



The Fossil

Volume 119, No. 2, Whole No. 394 ♦ Sunnyvale, California ♦ January 2023

Adventures in Madison

by David E. Schultz

FOR THE last eight years, I have been making use of the Library of Amateur Journalism (Fossils Library) housed in the Special Collections department of the University of Wisconsin Memorial Library in Madison. The primary focus of my research has been the twentieth century writer H. P. Lovecraft. Lovecraft was an avid amateur journalist since boyhood, when he hectographed astronomy and science journals and booklets. When he was only in his forties, he noted that he was at that time eligible to join *The Fossils*, although he did not. Since 1914, when he was invited by Edward F. Daas to join the United Amateur Press Association, he not only contributed to various amateur journals, he also published his own journal for a time. Nearly all his writings in amateurdom were unearthed long ago by researchers using the very same Library of Amateur Journalism, first by George Wetzel when the library was in Philadelphia, later by S. T. Joshi when it was

housed at the New York University Library—only two of many temporary locations. Their work aided the compilation by Joshi of the first comprehensive bibliography of Lovecraft's writings in 1981 and of collections of Lovecraft's work containing some of his obscure poetry and essays.

In 1990, Joshi and I began to amass and transcribe all the Lovecraft letters we could find, on the order of 3200 items. Only in the twenty-first century did we begin seriously to develop volumes of his correspondence. Lovecraft's *Selected Letters*, published by Arkham House between 1965 and 1976, were heavily edited and arranged chronologically, with a strong slant toward Lovecraft's weird fiction, although his ajoy involvement was covered as well. Our plan was to publish the letters grouped by recipient, since the tenor of his correspondence varied from one correspondent to another. We realized that considerable annotation of the letters would be required, as well as background information on the various correspondent, since the letters are more than ninety years old, and their content was not likely to be familiar to most modern readers. Many readers come to Lovecraft's letters primarily because of interest in his horror fiction. They would be familiar with Robert Bloch, Robert E. Howard, and Clark Ashton Smith, even amateurs such as Maurice Moe and James Morton because of *Selected Letters*, but probably not Ralph Babcock, Helm C. Spink, Hyman Bradofsky, Paul J. Campbell, James Larkin Pearson, and numerous others. The weird fiction genre is well covered by numerous reference books, and these days by online databases, such as

isfdb.com (The Internet Speculative Fiction Database). Amateur journalism is not so thoroughly documented, and its publications are not readily available.

Because I live in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, it was difficult for me to consult the few caches of amateur journals scattered around the country. The LAJ itself was curated for a time by Martin Horvat, Librarian, in Oregon. When Joshi and I prepared a volume of the writings of the Cleveland amateur Samuel Loveman, Mr. Horvat provided some text and other information, but we did not want to trouble him with myriad requests for information and copies. I learned shortly thereafter that the LAJ, merged with papers of other long-time, avid amateur journalists, was on its way to Madison. The prospects of consulting the rare amateur papers became much more likely, since the distance was greatly reduced for me to merely 70 miles. I was eager to get to work, but it would take many years after the arrival of the LAJ in Madison in 2004 to be ready for researchers to use. Every so often, I would email Susan Stravinski, who was overseeing the organizing and cataloguing at the time, asking if the collection was open. It was not, but she offered to look for certain items, providing that what I wanted was easily accessible. I had no idea of just how much work was involved. In time she informed me that the collection was at least partially available for consultation in person. After I retired in 2014, I was soon at work in earnest on Lovecraft's letters. I do not remember my first expedition to Madison, but following the Amateur Journalism Conference there in 2016, I stepped up my visits.

The LAJ contains bound volumes of



David E. Schultz at Amateur Journalism Conference 2016

journals arranged chronologically, sometimes a single year's publications requiring multiple volumes to contain them. My simple approach was to look for items Lovecraft or his correspondent mentioned in letters. Another major resource of leads was Lovecraft's *Collected Essays – Volume 1: Amateur Journalism*. Lovecraft held the position of critic, and so he discussed all sorts of amateurs, their journals, and items published therein. His detailed criticisms made locating material easy. Not only did I record specific bibliographic data for the various named items, I also scanned or photographed items of interest for possible reprinting. Many correspondents had numerous pieces published that were not mentioned in Lovecraft's correspondence. We felt it would be helpful to other researchers—of Lovecraft or certain of his correspondents—to list those items in a bibliography, and to reprint mentioned items along with other representative pieces.

In 2016, Joshi and I attended the Amateur Journalism Conference in Madison to participate on a panel led by Ken Faig, Jr., on Saturday, 23 July, to discuss Lovecraft and amateur journalism. Between sessions, Joshi and I visited Special Collections, where the LAJ is maintained. The archivist showed us several Lovecraft items she had pulled in anticipation of our visit. One was

Walter J. Coates's pamphlet, *Hubbardton Battle: A Ballad. Written for the Vermont Sesqui-Centennial Commission and Read at the 150th Anniversary Celebration at Hubbardton, July Seventh, 1927*. Why this? Coates was not an amateur journalist but editor and publisher of the little poetry journal *Driftwind*. She turned the cover to reveal that Coates had inscribed the copy to Lovecraft, meaning we had found yet another book to list in the ever-expanding *Lovecraft's Library: A Catalogue*. Furthermore, its presence confirmed that following Lovecraft's death on 15 March 1937, his young protégé R. H. Barlow, as literary executor, disposed of Lovecraft's amateur papers with Edwin Hadley Smith as instructed. (There is a journal in the collection in which Lovecraft had written extensive notes.) Barlow can be forgiven for deeming Coates an ajay figure, because Coates's little magazine—which published several of Lovecraft's sonnets—resembled some amateur journals.

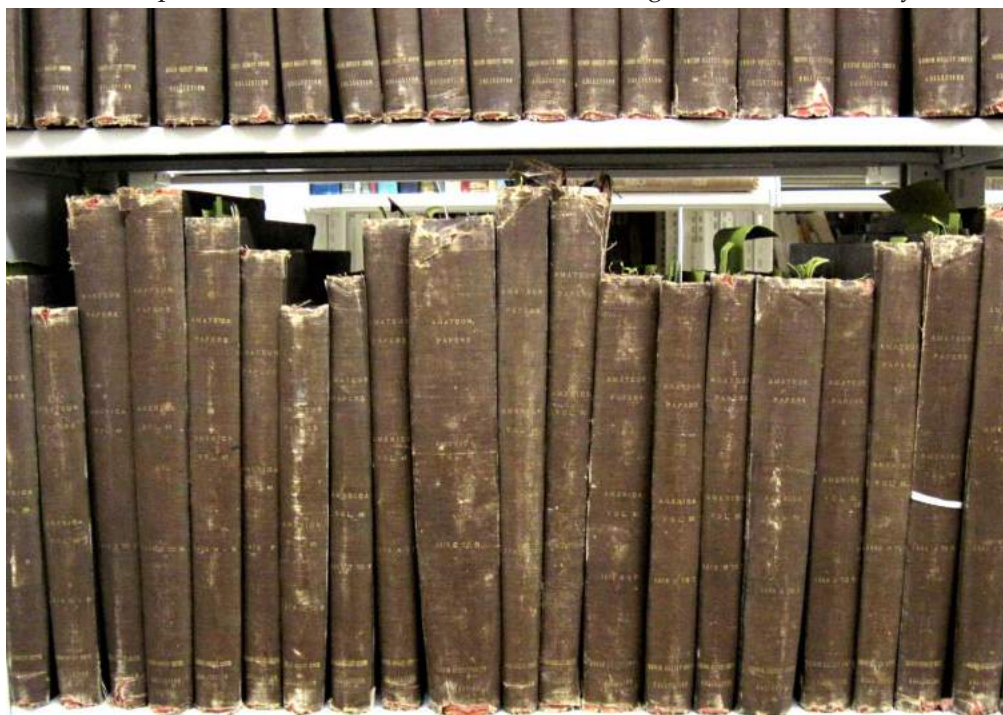
In the years since the conference, my wife and I made occasional trips to Madison, I to do research, she to look in nearby towns for fabric for quilting projects. We would arrive promptly at 8:00 when the adjacent Wisconsin Historical Society opened, and I went to work with the August Derleth papers. From there I would cross the Library Mall to go to the UW library, which

opened at 9:00, and I would spend the day in Special Collections, though sometimes I would work in the stacks. If I knew I would have enough work to keep me busy for two days, we would stay overnight at the nearby Lowell Center rather than return to Milwaukee, and I would walk back to the library in the morning. We made such trips perhaps averaging twice a year from 2017 to 2022 (excepting 2020).

When requesting material, I initially had to fill out many individual pre-printed slips, tediously repeating my name and other mildly personal information along with titles of the items desired. In time, the library and historical society adopted the Aeon system now used by many libraries nationwide. Researchers can send an email message to askspecial@library.wisc.edu

for directions on how to place requests. When I know I must go to Madison, I can request material ahead of time, so that it is ready for me when I walk in the door. Under the old system, I had to wait for material to be retrieved before I could begin working. (I learned to take a stack of slips with me to be filled out at home or at the hotel, so that on the next visit I could hand them in before I hung up my coat.) I can also use Aeon to request material to be scanned and then emailed to me, when I know I cannot be in Madison for some time. I believe I can login to the UW library catalogue and then make out requests while in the library. If not, the archivists can pull up a previous request and clone it into a new one. I try to request new items as I return old items but with a few items still on hand to consult as I wait.

I do not have a laptop computer or a tablet, so I filled many legal pads with notes, and loaded my phone with numerous images when I needed to capture text for later transcription. Special Collections and the historical society have desktop scanners, which are fine for flat pamphlets or magazines, but the bound volumes of amateur journals simply cannot be scanned on them. The volumes are very fragile, and very tightly (if awkwardly) bound, so that the only way to capture text is to open the book on a soft V-shaped cradle and to drape "snakes"—cloth tubes filled with rice or equivalent—over the page corners to hold the volume open gently



Volumes of bound amateur journals in the Library of Amateur Journalism. (Photo courtesy of Department of Special Collections, Memorial Library, University of Wisconsin–Madison.)

for photographing. That changed in 2022, when the library acquired a Knowledge Imaging Center (KIC) scanner. The book is again held up in a V shape, with snakes as necessary, but the scanner can flatten the image so that the lines are not aslant in the final image. One can simply turn the page and continue to scan as much as needed, the result being gathered into a PDF file that can be saved to a flash drive. This greatly sped up image capture, and also provided extremely legible images for later consultation back in Milwaukee. Some scans are so flat and clear that they can be converted to editable text using OCR technology.

The LAJ has been a great resource for expanding our knowledge of Lovecraft's involvement in amateur journalism. I jotted down names of journals along with their editors, which later proved helpful in finding certain specific issues and their contents. In two letters to Helm C. Spink, Lovecraft writes lists of journals he has on hand to review, to avoid overlap (or lacks) in the course of multiple critics writing reviews of recent publications. A reader might think "So what? Lists of titles." I was able to identify all the editors, and that information served useful in annotating other letters. In many cases we see only Lovecraft's side of the correspondence, so that matters under discussion are not always readily comprehended. For example, Lovecraft writes to several people of the effects of Noah F. Whitaker's vendetta against Lovecraft's correspondent, Maurice W. Moe. Using the dates of relevant letters, I found numerous screeds by Whitaker in his journals *Pegasus* and the *Plain Speaker*. All this served to clarify what Lovecraft had been writing about.

It was several years before I learned that the volumes of journals bound by year were not the only amateur journals in the collection. I had asked Dave Tribby about some material I wanted from the *National Amateur* because I heard he had acquired bound copies of old issues. I apologized for

asking him, noting that the LAJ did not have many *Nationals*. I had been looking for the organ in each annual set, but these had none. He graciously provided the items I wanted, but pointed out that the LAJ most certainly *did* have the journals—a similarly bound set. He had seen it at the time of the conference. I inquired about it the next time I was in Madison, and staff presented me with bound volumes of both the United and National organs. In time, I learned that they also had cartons of loose journals organized by title, then chronologically. I think that perhaps I did not know about them because staff was still in the process of sorting and organizing during my earliest visits. And so I now ask for specific journals, when I know what I am looking for, as opposed to using the annual volumes for mere browsing. Whereas I previously could not find certain issues of the *Silver Clarion* or *Toledo Amateur* in the bound volumes, I was now more likely to find specific items by looking in compiled sets of individual titles. Of course, sometimes even by that method I was unable to find a specific issue, and sometimes there are duplicates.

The numerous volumes of Lovecraft's letters published since 2016 have included generous bibliographies of certain amateurs and also samplings of their writings. These include Ralph W. Babcock, Hyman Bradofsky, Paul J.

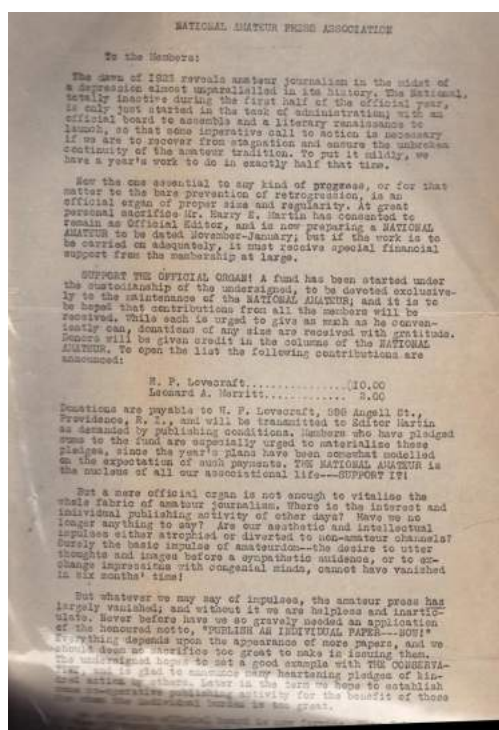
Campbell, Edward H. Cole, Winifred Virginia Jackson, Rheinart Kleiner, Frank Belknap Long, Jr., Samuel Loveman, James Larkin Pearson, Helm C. Spink, Margaret Sylvester, Wilfred B. Talman, and Natalie Hartley Wooley.

When we published Lovecraft's letters to Winifred Virginia Jackson, we included a good selection of her poems (especially those mentioned or published by Lovecraft) and a fairly robust bibliography, but unfortunately we also had a list of known works not yet found as compiled by another researcher. When Joshi later suggested that we issue a book of her verse, I took our bibliography back to LAJ, looking up items I had not previously copied—after all, we did not use them all in the book of letters—and then proceeded to find more. The researcher who had compiled the list of poems he could not find did not realize they were to be found in amateur journals instead of professional magazines and newspapers, and that was why he could not find them.

Because my initial research was to start with the volumes for 1914, the year Lovecraft joined UAPA, and go through them through 1937, the year Lovecraft died, I took note of work by any of the familiar names from Lovecraft's correspondence. I turned up many unexpected writings. For example, we knew that Wilfred B. Talman had published a little book of poetry while at Brown Uni-



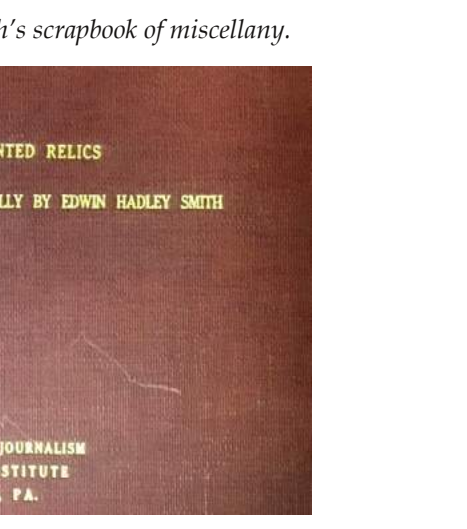
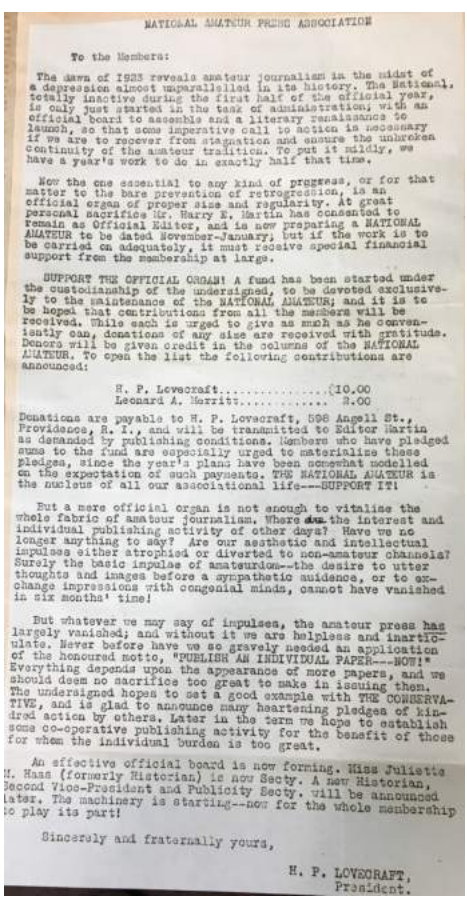
The KIC scanner flattens images, even those with tight center binding.



Left: Lovecraft's printed letter to NAPA c. February 1923, as it appeared in a photograph obtained from a dealer.

Right: Lovecraft's letter in its entirety, found by LAJ curators within Smith's scrapbook.

Bottom: Closeup of cover of Edwin Hadley Smith's scrapbook of miscellany.



lines of which were obscured (see box, left). Our source was unable to provide a better copy, because he had sold the item. It was a published, or more accurately printed, letter or broadside by Lovecraft addressed to the members of the National Amateur Press Association. There was no date, no place of publication. By its nature, it was not something many persons would keep. On a visit to the library, I asked the curator if the collection might include bits of assorted miscellany. She said it did, and so I emailed her the photo, and she said staff would have a look. After a few weeks, she wrote back with a full, sharp image of the piece in question. How could they find such a thing? It was contained in one of Edwin Hadley Smith's personal scrapbooks, the ideal repository for such a bit of ephemera. With inclusion of the missing text, the book went to the printer the next day.

Lovecraft's *Letters to Hyman Bradofsky and Others* (2023) is a volume that focuses primarily on Lovecraft's involvement in amateur journalism in his later years. When the United Amateur Press Association collapsed in 1926, Lovecraft's involvement in amateurism waned but it did not die. He did not have the time for amateur affairs that he did in his early days, but he remained minimally active. Following resuscitation in 1930 of the lagging NAPA thanks to the efforts of Vincent B. Haggerty, Helm C. Spink, Ralph W. Babcock, and Hyman Bradofsky, Lovecraft found himself a semi-active amateur journalist again, even though he had regarded himself a "United man." He wrote critical articles, mostly for the *National Amateur*, but also had work in other journals. He was very involved, as mediator, with some of the feuding young journalists, and he continually proffered membership applications to the growing number of young correspondents who approached him after reading his horror fiction in the pulp magazines. When they did join, he recommended journals to which they could submit their work, and indeed many of them did publish. Lovecraft also got Ernest A. Edkins to return to the field, long after his heyday, and he remained involved well into the 1940s. It is well known that horror fans inundated Lovecraft with letters in the early

versity—*Cloisonné and Other Verses* (1925). We did not know where or if the verses had appeared previously, most likely in student publications. I was surprised to find many poems and stories by Talman in the amateur journals. Likewise, we knew Natalie Hartley Wooley had published poetry, and I'd seen a few of her poems in the *Californian*, which Special Collections holds in its collection of Little Magazines. As I started looking through the volumes of the 1930s, I found many more pieces by her: poetry, fiction, and nonfiction. A

healthy selection of her work appears in the volume that contains Lovecraft's letters to her. I was surprised to learn that the great science fiction writer and editor Fredrick Pohl had something published in an amateur journal early in his career. Perhaps the most astonishing find was something staff at the LAJ located for me. Our *Miscellaneous Letters* (2022) was nearing publication, and we still had not found one item. Or, rather, there was an item in the book obtained from a photograph, the bottom eight

1930s, but the Bradofsky volume reveals that he was equally immersed in correspondence with fellow amateur journalists.

I began work on the book immediately following the 2016 Conference. The first pass through the text amounted to easy picking of low-hanging fruit. I took note of the writings of Bradofsky, Spink, Babcock, and Jennie K. Plaisier (an executive judge along with Haggerty and Lovecraft). I later came to realize that they and Lovecraft were all Presidents of NAPA at one time or another, several also serving as Official Editor. Reading the letters more carefully, I noted much discussion of matters I did not fully grasp. Those matters eventually became clear as I went through the journals again, not so much looking for the works of these people, but more for the matters under discussion. For example, Spink wrote cryptically (to me) "I know one thing: I have the Brodie volume." Lovecraft's reply was equally cryptic: "Congratulations on getting the Brodie volume—whose rediscovery was surely a dramatic event." I came to understand that Warren J. Brodie, an old-time amateur and printer, had lent his bound volume of the *National Amateur* to someone and never got it back. I wrote a feeble note to that effect. In May 2022, looking for information on another matter, I stumbled upon an entire article in *Library News* with a screamer headline about how the missing volume had been found. It had been lent to Charles W. Heins. In September 1906, he stated "'We are surprised that so valuable an asset that was so kindly donated years ago for a specific purpose should have been allowed to disappear so mysteriously.' In September 1935, twenty-nine years later, he was again surprised to find the volume in his attic." A lengthy account follows. I'm sure I saw *Library News* years before, but did not make the connection about the Brodie volume. Mystery solved! and I was able to write a stronger, more detailed, and colorful note.

Findings such as that abounded. Lovecraft took Ralph Babcock to task for adding snarky commentary into a story he published by Hyman Bradofsky, but without Bradofsky knowing of it until after publication. Babcock published the story as "An Uplifting Head of Belles

Lettuce" as by "Me 'n' Abner" (his derogatory name for Bradofsky) in *Enterprise* (Fall 1935).

There is a somewhat confusing discussion in the letters about a dispute regarding the "Second Anniversary Issue" of Ralph Babcock's *Red Rooster and New Times* for May 1935—or was it September 1935? The bound volumes for that year readily solved the issue. Babcock had issued his large journal in May, but it was not complete. Most notably, the "NAPA Whose Zoo"—a photo gallery of various amateurs—did not contain printed captions for many of the pictures. This particular copy has a typed note affixed to it: "FIRST EDITION.—Omits dedication and Section 1 which are in final edition, but contains Sections 5 and 6 which were omitted in final edition." There is another version of the journal bound alongside it. It, too, bears a typed note, but it reads: "FINAL EDITION.—Omits Sections 5 and 6 which are in first edition, but contains dedication and Sections 1 which were omitted in first edition." It is not known who attached the two explanatory notes. In the final, all the photos in "Whose Zoo" now bear captions identifying the subjects. Both states bear the date "May 1935," but the latter is called the "Second Edition." The furor over it arose because Babcock submitted his article for the laureate award for history, but Edwin Hadley Smith argued that it was ineligible because the journal was not released until September, regardless of what the masthead said and the fact that Babcock had issued a draft in May containing his essay. Seeing both issues with the explanatory notes clarified the matter. Truman J. Spencer notes in his *History of Amateur Journalism* (1957) that, despite Smith's protestations, Babcock was awarded the laureateship for "The Decline and Rebirth of the National Amateur Press Association: Part I. Its Regeneration in 1930."

A panel of printers at the 2016 Conference had spoken with awe of Bab-



Comment (by Edwin Hadley Smith?) pasted on the May 1935 Red Rooster.

Cutting-off is a reprisal for criticism and a suppression of a free amateur press. Hearing of it, an ex president and constructive thinker wrote me, as follows:

"Omitting important figures in mailing papers should be attacked in print. Such omissions are especially reprehensible when a paper contains matter adverse to the person omitted. I believe an amendment providing a penalty would be very much in order. A law requiring that a member must be supplied with a copy of an attack by registered mail (to avoid false claims of having sent a copy) not later than the mailing of any other copy. The penalty could be suspension of mailing-bureau privileges or suspension of membership for a stated period. Attacking a member behind his back, circulating hostile material before he has a chance to formulate a timely reply, is the flagrant thing that needs the sternest rebuke. The matter might well be brought up as an editorial theme. It would focus the members on an evil becoming increasingly prevalent, and in need of correction through drastic speech or legal enactment."

The defendant rests the case with the intelligent jury—the N. A. P. A.

Lovecraft wrote to Helm C. Spink (6 May 1936). "By the way—that paragraph about behind-back attacks which [Edwin Hadley] Smith quotes in a recent Boys' Herald is from a letter of mine." I found it in Boys' Herald under "View and Review," 65, No. 1 (March 1936): 2. Lovecraft is not mentioned by name, only as "ex president." This constituted another eleventh-hour addition to Miscellaneous Letters.

cock's celebrated "Bull Moose" issue of his *Scarlet Cockerel*. I was intrigued because of what they said, and so on one of my visits, I examined a carton containing numerous issues of his journal. As John H. Dow wrote in "Babcock's Big Red Birds" (*THE FOSSIL* No. 185 [c. December 1985])

RWB succeeded in producing the worst amateur paper in history.

The cover is printed (or misprinted) on paper towels stolen from the washrooms of N. Y. Central trains. There are typos, wrong fonts, work-ups and a score of other erratum [*sic*]—not just on every page, but in every line. Pages are smudged, off-set, finger-marked, and the text stock runs the gamut from toilet tissue to butcher's paper. . . .

Needless to say, Cockerel No. 16 was a sensation—not only among amateurs, but with professional typographers and printers in Boston who were permitted to see it. (p. 6)

Helm Spink had written to Lovecraft "I never did get out a creditable publication [. . .] except for the *National Amateur*, which 'for nearly half a century has rivalled the Congressional Record as the dullest publication of its kind.'" Who made the comparison to the Congress-

sional Record? After all, the comment is in quotes. Spink gives the following clue: "There are so many caustic remarks of that sort in *Causerie* that I am still laughing, even after reading them half a dozen times." *Causerie* was Ernest Edkins's journal. Sure enough, in *Causerie* for February 1936, we find the following: "Let us, with befitting ceremony, record a red-letter day in the history of the *National Amateur*. For approximately half a century it has rivalled the *Congressional Record* as the dullest publication of its kind; now, under Mr. Spink's masterly editorial direction, it actually sparkles!" Handling the actual copy of *Causerie*, I learned that it was printed by Spink himself.

Another. Lovecraft wrote Spink in February 1937 "I greatly appreciated your gifted colleague's thoughtfulness in issuing the Flood Number of *The Wag*," Searching in the bound journals for late 1936 and early 1937 I found *The Wag: An Occasional Publication, Devoted to Literature and Humor*, Flood Edition No. 2 (February 1937), jointly issued by Spink and Edna Hyde McDonald. Spink had written and published a piece titled "Life on an Island." In previous letters, Spink had written to Lovecraft about being stranded by the flood, and his print shop being inundated. Lovecraft died a month after acknowledging *The Wag*. Spink's colorful piece is included in an appendix to the volume of letters.

Other of our publishing projects also benefited from consultation of the LAJ, although admittedly, they were all the result of certain individuals' connections to Lovecraft. For instance, in 2001, Hippocampus Press published *Out of the Immortal Night*, a collection of the writings of Samuel Loveman. By virtue of work with the LAJ and other repositories, we were able to double the size of the book. The new edition contains more verse, much nonfiction, fiction, short plays, and what may be Loveman's earliest amateur publication, *The Hobo*, along with an unknown very early photograph of him. In 2002, we published *The Eyes of the God*, a collection of the writings of Lovecraft's young friend R. H. Barlow. As a NAPA member, Barlow won the story laureateship in 1933 at age fourteen and printed his own paper, *The Dragon-Fly*. We later found more uncollected writings by

Barlow, including pieces found in amateur publications, and the greatly expanded edition appeared in 2023. Our collection *Ave atque Vale: Reminiscences of H. P. Lovecraft* (Necronomicon Press, 2018) included some previously unknown pieces on Lovecraft in amateur journals, including "O Artemidorus, Farewell!" by Ernest A. Edkins and a piece by Arthur Harris, a Welsh amateur and long-time publisher of *Interesting Items*, found in the library's collection of British amateur journals.

The Library of Amateur Journalism has proved to be a very valuable resource in the study of amateur journalism, numerous individual amateur journalists, and especially H. P. Lovecraft. I have come to think of him more as the lifelong amateur he claimed to be, than as a writer of horror fiction. The library staff, which consists largely of students who come and go, have done a tremendous job of organizing the LAJ over the past eighteen years and are

now well acquainted with it. Lisa Wettleson has handled numerous requests that I made through Aeon or email. Special Collections expects eventually to have an online catalogue to the LAJ, just as the New York Public Library's amateur collection is. Although my work on H. P. Lovecraft and amateur journalism may be ending, others surely will find the LAJ a valuable source of information in amateur journalism, from the nineteenth through the twenty-first centuries. ♦

Editor's Note:

You can read related articles in past issues of THE FOSSIL, available online at www.thefossils.org/fossil/

"A Brief History of the LAJ," Ken Faig, Jr., July 2016, No. 368, p. 1.

"Amateur Journalism Conference 2016," Dave Tribby, October 2016, No. 369, p.1.

"A Day at the LAJ," Dave Tribby, October 2016, No. 369, p.10.

LAJ Update

by Robin E. Rider

Curator of Special Collections, University of Wisconsin-Madison

WE HAVE made significant progress in organizing a substantial section of the Library of Amateur Journalism Collection. In addition to the Edwin Hadley Smith bound volumes, the LAJ came to us with many individual issues of amateur journals, among them issues from the collection of Willametta and Martin Keffer, largely unsorted and unbundled. Student employees in Special Collections have sorted these individual issues and rehoused them in acid-free folders labeled by title, thanks to the generosity of donors to the Leland M. Hawes, Jr. Fund in support of the LAJ Collection. As with many projects, we had to press pause on such work during the first phase of the pandemic, but the physical sorting of these thousands of AJ issues is now complete. The issues occupy more than 78 archival cartons, each carton containing more than 100 file folders, each folder containing one or more issues of a given title. Quick sampling suggests a total of more than 8500 issues.

The third carton for the letter N, for

example, contains 110 folders. Some folders contain only one issue; some, quite a long run. All offer evidence of the popularity of this "no. 1 hobby for everybody," as proclaimed by one flyer from 1946. Our students have taken care to separate issues with similar titles, as with *Nuggets* (Manchester, NH, 1935), *Nuggets* (Redwood City, CA, 1953), and *The Nugget* (Edgewater, MD, 1984). Individual folders suggest the breadth and depth of this portion of the collection. *The Nutmeg Idler* (Torrington, CT), represented by a handful of issues starting with vol. 1, no. 5 (1901), and *The Nutmeg Reviewer* (Thomaston, CT), offer a glimpse into the early years of the 20th century. The *Nutmeg Amateur* (Norwich, CT, and Brooklyn, NY) began before the outbreak of World War I and continued through demobilization after World



War II, and invites comparison with *The Nutmegger* (Waterbury, CT, 1940–1946), whose editor reported he would shortly “be just Mr. once more.”

Such careful physical sorting allows us straight away to answer individual reference queries about whether this portion of the LAJ Collection contains any issues of a given title. Based on a “time trial” for creating a folder list of titles for one of these cartons, we expect that – thanks to the Hawes Fund – one

of our students will be able in spring semester 2023 to produce a folder list of titles for these 78+ cartons. We can then link such a list to our web page and library catalog record for the LAJ Collection, so that interested researchers can check titles for themselves. In the next phase of the project, we anticipate enhancing this title list with names of editors, places of publication, and date ranges of issues we hold.

In the meantime, we continue to

welcome researchers from near and far to use the LAJ Collection in the Special Collections reading room, and we answer LAJ reference queries sent to askspecial@library.wisc.edu

For information on how to support the Collection with a tax-deductible donation, visit

supportuw.org/giveto/laj

We are most grateful for the ongoing generosity of friends of amateur journalism and its history. ♦

AJ Collections at the University of Iowa

by Dave Tribby

ALTHOUGH THE University of Wisconsin–Madison’s Library of Amateur Journalism has the largest collection of amateur journals, a number of other public collections are listed on The Fossils’ website at

www.thefossils.org/collections.html

One of the larger repositories can be found at the University of Iowa Main Library in Iowa City. The Special Collections Department lists 26 individual collections in the category “Zine and Amateur Press,” including the following that have ties to amateur journalism:

Lauren Geringer Papers; given by Lauren Geringer in the early 1990s; 1 linear foot

Guy Miller Amateur Journals Collection; donated by Guy Miller August 2008; 0.8 linear feet

Elliott M. Ruben Amateur Press Association Collection; received October 2009 from Elliott Ruben’s widow; 30 linear feet

Burton Jay Smith and Willametta Turnepseed Papers; part of Mike Horvat collections received December 2004; 1 linear foot

M. Horvat Genre Apazines Collection; part of Mike Horvat collections received December 2004; 58 linear feet

M. Horvat Science Fiction Fanzines Collection; part of Mike Horvat collections received December 2004; 97.4 linear feet

Heath Row Amateur Press Association Collection; initially donated by Heath Row February 2010 with

periodic additions; 3 linear feet.

William H. Groveman Memorial Amateur Journalism Collection; gift of Ken Faig, 2014; 78 linear feet.

I recently sent a message to the Special Collections department to ask how often these collections are used, and received a reply from Peter Balestreri, Curator, Science Fiction and Popular Culture Collections:

The materials you’ve named are used frequently by students, faculty, and researchers. Mike Horvat and I have communicated often over the years and his collection is used almost daily. Heath Row just sent me a big box of fanzines of all kinds. Ivan Snyder did the same not long ago. So I know of whom you speak and their collections are featured in many of the classes I teach and those of others.

I used the Mae Strelkov hecto materials from Horvat last night for a class of art students interested in alternative print techniques. I’m lucky to have resources like these that I can leverage for classes from many different disciplines. I continue to reach out across the colleges, always trying to interest new faculty in taking a look at the History of Self-Publishing as expressed through the Fossils’ materials.

My reply to Peter invited him or any researchers who use the collections to write an article for THE FOSSIL describing how they have used the materials. He replied,

Your invitation is generous and bears some thought as to topic. I have a few stories that might be illuminating for readers of THE FOSSIL. I honestly



can’t recall any researchers digging into amateur press of late, nor any in the past that would have communicated articles or books resulting from research here. I am not informed when researchers come to the Reading Room unless there is an interest in speaking with me. So, referring you to authors or researchers would not be possible.

I look forward to hearing more from Peter about how amateur journalism materials are used at the University of Iowa. If any readers have stories about how any amateur journalism collection has been used, please contact me. ♦

Faig’s Podcast Interview

FOSSIL PRESIDENT Ken Faig, Jr., recently spoke about Edith Minter for the “30+ Minutes with H. P. Lovecraft” podcast. The interview, hosted by David Guffy, Richard Wilson, and Mark Griffin, is available online at anchor.fm/lcpl/episodes/Edith-Minter-e1ot9uj

[Edith-Minter-e1ot9uj](http://anchor.fm/lcpl/episodes/Edith-Minter-e1ot9uj)

The episode, which runs 1 hour and 23 minutes, was released October 13. Its description: “Kenneth Faig discussed Edith Minter, author of *Our Natupski Neighbors* and amateur journalist of the late 19th, early 20th century and a bit of her friendship with Lovecraft. Kenneth’s works can be found on Hippocampus Press, Amazon, and other book stores.” ♦

The Boys of 1876: An Overview

by Ken Faig, Jr.

TRUMAN J. Spencer's *The History of Amateur Journalism* enumerates on pp. 209-210 the sixty-five young men who attended the founding meeting of the National Amateur Press Association (NAPA) in Philadelphia in July 1876. In addition, Spencer provides a detailed account of the first convention on pp. 29-33 of his work.



President Ken Faig, Jr.

Richard Gerner of Hoboken, New Jersey served as chairman (i.e., presiding officer) of the founding meeting. John Winslow Snyder of Richmond, Virginia was elected NAPA's first president for the 1876-77 term. Of the sixty-five delegates, fifty-three were associated with specific amateur journals, while ten were not. Two—George N. Hicks of New York City and John Winslow Snyder of Richmond—were identified as "author" members.



John Winslow Snyder

The first NAPA convention drew delegates from as far north as Massachusetts, as far south as Virginia, and as far west as Missouri. The state breakdown was as follows:

State	No. of Delegates
Massachusetts	3
New York	13
New Jersey	1
Pennsylvania	24
Delaware	1
Maryland	3
District of Columbia	10
Virginia	2
Ohio	2
Illinois	3
Wisconsin	1
Missouri	2
Total	65

The specific residences of the delegates are listed in the table to the right.

Of course, only a minority of the delegates maintained their 1876 resi-

dence for the remainder of their lives. One such was William Warren Winslow (1862-1936) who was born and died in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, and practiced law there over the decades. Nathan Cole, Jr. (1860-1921), who with his brother Amadee Cole was one of the westernmost-dwelling delegates in 1876, had removed to Los Angeles, California by 1900. Delavan W. Gee (1859-1944), of Washington, D.C. in 1876, had relocated to Denver, Colorado by 1900 and edited and published newspapers in Colorado for the following three decades. David J. Hunter, of Philadelphia in 1876, had removed to York, Nebraska by the time he married Lynn Meredith in 1882. He was a cattle rancher in York when enumerated in the 1900 census.

At least four delegates had been born abroad. John Hosey (1859-1929) was born in Ireland and emigrated with his family about 1865. Charles C. Heuman (1857-1940) had been born in Coburg, Germany on Sept. 5, 1857, and emigrated to the United States in 1866. Richard Gerner (1856-1885) was born in England to Henry and Anna (Haase) Gerner; for most of his time in the United States, he lived in Hoboken, New Jersey. Finally, William Henry Siviter (1851-1939) was born in Worcestershire, England, and emigrated to the United States in 1869.

It was not easy to assign dates of birth for all delegates. I was unable to find birth date information for three delegates. (Where I had an attained age Y as of census year X, I used X-Y rather than X-Y-1 for the year of birth.) For the sixty-two delegates for whom I discovered year of birth information, the distribution was as follows:



John Hosey



William Henry Siviter

State	Locality	Delegate Name(s)
Massachusetts	Boston	James Austin Fynes, Jr. Correl Kendall Frederick Clement Kendall
New York	Brooklyn	Alexander Robert Black Harry D. Stillman
New York	Ellenville	Elmer Ernest Count John W. Count
New York	Fly Creek	William E. Leaning
New York	New York City	John J. Farrell William Samuel Hawk Charles Christian Heuman George Nathan Hicks John Hosey Thomas A. Hunt Frank A. Murtha John G. Wilson
New Jersey	Hoboken	Richard Gerner
Pennsylvania	Harrisburg	Mulford Byron Tausig
Pennsylvania	Media	Charles Edgar Chalfant
Pennsylvania	Philadelphia	James Montgomery Beck George W. Bertron John D. Brandt Thomas J. Carter Dudley A. T. Cross Edgar L. Doster Edgar Rexford Hoadley, Jr. David J. Hunt Levanus S. Kern Frank E. Macaran Millard F. Peterson Evan Ried Riale Robert Watts Smiley Frank K. Vondersmith John Miller Walmsley Charles Stokes Wayne Charles H. Willcox Leland Miguel Williamson John Clifford Worthington
Pennsylvania	Pittsburgh	John E. Doherty William Henry Siviter
Pennsylvania	Punxsutawney	William Warren Winslow
Delaware	Wilmington	Charles Clifford Royce
Maryland	Baltimore	George Hatton Spencer Jones Bennett Wasserman
Maryland	Westminster	William Thomas Hoppe
District of Columbia	Washington	Clarence Gale Allen Harry E. Boudinot John Edson Briggs James Francis DuHamel Delavan Wells Gee James Douglas Lee Frank Osgood McCleary John C. S. Richardson W. E. Thompson Lemuel Towers, Jr.
Virginia	Alexandria	Jeremiah Guilford White
Virginia	Richmond	John Winslow Snyder
Ohio	Cleveland	Charles McColm
Ohio	Sandusky	Frederick Boyd Stevenson
Illinois	Carbondale	Willis H. Allen
Illinois	Chicago	William Tilestone Hall Louis Jefferson Clawson Spruance
Wisconsin	Sharon	Charles Britton Case
Missouri	St. Louis	Amadee Berthold Cole Nathan Cole, Jr.

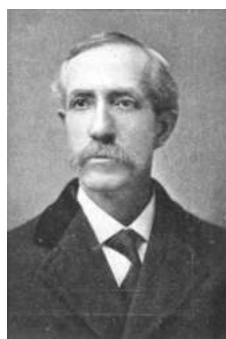
Residences of delegates

Birth Year	No. of Delegates
1850	1
1851	1
1852	1
1853	1
1854	0
1855	5
1856	3
1857	11
1858	7
1859	12
1860	7
1861	8
1862	4
1863	0
1864	1

It was definitely a meeting of young men (alas, no young women attended NAPA conventions until 1885). From my sixty-two data points, I computed a weighted average year of birth, with a result a smidgen in excess of 1858. (Median year of birth was 1859; as for mode, 1859 had the largest number of delegates, 12.) On average the 1876 delegates were about eighteen years of age. The oldest delegate whom I found was David J. Hunter, born about 1850 in Ohio. The youngest delegate whom I found was J. Miller (or Milnor) Walmsley, born July 24, 1864 in Maryland. Hunter was about twenty-six years old, Walmsley a few weeks short of his twelfth birthday, when NAPA met in 1876.

Many of the delegates had foreign-born parents. Generally, they came from middle class families—sufficiently well-off to allow an adolescent son to participate in the amateur journalism hobby. I found no evidence that any of the delegates were persons of color.

In addition to John Winslow Snyder, William Tileston Hall served as NAPA president in 1878-79, and John Edson Briggs in 1879-80. Charles C. Heuman served as NAPA official editor in 1877-



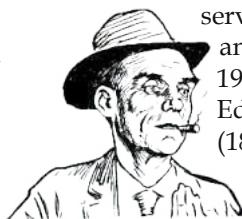
William Tileston Hall John Edson Briggs

78, and John Winslow Snyder followed him in that office in 1878-79. Others of the boys served as presidents of regional amateur press associations: Delavan W. Gee, Eastern Amateur Press Association, 1878-79; William T. Hall, Western Amateur Press Association, 1877; John Winslow Snyder, Southern Amateur Press Association, 1878; James F. DuHamel, Southeastern Amateur Press Association, 1878-79.

In addition, four of the boys served as president of The Fossils: Charles C. Heuman, 1904-05; John Edson Briggs, 1909-10; James M. Beck, 1928-29; and Evan Ried Riale, 1930-31. Charles C. Heuman served two terms as Fossils editor: 1912-13 and 1929-34, while J. Austin Fynes served in the same office in 1915-



Charles C. Heuman



James Douglas Lee

28. In addition, James Douglas Lee served as Fossils librarian for two terms in 1930-31 and 1932-34. Edwin Hadley Smith (1869-1944) took over as Fossils librarian in 1935 (when the collection moved from New York City to the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia) and served for the rest of his life. Smith had a personal connection with the boys—in 1917 he married Nita Gerner (1881-1969), the daughter of Richard Gerner (1856-1885), chairman of the 1876 convention. A handsome bound set of the writings of Richard Gerner still forms part of the Library of Amateur Journalism today.

From the biographical information I was able to assemble from the census and from city directories, it was not easy to assign long-time careers for the delegates. The easiest generalization is that there was a heavy concentration of delegates in journalism, whether as writers, reporters, editors or publishers. In addition, allied professions like printing and advertising are represented. In the table below, I have listed some delegates under multiple occupations, when this information changed over time. In addition, I failed to find any occupa-

tional information for several delegates. In assigning occupational information, I generally weighted the 1900 and 1910 censuses heaviest, since the boys were in mid- to late-career by these years. In any case, here are the occupations that I found:

Occupation	Delegate Name(s)
Actor	Robert Watts Smiley
Advertising	Carlton Britton Case Leland Miguel Williamson
Architect	John Clifford Worthington
Author	Edgar Rexford Hoadley, Jr Robert Watts Smiley Charles Stokes Wayne
Bookbinder	Thomas J. Carter
Bookkeeper	George W. Bertron Edgar L. Doster Charles McColm
Cattle rancher	David J. Hunter
Chemist	Charles C. Heuman
Cigar maker	Frank E. Macaran
Collector	Frank A. Murtha
Dry goods	Levanus S. Kern
Editor/Publisher/Reporter/Journalist	Alexander Robert Black John Edson Briggs Charles Britton Case John W. Count James Austin Fynes, Jr. Delavan Wells Gee William Tileston Hall William Henry Siviter Louis Jefferson Clawson Spruance Frederick Boyd Stevenson Harry D. Stillman
Engineer	Richard Gerner
Farmer	Frederick Clement Kendall
Fruit grower	Louis Jefferson Clawson Spruance
Government clerk	Clarence Gale Allen John Edson Briggs John Hosey Correl Kendall
Grain dealer/salesman	Amedee Berthold Cole Charles H. Willcox
Hotel keeper	William Samuel Hawk
Insurance	Evan Ried Riale Lemuel Towers, Jr.
Investments	Amadee Berthold Cole
Laborer	Jeremiah Guilford White
Lawyer	James Montgomery Beck James Frances DuHamel Frank Osgood McCleary John C. S. Richardson John Winslow Snyder William Warren Winslow

Missionary Elmer Ernest Count
 Moulder Millard F. Peterson
 Musician Mulford Byron Tausig
 Paper & photographic goods John Miller Walmsley
 Physician Charles Clifton Royce
 Printer Harry E. Boudinot
 John W. Count
 John J. Farrell
 Publicity Lee, James Douglas
 Real estate Cole, Nathan Jr.
 William Samuel Hicks
 Salesman Charles Edgar Chalfant
 George Nathan Hicks
 Stockbroker Bennett Wasserman
 Upholsterer Frank K. Vondersmith
 (Occupation not known) Willis H. Allen
 John D. Brandt
 Dudley A. T. Cross
 John E. Doherty
 William Thomas Hoppe
 Thomas A. Hunt
 George Hatton Spencer Jones
 William E. Leaning
 W. E. Thompson
 John G. Wilson



James M. Beck

The most famous of the boys of 1876 was Philadelphia attorney James Montgomery Beck (1861-1936). He served as U.S. District Attorney (1888-92, 1896-1900), U.S. Solicitor General (1921-25) and U.S. Congressman (1927-34); he also authored numerous works.

Many of the boys remained objects of legend within the amateur journalism community. Charles C. Heuman was so well known for misspeaking, that the phrase "To Err Is Heuman" originated with him.

When The Fossils hosted a fiftieth anniversary celebration for the boys at the Poor Richard Club in Philadelphia on July 3, 1926, ten were able to attend: James Montgomery Beck, John Edson Briggs, James Francis DuHamel, James



James DuHamel

Austin Fynes, Charles Christian Heuman, John Hosey, James Douglas Lee, Evan Ried Riale, Robert Watts Smiley and William Warren Winslow. The last surviving delegate is generally acknowledged to have been James Francis DuHamel, who died in Washington, District

of Columbia on Oct. 27, 1947, at the age of eighty-nine. The first of the boys to die may have been John D. Brandt who died in Philadelphia on Aug. 30, 1878, aged twenty-one. Other early decedents (before 1900) included William Thomas Hoppe, who died in Westminster, Maryland on July 11, 1880, aged nineteen, Thomas J. Carter, who died in Philadelphia on Jan. 24, 1883, aged about twenty-four, Richard Gerner, who died in Heston, England in July-



William Leaning

August 1885, aged about twenty-nine, William E. Leaning, who died in Gloversville, New York on May 15, 1890, aged thirty-three, and Jeremiah Guilford White, who died in Washington, D.C. on Sept. 2, 1893, aged thirty-four.

It is not easy to establish basic biographical data for some of the delegates, based on the limited information contained in Spencer's list. I failed to find dates of death for Willis H. Allen, Harry E. Boudinot, John E. Doherty, Edgar L. Doster, John J. Farrell, David J. Hunter, Charles McColm, Frank A. Murtha, John C. S. Richardson and Harry D. Stillman. I failed to find dates of birth or of death for Thomas A. Hunt, W. E. Thompson and John G. Wilson—in essence, I could not identify any of these three men from the information provided by Spencer. I summarized my findings in an Excel spreadsheet which I would be happy to share with readers upon request. Of course, I would have undoubtedly done better if I had had a library of amateur materials (particularly THE FOSSIL) available to me. I donated my own collection to University of Iowa Special Collections. I am grateful to David Tribby for assistance researching James Douglas Lee and John Hosey.

One of the most famous amateur journalists whom I met in the course of my own career in the hobby was Harold Segal, who printed articles of mine on Herbert A. Clarke and James Larkin Pearson in his *Campagne*. In shaking my hand at one of the conventions I attended, Harold told me that I ought to feel honored, since I was shaking the hand that had in turn shaken

with George W. Bertron, one of the boys of 1876. So, by virtue of shaking with Harold, who had shaken with George W. Bertron, I have "boys number" of 2. (Harold's boys number, of course, was 1.) So what's your boys number? Since the last survivor of the boys did not die until 1947, I suppose it is possible that we still have with us someone, like Harold, with boys number 1.

It's a shame that no photograph was taken of the assembled delegates at NAPA's founding convention in 1876. To tell the truth, finding time in the busy schedule for such an endeavor would probably have been difficult. Finding enough young men willing to spend \$1 or more to have a group photograph made to them might also have posed a challenge.

In any case, with sufficient research using amateur magazines, genealogy websites and other resources like Find-A-Grave, it should be possible to assemble a partial gallery of erstwhile delegates. But the images will probably be from later in their lives, not the images of their youthful selves as they were during that torrid summer of so many years ago.

While there were amateur journalists before them, today we nevertheless regard them as founders, not only of NAPA, but of the hobby as a whole. Some of them were probably disconnected from the hobby in their later lives. A few (like Richard Gerner) probably wanted nothing to do with it. But I suspect that a solid majority realized that they had, indeed, started something, and treasured their memories of those July days. As the 150th anniversary of the 1876 convention approaches in 2026, I hope we will see new attention focused on the boys of 1876. ♦



Bennett Wasserman



Mulford Tausig

Keeping Up With the Swift Family

by Dave Tribby

I USE a family tree on Ancestry.com to fact check articles, such as President Ken Faig's "A Family History of Viola Frances Addison" in the October 2020 issue. Viola's first husband, Edwin Swift, was a prominent amateur journalist of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. His inclusion in my tree caught the attention of Susan Ford, who provided some family stories:

I discovered your Amateur Journalists tree as I was researching my husband's grandfather, George Ford, whose mother was Mary E. "Mamie" Dales, half sister of Edwin Booth Swift. Their mother Serena M. "Emma" Talburt lived quite a life—Louisville actress and bagnio owner, presumed dead in the 1869 steamer *Stonewall* fire on the Mississippi, and died in a Cincinnati asylum for the insane in 1900. The family includes several actors, which is why Edwin Booth Swift was named after John Wilkes Booth's brother.

Serena Talburt married at age 15 to Adam Hagan, but returned to her parents after a few months. At 16 she married Dionysius "Dion" Swift, a traveling actor from Cleveland. Their son Edwin Booth Swift was born in Louisville. Dion traveled, performing and selling Wizard Oil. In the 1860 Census, Serena and Edwin are listed in Indiana with Dion's mother Ellen Ryan Swift McCann and Ellen's son by her second marriage, William. Dion enlisted in Minnesota to fight in the Civil War, and Serena, and I suppose Edwin, moved back to Louisville where she filed for divorce. In 1862 or so, Serena connected with Major Clinton Dewitt Fitch from Paw Paw, Michigan, who was serving in Louisville. Before long she called herself "Mrs. Emma Fitch," and, after he was discharged on disability in 1863, they left for Saint Louis. They soon parted ways, and Major Fitch's family knew nothing of his whereabouts. There is a femme fatale edge to this story that, I guess, is a sign of the times.

Meanwhile, "Mrs. Emma Fitch" had two daughters, Mary born about 1865 and Lillie, born about 1866. I can't find birth records for them, but their father may be Harry/Henry Dales/Dale because they use the name Dales

or Dale in Cincinnati. (Lillie eventually switched to Swift.)

In 1869, Serena was aboard the *Stonewall* with either Major Fitch or a young clerk or with friends, depending on the story, and she was presumed to be among the dead. A later 1869 news story reported she was not dead. Another story reported that Major Fitch's family thought he was dead, but found him in terrible shape in Saint Louis, and both Major Fitch and his wife Rosanna Fitch were sent to an "insane asylum" in Jefferson City, Missouri. By the mid-1870s, Henry/Harry, Emma, Mary, and Lillie Dales, and Edwin B. Swift had moved to Cincinnati.

Meanwhile, Miranda Talburt, Serena's mother, lived in Saint Louis (1870 Census) with Edwin and Lillie, and then moved with them to Cincinnati. I can't find her in directories after 1878, so she may have died in Cincinnati.

From that point forward, Edwin B. Swift is well-documented and seems to thrive. Serena "Emma," Harry/Henry, Mary "Mamie" Dales, and Lillie Dale/Swift struggle. There are news stories of fights among themselves and others. Mary "Mamie" Dales surrendered my husband's grandfather to the Cincinnati Children's Home in 1886, and, after several false starts, he was fostered out to a family in Hartford City, Indiana. Mary "Mamie" eventually married George Frohle and had four more children, who also spent time in the Cincinnati Children's Home before the family moved to Dayton, where Mary died in 1901. Serena "Emma" Dales was sent to a Cincinnati asylum and died there in 1900. Lillie Dale had the acting bug. After moving to Cincinnati, Lillie lived sometimes with Edwin B. Swift and is listed in at least one Cincinnati directory as an actress and lived near others connected to the Cincinnati Robinson's Circus. On 28 May 1890, she gave birth to a boy, no father named, and I don't know what happened to him. By 1895, she began touring in vaudeville and burlesque shows as Viola Thorn-dyke, "The Modern Venus," posing in tableaux of famous art works. In 1902, while on tour in Chicago, Lillian Viola

Swift (as she then called herself) married Henry M. Brown (real name Martin Thurber Brown), a fellow vaudeville/burlesque actor. They performed together for several years and she then retired to his hometown, Providence, Rhode Island. He continued to perform for a while in various reincarnations of his act, returned home to Providence, and died in 1936. Lillie M. Brown died there in 1945. It's all kind of twisted to follow with various incarnations of stage names, but I've done the best I can to document it on my Ancestry tree.

■■■■■■■■■■

In this issue's President's Message, Ken notes several of the "Boys of 1876" listed in Spencer's *History* are hard to research, with no other mention in amateur journalism history references. Hoping to find additional information related to the boys, I turned to John Travis Nixon's *History of the National Amateur Press Association*, published in 1900 and available online. He reprints two accounts of the 1876 convention, one written by John Winslow Snyder in 1888 and another from the *Pacific Amateur Journal* dated July 15, 1876.

Snyder seems somewhat defensive about who was there; he lists names of the first eight who registered, "to enforce the claim that the first National convention came more nearly to being a National one, in the sense at least that it represented various and distant sections of the country... Obscure poets, authors of a single article, poets without poems and members of three weeks standing in some local club (formed for political purposes only), did not sweep this convention by that irresistible force known as the power of numerical strength."

Snyder names about half the 65 delegates. Both accounts include a name that Spencer's history does not mention: Sandusky (last name only). I couldn't find any further mention of that name in Nixon's *History*. Spencer must have had access to the earlier book when he wrote his *History of Amateur Journalism*, so I wonder if he made a correction or an omission. ♦

Webmaster Report

by Dave Tribby

THE FOSSILS' website (www.thefossils.org) came online in April 2005, making available information about amateur journalism that had been gathered by Mike Horvat, plus a description of The Fossils, a listing of the winners of the Gold Composing Stick and Russell L. Paxton awards, and issues of THE FOSSIL. Over the years additional sections have been added, such as a listing of public collections of amateur journals, information about the Library of Amateur Journalism and how to make a donation to support it, and internet links related to amateur journalism. Please drop by for a visit and see what is available.

During 2022, the site had a total of 25,741 visitors, or an average of 70 per day (not counting most of the "robots" or "spiders" that continuously search web content). This is an increase over 2021's average of 46 visitors per day.

Electronic issues of THE FOSSIL attract more readers than the print edition. The number of visitors who accessed each of the 2022 issues:

January 2022	205
April 2022	143
July 2022	136
October 2022	112

Several earlier issues had more than 190 visitor downloads during the year: July 2006 (469), July 2009 (297), April 2012 (288), January 2016 (286), October 2017 (227), and July 2005 (193).

In last year's report I noted several distinct spikes in daily traffic of over 120 visitors when an issue of THE FOSSIL or a web page was linked from another website. I didn't detect any such spikes in 2022.

There were only a few changes to the website during 2022, mainly to update links to external web pages

Time to Renew?

Many Fossil memberships come due in January. Please check the expiration date on your mailing label. If you are due before the next issue (April 2023), send your renewal dues to Secretary-Treasurer Tom Parson — and donate a few dollars extra if you would like The Fossil to continue to be printed in color. ♦



Number of visitors to The Fossils' website over two years, 2021 and 2022.

that had moved, to add some newly-found resources to the "History" section, and to add each new issue of THE FOSSIL. ♦

The Fossil

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www.thefossils.org

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Ken Faig, Jr., PRESIDENT, 2020 Chestnut Ave. Apt. 405, Glenview, IL 60025; president@thefossils.org

John Horn, 24300 Chenal Parkway, #71, Little Rock, AR 72223; jhorn@thefossils.org

David Goudsward, 5141 Second Road, Lake Worth, FL 33467; dgoudsward@thefossils.org

Appointed Officers

Official Editor: Dave Tribby, 1529 Fantail Court, Sunnyvale, CA 94087; editor@thefossils.org

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Librarian: Mike Horvat, 22275 SW 102nd Place, Tualatin, OR 97062; librarian@thefossils.org

Webmaster: Dave Tribby (contact information above)