

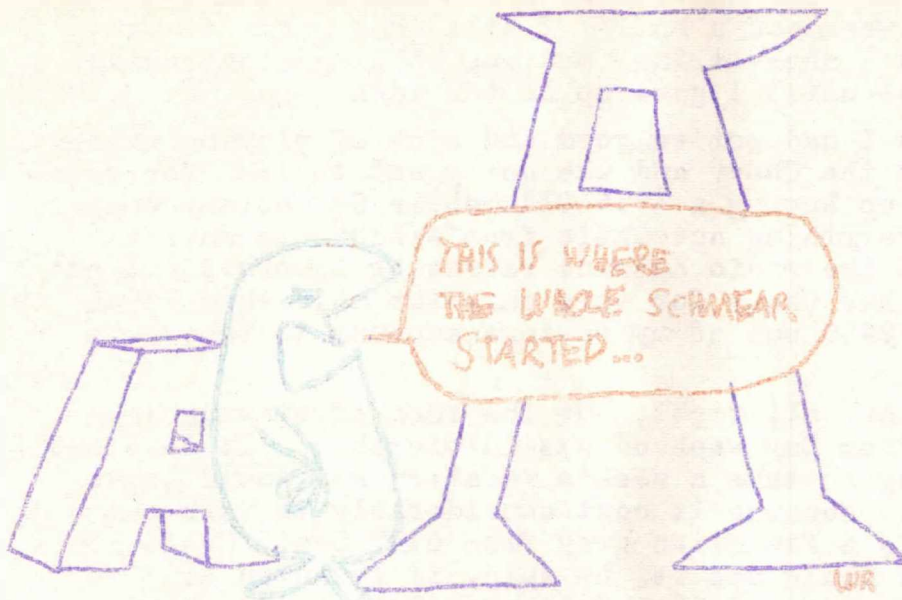
# walling street

NO. 14



atom





WATLING STREET appears quarterly, more or less, for the friends of Bob Lichtman (6137 South Croft Avenue, Los Angeles 56, California) and for the Spectator Amateur Press Society. This is #14, for the 61st SAPS mailing, October 1962, and it's Silverdrum Publication #59. The two covers were put on master by Arthur Thomson several years ago and it's about time I got off my ass and ran them off. Interior illustrations are all by William Rotsler at this writing. Your comments are welcome, especially if you're not a SAPS member, and as we keep no permanent mailing list will insure your receiving #15, if and when.

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IRV, formerly Speedy Jack  
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ishbah

I didn't go to the Chicon III. I bought a car instead. In fact, I bought two cars. Let me tell you about it.

This summer's plans began with the idea of working full-time all summer for Design Guild Mfg, Inc. (a manufacturer of expensive custom decorator lamps; write me for a catalogue and price list, if you're interested in lamps in the \$50-200 field) and using the proceeds for living in an apartment of my own the coming semester. I launched into full-time work and immediately got snowed under by a series of debts. There was the UCLA fee to pay and then along came a bill for my socialized medicine plan. By the time I finished working these off, it appeared impossible to get an apartment for any length of time.

So, I decided to get a car and attend the Chicago convention. One thing led to another and in the early part of August I finally achieved the first part of my goal. I purchased a 1950 Chevrolet 2-door sedan from a friend of my younger brother, for \$100. It was nicely finished in copper and ran pretty well, except that it burned oil like a son of a gun. A quart every two or three days was about the way it burned the stuff. A ring job would have cured

it, of course, but I didn't feel I could swing the \$40 or so it would take, especially after I had to get a \$30 brake relining after having the car a week and a half. I still had plans to make it to the convention on a shoe-string, and was cadging about until the third week of August until I gave up on the idea.

Besides, by then I had gotten good and sick of playing around with the stick shift on the Chevy and was going out to look for something better. I ended up buying a 1955 Oldsmobile 98 Holiday coupe, a blue bomb that has everything automatic from windows to antenna (yes, push a button and the radio antenna raises or lowers!). I got \$100 trade-in on my former Chevy for this car--far more than it was really worth--and drew \$450 out of my savings account to take care of the rest.

So now I had a car, all right, but the idea of staying in Los Angeles over the Labor Day weekend was intolerable. It developed that Don Fitch was going to take a week's vacation and would leave his Vauxhall at my place because it cost considerably to park out at the airport, which is a few miles away from 6137 South Croft here in Los Angeles. I could use it, he said, if I wanted to, and with this in mind I arranged with Noocey A. Bratmen to share expenses on a drive to the Bay Area for the Nonvention, being held this year at Ed & Jessie Clinton's place in Los Alto, about 35 miles south of San Francisco on the peninsula. The Vauxhall gets roughly 2½ times the gas mileage the Olds manages, so our reason for wanting to take it was obvious.

We took off on Friday, the 31st of August, from my place, Alex having driven up from Long Beach in his Studebaker, which we left here. I drove the first leg of the trip, along the torturous Highway 101 alternate through Malibu and over the coastal hills into Oxnard and thence to Ventura. Above Malibu and before Oxnard is some of the most frightening road of the whole trip. The pavement is not very well maintained and there are lots of sudden turns. To top this all off, this section is right over the ocean, maybe 50 or more feet up.

When we got into Santa Barbara, I pointed out to Alex that the town was well-known (to me, ahahaha) for being full of exceptionally pretty girls. Even though it was but half an hour away from midnight, as I drove up State in search of a reasonably priced gas station Alex was happily nodding his head in agreement. While in town, I dropped a call to Robert Henry-West, a friend of Andy Main's whom I met and became fairly well acquainted with last year when I spent five days in Santa Barbara on my way to Berkeley. He was glad to hear from me, but owing to the hour we were unable to arrange a visit.

Taking off again, Noocey took the wheel and kept it until our next stop, which was the Hunter's Inn in Santa Maria, where we experimented on their weird cuisine and had linguisa (a variety of Portugese sausage) sandwiches. They weren't bad.

In Paso Robles we had to stop for gas again since the tank was getting pretty obviously low. We had a two-gallon reserve supply stored away in the trunk, but we didn't want to risk it. After this stop, I took the wheel again and drove onward to some small town past King City whose name I don't recall. Alex conveniently fell asleep along most of that long stretch on two-lane road below and above King City. This was the place where John Champion was killed

in July and I kept trying to keep this from occupying my conscious mind while I was going through that section. After this stop for a snack and coffee in that unrecalled village, my memory grows a bit hazy. I'm not sure whether or not Alex took the wheel again but maybe he did along a small stretch. Anyway, I know that past Salinas I took it all the way, through Gilroy and San Jose and up the Bayshore Freeway along the peninsula.

The Nonvention was being held in Los Altos, we had been told, which was along the San Antonio Road turnoff, so I took the turnoff and started heading along the avenue, looking for Edith, which was the street on which the Clintons were supposed to live. Stopping in a gas station for information and some fuel, we finally managed to locate the Nonvention. However, we were surprised to find no one at all there!

There were signs all over the place proclaiming the party, but not a soul or a car was to be seen. There was a tent rigged up on their side lawn, but all that inhabited it, we discovered, was a rather empty sleeping bag. Trying the door, we found it locked, and so we started ringing the bell, knocking, and generally creating all sorts of loud disturbance in an attempt to rouse someone who could tell us where the Nonvention had disappeared to.

We kept this up for maybe ten minutes with no results; then we took off in the direction of Palo Alto. The next nearest fans were the Rolfes, Joe and Felice, and though it was only around seven in the morning we felt duty-bound to wake them up and ask about the Nonvention. Knocking on their door at 1360 Emerson, we first managed to arouse Joe, who glared out at us sleepily and seemed confused about our questions about the whereabouts of the 'con. Felice came up behind him and blided out at us. She told us that everyone had left last night despite some earlier plans to stay over. But they'd be back again later on, she said. We were invited in for breakfast but we demured, choosing instead to go on to Berkeley.

Onto the freeway again and up towards The City. However, just a few feet away from the Grand Avenue turnoff for South San Francisco, the fan belt snapped and threw off the hose connecting the radiator with the rest of the engine, and much steam and smoke began issuing forth from beneath the hood. There was also a considerable loss of power, and it was with great difficulty that we managed to get up the slight grade to the turnoff. We coasted down the turnoff into a parking lot, surveyed the problem, then decided to drive over to the first gas station to try to get it repaired. The car steamed all the way and we had to run two stop signs in order not to complicate matters. Fortunately, it was just before eight, and there was little or no traffic.

Nothing was open yet, so we had breakfast in a little restaurant across the street. After that, we went up to the village Pontiac dealer, who was supposed to carry Vauxhall parts, the car being a British General Motors product. He wasn't open yet, and a cleaning man in the showroom shouted out to us that the garage wouldn't be open today, anyway. We walked back down to the main drag to wait for an auto parts store to open. In the meantime, the station had opened, but the attendant didn't have the fan-belt we needed and showed little or no interest in us at all.

We went over to the next station, half a block away, and got a somewhat better reception. The attendant was only too happy to

help us. He didn't have the right fan belt, but eventually the parts outlet opened, and did have it, and soon we were on our way again, cautiously watching the temperature gauge until it cooled down again from its workout.

San Francisco loomed ahead of us and then, with the crossing of the city-county line, suddenly we were there. There was the Cow Palace off to the left and Candlestick Park in the immediate distance on the right. Hills lined with houses rose up before us, along either side of the freeway, and the old, familiar streets -- Army Street, Mission, and Broadway -- appeared on the off-ramp warning signs. However, our destination was not San Francisco, it was Berkeley, and so we took the Bay Bridge ramp and soon found ourselves over a very foggy bay. This was my first experience at driving across the bridge and I was quite thrilled at the whole bit despite being sleepy as all get out.

We reached Berkeley at around 9 o'clock and went directly up University to Grove to try to find Fitch. However, he didn't answer the door (didn't hear us, though he was there) so we went back down University to see if the Knights and Calvin Demmon were home. They were, but were asleep out of their mind -- though Calvin heard the little piece of wood that Alex obligingly carrommed off the bedroom window far too many times and commented on this later. We then went over to Donaho's, not knowing that he'd gone off to the Chicon. His mother, a very sweet lady, answered the door and Deuteronomy, more orange and huge than ever, came out at us. I scooped him up and asked for Bill. When it developed that he wasn't there, we talked for a while and then left for the Nelsons. Surely we would find them home, I thought, and so of course we did.

Walter T. answered the door and recognized me. I asked him if either Ray or Kirsten were up. Ray was up, he said; fine, I replied. Will you tell him we're here, quietly, so you don't wake Kirsten? Sure, Walter T. smiled, and then turned towards the

steps and hollered "Bob Lichtman is here!" several times at the top of his lungs. Good grief, I thought, cringing mentally.

Ray came down and met us, inviting us in. We sat down to talk, Ray telling us about how he was probably going to have a story in E&SF real soon now and all that. And from here my memory starts to lose track of order, and I shan't attempt to keep things straight nor present everything.

After a while Ray, W.T., Alex and I took off in the car for Breen's place again, hoping that Fitch would be up. He was and we told him all about what had happened, and Ray sat around reading some of Walter's collection of little mags, and like that.

DAMMIT-I WAS  
JUST GETTING  
SOMEPLACE WITH  
HER AND THE  
MOON CAME UP



I wanted to go down and see Jerry, Miri and Calvin, though, and Alex was getting hungry again, so after calling up at 947 to see if people were up (Miri was and told me all about the dream I'd interrupted her from) we took off in that direction.

Jerry had been called off on an overtime assignment for IBM, but Miri and Calvin were there. All sorts of crazy things went on, which sound crazier as follows when not rounded out by less interesting continuity. At one point Miri showed Ray a dress she had found the previous evening in San Francisco (along with a bunch of Xmas tree ornaments, a sweater, and a bunch of whisky and bourbon advertisements; but all that is another story) and said that it might fit him. "Goody," clapped Ray, "I'll go try it on." "Jeezy-peezy," went Calvin, sort of waving his hands in the air. I threw in a "Good grief!" or two and sat down to wait it out. Ray had gone up to the bathroom on the first level above the ground floor to try it on, and when we heard him coming down again both Calvin and I turned our backs and walked towards the door, opening it and looking out, being disgusted. However, Ray had found that it was too tight around the waist and wasn't wearing it after all. Meanwhile, Miri and Alex were in the kitchen. Alex was doing addition and subtraction to help Miri balance her checkbook which had somehow gotten a dollar or so off the beam. Everything checked out from Miri's entries in the book, but still the error remained. Ray and Calvin started playing piano. After a while I started getting hungry too, so eventually we took Ray and Walter T. home and went over to the Casa del Rancho in Albany. This is the fancy cheap restaurant that Donaho mentioned in OMPA nearly a year ago, and is good. If you like well-spiced Mexican food, that is...

After dinner I took Don and Alex back to Grove Street and went off to see if the Ellingtons were home. They weren't, but Bill Rickhardt and Marlene were in the back yard. Marlene was sewing up the seams on the seat cover of the new Rickhardt car, which is the former Jim Caughran Fiat. (Jim sold it to Bill when he left for the convention and graduate school.) I talked with these nice people for a while and then headed back to Grove to see what was going on, and mainly find out when we were going down to the Nonvention again.

Don was there fixing dinner and Noocey was in the next room fast asleep. I'd been nearly 36 hours myself without sleep by that time and was feeling a bit crapped out, but not enough to want to fall over on my face. In the middle of preparing the spaghetti sauce, the phone rang. It was Miri. She wanted us all to come out to dinner with them. Don invited them all up to Grove for dinner there. Miri wanted us to go out and eat. We wanted to eat at home. Finally we ended up going to Brennan's, a hofbrau sort of establishment on the Berkeley waterfront where the Little Men meet after meetings up at Stark's. Then it was off to the Nonvention, Fitch driving his own car for a change, partially because I didn't want to and partially because I was afraid I'd fall asleep at the wheel. I was really feeling down and out by then.

But when we got to the Nonvention and I found all sorts of interesting people there, it was as if I'd just come out of a brisk shower and all, for I felt pretty wide awake again. The Clintons were there (and apologized for not waking up that morning as though it were capital), as well as the Bogerses, Barry Miller and a friend of his whose name I don't recall, Elmer Perdue (surprise to us!), and lots of others. But my memory is faulty and I

had better just add the presence of three Ellington people and leave it at that.

There was a lot of drinking going on, to which I added about half a quart of wine (not my normal load, but I was tired after all), and some futzing about with a tape-recorder, results of which were supposed to be sent to LASFS, but overall I was none too enthused at the scene, found nothing better left to do but drink myself under the table (hi, Calvin!), and so suggested to Fitch that going into San Francisco might be a better scene for that evening. He agreed and so we left around 11 towards The City.

Arriving there, we soon found ourselves in a traffic jam on Grant Avenue through Chinatown which didn't abate at all, so we turned off onto Columbus eventually and started looking for a parking place near the City Lights bookshop, located at Columbus and Broadway. We didn't find a place until we got up to Washington Square, a good many blocks further along Columbus, and had to walk back. It was a cool evening, and misty, so I was wearing a sweater in addition to my cord jacket.

However, the City Lights is well worth any such walk through any degree of extreme cold, and soon we found ourselves browsing through stacks of paperback books and magazines in search of the stuff we wanted. I ended up with a whole clump of Birth Press publications, including the notable "Sex & War," as well as such delightful Ferlinghetti treatise poems I'd failed to get before as "1000 Fearful Words for Fidel Castro" and "Tentative Description of a Dinner Given to Promote the Impeachment of President Eisenhower" -- and others of equal interest to me. Gathering up our purchases in a paper bag, we headed down Columbus to see the sights for a few blocks, but it was getting very, very late by then so we walked back to the Square and took off for Berkeley, upon arrival at which I sacked out immediately and didn't wake up until around noon the following day.

Which was Sunday. I spent the afternoon at the Ellingtons, a thoroughly enjoyable place to shoot the breeze, and when Norm Metcalf dropped over I took him down to the Nonvention. (Fitch had gone over to the City to have dinner at the Dickensheets.) There weren't as many people there as the previous evening, but generally I enjoyed myself more. We played Botticelli (or "who-am-I-not?") for a while. This is the game where the person who is it chooses a famous person and says to the other participants that he is a famous (give initial of last name of person here). The others can pose questions whose answers also begin with that initial and if they can stump for person who's it they get to ask a free question, to be answered yes or no. To give an example of this, I said "I am a well-known 'H'" at one point. Dick Ellington didn't know I was the it person and so asked a question whose answer was Harlan, after whom Harlan County (of "Which Side Are You On?" fame) was named. He looked over at me then and said, "Oh, if I'd known it was you I'd've saved that question." When it finally developed, after quite a long time, that I was Joe Hill, Dick groaned and said, "Oh, no" and Pat laughed from the card table and shouted "You've been had, Dick!" at him. Later on I was a famous "K": Mickey Katz of Berscht Capades fame. But that wasn't as much fun.

Some non-fan friends of Felice's showed up and we tried explaining fandom and fanzines to them. However, we were stalled out on the latter point when it developed that the only examples of fanzines around the house were Rhodomagnetic Digest, Bixel (Alva



Rogers' OMPazine), and Wobbly. Hardly what one would call a representative selection, but finding fanzines at the Clinton manse appears to be like finding a particular paperback book in a large bookstore.

All good things must drag along to an end, and after a while the hour grew late and people started heading back to Berkeley. Alex drove Norm home in the Vauxhall and I went back with the Knight/Demmon entourage in Jerry's new Volkswagon convertible, which is a terrific automobile.

And the next day Alex and I left Berkeley and went back to Los Angeles. And that was my Nonvention. How was your convention?

-oCo-

As Wrai would say, this is a "gafiated type" issue. I'm still interested in SAPS, but I have just gotten into PAPA and am working towards an extravagant first issue there, and lately I've been even busier, if possible, than before. During the summer there was work, combined with delightful excursions like the one I've just tried to describe to some extent, and now that it drags on into fall, school is once again with me.

This semester I'm taking only fourteen units, as opposed to 16 units the previous one. Of course, two of those units last time were for ROTC, which the Regents finally voted out as a university requirement (thus saving my having to take the final semester of it!), so actually my load is about the same as it was. I'm taking eight units of English, my major subject, including the second half of two survey courses (in American and British literature, respectively) and a course on Shakespeare. I'm also taking an elementary level course in geography, though not by choice; it's my final stint of university requirements. Additionally, and finally, I'm taking English History, which fulfills both my history requirement and an English department requirement for us English majors. I shall be able to recite all the kings before very long; just you wait and see, gentle reader. It's a fun programme; I'm enjoying it so far.

Anyway, I imagine that my SAPSazines will stay about at this level of size for a while to come. It has been obvious to me that the spirit which used to produce 40 pages of Lichtman stuff for SAPS each quarter has been long absent (though reviving in the direction of PAPA lately) and I would be kidding myself if I said I was as enthusiastic about SAPS as I was before. Future issues of WS will probably consist largely of mailing comments or short articles on this subject or that as suggested by the mailing. But there's none of this in the current issue (the one you're reading, if my syntax confuses you), mostly because I found next to nothing in the last mailing to move me to do up mailing comments.

In the meantime, I do continue to read the mailings, as much of them as I can see worth my while, and enjoy a lot of what is said. For instance, my favourite item in the July mailing was Calvin Demmon's article on handom, or "Think Clean for Mental Hygiene (and the three rabbits)" which was funny as hell. I also enjoyed Ed Meskys' fanzine, and I think it's the best thing Ed's ever written. Reading over Lee Jacobs' article on "The Influence of Science Fiction on Modern American Folk Music" was nice, too, and of course Pot Pourri remains one of my favorite magazines, despite my usual lack of comment. So much for mailing commentary, however.

At this point, that is, I'd like to present something in the way of an unscheduled, unpremeditated outside contribution. This was found lying near an Olympia portable typewriter on the front room table at the Clintons on the final evening of the Nonvention. Permission to publish it was granted at that time.

Without further ado, then, Lichtman Talent Associates presents:

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fear  
by a b perdue

Let me at this point speak to you about fear.

Let me tell you about absolute terror.

I am afraid. I have a horrendous fear of heights -- of people -- of enemy eyes watching -- of anyone 'snever looking at me. Even though those eyes may be friendly.

Fear.

It's not good, Meyer. When one gets to the point (which I have) where you push the elevator down button and then don't have the guts to get on -- just because there is somebody on board besides the operator -- and then you excuse yourself fast like you forgot something and go back in the office -- that's not good, Meyer.

I've done that.

I am not sane, Meyer.

I work on the fourteenth floor of City Hall. Also not good. There is an open air shaft overlooking sixteen stories of emptiness. I was god damn worried, until one day I found they'd put up a chain link fence over the jumping-off place.

My mind is not well.  
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As most of you are probably aware, I have a little black kitten (half Siamese, so bat ears) name of Joesky who purrs very loudly and is occasionally ill-mannered. However, I must announce as a matter of course that Joesky has been very considerate and well-behaved during the publication of this issue. That is, during most of the work of creation -- writing and printing, and other attendant chores, such as putting artowkr to master -- he has jumped into the wastebasket and stayed there, glaring out at me.

This to me is a very reassuring trait on his part. I mean, how many of you would jump into the wastebasket to avoid getting in the way of one of your fellow workers?

-- Bob Lichtman  
September 1962





"You mean Bob remembered to put aside the letters of comment this time?!"  
"That's about it."

Larry McCombs

Your remarks about the steady disappearance of England remind me of the amazing fact that Los Angeles is moving towards San Francisco at the rate of 2 inches per year, due to slippage along the San Andreas fault. I doubt that this concept particularly pleases either city!

The 50-Minute Children's Hour was enjoyed, but the bit with Ted's mother didn't quite come off. Perhaps because I've only met her once, and she seemed quite nice (though not loveable), then. (I've only met Ted's mother once and got the same impression. And this mischaracterization of her ruins the story for me.)

Your question to Ted about IQ tests could result in a long essay on the subject, but I'll try to cut it very short. With most IQ tests, the average person ceases to improve his score past age 16 or so. Thus, IQ being defined as the ratio of your score to the average score of persons your age, the denominator of the fraction remains constant and your IQ would fluctuate all over the place if you change a little. Therefore most IQ tests don't mean much past that age. Especially since lots of highly intelligent people continue to grow mentally long past this age, and hence would continue to raise their IQ -- a ridiculous idea, since IQ is supposed to be a constant throughout your life. (Not the information I have at all; it's able to fluctuate quite considerably, though in theory (according to my references) it should stay at about the same level.) However some IQ tests, such as the Cattell 3 used by Mensa, are deliberately designed to be used only by very brilliant people -- people who continue to grow mentally after age 16. Thus the "average" score does continue to go up, and hence the IQ does mean some-

thing. But to try to compare IQ scores from this sort of test with IQ scores from the more usual tests is almost meaningless. In fact, IQ scores as such are almost meaningless anyhow. (Amen!) I recommend a textbook called "Psychological Testing" by Anastasi, which goes into this in some detail -- explaining how various sorts of tests (including IQ tests) are set up, and what they mean.

Amen to your comments on Coventry. I couldn't have said it so well, but it's what I've been thinking.

As for mixed drinks, I refuse even to allow an ice cube into my liquor. My favorite party beverage is a small glass of straight whiskey or brandy, on which I sip slowly all evening. I dislike growing drunk (and only do so through miscalculation usually) because I don't like to lose control of my body. I seem to become neither maudlin nor happy, but merely become very cautious in body movements, enunciate very very clearly, repeat things over and over again as if I didn't expect anyone to understand the simplest points, and often feel quite unhappy at my own lack of bodily control.

If you really like good salad dressing, I recommend a little place in Pasadena called Le Payer. It's on Lake Street, just south of Colorado by about a block and a half. The MTA bus ("Via Oak Knoll," not "Short Line") will deposit you right on the corner of Colorado and Lake for a mere 46¢ (unless they've raised it again) from the LA MTA depot. The steak dinners are good but not Great, the atmosphere is dim and smoky and romantic, but the salad and salad dressing are out of this world. Be sure to ask for the pepper grinder and get fresh ground Black Pepper put on top of your salad. Of course, one has to be somewhat of a salad dressing fan to splurge \$5 on a steak dinner just to get the salad! I used to do this about once every two months when the routine of school food got unbearable and I felt the need to treat myself to a night out.

I dug Crane's poems very much. Hope you print some more. This cross-fertilization between a jay fandom and fan-fandom seems to be producing some exciting and interesting results.

ted white

"The Fifty-Minute Children's Hour" seemed to me to lack any narrative point and plot. Sure, it was to point out how Coventry is just a kiddy game, but you put it better and with less malice in your mc's.

The idea of a "washday" in Berkeley croggled me, although I dug it. Tonight I asked Terry about it and he told a couple of stories about that scene. Damn, sounds great. Too bad we're all so spread out around here.

Your mention of the fact that you seldom read the papers and hardly ever know what's happening struck a responsive chord in me. When I lived with my parents, I used to read the two DC papers (mostly for the comics when I was younger, and then sometimes for the front page, the first page of the second section (local news), and editorial page). Also, every night during dinner Dad would tune in a favorite radio newscast (and what ever happened to the era of good radio news commentators, like Earl Godwin?) for fifteen minutes (for that matter, whatever happened to the fifteen minute news broadcast?) (It's still around out here on a number of stations, particular KFI.) (and, Jack Armstrong, Tennessee Jed, Capt. Midnight, Hop Harrigan, and all that great old gang? Geeze, radio used to be great. Even Pacifica Radio can never replace the by-

gone glories). So I just naturally kept up with the news.

When I moved to Baltimore, it was very disorienting. The Balto papers, despite Ted Pauls, were and are gawdawfully cruddy, and anyway I wasn't in the habit of having my paper not delivered to my doorstep. (Some Day When I'm Rich...I'm going to subscribe to the DC Post and Star by mail. Damn, those were good papers.) At that time, Nasser was causing all sorts of trouble, and after hearing it discussed, I realised that a war could start and I'd be so cut off from the news that I wouldn't know.

So this is bad? I dunno, but it did shake me up to realize how out of touch I'd gotten. These days I scan the papers irregularly, usually buying the Post if anything because I like the editorial section, but usually getting only the weekend edition with the extra features, color comics, etc. I still dig newspaper comics. I can often pick up a paper while riding the subways; people sometimes leave their papers behind them. For some reason I balk at 5¢ or 10¢ for something as impermanent as a newspaper.

But for the most part I still only glance over headlines at papers on a newsstand. That way I get all the important stuff, like Scott Carpenter, Liz Taylor & Richard Burton, the birth deforming drug, and Marilyn Monroe's suicide. I mean, what else is there, really?

I like mixed drinks. One of my favorites is the screw-driver: orange juice and vodka. It's cheap and tasty. A Nuclear Fizz is also Okay. But if I'm going to drink a good whiskey I want it straight (perhaps chilled, though this is hard to get), with a chaser. I hate the taste of diluted hard liquor, whether directly as in scotch & water, or indirectly, as with melted ice cubes from -on-the-rocks.

It's not that hard to predict the odds of the IO of the offspring of a given set of parents. I mean, the odds are a smart pair of parents will have a smart kid, and vice-versa. I imagine this has all been pretty well worked out by now. Figuring in probable environment, you might be able to come damned close on 99 out of 100 cases. There will always be some exceptions, but the more extreme they are, the rarer they are.

For years I thought Chinese food consisted of Chow Mein and Chop Suey. Then I discovered good Chinese food a year or two ago, and I still wonder why anyone would order Chow Mein. I mean, sure, you wanted something easy to fix. But I imagine inquiry would've turned up something equally fast to fix and probably a lot better tasting. (I remember my delight in discovering Chinese Tomato & Beef, and other non-typical delights.) (Well, yes, but I wasn't in the mood for looking over the menu a long time, either. On the other hand, whenever I can get it, I much prefer Japanese food to Chinese. There's a fine Japanese section of Los Angeles, up near City Hall, where you can get some really fine Japanese food.)

Covers nice, but the Atom seems on close inspection a bit sloppy for him. (Yes, I should have inked it in a bit better than Art had done before giving it to my printer (hi, Don).)

Suzanne Lacy

With the help of your letter and my brother's explanations (he got them from Jinx) I could intelligently (??) reread both of your stories and your argument against Coventry (if it's not important, why do you capitalise it?). Ahora yo comprendo! I've got to hand it to you -- you did a terrific job of getting your point across in these two "children's" stories.

In regards to your argument against word-recognition, I

don't think you can really say that you read better than your brother as a result of teaching methods. There are too many variables involved. It could very well be that you would be the better reader regardless. (Why, I think you may be right!) If you had statistics (for instance: comparison of reading averages between grades or schools) you could back up your argument.

All the above is merely my argumentative personality asserting itself -- I take the opposite side of everything just for the heck of it. (Well, then, it's up to you to prove your point, for I am too lazy to dig up those statistics.) If you will notice, I said absolutely nothing about whether or not I agree with word-recognition, mainly because I don't remember how I was taught to read, and have never thought enough about it to present an opinion. One idea, though -- could it be that word recognition, while falling down on spelling and pronunciation, encourages better comprehension?

There must be some reason why they are using that system. (As a matter of fact, the notion of better comprehension resulting from the word-recognition method is precisely what the educators who back this system claim as its big advantage over phonics. "Look," they say, "see that kid picking up new words at the drop of an eyetrack. You can't do it that fast by your rusty phonics, can you?" Well, maybe you can't, but this argument



This, children, is a FAPA Dragon taunting a SAPS Knight. Are you one?

strikes me as being somewhat beside the point. My own view is that a combination of these two systems would be best. Preferably the phonic method should precede the recognition method, so that one can pronounce the words identified, right off the bat, instead of having to pick up pronunciation anew with each word.)

harry warner jr

The Fifty-Minute Children's Hour gives the impression of a message which you may not have intended it to convey: that Coventry has endured and flourished because it became a symbol of youth's rebellion against mundane parents. As I think I've told you before, I have felt no desire to get into the Coventry pastime. But I can't see that its unusual nature is essentially any different or worse than the little worlds that active members of the Elks build around themselves, dressing up for ceremonials and politicking feverishly to gain election to titles or appointment to committees. There is one possible benefit of Coventry that you haven't cited and in fact I don't think any active participants have pointed it out: if I understand it correctly, it could provide some useful practice in the art of handling people and getting one's own way. I assume that the Pelz and Harness statements of how wars

are fought and history is created are accurate. If so, Coventry could help to prepare one for the real world in much the same manner that class offices and student council activity help to get promising young men and women ready to be leaders in the political and business world. (Somehow, I seriously doubt that, Harry.)

Maybe every fan who really cares should write a brief article about his gripes concerning careless writing. Then an anthology of these complaints could be published and used by fans in general as a means of improving style and grammar. I don't mind carelessness in letters of comment or in fanzines that are deliberately produced as casual, spur-of-the-moment things. But I like to see more formal writing done with some care as to how things are said. One bad habit that some otherwise literate fans contract is that of running sentences together in a permissible but annoying way; they use a semi-colon to turn into one sentence what should really be two sentences, like this one. I had a terrible time breaking myself of this habit when I finally noticed how frequently I was doing it. Marion Bradley fell into the same rut for a long time. She seems to be out of it now, and I must remember to ask her if she got scolded by someone or caught on by herself, as I did. (I find nothing wrong with stringing two sentences together with a semi-colon, if it's done right; where the thoughts in each is related, as here, it's perfectly permissible, though of course it shouldn't be overused. Also, if both halves are quite long, it is not very wise to keep it as one sentence, for you tend to lose your reader.)

We seem to be equally interested in newspapers. I must look through the local papers on working days, so that I know what local news has already appeared in print and what stories may require further investigation. But I never do much more than skim over the first paragraph or two, and I never pay attention to national or international news unless it's of scarehead proportions. I didn't even know about the latest Russian space exploit (the means the two men in separate spaceships, here) until a couple of hours ago, when I helped in a proof-reading emergency and found a story about American reactions. I suppose I'll have to watch the last news-cast on television before I go to bed, just in case they're still up there or have made some sensational discoveries.

Don't worry about your reputation as a non-talker. Some people are like that and they get along just fine, once their friends recognise their habits and stop assuming that they are offended or sulking or sick. I'm probably in-between the extremes. However, I find a special problem when I get among fans, that of regearing my conversation for the broadminded people around me. In Hagerstown there aren't many persons to whom I talk freely: I would hurt their feelings badly or start endless arguments or become involved in sticky situations as my more liberal beliefs got exaggerated into real radicalism. Around fans, I usually need two or three hours to make the transition, even when they're fans I've met frequently in the past. Ella Parker is the only fan I can recall who got me out of the self-censorship stage almost instantly.

I laughed and laughed at the thought of you worrying about the danger that you'd have to lug away fifteen cartons or more if you moved. If you ever get East, I must take you on a conducted tour of this house. Fifteen cartons wouldn't make a perceptible dent on some rooms in it, not counting the major items of furniture. (True, but you've been around longer than me, and, I suspect, have more of a packrat tendency. And the only furniture I own, so to speak, is a bed.)

It's good to know that you plan to concentrate considerably on FAPA when you get in. Sometimes I think the best way to solve that organization's waiting list problem would be by adoption of an amendment to the constitution, limiting membership to fans who do not hold membership in any other ayjay group. It would prevent fans from knocking themselves out trying to give their all for two or more apas and it would cut the attrition that SAPS and OMFA are suffering from the prestige symbol that FAPA has become. At a guess, I'd say that two-thirds of the current FAPA membership would either qualify immediately for the new regulation or would not hesitate to dump any other ayjay organizations. It probably wouldn't be hard to fill up the rest of the roster from waiting listers who are interested mainly in FAPA. (Boy, do I doubt this plan would work very well, even if FAPA did pass it. Besides, I don't really notice any major decay in the other ayjay groups because of FAPA's status symbolism. It is true that an occasional SAPS or OMFA member, more usually the former, as OMFA holds its more dedicated, seriously interested members pretty well, will drop his other apa upon entering FAPA, but this is less likely to happen than the eventuality of a fan spreading himself a bit thinner on entrance to FAPA. I don't intend to drop OMFA or SAPS just yet.)

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"Gather ye rosebuds while ye may," said Leibcher  
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Lady, lady, Thracian filly,  
Why so fearful, neighing shrilly  
When you're mocking with your eyes?  
Though in love I'd feign be idle,  
Yet on you I'd place my bridle,  
Round the circus curb my prize.  
Frolicking, on love a luncher,  
You have never had a puncher  
Who could tame you anywise.

Dear, if your eyes were deep, deep blue  
I'd like them more than eyes of brown.  
Of course, the ones you have must do,  
But if your eyes were deep, deep blue  
And quite alike, in size and hue,  
They'd go superbly with your gown,  
So, if your eyes were deep, deep blue  
I'd like them more than eyes of brown.

by Purton Crane

(Reprinted, respectively, from MASEKA #13 and #14. 1944 and 1945)



