in some ways mensa characteristic-- deep, fast study in an unfamiliar field with comprehensive results. I remember del Rey in Washington in 1940, when he had some side income from translating obscure references for college students. No particular problem -- he'd get the desired text, a grammar and a vocabulary for the language; would learn the language and deliver a translation --overnight.

Through the fine summer mon ths it was a pleasure to roam this my City with the lady and her teenage daughters. I do regret it that Disneyland was missed; however, the study of Rodia's Watts Towers was an intense two hour project.

The lady wrote for a living, and had come out because of family sickness, leaving her typewriter behind. I therefore lent her my Billboard machine because it was going to waste. I should like to reproduce for you on the next sheet, the thank-you note that I found in it when returned...

Ars longa, vita brevis.

And let us not forget the convention in San Diego. LeeH was a surprise physically -- I'd visualized her as light brown hair. And once again OWX 715 parked anear NCD 884. Phil Bronson's wife looks more beautiful every time I see her. How did that Alvah Rogers get that magnificent Sidonei? Good to see Lester del Rey after 26 years ... sure

missed Milty -- it's been two decades. And do you realize that in challenging Laney time must spin back a fifth of a century? There indeed is a man who lives after his bones...

Dear Ghod:

(oh, Uncle Ghod as whilom friends erstwhile
yclept you; which is contradiction
Unless incest be fact and not a fiction:
at which all our conversation ends.)

Dear Ghod;
Thank you for jazz you never made,
But booze you bought and cheese and meat and bread,
and beastly words you thought but never said,
and games you understood but others played
wherefore we wept and foamed and our accent was rude and acid, coming from the east
where lately we had dined on a roast beast
who, naive, thought he tracked us where we went.
This bread and butter letter we send late:
Oh, Ghod, be eating: be not only ate.

Imprimatur February 20, 1968, 520 07 0328 aka Elmer B Perdue, 2125 Baxter, 90039, at the Sign of the Moth-Eaten Fifty.