

## **THE FOSSIL**

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### **A FITTING AWARD TO JAKE WARNER President's Report**

**Guy Miller**

When I first revealed to a small select group that Chairman Lee Hawes had agreed that Jacob L. Warner should be selected for the 2008 Russell L. Paxton Memorial Award for Service to Amateur Journalism, the collective response seemed of one breath: “Well, it's about time!” Indeed.

Jake and his son David came to ajay in 1969, thanks to a two-page NAPA-authored promo insert which appeared with the April mailing of *The Printer's Helper*, a publication of the Kelsey Company. Before that brochure, Jake tells us, the two had no idea that the hobby of amateur journalism existed. Jake's children had received a small press and a short font of type as a present, and Jake and David took an instant interest in learning how to use it. Soon they were finding self-help books on the subject, including Ben Lieberman's *Printing as a Hobby*.

In the meantime, they had graduated to larger presses and more type. But they were running out of things to print. So, the news of an outlet for their new-found hobby was well-timed. Thus *The Boxwooder* No. 1 for July 1969 not only introduced the ajay world to father and son and this remarkable journal, but also to what would become a dedicated ajay clan. For, soon Jake and Dave were joined by Leah with her *Rosewood Rambler*. Then, a little later, with the marriage to David to Melody Hageman and subsequent birth of daughter Alice, a total of five publishers—and, as important, office holders—made up the Warner team.

Jake jumped into the political fray in 1970 as NAPA Recorder and has steadily served ajay in almost every office including that of Mailer, Official Editor, President and Executive Judge—and author of NAPA's first computerized mailing label program. Soon David was marking out a similar pattern including NAPA President. Not to be upstaged, Leah also served in various capacities including that of President. Melody did her part as Recorder and later as Official Editor. April, soon to become Mrs. Marc Brosey of Nashville TN, has served NAPA as Mailer.

Jake, Dave and Leah attended their first NAPA Convention at Marietta OH in 1971, and from that time on Jake has boasted a perfect attendance record. During those sessions he has been Parliamentarian, Senior Advisor, and Committee Member, as well as a regular Laureate recipient for his printing, editing, and writing. And in regard to his writing talent, Jake has said, “I always had an

urge to write. I took journalism courses and even became editor of a college newspaper—an experience I will never forget.” But, he adds, “I became more interested in physics than in writing.” Thus did professional journalism lose an asset while amateur journalism picked up an enthusiast, strongly enough interested to put all his other hobbies of photography, model railroading, and stamp collecting on hold.

It is not an overemphasis to state that Jake and clan have been the mainstay just at those times when NAPA needed someone to step in, roll up their sleeves, and do the heavy lifting. In laying out the parameters for selection of the person for the Russell L. Paxton Memorial Award, donor John Horn specified that “The recipient should be a person who has given freely of his or her time and effort solely for the benefit of their fellow amateur journalists.” And for guidance, “Look to the person for whom the award is named as an example.” In the selection of Jacob L. Warner, one can truly respond, “Well, it's about time!”

**IN MEMORIAM:  
BETTY B. MILLAR**

**Guy Miller**

By the time Betty Millar joined NAPA in 1969, she already was a veteran amateur journalist; for immediately after joining the United Amateur Press Association of America in 1966, she became involved in helping Willametta Keffer in her efforts to persuade the overlapping memberships of the UAPA and the UAPAA to come together into one union. And when the effort predictably failed (several UAPAA members refused to give up their identities), Betty swore allegiance to the newly formed UAP and served in various offices including that of president in 1981-82. No surprise, then, to find that Willametta's husband Martin was Betty's sponsor for NAPA membership.

According to a biography written by a Kae Carter Jaworski and published in the January 1995 issue of *The Fossil*, while she was a member of the United groups, Betty proved herself an accomplished poet and “began fulfilling her writing gifts as editor and publisher of *The Derrick Beachcomber*, *Brea Bulletin*, *Betty's Notes & Quotes*, and *Sand Pebbles*.” The biographer also indicates that during these years Betty published professionally and at one time recited her poetry over radio stations in Los Angeles and Salt Lake City. In NAPA, Betty published at least two issues of *Beachcomber* which consisted mainly of poetry of such ajays as NAPA's accomplished Laurence Estes. Also, we find that she submitted articles to the Manuscript Bureau.

“Widowed after 22 years of happiness,” Betty later met and married Ira B. Millar in 1963, and the two settled in Morro Bay, California, where Betty resided until her death on February 27, 2009. In an issue of *The Fossil* (October 1973), Willametta mentions meeting Betty at the 1973 UAP Convention in San Diego and later visiting Ira and Betty at their home in Morro Bay. She tell us that the two were rock hounds and had a private museum “which far surpasses many public ones.”

Betty joined *The Fossils* on March 31, 1976. During her 33-year membership she served as first vice-president for two terms 1983-85 and was nominated for president in 1993 (Merry Harris was re-elected). We find that she authored three articles for *The Fossil*, one in praise of long-time United member Bertha Jones, another in remembrance of Willametta, and a third, actually an edited

reprint from *Beachcomber* No. 2, re-titled "What Is Amateur Journalism?" After struggling to express its attraction to her satisfaction, she concludes, "Words are inadequate to describe Amateur Journalism. I only know this is my life and I am enjoying every minute of it."

**IN MEMORIAM:  
EUNICE MCKEE FONTENOT**

**Guy Miller**

Eunice McKee (Fontenot), of Haynesville LA, was a fair lass of 18 when in 1932 she became a member of NAPA, sponsored by 17-year-old Harold Segal who had joined NAPA barely two years earlier and already was serving as NAPA Official Editor. Eunice tells us in an issue of *The Fossil* (April 1975) that she came to amateur journalism by way of a letter to the Editor of *Holland's Magazine* in Dallas TX. "Then I received a letter from John B. Schlarb, who had read my letter..., advising me about amateur journalism, and I joined the NAPA." Eunice was ready with her credential, "A Stenog Meditates," which possibly appeared in Harold's *The Times* or his *Sea Gull*. Besides *Sea Gull*, her short stories were soon to be seen in other publications such as *The Scarlet Cockerel*, *Walk One Flight*, *Technician*, *Enterprise*, and *The Californian*. This last named journal, published by Hyman Bradofsky, can probably be credited with featuring the majority of her work during the early thirties. Indeed, her first submission for a Laureate Award was "Christmas for Scotty," which was printed in the Winter 1934 edition.

That she failed to receive an award that year did not discourage Eunice from making regular submissions in the Laureate contests, and her talent in the short story genre was finally recognized with 1943 Honorable Mention for "You Can't Tell Who's Looking" and 1972 Laureate for "Down that Old Town Road."

During this period (1935-36) Eunice was a professional correspondent for the *Shreveport Journal* and *Shreveport Times*, and later (ca. 1947) worked as clerk-stenographer for the U.S. Soil Conservation Service. In addition, Eunice became on December 4, 1937, the wife of Mr. D. L. Fontenot, Jr., "an agronomist-soil scientist." I have concluded from genealogical records that Mr. Fontenot was a member of a large and illustrious Louisiana clan. In any case, Eunice's new role brought about only a small pause in NAPA affairs, for in 1939 she was again submitting short stories to the ajay press. In May 1941 Eunice produce the first issue of her mimeoed journal *Scribblings from Louisiana*, prompted by Burton Crane's admonishment "that anybody genuinely interested in the hobby should publish; mimeo is cheap." The rest of this first number pays tribute to the work of Dora Hepner Moitoret and answers a rather stinging accusation from then VP Louis B. Gilbert who had apparently suggested that Eunice revealed a vein of racism in Willametta Keffer's *Walk One Flight*. Succeeding issues of *Scribblings*, at least through No. 3 (August 1947), seem to be less controversial.

Surveying what we could of Eunice's NAPA activity other than as writer and publisher, we find that served as Director of Publicity under the 1977-78 administration of Keith Gray. She attended perhaps her only convention in 1977 in Kansas City and reports an interesting interlude with Willametta Keffer whom she and her husband had earlier met during a visit to Willametta and Martin's home in Roanoke VA. As newly elected President of The Fossils (1974-77), Eunice laments in her "President's Message" her inability to attend the 1975 NAPA Convention in

Cleveland, where a discussion was held concerning what is now known as the Library of Amateur Journalism, housed in the Special Collections section at the University of Wisconsin in Madison.

Eunice had joined *The Fossils* in 1947; and, aside from penning a tribute to Willametta and furnishing her presidential messages, otherwise devoted her writing activity to NAPA. But she was active as an officer, not only as twice-elected president, but earlier as first vice-president in 1973-74 and later in that same office in 1982-85. In the same issue of *The Fossil*, cited at the top of this article, Eunice closes her presidential message this way: “Through the intervening years the hobby of amateur journalism has been a sustaining force. I have received something from it in personal growth satisfaction, and a lot of you out there will know what I mean.” Eunice passed from us on December 13, 2008, at the age of 94, 76 years a member of NAPA and 61 unforgettable years as a Fossil.

Special Thanks for Bill Boys, Ken Faig, Arie Koelewyn and Martha Shivers for their help.

**THE STRANGE STORY OF “POETRY AND THE GODS”  
BY ANNA HELEN CROFTS AND HENRY PAGET-LOWE  
(UNITED AMATEUR. SEPTEMBER 1920)**

**Ken Faig, Jr.**

H. P. Lovecraft had only three signed collaborations with female authors—two, “The Green Meadow” and “The Crawling Chaos” with Winifred Virginia Jackson (1876-1959)—linked to him romantically by Willametta Keffer—and one, “Poetry and the Gods,” with Anna Helen Crofts, first published in the *United Amateur* for September 1920. The original publication in the *United Amateur* is reproduced in facsimile in the center section of this issue. (For Internet readers without access to our illustrative material, a Google search for “Poetry and the Gods” will readily yield the text of this story.) Lovecraft researcher George T. Wetzel (1921-1983) found “Poetry and the Gods” whilst researching Lovecraft's amateur press writings in the Library of Amateur Journalism (then at the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania) and first republished the text in the first volume of his *Lovecraft Collector's Library* in 1952. “Poetry and the Gods” first appeared in an Arkham House collection of Lovecraft's work in *The Shuttered Room and Other Pieces* in 1959; thereafter, Arkham House has kept this text in print in the collection *Dagon and Other Macabre Tales* (originally published, 1965; new edition with texts corrected by S. T. Joshi, 1987). Over the years, “Poetry and the Gods” has also appeared in paperback collections of Lovecraft's work, including *The Tomb and Other Tales* (Ballantine, 1970), *The Transition of H. P. Lovecraft: The Road to Madness* (Ballantine, 1996) and *Shadows of Death* (DelRey, 2005). It is surely one of Lovecraft's lesser writings and is strangely unlike most of his writing both in mood and in subject. Of the protagonist, a young woman named Marcia, the authors write: “Attired simply, in a low-cut black evening dress, she appeared outwardly a typical product of modern civilization.” Few very female characters appear in Lovecraft's fiction—perhaps the most notable is Asenath Waite in “The Thing on the Doorstep”—and certainly none of them other than Marcia are ever described as garbed in “a low-cut black evening dress.” (Although Lovecraft's wife the amateur journalist Sonia Haft Greene (1883-1972) described the author as an adequately excellent lover, it is difficult to conceive of “The

Conservative”s commenting upon a woman's décolletage in print.) Marcia reposes on “a soft divan by a solitary lamp” and scans a magazine for “some healing bit of poetry.” Marcia is oppressed by the coldness of her household, “where relations were always strained and the inmates scarcely more than strangers,” feels a “misplacement in time and space, where she had been born too late, too early, or too far away from the haunts of her spirit ever to harmonize with the unbeautiful things of contemporary reality.” In the gloomy days of the April succeeding the close of the Great War, she feels “strange thoughts and wishes, unheard-of yearnings which floated out of the spacious twentieth-century drawing room, up the deeps of the air, and eastward to olive groves in distant Arcady which she has seen only in her dreams.” She finds an enchanting bit of blank verse, with “all the unstudied music of a bard who lives and feels, who gropes ecstatically for unveiled beauty.” Marcia lapses into dream whilst reading the poem, and is greeted by Hermes, who sweeps her up to Zeus's court on Parnassus, there to meet six great poets whom the Gods have appointed as messengers to men: “divine the Maeonides, the avernian Dante, the more than mortal Shakespeare, the chaos-exploring Milton, the cosmic Goethe, and the musalan Keats.” Each is given an opportunity to speak, although only the words of Shakespeare (*All's Well That Ends Well*, Act III, Scene iv, lines 8-11), Milton (“Il Penseroso,” lines 85-92, 97-100), and Keats (“Ode on a Grecian Urn,” lines 11-12, 46-50) are quoted. Before she departs from Parnassus, Zeus promises Marcia that he will send a new messenger: “Search thou unceasingly for our messenger, for in him wilt thou find peace and comfort. By his word shall thy steps be guided to happiness, and in his dreams of beauty shall thy spirit find that which it craveth.” Hermes leads Marcia back to the world of men where we next hear of her:

Many years have passed since Marcia dreamt of the Gods and of their Parnassus conclave. Tonight she sits in the same spacious drawing-room, but she is not alone. Gone is the old spirit of unrest, for beside her is one whose name is luminous with celebrity: the young poet of poets at whose feet sits all the world. He is reading from a manuscript words which none has ever heard before, but which when heard will bring to men the dreams and fancies they lost so many centuries ago, when Pan lay down to doze in Arcady, and the great Gods withdrew to sleep in lotos-gardens beyond the lands of the Hesperides. In the subtle cadences and hidden melodies of the bard the spirit of the maiden had found rest at last, for these echo the divinest notes of Thracian Orpheus, notes that moved the very rocks and trees by Hebrus' banks. The singer ceases, and with eagerness asks for a verdict, yet what can Marcia say but that the strain is “fit for the Gods”?

Some writers have speculated that “Anna Helen Crofts” was another pseudonym for Winifred Virginia Jackson, or even a pseudonym for Lovecraft himself, but she was a *bona fide* member of Lovecraft's faction of the United, residing at 343 West Main Street in North Adams, Massachusetts. She had been elected Eastern Manuscript Manager at UAPA's Columbus, Ohio convention in July 1920—the same convention which elected Lovecraft as Official Editor of the *United Amateur*. As fellow officials of the United, the scenario for the collaboration of Lovecraft (writing as “H. Paget-Lowe”) and Miss Crofts on “Poetry and the Gods” was set. S. T. Joshi credits Miss Crofts with at least one further story in the amateur press, “Life” (*United Amateur*, June 1921), which I have not seen.<sup>1</sup> One may justifiably wonder what convinced Lovecraft to collaborate in a

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<sup>1</sup> George Wetzel wrote of finding an unknown Lovecraft story entitled “Life and Death” during

work of fiction so different from his usual mood and subject. He has surely spent a great deal of time to enrich the text of “Poetry and the Gods” with many appropriate classical references. If his co-authoress Miss Crofts was responsible for the initial draft of their collaboration, I suspect that the introductory paragraphs concluding with the citation of the enchanting blank verse are most of what remains of her work. Perhaps the basic idea of the six divine bards encountered in Marcia's dream and the ending scene with Marcia admiring the work of the latest messenger-poet sent by the Gods were also Crofts'—she may also have chosen the quotations from Shakespeare, Milton and Keats. But the richness of classical reference which one finds in the dream sequence certainly owes much to Lovecraft's collaboration.

I suspect that what attracted Lovecraft most to Crofts' initial draft were the remarkable bits of blank verse that form Marcia's reading immediately before her dream. But here we encounter our first surprise—perhaps unknown to Crofts' collaborator Lovecraft—for the blank verse cited in the story was not created by Crofts, but derives from an actual published poem, “Sky Lotus,” by Elizabeth J. Coatsworth, published in the July 1919 issue of *Asia*, “The American Magazine on the Orient,” published by the American Asiatic Association. “Sky Lotus” in its original publication in *Asia* is reproduced on our inside front cover, but for the benefit of our Internet readers, I will transcribe the entire text here as well (I have enclosed the portions of the poem not quoted by Crofts in square brackets):

Moon over Japan,

White butterfly moon!

[The waters wash against the sacred islands

Where steps lead down to the sea,

Where neither death nor birth is permitted,]

Where the heavy-lidded Buddhas dream

To the sound of the cuckoo's call.

[The whitened mists lie adrift among the pines

And steal the color from the bright-leaved maples

On the mountains where the deer pasture and the monkeys

sleep among the branches.]

The white wings of moon-butterflies

Flicker down the streets of the city,

Brushing into darkness the useless wicks of round lanterns

in the hands of girls.

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his research in the Library of Amateur Journalism at the Franklin Institute; he was unable to rediscover the story upon a return visit to the institution. I wonder if he may have been misrecalling Miss Crofts's “Life” when he wrote of “Life and Death.” Since she had collaborated with Lovecraft on “Poetry and the Gods” and her name bears a strong similarity to his, it would have been a natural mistake. Wetzell may also have assumed that “Anna Helen Crofts” was a pseudonym for either Winifred Virginia Jackson or for Lovecraft himself.

Moon over the tropics,  
A white curved bud  
Opening its petals slowly in the warmth of heaven.  
[The white tree-lilies droop in its presence;  
The long stemmed cocoanut palms catch little reflections  
And gather them on their leaves like garlands of white shiny  
flowers;]  
The air is full of odours  
And languorous warm sounds;  
[In the flooded terraces the bright outline of the moon  
Is a silver floor for the young rice to stand upon;]  
A flute drones its insect music to the night  
Below the curving moon-petal of the heavens.

Moon over China,  
Weary moon on the river of the sky.  
The stir of light in the willows is like the flashing of a  
thousand silver minnows  
Through dark shoals;  
The tiles on graves and rotting temples flash like ripples;  
[The sands of deserts, and the great shoulders of treeless  
mountains whiten austere in its rays;]  
The sky is flecked with clouds like the scales of a dragon,  
[And the beggars, lying beneath the city walls, huddled to-  
gether, whine  
“It will rain on us before another nightfall.”]

Surely, it was this brilliant blank verse, with its striking poetic images, which convinced Lovecraft to collaborate on the manuscript submitted to him by Crofts.<sup>2</sup> Had he been aware that the authoress was simply quoting from a published poem by Elizabeth J. Coatsworth (just as she later quoted from Shakespeare, Milton and Keats), he might have had second thoughts concerning the collaboration. Without credit to Coatsworth for the blank verse, “Poetry and the Gods” surely ran the risk of a charge of plagiarism. “Sky Lotus” was indeed magazine verse and perhaps Lovecraft's young collaborator did not believe in her naïveté that even such extensive quotation required credit.

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<sup>2</sup> “Poetry and the Gods” contains these phrases descriptive of Miss Coatsworth's poem: “It was only a bit of vers libre, that pitiful compromise of the poet who overleaps prose yet falls short of the divine melody of numbers; but it had in it all the unstudied music of a bard who lives and feels, who gropes ecstatically for unveiled beauty. Devoid of regularity, it yet had the harmony of winged, spontaneous words, a harmony missing from the formal, convention-bound verse she [Marcia] had known.” It is apparent that the poetic images and beautiful phraseology of “Sky Lotus” struck Lovecraft, despite his dislike for its lack of traditional rhythm and rhyme.

Whether Lovecraft ever became aware that the blank verse was not the original work of his co-authoress I do not know. It is surely fortunate that “Poetry and the Gods” was apparently never nominated for any of the laureate awards, where further scrutiny might have revealed the uncredited quotation.<sup>3</sup> Only the digitalization of the 1919 volume of *Asia* by Google Books has finally revealed the uncredited quotation.

I conclude by trying to find out what I can about both Lovecraft's credited collaborator Anna Helen Crofts and Lovecraft's uncredited collaborator Elizabeth J. Coatsworth.

I begin with the amateur journalist of North Adams, Massachusetts. North Adams city directories from 1916 through 1946 list Anna H. Crofts, in the family home at 343 West Main Street for all years examined except 1931, when she was residing at the Wellington Hotel. Beginning in the 1919 directory and continuing through the 1944 directory, her occupation is identified as teacher, and the 1931 through 1942 directories identify her school as Haskins School. In the 1946 directory, Miss Crofts was listed at her longtime address of 343 West Main Street, but with no occupation given. Perhaps she had by then retired from teaching. She was no longer listed in the 1948 and 1950 North Adams directories. However, there is no record of her death in the North Adams vital records, so we must presume that she removed from North Adams at some point after her listing in the 1946 directory.<sup>4</sup>

We can probably find one of the best pictures of her immediate family in the 1900 U.S. census of North Adams enumerated on June 5, 1900:

Crofts, Nicholas M., head, white male, born November 1863 New York of Irish-born parents, married 12 years, physician and surgeon;

Crofts, Julia B., wife, white female, born September 1865 Massachusetts of Irish-born parents, married 12 years, 2 children, 2 living;

Crofts, Anastasia, daughter, white female, born December 1889 Massachusetts, at school;

Crofts, Edmond, son, white male, born October 1891 Massachusetts, at school.

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<sup>3</sup> Writing in *The H. P. Lovecraft Encyclopedia*, S. T. Joshi and David E. Schultz comment that “Poetry and the Gods” is not mentioned in any extant Lovecraft correspondence. Nor, so far as I know, is it included in any listing of his stories constructed by the author himself. Plagiarism was a serious charge in both the amateur and the professional world of letters. “Sky Lotus” did receive additional publication in Miss Coatsworth's first published collection of verse, *Fox Footprints* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1923). While not appearing under the title “Sky Lotus,” the three stanzas of the poem, as “Moon Over Japan,” “Moon Over China,” and “Moon Over the Tropics” serve as the lead poems (pp. 3, 33, 63) for each section of the collection.

<sup>4</sup> I am grateful to Kacy Westwood of the Special Collections Department of the North Adams Public Library for research assistance with the 1944-50 city directories and with the North Adams vital records. I consulted the other city directories online using Ancestry.com.

Essentially the same family, with a few minor differences, was enumerated in the 1920 U.S. census of North Adams on January 10-13, 1920:

Crofts, Nicholas, head, white male age 51, born Canada of Irish-born parents, physician, emigrated November 1868, naturalized 1869;

Crofts, Julia, wife, white female age 49, born New York of Irish-born parents;

Crofts, Anna, daughter, white female age 27, single, born Massachusetts, public school teacher

Crofts, Edmund, son, white male age 25, single, born Massachusetts, newspaper stereotyper

In the 1930 U.S. census of North Adams, enumerated on April 11, 1930, Anastatia Crofts [sic], female 34, single, public school teacher, born Massachusetts of a Canadian-born father and a New York-born mother, was enumerated as a lodger at the Wellington Hotel on State Street in North Adams. Her father Nicholas M. Crofts was the son of Thomas Crofts (c1842-1887) and Ellen (Savage) Crofts (1843-1905), both born in Ireland. Thomas, a laborer, and his wife Ellen were living on Pearl Street in North Adams when the 1880 U.S. census was taken. With them in that year were their children James, age 19, laborer, born New York; Mary, age 16, servant, born New York; Eliza J. age 14, worker in gingham mill, born New York; Nicholas, age 17, barber, born Canada; Ellen, age 11, at school, born Massachusetts; Margaret, age 8, at school, born Massachusetts; and Thomas, age 6, at school, born Massachusetts. We may surmise that Thomas and Ellen Crofts, having lived in New York and Canada after their emigration from Ireland, came to Massachusetts by 1869. Nicholas Crofts continued to be listed as a barber in the 1887 and 1890-93 North Adams City directories. However, between 1893 and 1900, he obtained training as a physician and surgeon. He continued to be listed with this occupation in North Adams city directories through 1939, but was no longer listed in the 1941 directory. We may guess that Anna H. Crofts' father passed away sometime between 1939 and 1942.

Anna's brother Edmund M. Crofts was listed as an employee of the *Transcript*, boarding at the family home at 343 West Main Street, in the 1916 and 1917 directories, in good agreement with his enumeration in the 1920 U.S. census. In the 1919 directory, he was also listed at 343 West Main Street, but with occupation "U.S.N." (United States Navy). In the 1921 directory, Edmund was still listed at 343 West Main Street, but without the U.S.N. affiliation. He is missing from the North Adams city directories for 1922 and later years.

Nicholas's brother Thomas followed his elder brother into the barbering trade and was listed in the household of his widowed mother in the 1900 U.S. census:

Crofts, Ellen, head, white female, born March 1835 Ireland, widow, 11 children, 8 living, emigrated 1860;

Crofts, Nellie, daughter, white female, single, born January 1870 Massachusetts, shoe turner;

Crofts, Lizzie, daughter, white female, single, born April 1865 New York, tailoress;

Crofts, Thomas, son, white male, single, born March 1874 Massachusetts, barber.

Nicholas's brother Thomas married ca. 1907. His household was enumerated on Brooklyn Street in the 1930 U.S. census of North Adams:

Crofts, Thomas F., head, white male age 56, born Massachusetts, barber;

Crofts, Blanche M., wife, white female age 52, born Massachusetts;

Crofts, Thomas H., son, white male age 26, single, born Massachusetts, salesman-department store;

Crofts, John F., son, white male age 23, single, born Massachusetts, oiler-print works;

Crofts, Helen E., daughter, white female age 18, single, born Massachusetts, no occupation listed;

Crofts, Blanche E., daughter, white female age 13, single, born Massachusetts, no occupation listed;

Crofts, Barbara E., daughter, white female age 11, single, born Massachusetts, no occupation listed.

Thomas Crofts was still listed as a barber in the 1950 North Adams city directory. According to the Social Security Death Index, his son Thomas H. Crofts, born April 15, 1903, died July 19, 1973 in North Adams. Thomas H. Crofts was in the dairy business and sat on the North Adams city council.

What became of public school teacher and onetime amateur journalist Anna Helen Crofts after her listing in the 1946 North Adams city directory? I do not know. An inquiry directed to the sole remaining Crofts family member listed in North Adams telephone directories failed to draw any response. Someone with better interpersonal skills than the author will probably need to work on the further life history of Anna Helen Crofts.

On the other hand, Elizabeth Jane Coatsworth (1893-1986), Lovecraft's "hidden" collaborator in "Poetry and the Gods," the authoress of the poem "Sky Lotus," is quite well known. She was the author of over ninety professionally published books for children, including the Newbery Medal-winning *The Cat Who Went to Heaven* (1930; recipient of 1931 medal), which is still in print. Probably her best-known books were the "Sally" series (1935-46), written while her own daughters were growing up. Elizabeth was born to a prosperous family in Buffalo, New York on May 31, 1893, and travelled with her family in Europe and Egypt. Up to age eighteen, Elizabeth attended the Buffalo Seminary; after the death of her father in 1912, Elizabeth attended Vassar (B.A., 1915) and Columbia (M.A., 1916) and then travelled with her mother and her sister in Asia for thirteen months (1916-17). After her return, she did graduate work at Radcliffe College. In the early 1920s, she and her mother purchased a home "Shipcote" in Hingham, Massachusetts. Her first children's book, a collection of poems entitled *The Cat and the Captain* was published by Macmillan in 1927. In 1929, Elizabeth married the natural history writer Thomas Beston (1888-1968). After living in Hingham for some years, they removed in 1931 to "Chimney Farm" in Nobleboro (near

Damariscotta), Lincoln County, Maine, where they lived out the remainder of their lives. Elizabeth died as a widow in her ninety-fourth year at “Chimney Farm” on August 31, 1986. Elizabeth published her memoir *Personal Geography: Almost an Autobiography* in 1976, at age eighty-three. A collection of her literary papers dating 1910-33 is maintained as part of the Maine Women Writers Collection in the Abplanalp Library of the Westbrook College Campus of the University of New England. Her correspondence with her Macmillan editor Louise (Seaman) Bechtel (1894-1985) is at Vassar and there are smaller collections of her papers in other university libraries.

“Sky Lotus” was one of three works that Elizabeth Coatsworth published in *Asia* in 1919. Her series of eight haiku poems, accompanied by Japanese prints, was published under the collective title “Shadows in Print Land” in the July 1919 issue. Her illustrated article “Through the Diamond Mountains of Korea with the Ancients” was published in the January 1919 issue. In addition she had twenty-eight poems published in *Poetry* between 1919 and 1933, eight poems in 1919 alone. Two of her poems from *Poetry*, “The Curse” and “The Gate” were published in William Stanley Braithwaite's (1878-1962) *Anthology of Magazine Verse for 1920*, which also published poetry by Winifred Virginia Jackson. Lovecraft would probably have liked these poems just as well as he liked “Sky Lotus”:

#### The Curse

On the cord dead hangs our sister,  
She of the wondrous lily feet.  
They have blasted our fragrant flower—  
She shall curse them as is meet!  
Hold the broom in her dead hand—  
Raise her up until she stand.  
Backward, forward, sweep the room!  
Wealth and happiness and long life  
Sweeps she with avenging broom  
From the house where she was wife.  
Backward, forward, sweep the broom  
Sweeping doom, sweeping doom!

Now the gods will surely punish—  
Surely pity the young bride.  
She was like a willow blossom,  
It was springtime when she died.  
Hold the broom in her dead hand—  
Raise her up until she stand!  
She was always flower-gay  
Till they broke her smiling heart.  
In this house she would not stay—  
Take her up—let us depart.

## The Gate

The dust is thick along the road;  
The fields are scorching in the sun;  
My wife has ever a bitter word  
To greet me when the day is done.

The neighbors rest beside the gate  
But half their words are high and shrill.  
My son is over-young to help;  
The fields are very hard to till.

But in the dusk I raise my eyes—  
The poet's words come back to me:  
“In the moon there is a white jade gate  
Shadowed cool by a cassia tree.”

Her poem “Reflection” was published in *The Dial* for September 1921 (p. 398):

Geraniums...

Who ever heard that Sappho put  
Geraniums in her hair?

Or thought that Cleopatra brushed  
Her long Greek face against their petals?

Did Beatrice carry them?  
Or any bird sigh out his wild fire heart  
In passion for them?

Yet sparrows, for outnumbering nightingales,  
Have gossiped under their tomato cans,  
And lonely spinsters loved them more than cats,

And living girls have felt quite festive, going  
Down vulgar streets  
With such unsubtle gaiety at their belts.

Miss Coatsworth published her first collection of verse, *Fox Footprints*, with Alfred A. Knopf in 1923. Each of the three stanzas of “Sky Lotus” served as lead poem for the three sections of this collection. Further version collections were published as: *Atlas and Beyond* (New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1924), *Compass Rose* (New York: Coward McCann, 1929), and *Country Poems* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1942). I do not know whether Lovecraft ever

had occasion to read any of Miss Coatsworth's poetry beyond the unacknowledged selections from "Sky Lotus" used by Miss Crofts in "Poetry and the Gods." The beautiful phraseology and imagery of Miss Coatsworth's poetry clearly appealed to Lovecraft. The poetess also had some sensibility for the *outré* despite a strong grounding in everyday commonsense. In accounting two ghostly experiences in her autobiography *Personal Geography* (pp. 152-154), she prefaced her account with the words: "I have never believed in ghosts, and still do not, but of late years I have seen two." Her autobiography (pp. 32-33) also contains a remarkable rhymed poem (taken from a notebook begun in 1928) based upon the "Peddler story of Zoar Valley," from which I quote the final stanza:

They say—they say the curse lies on them still  
through generations tilling sour soil,  
with furtive eyes and unrewarded toil  
in a steep cleft between green hill and hill.

(The cursed inhabitants of the valley, marked by six fingers on each hand, had ancestors who once tossed an unwelcome peddler into a well, and then hacked away his hands gripping the sides of the well, sending him to his death.) The composition of Miss Coatsworth's Zoar Valley poem dates to the same year as Lovecraft's "The Dunwich Horror" and certainly exhibits a similar concern with the isolating effects of the New England backwoods. While Miss Coatsworth preferred blank verse, she also used more traditional forms. Her collection *Fox Footprints* begins with a remarkable sonnet "Enough of intersecting streets" from which I quote the final stanza:

Am I bewitched? for in some way it seems  
That memories are more real than present times.  
I wander down the crowded streets of dreams  
And listen to long-silenced temple chimes,  
And Time and Distance which oppressed my heart  
Seem now but curtains I may draw apart.

The similarity both in theme and in form with Lovecraft's remarkable "Fungi from Yuggoth" sonnet cycle (1929-30) is certainly very striking. Other poems in *Fox Footprints* also reveal a strong sensibility for the *outré*: "Bewitched" (p. 20), "Ghouls" (p. 42), and "Fox Grave" (p. 53) are examples. Lovecraft would surely have loved the short "Ghouls" for its title alone:

All day the long cold fingers of the rain  
Have pried at the gray tiles above the graves  
Finishing the work of years in the drear fields,  
Where coffins lie uncovered in the light  
Of sulfurous mustard blooms. Here by the bank  
The greedy water has uncovered bones  
Shining, blue-white, wet in the biting wind.

While I know of no connection between Miss Coatsworth and Lovecraft's erstwhile amateur rival

Elsa Gidlow (1898-1986), both poetesses shared an appreciation of female beauty: in addition to writing of Sappho in her poem "Reflection" (quoted above), she wrote of Gauguin's bare-breasted island women in "Les Seins Aux Fleurs Rouges" (*Fox Footprints*, p. 65):

They are the daughters of the morning of the world  
Hidden for centuries behind the walls of the sea.  
They are part of the jungle as fruits are or flowers  
And their breasts are like blossoms.  
Their forms are luminous as though they had stored up the  
sunshine  
And all their motions are large and tranquil.

Lovecraft and his hidden collaborator shared a love of cats. Two of Elizabeth Coatsworth's cat poems are included on the Internet site "Dean's Den":

#### The Bad Kittens

You may call, you may call,  
But the little black cats won't hear you,  
The little black cats are maddened  
By the bright green light of the moon,  
They are whirling and running and hiding,  
They are wild who were once so confiding,  
They are crazed when the moon is riding—  
You will not catch the kittens soon.  
They care not for saucers of milk,  
They think not of pillows of silk,  
Your softest, crooningest call  
Is less than the buzzing of flies.  
They are seeing more than you see,  
They are hearing more than you hear,  
And out of the darkness they peer  
With a goblin light in their eyes.

#### Man with Kittens<sup>5</sup>

He is tired of legal questions,  
of reading law books late into the night,

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<sup>5</sup> President Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) loved cats and other domestic animals. The references to "Abe" and to late-night reading of law books makes me wonder if President Lincoln's affection for cats might not be the subject of this poem.

of a contentious wife, mad about clothes,  
and sons with small respect for fathers.  
He is tired  
of thinking about the country and what it's coming to,  
and of himself and what he's coming to,  
that big, lean, rawboned, homely, homespun man,  
and so he leans down and pulls out a couple of kittens  
asleep by their mother under the kitchen stove,  
and goes out in his shirtsleeves to sit on the back steps  
where the sun is shining and he can hear the neighbors' voices  
to play with the kittens or watch them play with each other,  
crouching in four-inch grass (Why haven't you cut the grass?)  
like round-faced tigers  
pouncing on one another, their blue eyes staring,  
lashing their short tails, grappling rolling,  
breaking loose with furious miaous, distracted by beetles,  
looking wise as little owls, innocent as a pair of flowers,  
playing with his shoe string, attacking his big hand..  
They have their uses, Abe's kittens. They make him smile  
a different sort of smile. He looks easier,  
and maybe falls asleep in a little while  
there in the sun, his head against his arm  
and that arm on the step by the kitchen door.  
The kittens will not wake him. Like as not  
they'll fall asleep themselves, when he's asleep.

There is really very little more to say about H. P. Lovecraft's "Poetry and the Gods." I believe that Elizabeth Jane Coatsworth's "Sky Lotus" (*Asia*, July 1919) deserves a credit in future printings of this work. Anna Helen Crofts was surely ill-advised to use extensive extracts from this poem without crediting the author. At the same time, the public school teacher enabled a "hidden" collaboration between Lovecraft and an esteemed authoress who shared his imaginative power, literary brilliance and love of felines. Perhaps the identification of the source of the blank verse quoted in this story will help to enrich future appraisals of this "odd gem" of the Lovecraft *oeuvre*. We may never learn much more of Lovecraft's obscure collaborator Anna Helen Crofts. However, in Elizabeth Jane Coatsworth he had a "hidden" collaborator who shared his brilliance and his sensitivity to the New England psyche.

### **U.A.P.A. CONVENTION. CLEVELAND—1916**

**Wesley H. Porter**

*(Reprinted from Charles W. Heins's The Phoenix (vol. X no. 2) for November 1950.)*

The other evening I was down paying a hasty visit with mother. Mother, as some Amateur Journalists may remember, has had her fingers on this AJ business for quite some time. "Look here, son," she said, "I've been saving these photographs and programs for a long time. I don't need them any more and I don't want to throw them out if you want them." With that she handed me the official convention photographs of both the United 1916 Convention in Cleveland and the 1917 United Chicago Convention. Not stopping there, she gave me the official programs—all duly autographed and with copious notes regarding the doings, weather, sidelights, etc.

Now it so happens that I attended the 1916 Convention in Cleveland. I was 17 years of age. My first convention had been at Columbus in 1914—and you can easily figure out my age on that one. I was unable to attend the 1917 convention, but my brother (who had a smattering of understanding regarding AJ) and I chipped in and shipped off my mother. She had the time of her life, as her program so well records.

Whenever I think back to those early conventions that I attended there's a warm feeling that comes creeping up around my heart. My eyes are apt to get that far-away look, and then, suddenly, I realize that a whole flock of years have passed since those blessed days.

I well remember that 1916 convention, I had been corresponding with Bill Dowdell and already met many of the others who attended. There was a young fellow in Cleveland about that time who I had a particular yen to meet. His name was Charles A. Shattuck and he had published "The Trooper," if my memory serves me correctly. I was interested in Boy Scout work.

Now let's look at the official program and Mother's notes. The dates of the convention were Thursday, Friday and Saturday, July 20, 21 and 22, 1916.

The convention was scheduled to open at 10 a.m., on Thursday, but Mother had a note "later" which is right in keeping with AJ schedules. Anyhow, the opening session was held in the Assembly room of the Public Library and we were to hear the President's message.

At 2 p.m., there was a trip through the "Leader-News" plant, and Mother had a notation "very warm." The three o'clock visit to the city hall carries a notation, "cut out."

The rest of that day's page carries the notation, "Theater party given by McKee at Keith's, preceded by a downpour of rain, visit to ice cream parlor and the Union Station to meet Dora M. (Hepner) from Piqua: to hotel about midnight."

Now for the second day—Friday. It was cooler, and the 10 a.m. business session was adjourned. Around 1:30 the group visited the collection of Amateur papers at the Western Reserve Historical Society's museum, where there was an address by no other than our own Warren J. Brodie. He was known as "Commodore Brodie" in those days, too. It was on Friday, July 21, 1916, in the late afternoon that the official convention photograph was taken. At eight o'clock that night there was a gathering at Euclid Beach Park—the same dance floor where a few years later I was literally kicked off because I was dancing the *new* front position. My dancing lessons, and I did take 'em, told us how to waltz, two step and do the schottische (hope I spelled the last word right.)

Notation on the program: "Dancing enjoyed 'till closing time. Last car home."

Now, here comes the last day. The final session at Hotel Olmstead called for the election of officers for the following year. Notation: "Lasting until 2 p.m."

Then came the Banquet. I find no notation here, but I do vividly remember that on that occasion my mother was called upon and gave the toast: "I didn't raise my boy to be an Amateur Journalist." In case you forget, the song, "I didn't raise my boy to be a soldier," was still popular.

Now, bless her, Mother had the following signatures on her program: W. B. Stoddard, Bess Ballou, Lourina Van Norman, Eleanor J. Barnhart, Thos. McKee, W. J. Dowdell, Wesley H. Porter, Addie L. Porter, Anthony F. Moitoret, James F. Dolin, Peggy Hepner, Helen H. Harwood, Leo Fritter, Helen Metzger, Norma Sanger, Irene Metzger, Edw. Buell, Ray L. Horn, Geo. W. Macauley, Alma Sanger, G. Murray Rider, Dora Hepner, Paul J. Campbell, F. W. Bigfeld and Arley O. Porter.

And there you have it.

In the next installment I'll tell you more about how Mother went to the 1917 United Convention in Chicago—and (don't you breathe it) how I heard it—I only heard—that Mother took a puff of a cigarette. Today she denies the whole thing!

*Editor's Note*

I don't seem to have any issue of *The Phoenix* after November 1950, so I don't know if Mr. Porter's account of the 1917 Chicago U.A.P.A. convention—which elected H. P. Lovecraft to the presidency—was ever published. I'd love to reprint Porter's account if I could get ahold of a copy.

**MINUTES OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF  
THE UNITED AMATEUR PRESS ASSOCIATION AT  
COLUMBUS, OHIO, JULY 1, 2, 3, 1920**

**Ida C. Haughton, Secretary**

*(Reprinted from The United Amateur, September 1920)*

The twenty-fifth annual convention of the United Amateur Press Association assembled in the parlours of the Chittenden Hotel, Columbus, Ohio, July 1, at ten A.M., and was called to order by the President, Mary Faye Durr. Other national officers present were E. F. Daas, First Vice-President, and Ida C. Haughton, Secretary. The local press was represented by Miss Jones of the *Citizen* and Mr. Hooper of the *Dispatch*. The President appointed Miss Ballou temporary Treasurer, and the following to serve on committees: Proxy, Mrs. Fowler, Chairman, Mr. Dietzler, Mr. Daas, Miss Ballou, and Mrs. Haughton; Resolutions, Mr. Hutchinson, Chairman, Mr. Daas, and Mr. Fritter. Miss Ballou as President of the Woodbees announced the complete programme of entertainment, after which upon motion of Mr. Fritter, seconded by Mr. Daas, the meeting adjourned.

*Second Session*

The second session was called to order at ten A.M., Friday, to listen to an address on "Literary Traditions of Columbus," by Mr. Osman C. Hooper, editor of the *Dispatch* and Professor of Journalism at Ohio State University. Minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved, after which the session was turned over to Mr. Hooper, whose talk was followed by an informal discussion by the members present. Upon motion of Mr. Dietzler, seconded by Mr. Hutchinson, the meeting adjourned.

### *Third Session*

The third session was called to order at ten A.M., Saturday. Minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved. The Secretary's and Treasurer's reports for the year were then read, the former showing a record of 124 new members, 6 sustaining members, 6 reinstatements, 62 renewals, 28 renewals due, total present membership 240. The Treasurer's report showed a balance on hand of \$5.10. Upon motion of Mr. Fritter, seconded by Mr. Conover, both reports were accepted as read. The Secretary was instructed to forward all cash on hand, including receipts up to the time of Convention to Mr. J. C. Pryor, former Treasurer, to apply on payment of July Official Organ.

Report of the Proxy Committee was read by Mrs. Fowler, showing that ballots had been received from the following members: W. W. Burton, Theodore D. Gottlieb, P. B. McDonald, Chester P. Munroe, Frank B. Long, Jr., Paul J. Campbell, Eleanor B. Campbell, Elizabeth Barnhart, H. L. Lindquist, Anne T. Renshaw, John R. Bullen, H. P. Lovecraft, Jennie Harris, Agnes Richmond Arnold, Verna McGeoch, Jonathan E. Hoag, Hazel Pratt Adams, H. L. Mowrer, Mary Rosalie Hulsman, Blanche Blood, Olga Zeeb, Inez G. Hall, Margaret Abraham, Milton McGovern, Winifred V. Jordan, Susie Nelson Furgerson, Chresten A. Daniels, Alice M. Hamlet, E. J. Mazurewicz, Alfred Galpin, Jr., Kate Humphrey, Henriette Ziegfeld, Durand Smith, Annie Laurie Davis, George A. Hopkins, Amy D. Putnam, Arthur H. McFadden, and Howard Bixler.

Upon motion of Mr. Daas, seconded by Mrs. Fritter, the report of the Proxy Committee was accepted. It was then moved by Mr. Daas and seconded by Miss Murdock that, as the proxies had virtually decided the election, the Secretary be instructed to cast the ballot for the unanimous vote of the Convention in favour of the candidates receiving the highest number of votes on proxies. The election results as follows:

For President:

Alfred Galpin, Jr., proxy, 34; conv., 11; total, 45;  
Anne T. Renshaw, proxy, 1;  
E. F. Daas, proxy, 1;  
Ida C. Haughton, proxy, 1;  
Mr. Galpin elected.

For First Vice-President:

Paul J. Campbell, proxy, 34; conv., 11; total, 45;  
Victor Opper Schwab, proxy, 1;  
Milton McGovern, proxy, 1;  
Mr. Campbell elected.

For Second Vice-President:

Alice M. Hamlet, proxy, 33; conv., 11; total, 44;  
Edna M. Sell, proxy 11;  
Eloise R. Griffith, proxy 1;  
Miss Hamlet elected.

For Third Vice-President:

J. Gordon Amend, proxy, 34; conv., 11; total, 45;  
Dorothy Roberts, proxy, 1;  
Della Knack, proxy, 1;  
Mr. Amend elected.

For Fourth Vice-President:

Dorothy Roberts, proxy, 35; conv., 11; total, 46;  
John M. Samples, proxy, 1;  
Miss Roberts elected.

For Treasurer:

Margaret Abraham, proxy, 33; conv., 11; total, 44;  
Alice M. Hamlet, proxy, 2;  
J. C. Pryor, proxy 1;  
Miss Abraham elected.

For Official Editor:

H. P. Lovecraft, proxy, 36; conv., 11; total, 47;  
Mr. Lovecraft elected.

For Laureate Recorder:

Blanche Blood, proxy, 34; conv., 11; total, 45;  
Anna H. Crofts, proxy, 1;  
Ida C. Haughton, proxy, 1;  
Winifred V. Jordan, proxy, 1;  
Miss Blood elected.

For Eastern Manuscript Manager:

Anna H. Crofts, proxy, 35; conv., 11; total, 45;  
Mary Faye Durr, proxy, 1;  
John Milton Heins, proxy, 1;  
Miss Crofts elected.

For Western Manuscript Manager:

Howard R. Conover, proxy, 34; conv., 11; total, 45;  
Dora H. Moitoret, proxy, 1;  
A. L. Hutchinson, proxy, 1;  
Agnes R. Arnold, proxy, 1;  
Mr. Conover elected.

For Historian:

Ida C. Haughton, proxy, 36; conv., 11; total, 47;  
Blanche Blood, proxy, 1;  
Theodore Gottlieb, proxy, 1;  
Mrs. Haughton elected.

For Directors (three to be elected):

Maurice W. Moe, proxy, 37; conv., 11; total, 48;  
John D. Christiansen, proxy, 34; conv., 11; total, 45;  
P. B. McDonald, proxy 34; conv., 11; total, 45;  
Harold H. Torbet, proxy, 1;  
Mary Faye Durr, proxy, 1;  
Edna M. Haughton, proxy, 1;  
E. F. Daas, proxy, 1;  
W. Paul Cook, proxy, 1;  
Mr. Moe, Mr. Christiansen and Prof. McDonald elected.

For Convention Seat:

Washington, D.C., proxy, 30; conv., 11; total, 41;  
Chicago, Ill., proxy, 1;  
Greenwich, N.Y., proxy, 1;  
Providence, R.I., proxy, 1;  
Washington elected.

The President then read the reports of Mr. Hooper and Captain Fielding-Reid, judges of editorials and verse, and on motion of Miss Ballou, seconded by Mr. Fritter, these reports were accepted. On motion of Mr. Dietzler, seconded by Mr. Hutchinson, all the Laureate Judges were elected to honorary membership for one year. Relative to this matter, the President announced that Lord Dunsany had gone to the expense of cabling his acceptance as judge of poetry in order that it might reach the Association in time, and that she and others felt that he should be reimbursed by a voluntary offering for one of the war-relief organizations in which he is interested. Motion that a Convention collection be taken for this purpose by Mr. Daas as Custodian was made by Mr. Hutchinson and seconded by Miss Ballou. The Committee on Resolutions announced that their report would be ready to read at the Banquet, and upon motion of Mr. Fritter, seconded by Mrs. Haughton, the meeting adjourned.

### *Final Session*

The final session was called to order at nine P.M., Saturday. Greetings to the Convention were read from Clara L. Bell, Paul and Eleanor Campbell, Elizabeth Barnhart, and Jonathan E. Hoag. Mr. Hutchinson then read the report of the Resolutions Committee as follows:

Whereas: The United Amateur Press Association has just closed a very successful year, characterized by a very active recruiting campaign resulting in a large increase in the membership of the Association; by the organisation of two active local clubs and the reorganisation of a former

club; and by the publication of a large and instructive volume of THE UNITED AMATEUR, therefore

Be it resolved: That a vote of thanks be tendered Miss Mary Faye Durr for her energetic work during the year, in conducting the affairs of the Association in such an able manner;

Be it further resolved: That a vote of thanks be tendered Mrs. Anne T. Renshaw for the splendid volume of the Official Organ published under her supervision;

Be it further resolved: That a vote of thanks be extended to Mrs. Anne T. Renshaw, Edward F. Daas and Paul J. Campbell for the unrivalled recruiting campaign conducted by them;

Be it further resolved: That a vote of thanks be extended to the Laureate Judges for their services and kindness in judging the various Laureate entries;

Be it further resolved: That a vote of thanks be extended to the Woodbee Press Club in general, and Miss Bess Ballou in particular, for the enjoyable entertainment offered the members in attendance at the Convention;

Be it further resolved: That a vote of thanks be extended to Mrs. Ida C. Haughton for her faithful, accurate and energetic work as Secretary of the Association;

Be it further resolved: That a vote of thanks be extended to Mr. W. Paul Cook for aid given the Association in printing the Official Organ and other papers, without which it would have been impossible to publish such large editions;

Be it further resolved: That a vote of thanks be extended to Mr. H. P. Lovecraft for his untiring efforts throughout the year in helping the cause.

A. L. Hutchinson, Chairman,  
Edward F. Daas,  
Leo Fritter.

It was moved by Mr. Dietzler and seconded by Miss Sanger that this report be adopted. Upon motion of Mr. Fritter, seconded by Miss Haughton, the Convention adjourned sine die.

The following were present at one or more sessions of the Convention: Edward F. Daas and Eugene Dietzler, Washington, D.C.; Mr. and Mrs. Leo Fritter, Canton, Ohio; A. L. Hutchinson, Weyauwega, Wis.; Anna Daas Nieman, Milwaukee, Wis.; Hettie B. Murdock, Akron, Ohio; Maude Dolby, Cincinnati, Ohio; Mrs. Maud Frazier, Westerville, Ohio; William C. Ahlhauser and Walter F. Zahn, Milwaukee, Wis.; and the following from Columbus: Mary Faye Durr, Bess Ballou, Mrs. Edith W. Fowler, Mrs. Ida C. Haughton, Edna M. Haughton, Alma Sanger, Emelie Ziegfeld, Norma Sanger, Henriette Ziegfeld, Freida Sanger, Hilda Ziegfeld, Alma Ziegfeld, Arthur Ziegfeld, Millie Falkenbach, Lillian Sweinsberger, Lucile Evans, Kathryn Evans, Oscar Ziegfeld, Oscar Kneeland, Robert Schumacher, Howard C. Bixler, Adaline Hardesty, Evelyn Perkins, Mrs. P. Fritter, Mrs. Rose Harwood, Helen Harwood, Kathryn Frazier, Mrs. Bovey, Mrs. Ziegfeld, Frieda Frazier.

Signed: Ida C. Haughton, Secretary.

Approved: Mary Faye Durr, President.

## **THE CONVENTION SOCIALLY**

**Ida C. Haughton**

*(Reprinted from The United Amateur, September 1920)*

The first social event of the United's 1920 Convention was a reception at the home of the Sangers, informal and delightful, at which there were twenty-three present. The second event was the play, in which Miss Norma Sanger was the star attraction, ably assisted by Oscar Kneeland, Emelie Ziegfeld, Robert Schumacher, Henriette Ziegfeld and Maude Dolby. Minor characters in the play were Freida Sanger, Hilda Ziegfeld, Alma Sanger and her little niece Charlotte, Lucile Evans, a dancer, Kathryn Evans, flower girl, and Margaret Bausch, pianist. After the play the entire cast and convention delegates assembled at a garden party at the home of the Ziegfelds, where they were entertained by a playlet, "The Forgotten Lesson," written and staged by Arthur Ziegfeld, Miss Esther Ferris and Miss Olive Sands. After this everybody took part in a Musical Frolic till midnight.

The third event was the picnic supper, hay-ride and dance at the home of Mrs. Maud Frazier at Westerville, the seat of Otterbein College and the home of *The American Issue*, organ of the Anti-Saloon League. There were thirty-six present, and there were so many delightful features that it is hard to distinguish, not forgetting the wonderful menu, which included everything from hot wieners, baked beans and coffee to salads, peach ice cream and cake. The Convention picture was taken at seven o'clock, though part of the crowd got there too late to be included. The hay-ride was most enjoyable, especially on the return, with popular songs ringing through the countryside.

The Banquet held at six-thirty on Saturday evening was a thing of beauty and a joy forever. It might also be called a feast of reason and a flow of soul. The tables were arranged in the form of a hollow square, with Toastmaster Fritter at the head, Miss Durr on his right, and Miss Ballou on his left. Miss Murdock and Mr. Daas were also seated at this table. The tables were beautifully decorated with baskets of flowers in the national colours, while fern leaves and single flowers were scattered artistically over the entire length of the table. The flowers were the gift of Miss Adaline Hardesty, who frequently attends the meetings of the Woodbees. Another original attraction was the dainty hand-painted programme, the work of Miss Alma Sanger. These served as favours and, autographed between the courses, as artistic souvenirs of the whole Convention. The menu, under the supervision of Mrs. Fowler, was all that could be desired. The Toastmaster made the opening address in his happy, felicitous style, being followed by Miss Durr, whose parody on the Gettysburg Address proved popular, and by Mr. Dietzler, who spoke on Washington as a Convention City. Miss Ballou then told of the work and the fun it takes to prepare for an amateur convention. Mr. Daas had chosen for his subject, "Does Amateur Journalism Pay?" and cited as proof some of his many friendships made through the Association. Miss Murdock gave a spicy little gem in which she attributed the over-sophistication of the modern world to the movies. Mrs. Haughton gave an outline on the quotation, "The elevator to success is not running—take the stairs!" Mr. Hutchinson made quite a "hit" with some deadly comparisons among those present, saying he knew where to come to find the Ziegfeld Follies, the Three Graces, and the Queen Bee of the Hive. Mrs. Frazier related how much she had enjoyed knowing the amateurs, and, incidentally, entertaining them at her home; and said that the latchstring was always out at the Frazier Farm for the members of the United Amateur Press Association. She was followed by Mrs. Fowler, who replied to a vote of thanks for the excellent banquet served.

The Banquet was over by nine-thirty, as the Washington delegates were leaving early for Milwaukee. But one more entertainment remained for the women of the Convention, who adjourned to the home of the Secretary and her daughter, and held a wild and hilarious "slumber party." As to

real sleep or slumber, that may be regarded as a negligible factor when eighteen girls are expected to sleep in five beds, and we leave the programme to the imagination of the reader! Such ghostly parades; such pillow fights; such wild dancing whenever an inspiration for such seized anybody! As might be expected, the more active spirits were Norma Sanger, Henriette Ziegfeld, Helen Harwood and Peggy Fritter. It was a grand finale to the three days of the Convention, yet most of the participants got up in time for breakfast and went to church afterward. We shall long remember the Silver Jubilee of the United Amateur Press Association.

### **PRESIDENT DURR'S COLUMBUS ADDRESS**

**Mary faye Durr**

*(reprinted from The United Amateur, September 1920)*

One score and five years ago our literary ancestors perpetrated upon this innocent world a new hobby, conceived in pen and ink and dedicated to the proposition that he who runs may read. Now we are engaged in a great celebration, testing whether Eddie Daas's appetite or any appetite so elastic and so imperative can much longer be endured. We are met in a favourite pastime of United Amateurs. We have come to dedicate a portion of that feast to those who would fain be eating with us, if railroad fare were not so high. It is altogether extravagant and useless that we do this. For in the fullest sense, we can not extricate, we can not eradicate, we can not satiate, these appetites. The Entertainment Committee, now nearly dead, have provided for them better than our poor purse could ever accommodate. Our friends, the National, will little note nor long remember what we say here, but they can never (let us) forget what they would have done here. It is for us, the eaters, rather to take the next few hours to flag the Pennsylvania. It is rather for us to send these delegates on their way on which they have thus far so nobly advanced. That from these disreputable speeches we take a solemn vow to discontinue that practice for which their authors gave up their afternoon naps. That we here feelingly resolve that these remarks shall not have given pain. That this Association under Alfred Galpin shall have an increase in finances, that Conventions of the Amateurs, by the Amateurs, and for the Amateurs shall not perish from this attempt.

### **COSTLIEST A.J. OUTING ON RECORD CHARGE FOR BOSTON HARBOR JUNKET \$ 1 134.00**

**Walter T. Vaughan**

*(reprinted from Charles W. Heins's The Phoenix, January 1950)*

Our Historians have been woefully remiss. The story of the costliest A.J. Outing on record—the biggest one-man sponsored event in the history of our little world of letters—has never been written. It was accorded only a brief paragraph in one of our local publications.

The gala affair, replete with all the thrills that could possibly be crowded into one day's doings, was the Hub Club "Round Up" of July 4th, 1923. The man behind the gun, always efficient in the art of "shooting the works," was J. Bernard Lynch, our Alumni Secretary.

Joe, knowing there were many in New York, New Jersey and local members who for various reasons would be unable to attend the National Convention in California, decided he would stage a substitute convention—or as he called it, Hub Club Round-Up—for the benefit of those lacking the funds or opportunity to travel West.

His first step was a personal visit to the Mayor of Boston. From previous experiences, as Chairman of Reception Committees, he knew that the City of Boston has always had a fund set aside for entertainment of national conventions—the amount allotted to each to be designated by the Mayor. He was able to convince His Honor that while the Hub Club was not a national organization, it was an important group of writers with national prestige.

Said the Mayor: "O.K., you win. You can have whatever you want."

Joe asked for the limit and got it.

The next step was writing and printing of a circular letter of invitation to all Massachusetts, New York and New Jersey Amateurs. Among the out-of-state Ams who attended were Mrs. A. M. Adams of New Jersey and James F. Morton of New York. Circular badges, symbolic of the Round-Up, were sent to each and everyone invited to serve as identification.

The big feature of the Round-Up was the boat trip down Boston Harbor.

A City Steamer was provided for our exclusive use. One of the city's leading caterers with fifteen able assistants was aboard, to serve the "refreshments." The array of food and delicacies of surpassing quality and in adequate quantity was truly astonishing. There were chicken and lobster salads, sandwiches of all kinds, rich pastries, ice creams, frozen pudding, tonics, beer, and bottles of a more potent beverage for those who indulged. One happy voyager remarked: "This is the most lavish luncheon I have ever eaten. It is five royal banquets rolled into one."

The cost to the city of Boston for this "junket" was \$1,134. Perhaps the cost of operating the steamer and pay for the personnel was included. When the Finance Committee that checks on the expenditures of the Mayor sent a letter to Joe to ask him if he didn't think the charge for the outing was excessive, Joe replied: "I am not an expert on such matters. Whatever the cost, it was worth it."

Space will not permit a recounting of the many incidents of that thrilling two-hour trip down Boston Harbor, enabling one to view its scenic wonders and historical landmarks. There were some who danced, some who sang songs in merry groups, and others who reminisced.

The landing was at Deer Island, where the City's correctional institutions are located. The "Master," in behalf of the City of Boston, gave us official welcome. Later a group photo of the 140 amateur sailors was taken with the "Master" sitting pretty in the front row. Joe had also arranged for this. The return trip to Boston was delightful. There was still an abundance of food, rich delicacies and refreshing drinks.

As we approached the shoreline at Atlantic Avenue, James F. Morton "volunteered" to make a speech. With an attentive audience lining the upper deck, "Jim" with the tang of salt in his nostrils, the brisk East Wind playing havoc with his shock of white hair, poured forth his soul like one inspired. It was "Jim" Morton at his oratorical best, delivering the finest oration I had ever heard him make. The deck hands busy with lines preparatory to docking, stopped work to listen spellbound to eloquence and pearls of wisdom wafted across the broad expanse of water.

Joe, being the leading character in this saga of the Hub Club, let us follow him through. During the beginning of his second year of his three-year reign as President he declared: "We have only eleven dues-paying, active members. I can build the membership to over a hundred, and do it within a year—alone."

He did! In nine months the membership roll totaled 119. To achieve this it was necessary to spend several hundred dollars of his own personal funds, and contribute the part-time efforts of two of the stenographers employed in his publishing business. He had long contended that A.J. Associations were loosely organized, without benefit of astute business executives—and, from a practical viewpoint the members were living in a fool's paradise.

"We will always remain small, impotent, always struggling for survival," he averted, "because those who rule the roost want it that way—they prefer to be big toads in a little puddle. Why not prepare to do things in a big way! Something succeeds because someone has faith."

Those who would learn the technique of recruiting on a large scale within a prescribed period might do well to ponder the source from which Joe obtained his members. One fertile field was "The Boston Post" amateur story contest—still operating. Another was the "Bard's Corner" still being conducted by the "Boston Back Bay Ledger," a weekly newspaper that prints the work of Amateur versifiers.

Here I must take issue with a local historian who, ostensibly, writing the history of the Hub Club, questioned the desirability of the members obtained from these sources, and failed to make mention of the biggest day in the Hub Club history—the Hub Club Round-Up.

It was unsporting to belittle the fitness of the Hub Club recruits, many of whom have long since attained notable success in literature and journalism, and also unfair to omit mention of an extraordinary local event in which erstwhile Hub Club members were vitally concerned—the NAPA convention of 1930, held at the Hotel Statler, in Boston.

This conclave, remarkable in many ways, was pyramided from the zero of utter despair to the heights of successful achievement because someone had faith.

At "the last minute," NAPA President Victor E. Bacon hopefully retained Boston as the convention city—hopefully on the basis of past prestige.

His letter appointing "Joe" as Chairman of the Arrangement Committee found that worthy ill in bed. Disregarding the advice of medico and solicitous friends he moved into action.

"They have confidence in me, because I have served before," he declared, "so now I can't let 'em down. Moreover, Boston has a reputation to sustain!"

The task that loomed ahead was barren of prospect. The Hub Club was non-existent—the enthusiasm of former members for Amateur affairs, at low ebb. There was no available funds to finance a creditable convention—and seemingly, the Chairman was confronted with an insolvable problem.

Inspired by his personal slogan: "Something succeeds because someone has faith," and fortified by the gift of resourcefulness in an emergency, he composed a printed letter, explaining the situation, which was mailed to all members. In his plea for donations, he was assisted in the clerical effort by Laura A. Sawyer and Mary Kennedy, now deceased.

The response was spontaneous and generous. Enough money was contributed by the ever-loyal minority to insure success.

If you like to measure the undertaking by the result obtained, you will find this convention

compared favorably with others that preceded it.

“Joe” had provided excellent entertainment features which included a “sail” on the historic Charles River to Sunset Bay, “the haven of peace,” recently immortalized in his song composition, “Boston Is My Home, Sweet Home.”

At the close of the convention, he was able to persuade the manager of the Statler Hotel to “forgive” the charges of the meeting hall and other “trifling” costs. After an accounting was made for money received and disbursed, there was a substantial sum left. Establishing a precedent, he donated the entire amount to a sadly-depleted NAPA treasury.

The Hub Club of Edith Minter, her mother, Jennie E. T. Dowe, John Peltret, Paul Cook, Howard Lovecraft, Willard O. Wylie, Truman Spencer, Laura Sawyer, Mary Kennedy and other A.J. immortals, is now history. Those of us who carry on, individually, endeavor to perpetuate its fine tradition.

Like myself and many others, Joe Lynch is no longer young. After several operations, six months in the hospital and three years of wearisome convalescence, he has come back—smiling! “You can't kill an Irishman,” he contends, “he must wear out—naturally.” He traveled, alone, to the United Alumni Convention in Milwaukee last year. With his good wife, Florence, he attended the NAPA and United Alumni Conventions in New York this year.

If we are to write the record truthfully, we must concede the Hub Club Round-Up of July 4th, 1923, was the greatest day in Hub Club history. And something approximating credit is due the one who painstakingly labored to make it an event long to be remembered.

Grateful acknowledgement is herewith made to Michael White for the suggestion that “Round-Up Day” be included in the history of Hub Club activities and due credit given.

[The panoramic photograph of the Round-Up participants which appeared in *The Phoenix* is reproduced on the final pages of this issue of *The Fossil*. That H. P. Lovecraft attended the Round-Up on July 3-4, 1923 is confirmed in S. T. Joshi's *H. P. Lovecraft: A Life* (West Warwick RI: Necronomicon Press, third printing, 2004, p. 294)—Ed.]

### **MY MEMORIES OF AMATEUR JOURNALISM AND SCIENCE FICTION FANDOM IN THE NINETEEN THIRTIES**

**Charles Hamilton Bloomer, Jr.**

Yes, C. Hamilton Bloomer and Charles Bloomer are the same—I just [March 27, 2009] celebrated my ninety-fourth birthday. My spelling is better than my typing. This is just random thoughts as I go through your letter. You can use any parts or all if you wish.

In the mid-1930s I caught pneumonia and was hospitalized for awhile. In those days there wasn't penicillin, etc., so you basically just lay there until you either got better or died. As I recall, I got better. But in doing so I passed the time looking into science fiction.

I read quite a lot and became interested in the fans and their groups. I also became interested in the field of amateur writing and publications. I contacted Victor Moitoret of Oakland and got interested in his Oakland Amateur Press Club. Victor got into Annapolis and did well in the Naval Academy but was turned down for a commission because his eyes went bad. I often wondered if

during the war standards were lowered so he did get in.<sup>6</sup>

Benton Wetzel and I did a lot together; his father owned a print shop and indulged his son in printing a lot of papers. We tried to put out a weekly shopper but there were already two being published so us kids couldn't succeed.

I noted your article by Lee Hertzberg.<sup>7</sup> Lee and I went to Hoover High in San Diego. We married sisters, who have since passed away. We lived a few miles apart in the San Francisco Bay area. Lee died a year ago.

It seemed to me that in the early days of science fiction fandom that every one wanted to row their own boat. I remember writing to James Blish, at the time he was interested in doing his own thing, the magazine *Planeteer*. He did OK.

I remember Donald Wollheim as a very independent critic. He made fun of my name by coining a nickname, "Seelyham." I didn't care; at the time I thought it was funny.

I remember writing to E. E. "Doc" Smith for a short story. At that time I was offering one-quarter cent a word. *Amazing* was paying one-half cent and *Astounding* (Street and Smith) were paying one cent. In declining, he said he only did novels and it wasn't because of the one-quarter cent—he got less than that from Hugo Gernsback (*Amazing*).

In those days many magazines were cheaply published on cheap pulp paper and lots of fly-by-nights got into the publishing business and paid little or nothing. Street and Smith were reputable and paid OK.

I wrote to J. Harvey Haggard a few times. I asked about writing a story for my mag. He sent me one of his rejects—he said it wasn't the worst story he ever wrote. I ran it in installments. He was a cousin or nephew of H. Rider Haggard.

After a few years the wine and tank business<sup>8</sup> slowed down and I was out of work. I got an auto dealer route with the *Examiner* newspaper. It was made up of two or three kids' routes put together. It was quite a bit of work but it was enough to keep a single guy who lived with his parents at home going.

I belonged to a writing club, the members put out little amateur publications, etc. One of the girls in the club had a dad who was a big wig in the Pacific Gas & Electric Company. He gave me a card to the personnel manager, who gave me a job in the collection department. That was in 1938. The man who steered me into the job sort of off-handedly told me there was a good independent

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<sup>6</sup> Victor Moitoret (1919-2005) was eventually commissioned a lieutenant in the Navy and served in the Pacific during World War II. He became a career naval officer and rose to the rank of captain, serving during the Lebanon conflict in 1958.

<sup>7</sup> See "A Story to be Whispered"—a short biography of C. Hamilton Bloomer, Jr.—by Lee Brown Hertzberg (1915-2008), reprinted in *The Fossil* for April 2006, along with the editor's article "About C. Hamilton Bloomer, Jr." and a facsimile reproduction of the November 1937 issue of Bloomer's amateur magazine *The Bloodstone*.

<sup>8</sup> Bloomer had been employed by J. M Curtis & Son as a wine chemist. Later, he owned and edited *Wine Digest* for a six-month period.

union there. I took the hint and joined. There were a number of conditions the employees were complaining about—work schedules, vacation times, etc. People who don't work for large corporations frequently don't realize that the company might have reasonable policies, but the lower down branch bosses and straw bosses make their own rules and play favorites. The NLRB ruled that the Pacific Gas & Electric Company had helped the “independent” union and outlawed it. So now only the CIO and AFL unions were left in.

The War intervened and I spent two years in the South Pacific. Not much happened on my watch—I always say the only thing was that a typewriter fell on my foot. When I came back I went to college on the G.I. bill and got my degree in Business Administration. I became business manager of a manufacturing company making fancy paper gift boxes. I retired in 1981.

I have done a lot of traveling. I've been to most areas. I need to go to the South Pacific islands, New Zealand and Australia. I've been to Antarctica and to North Canada and a dozen or so other places. I still read a little science fiction now and then, but not the magazines.

#### *Editor's Note*

After reading my account of legendary science fiction fan and amateur journalist C. Hamilton Bloomer, Jr. in *The Fossil* for April 2006, my good friend the late A. Langley Searles (1920-2009), himself editor of *Fantasy Commentator* since the nineteen forties, wrote to encourage me to keep looking for Bloomer. When I found an on-line listing for Charles H. Bloomer, Jr. in Concord, California, I decided to write to Mr. Bloomer—without much hope of success. Imagine my surprise when I received these reminiscences from ninety-four-year-old Mr. Bloomer. The Fossils thank Mr. Bloomer for his wonderful recollections of his participation in amateur journalism and science fiction fandom.

Mr. Bloomer published and edited *Tesseract* for the Science Fiction Advancement Association in 1936-37. Many of his wonderful issues of *Tesseract* can be viewed on the website of antiquarian bookseller Lloyd W. Currey ([lwcurrey.com](http://lwcurrey.com)).

### **EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK**

#### **Ken Faig, Jr.**

I join Guy Miller and our other members in congratulating Jake Warner on winning the Russell L. Paxton Memorial Award for Service to Amateur Journalism for 2008. Jake and his family have contributed mightily to the amateur journalism hobby over the last forty years and Jake's *The Boxwooder* has achieved a publication record equalled by few other journals. I particularly recall my delight in Jake's accounts of his bicycling hobby published in *The Boxwooder* before and during my service as NAPA critic. I also want to thank Guy Miller and Martha Shivvers for their contributions to this issue of *The Fossil*. Guy's memorials for our departed members add a richness of personal and institutional memory to our journal. Martha's wonderful nature poems always make delightful reading. Our Fossil poets Louise Lincoln, Martha Shivvers and Marion Wyllie prove that age is no barrier to creativity. Martha will celebrate her ninety-fifth birthday on February 13, 2010. I hope readers of *The Fossil* will enjoy this reminiscent issue, which focuses on two organizations—the

Hoffman-Daas United (1912-27) and Boston's Hub Club (1890-1924)—where Howard Phillips Lovecraft (1890-1937) flourished during his near twenty-five year stay in the amateur journalism hobby. This issue has a Lovecraft focus—and I cannot deny my personal interest in Lovecraft—but I want to assure readers that *The Fossil* is not going to become a journal devoted to HPL. Our purvey is rather the entire field of amateur printing and publishing—in all eras and in all its manifestations.

Lovecraft was not a world-renowned writer when he participated in our hobby. He was just another ajay—evidently quite talented, but also somewhat suspect for his “literary” bent. Not everyone enjoyed his macabre fiction. Dora (Hepner) Moitoret (1888-1968) (wife of Anthony and mother of Victor) wrote in Wesley H. Porter's *Toledo Amateur* for November 1920:

Is Howard Lovecraft striving to imitate Edgar Allan Poe? If so, he seems to be succeeding. When he departs from his rather scathing and totally biased reports from the bureau of critics, and from his lengthy verse in heroic couplets, to delve into original prose composition, he goes the limit, never deigning to stop until he has succeeded in creating goosepimples, cold chills and nervous tremors. This may be successful composition; we hope it is. But it is too terrible. “Dagon” published recently by the same author, was a similar composition. Horrors unthought of by the average business man, student or statesman, have taken root and festered in the brain of this fellow until the very words seem to pollute the pages on which they appear. Ugh! and Bah! Let us have happier things; the world is full enough of bogies as it is, without any new creations, if you please.

A year earlier, in their *Sun* for August 1919, editors, Anthony F. Moitoret, Wesley H. Porter and William J. Dowdell ran a cartoon (reproduced in this issue) which ridiculed Lovecraft's opinions on their paper's content.

Despite his stiffness, those who met Lovecraft in person—even amateurs with dramatically differing personalities like George Julian Houtain—generally found him likable and good-humored. It is only a shame that his strong ties to his 598 Angell Street “hermitage” in Providence kept him from traveling to many amateur functions until his mother was institutionalized in 1919. As far as is known, he never attended a United convention—as the star recruit of 1914 he would surely have enjoyed Rocky Mount in 1915—but as evidenced by the group photograph taken on Deer Island, he was part of the Hub Club's famous Round-Up of July 4, 1923, and he did attend the National's conventions in Boston in 1921 and 1930, meeting his future wife Sonia Haft Greene for the first time at the former event.

His stay in the Hoffman-Daas United—capped by his presidency in 1917-18 (when Elsa Gidlow was president of the rival United faction)—was not entirely happy. He bristled when accused by President Ida C. Haughton of mismanagement of organization funds in 1921-22. In 1922-23, his “literary” faction was turned out of office in the United, only to be restored in 1923-24. Encouraged by his friend James F. Morton, the National Executive Judges recruited him as President after William J. Dowdell resigned office in November 1922. Edward H. Cole tried to convince Lovecraft to accept a full term as National President, but he refused. The old Hoffman-Daas United, still hampered by disputes<sup>9</sup>, faded from existence during the mid-twenties, when amateur affairs were at low ebb across the associations.

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<sup>9</sup> When the Lovecraft faction resumed control in 1923-24, the former Treasurer Alma Sanger refused to turn over funds to her successor, forcing a reduced program.

Lovecraft resumed notable activity in the National after attending the Boston convention in 1930. He served on the bureau of critics in 1931-35, as chairman in 1933-35 by appointment of President Harold Segal. He served two terms—1923-24 and 1935-36 on NAPA's Board of Executive Judges, rendering especial service during his second term in resolving the disputes which marred Hyman Bradofsky's administration. He left his own amateur papers to the Library of Amateur Journalism, a bequest honored by his literary executor Robert H. Barlow. Some of these papers, which duplicated existing holdings, eventually found a home in Leon Stone's Australian Library of Amateur Journalism, which tragically burned in 1960.

When Helen Wesson bravely attended the Lovecraft convention “NecronomiCon” in Providence in 1997, she rose at one of the panels to proclaim that fans who ignored Lovecraft's participation in the amateur journalism hobby were overlooking an important part of his life and literary career. Indeed, if the names of James F. Morton, Rheinhart Kleiner, Maurice W. Moe and W. Paul Cook come immediately to mind as Lovecraft's closest compatriots in the hobby, the names of Hub Club friends like Edith Minitzer, Winifred V. Jackson, and Edward H. Cole are not far behind. Even as late as the 1960s, a panel of veterans of the amateur journalism hobby who had known Lovecraft well might have been assembled—e.g., Edward Daas, Horace Lawson, Ira Cole, George Macauley, Wesley Porter, Anthony Moitoret, Dora (Hepner) Moitoret. Even John T. Dunn (1889-1983) of the erstwhile Providence Amateur Press Club (1914-16) was still hale and hearty at that point. Fans and students of Lovecraft's work must ever mourn that no such “panel of experts” regarding Lovecraft's participation in the amateur journalism hobby was ever assembled. But we do benefit from many fine memoirs by his fellow amateur journalists, some of them collected in Peter Cannon's *Lovecraft Remembered* (Arkham House, 1999).

In this issue of *The Fossil* I have reprinted several “period” accounts of United activities to provide a flavor for the organization to which Lovecraft devoted his primary loyalty. I have also taken a closer look at “Poetry and the Gods,” Lovecraft's curious collaboration with fellow amateur journalist Anna Helen Crofts. If in fact its uncredited use of verses by Elizabeth Jane Coatsworth was detected by a fellow amateur journalist, there may be very good reason for its obscurity. In addition to accounts of the 1916 and 1920 UAPA conventions, I have included Walter T. Vaughan's account of the famous July 4, 1923 Hub Club Round-Up which Lovecraft attended. As a final link to Lovecraft's participation in the hobby, this issue features some recollections from 94-year-old Charles H. Bloomer, Jr., who participated in both a-jay and science fiction fandom during Lovecraft's final years of activity.

Not everyone within our hobby liked Lovecraft's fiction and verse. Not everyone approved of his “literary” take on the hobby—although many did (like his friend Ernest Edkins). Lovecraft's best fiction has now been collected in a volume from the prestigious Library of America (2005) and his work is read and studied around the world. Amateur journalists take pride that our hobby helped to mature his talent. Eddie Daas gave his heart and soul to the amateur journalism hobby throughout most of his long lifetime. To Eddie we give thanks for recruiting Howard Phillips Lovecraft to our hobby.

## **IOWA IN RETROSPECT**

**Martha E. Shivers**

In the land of Iowa  
where the Fox and Sioux once roamed,  
along the lush banks of English creek,  
along the timbered banks of Whitebreast stream,  
among the forests of oak and walnut,  
among the forests of elm and hickory,  
amidst the wild plum and blackberry,  
amidst the grape and elderberry,  
grew violets with perky faces,  
lamb's-tongue and bright sweet william;  
grew wild strawberries, sweet and juicy,  
and tender mustard greens.  
Ran the coyote, fox and rabbit,  
lived the skunk, muskrat and chipmunk,  
climbed the squirrel, the 'coon and 'possum.  
Sang the robin, bluebird and cardinal,  
sang the meadowlark, blue jay and blackbird,  
and screeched the owl, the one of wisdom.

Now, lies a region plowed and baring  
Man's cultured crops, another's faring.

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This journal is the Official Organ of The Fossils, a non-profit organization whose purposes are to stimulate interest in and preserve the history of independent publishing, either separate from or organized in the hobby known as “Amateur Journalism” and to foster the practices of amateur journalism. To this end, The Fossils preserved the Library of Amateur Journalism, a repository of amateur papers and memorabilia dating from the 1850s, acquired in 1916 and donated in 2004 to the Special Collections Department of the University of Wisconsin Library, Room 976, Memorial Library, 728 State Street, Madison, WI 53706. Individuals or institutions allied with our goals are invited to join The Fossils. Dues are \$15 annually—\$20 for joint membership of husband and wife. Annual subscription to *The Fossil* without privileges of membership is \$10. Make remittances payable to The Fossils, and mail to the Secretary-treasurer.