

# 'Baltimore Sage' Dies While Asleep

BALTIMORE (AP)—H. L. Mencken, literary giant whose caustic dissent helped shape the pattern of American thought in the turbulent twenties, died quietly in his sleep Sunday.

The noted newspaperman, author, wit and critic was 75.

For half a century he brandished his pen like a broadsword slashing at fraud, deceit and ignorance where ever he thought he found them. He employed an inimitable style marked by humor, vitality, scholarship and a mock omniscience.

## Passing Quiet

His passing was as quiet as his life and writings were lusty.

Ranch Brown, Negro valet called by Mencken his "factotum," found his employer in a sleeping position in his third-floor bedroom around 8 a.m. He summoned Mencken's brother, August, when it became apparent the aging author could not be awakened.

A doctor said it was probable a blood clot had ended the life of the man dubbed "The Sage of Baltimore."

August, who was his brother's constant companion, slept in the back bedroom of the third-floor red brick rowhouse at 1524 Hollins Street, where the two men lived almost their entire lives.

## No Noise

"If there had been a struggle, I'd have heard it. I'm a light sleeper," August said.

Just last night, Mencken and his brother entertained Louis Cheslock, an old friend and member of the famed "Saturday Night Club" of Baltimore.

"We talked a little and had a couple of drinks and Harry, the family nickname, seemed to be in pretty good health and spirits," August said.

Mencken's last public statement was in an exclusive Associated Press story last Friday about a forgotten manuscript he had put together in 1948. It was resurrected and sent to publisher Alfred Knopf to be issued next May under the title "Minority Report." It will contain his last public utterances. He suffered a stroke later in that same year and had been unable to read or write since.

"It will be nice being denounced again," he said cheerfully as he discussed the manuscript last Wednesday night.

## Stories Provide Trip

August disclosed Sunday that newspaper stories about the book had provided his brother with an appropriate ticket to Valhalla. "Already, somebody wrote in denouncing the book," he said. "Harry was delighted."

Mencken began his career at the age of 19 as a cub reporter on the now defunct Baltimore Herald.

He joined the Baltimore Sunpapers in 1906 and wrote for them on and off for the next 42 years. He was a former member of the board of directors of the Sunpapers.

## Founded American Mercury

In 1924, along with George Jean Nathan and Knopf he founded the American Mercury Magazine. The brilliant publication gave him a platform for his views for years and through it he helped such authors as Sinclair Lewis and Theodore Dreiser along the road to fame.

Survivors besides his brother, August, include a brother, Charles Mencken, who resides in Pittsburgh, and a sister, Anna Gertrude, who lives in Baltimore.

# Fire, Panic Kills 11 At Baltimore Party

BALTIMORE (AP)—Fire and panic raged through a church party south of here Sunday night killing at least 11 of a milling, scrambling crowd of about 1,000 and bringing injury to some 227. Three of the dead were children and seven were women.

Ten of the bodies were at a funeral home in nearby Glen Burnie. It wasn't immediately known where the 11th had been taken. Nor had the sex and age been determined.

Dr. Gustav Flaubert, Anne Arundel county's deputy medical examiner, said one of the children appeared to be about 15 years old, a second was between 8 and 12 and the third in the 8-10 range.

## Hospitals Treat 127

The Red Cross said 110 persons had been treated and released at eight Baltimore hospitals and another 17 were admitted. Firemen estimated another 100 had been treated at the scene.

The blaze broke out at 5:15 p.m. just 45 minutes before an oyster roast was supposed to end. A spokesman for St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church, which sponsored the event, said 1,200 tickets had been sold.

By 8 p.m. the flames were out but a huge pall of smoke hung over the building, a brick structure with a quonset type roof. The one-story building was 75x100 feet in length.

Lt. Charles Doegen, of the Brooklyn fire department, said the bodies were near a series of windows.

Firemen were hampered in their search by the rubble caused by the fallen roof, melted and twisted metal chairs and sodden materials.

A four-inch carpet of ashes covered the smoldering ruins.

The American Red Cross in Washington rushed 200 pints of whole blood and 100 units of serum albumin to bolster supplies available here, if needed.

## Eden Arrives Here For Treaty Talks

WASHINGTON (AP)—Chairman George (D-Ga.) of the Senate foreign relations committee Sunday forecast differences between President Eisenhower and British Prime Minister Eden over any new treaty role for the United States in the Middle East.

Eden arrives here Monday for a round of talks in search of a unified countermove to Russia's new political-economic offensive. Arab-Israeli contention and maneuvers by Russia to spread its influence in the Middle East present a crucial problem for the Eisenhower-Eden talks.

George said in a television interview that the issues "will be most difficult."

He said one possible Eden proposition may be that the United States become an "active party" to the Bagdad Pact. But he said he does not believe the United States would agree.

This country supported the five-nation pact as a link in the Free World's chain of alliances from Europe to Asia. Secretary of State Dulles said recently, however, that the United States would consider active membership only when it appeared that this would strengthen the security of the Middle East.

The front of the building contained a milk bar and cloak room for persons using the hall. It occupied a space about 50 by 20 feet. Adjacent to it was a small cocktail lounge.

The windows were of steel frame, about 18 by 30 inches, just small enough to give trouble to a portly person attempting to use them as escape exits.

## Front and Rear Doors

There was one door at the front and garage-type doors at the rear. The rear door, about 12 feet wide and 9 feet high, was near the windows and the pile of dead.

The door was never opened.

Chief Harry K. Lasier of the Anne Arundel county fire prevention bureau, said the fire apparently started in the kitchen. The exact cause was not known.

A total of 32 pieces of fire equipment from Baltimore city, Anne Arundel and Baltimore counties answered the general alarm call of the fire.

The confusion inside the jammed hall was made worse as families tried to get together before making an escape. They created what one survivor called "a sea of panicked humanity."

Oyster roasts are festive occasions native to the Chesapeake Bay area. Oysters raw, frittered, stewed—every way but roasted—are consumed. Usually, there is other food and liquid refreshments.

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# Operation Deepfreeze Starts

LITTLE AMERICA V, Antarctic (AP)—Three weeks ago this main base of Operation Deepfreeze was two olive drab tents lost in a gently undulating sea of snow.

It looks then as if it could be blown away in the first blizzard.

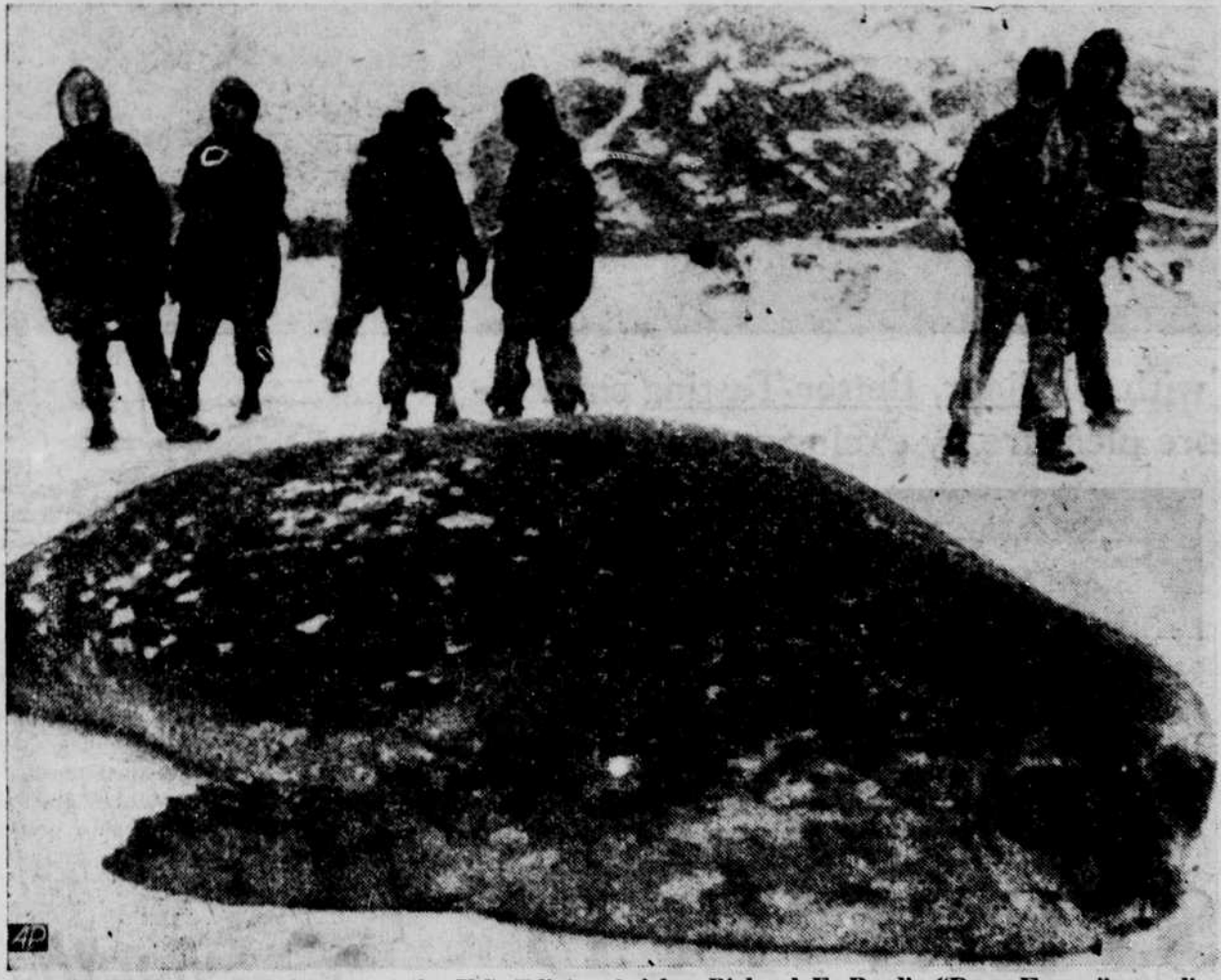
Today it's a bustling community of 12 buildings with a working population of 140, lost

in the same sea of snow. With its uniformly low flat orange buildings the base looks like a low cost housing development planned by an architect with a passion for oversize shoe boxes.

But what the camp lacks in chic it makes up in durability. It is well-heated, lighted and provisioned with acres of food and equipment surrounding the buildings. All in all the base looks

well dug in for the worst the Antarctic winter night can offer.

With seven more buildings scheduled to go up, Little America is expected to be self-sustaining within a week. Thus it is much further along than the expedition's second base, 400 miles to the west, at McMurdo Sound, where changing ice conditions delayed cargo unloading.



MEMBERS OF THE CREW of the U.S. Edisto of Adm. Richard E. Byrd's "Deep Freeze" expedition to the Antarctic approach a huge sea lion taking its ease on the ice. This picture is one of the first to reach the United States from the expedition. (NBC News Photo from (AP) Wirephoto)

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