I

He's a funny old hound:
His butt's in the air and his nose is down.
Ain't no telling what he thinks he's found.
He wuffles and he snuffles and he's going to town!
There's a rabbit in his head -- it's not on the ground --
And he'll keep on going 'till he runs it down.
He's a funny old hound.

II

She's a sweet little pup.
Toddles around with her tail straight up.
She just wants to go, but she wants to stay:
She ends up running 'round ever' which way.
Big little bark says she wants to play,
but when you reach down for her, she runs away.
She just can't get her mind made up,
but she's a sweet little pup.
III

He's the boy's best friend,
But what do you do when boys become men?

When he was a pup he was the pick of the litter,
    He was half pointer and half Irish setter,
But all bird dog! He'd flush a grasshopper
    And point a daddy cardinal or an old candy wrapper,
But that was OK for a boy of nine:
    The boy named him "Lucky" and liked him just fine.
    He had a new friend.

When Lucky was seven it was all curves and curls
    And what's a dog do when his boy discovers girls?
There's still some Sundays, and summertime's something
    For a boy and a dog and "Let's go huntin'!"
    Still the boy's best friend.

When Lucky was nine, his boy was in school,
    And it's "No Dogs Permitted" there -- that's the rule.
And when he was home there were friends and study
    And not much time for his old best buddy,
    Who missed his old friend.

Now Lucky's fourteen, and the old bones creak,
    And his friend's a Marine, but he's home for the week,
and they're out in the pasture, and he's young again,
    And he'll point up a bobwhite for his old best friend:
    Still the boy's best friend.
IV

He's a tough little fellow.
Can't rightly say if he's brown or yellow.

Morgan says he's a Corgi, but I wouldn't bet money.
Well -- that little fellow may look sort of funny,
But he's got courage enough for four or five mutts.
He likes to hunt rattlesnakes. How's that for guts?

He'll take a snake up behind the head,
And shake it once or twice 'till it's dead,
Then drag it on home and leave it by the pen
For Morgan to find, 'cause Morgan's his friend.

He'll lose one someday. He won't lose two.
Guess he'll go out doin' what he loves to do.
I can think of worse than that, how 'bout you?
Yeah, that little dog is a rattlesnake killer,
Real tough little fellow.

V

She's an odd old gal.
That big, fat brindley cat's her pal.
The dog had a litter back in seventy-nine.
Lost one pup, but the others did fine.
Then this ragged little kitten strayed up.
Wouldn't you know, she thought it was her pup?
So she squeezed it in and gave it a tit,
And the kitten pushed and shoved 'till it fit
Right in. Grew up to be the old dog's pal.
The dog's skinny, now. The cat's got fat.
That heap by the fireplace. There they sit,
The old cocker spaniel and her buddy the cat.
She's an odd old gal.
VI

She's a working lady.
If there's critters to herd, you better know she's ready.

She's a pretty little thing, all black and white.
She's a border collie, and she knows what's right.
Keep those critters all herded up tight.
Don't let a single one out of your sight.

A border's got to herd-- that's how they're bred.
There's herding born into that silky head.
If you don't give her work, well, she doesn't mind --
She'll just take to herding whatever she can find.

She's got a little flock: two kids and a cat.
They're four and two and a little less than that.
She herds 'em and keeps 'em up close in the yard.
She knows how to do it. It's not even hard.

When the little girl tries to wander away,
There's a workin' lady to get her to stay.
The one thing she can't quite handle's the cat
When he goes up a tree. She's stumped by that.

And she's always on the job. She's a mighty steady,
Hard-workin' lady.

VII

He's a ragged old bum:
God knows what he'll do when winter's come.
A few years back, he was just a pup:
Cute ball of fuzz, some folks picked him up,
Well, now, before you could fall off a log,
That cute little pup grew up to a dog.
And they didn't want a dog -- so the let him go stray,
And now he lives from day to day.
He'll eat -- if there's something in that garbage can.
Well, who said a dog's best friend is a man?
It'll be hard times when the cold months come,
For that ragged old bum.
Mac gets lonely some days, 
when the Colonel's gone from the house, and he stays. 
Mac's a big ol' springer, mostly chocolate brown 
With a square white nose and freckles all around.

Mac's a country dog. Didn't get on well 
When he lived in town, so his people tell. 
So they put an ad: "Good dog needs home, 
With plenty of room to run and roam."

Mac's a dog, knows when he's got good luck. 
When the Colonel came by in his pickup truck, 
Although he never met the Colonel before, 
Mac jumped right in when he opened the door.

Now Mac and the Colonel go ever'where:  
Down to the harbor for the afternoon air,  
Out on the boat when the fishin's good,  
Evenin's, back to the house in the wood.

But the Colonel's got some business to do. 
He'll get a call -- just a day or two -- 
Mac's a one-man dog. He'll sorrow and pine  
'Till the Colonel's back, and then he's fine. 
And that's why Mac gets lonely sometimes.
IX

He's a government sniffer,
An official agent, a customs whiffer.

Some folks bring fruit to the USA
That might not be safe, the regulations say.
His job is to stop that contraband fruit.
He's equipped with a standard-issue beagle snoot.

He's the only cop on the customs detail
Who's always friendly, and wags his tail,
But who'd have thought a sweet dog like that
Would turn out to be a government rat?

He works real cheap -- just room and board
And a doggy treat for his reward,
And he's 'most always right -- now who would differ
With a government sniffer?
X

She's a little white bandit.
If she can't steal it she'll demand it.
If she can't have it she just can't stand it,
And she'll do whatever she has to, to land it.

She's a French breed of dog -- a "bichon frise."
That means "fluffy lap dog," easy as you please.
And she's plumb spoiled rotten, just like all of Daddy's pets.
Whatever Daddy's got, Little Bandit gets.

When Daddy has a snack, she's right by his chair,
Barkin' and cryin' to get her share.
When Daddy's at the dinin' table, she's right there.
Momma doesn't like it, but Daddy doesn't care.

If there's meat on the counter, you know it's not safe:
She can jump like a Kangaroo and run like a thief.
And she'll get away with the dastardly act,
'cause she's got an "accessory after the fact."

Momma may holler, but the dog won't unhand it,
'Cause she knows her Daddy will understand it.
She's his little bandit.

XI

He's a proud big guy:
When he goes for a Frisbee you'd think he could fly.
He owns that Frisbee. It's one he found.
He carries it with him all around.
He lives on the Campus. He eats pretty well.
The kids on the Campus, they all treat him swell.
He's nobody's dog, but he's ever'body's pal:
Throw that Frisbee of his, and he'll be yours for a while.
He's a pro athlete. He can reach for the sky,
and he's a proud big guy.
XII

She's named Vanessa -- a Painted Lady.
Like a true Painted Lady, she's pretty, but shady.
She hasn't a care and she hasn't a fear,
but a tricolor tail and a spot on her ear
make a pretty little picture for a bundle of sin:
just open the fridge, and bingo! She's in!
There isn't a slipper that isn't bitten --
there isn't a neighbor who isn't smitten!
She'll steal your heart -- and gnaw it to rags,
and then she'll start right in on your legs!
If there's evil to do she's up and she's ready,
this Painted Lady.
Striders
1959-64

When I was still at the age of awe,
on a willow-rooted pool I saw
those wonders, water-striders there
that walk where the water meets the air.

And on the surface of the sky
yesterday I saw pin-point high,
sky-striders that left behind a wake
of clouds like stiders on a lake.

Daffodils
about 1959

The chimney stands half-broken, bleak among the pine
sheltered by a great pine-tree I planted with my hands.
When it was a tiny sapling, the land about was mine
I died when it was head-high, and was buried ’neath my lands.

Around my broken hearth the towhead daffodils are now,
clustered as my towhead children clustered once before,
and as when I’d look upon my children from my plow,
I watch the flowers stirring as the wind arises more.

The flowers cluster ’round my hearth, but there no children play,
and weeds and underbrush, no crops, enjoy my life-rich loam,
and as my children’s children now are grown and gone away,
my lonely ashes lie beneath the ashes of my home.
Mau-i
about 1962

Well, then, Mau-i, you too learned it
digger of lakes, Fisher of lands,
greatest of men, you could not do it,
so you died on death’s own strand.

Stole death’s heart as he lay sleeping
while your wild-friends watched you try
’till the sea-bird’s joyful peeping
woke the monster -- you must die.

Many like you, men of power
try to conquer death alone,
hope to hold in thrall, their hour,
all the world, and they have known.

Death our last and greatest master
claims the best at last his own,
just as the sea-bird’s joyful laughter
killed the finest hero known.
Stand Like the Willow
About 1962

Stand like the willow, bend with the wind.
Never be broken but never give way.
for strength belongs to those who bend,
and who will not bend will not last the day.

Stand like the willow by the pond,
stretch to the sky, bow to the rain,
when the wind comes vagabond,
bend with the wind and stand up again.
Stand like the willow, bend with the wind.

As when the willful wind comes prying,
the willow bows but does not fall,
and will not break for all wind’s trying,
bow like her, and then stretch tall.
Never be broken, but never give way.

The willow stands, and gives new shoots,
and when the winds of next year bawl,
find a forest of willows, with good, strong roots,
and not a one needs bend at all.
For strength belongs to those who bend.

But the solid oak stands to the wind
and will not give an inch or foot
It breaks -- because it will not bend
and leaves behind a barren root.
And who will not bend will not last the day.

Stand like the willow, bend with the wind.
Never be broken but never give way.
for strength belongs to those who bend,
and who will not bend will not last the day.
Santa Anna, Texas
August, 1963

I saw a great sentry-dog resting,
and nestled between it’s paws trusting,
   safe where he had crept,
      a tiny kitten slept.

A second time I saw it;
at first I did not know it.
   It was a tiny town,
      below a hill laid down.

The hill four hundred feet above,
looked down in stony, doglike love,
   and like a cat, the little town
      lay at its feet, and wrapped around.
Undine  
Summer 1964

If sea and sky were gray and polarized  
and you and I as in a photograph,  
in gray and black, as summarized  
on glossy-finish paper, and as still,  
If it were so, I heard you laugh.

I realized  
the sky was lavender, the sea was green,  
the sand was cold, the wind was flat and chill.  
and dune-grass grew in water-color strands  
and oil-paint cirrus laced the sky in bands,  
and Japanese-tempera breakers rose in swells  
and leaned against the tile-mosaic bank  
and broke into pontillist glasssy bells  
that exited in draftsman’s file and rank.  
Thus materialized  
your laugh, Undine.

Untitled  
about 1964

In gambling, in the thought of suicide,  
the vertigo of hurling from a height,  
there wells up from the belly, all blade-bright  
a fear-and-pleasure alloy, close-allied.  
And if the cliff and knife call so to me,  
what of the saint who sleeps upon his tomb,  
the hero who braves gunfire recklessly?  
So the spirit flutters round it’s doom,  
and if the self is given, it is lost,  
and this the moth-self willfully would do.  
So: when the lance and nails accounted cost,  
did He hot feel this same temptation too?
A Doughty Maid
1968-72

Ah, once there was a doughty maid: she put a saber on
and rode away from her father’s stead, and from her father’s sons,
Saying “I’ll not let my girdle loose, nor the saber from my hand,
nor will I wed with any lad, till I have freed my land.”

Her brothers, shamed, followed her, with horses and with arms.
They rode the land from height to strand and called the steads and farms.
Then twenty doughty lads there were: they robbed a caravan,
and took back what the conqueror had stolen from the land.

Her father, shamed, rode a mule, and took a carabine,
and took a dozen mountain-men up to the mountain-line,
and when the soldiers crossed the pass to reprimand the poor,
no more than half, unwounded men, came to the valley floor.

There were two hundred mounted men: they paid for their provender
with cash from several caravans that they had dared to plunder.
There were some quarters where the folk now paid no tax at all,
to the conqueror, but lodged the lads, when they would come to call.

There were a thousand armed men, no more the enemy.
There was a mighty battle on the plain before the sea.
The tide ran red: the wounded lay and bled beside the slain:
but the conqueror was routed, and never came again.

The maiden’s father lost a leg from wounding in a fall.
The maiden’s mighty brothers they were buried one and all.
The maiden lay upon the strand, pierced in her breast,
Saying “No virgin I, for here I die upon my lover’s breast.”
Appollo 13

“Cold but confident astronauts approaching”*
from translunar orbit, stricken
by a meteoric fragment
or by failure human error.
The Appollo, three times cursed
by the number of ill-fortune
bore the name of Oddyseus.
He, too, wandered lost, in legend.
He, too, came back to his homeland
where Penelope had waited
while the years passed not despairing.
(When the Vikings set out rowing
out from Iceland none awaited.
If they were stricken on the ocean
and they died their skalds died with them
and they perished unrecorded).
What a pride in backup systems
to tempt the fates by designating
as a lost afflicted warrior
a ship the thirteenth in it’s lineage!
Put down your rules and calculations
Learn the power of the symbol
man is not a mechanism

*Headline, the Bellingham Herald.
Lately I have come to live  
in an alderwoody brake  
where the mountain-passes give  
down to a granite-bottomed lake  
Ah, but I would rather be  
over the inland sea!

There the sky is lead and brass  
and crawls like molten metal can  
The sea appears a solid mass  
and something airy like a man  
could walk upon the waves and flee  
over the inland sea.

I’d run down alleys paved with glass  
between the islands, where the light  
of evening comes like poison gas  
from where the sun lies out of sight  
venting it slowly to the lee  
over the inland sea.

There’s a land where things are real.  
A man’s a wraith, a man’s a shade  
Would not a twilight-creature feel  
the sunshine like a tempered blade?  
Now will you dare to come with me  
over the inland sea?
Please, Don't Step on my Blue Suede Hat
about 1970

I have this blue suede leather hat. It's warm and dry and nifty. I got it to keep my glasses dry. It set me back thirteen-fifty. The only thing about it is that it's aerodynamically lifty. It wants to fly right off my head whenever the winds get shifty.

I used to wear my stockin' cap whenever the wind got gusty, but raindrops on my glasses made my vision less than trusty. A canvas fishing cap up top which had a brim, was just first rate but it was so tight around my head it made my nose and ears inflate.

So here I am chasing my hat again, through field and fountain, swamp and plain.
Roger Ashton McCain Sr. 1890-1971 RIP

Now, rein in your stallion and go down and get your hound. The ride is done, the hunt is done, the fox is gone to ground.

He was a crafty quarry and he had a garland tail. He gave us quite a pretty chase, but good hounds never fail.

Their eyes are fire, their claws are steel, their voice is like a bell, their legs are half as long as trees. They are the hounds of hell.

If a skin will fetch a penny then it’s what a fox is worth. But never mind, the hunt’s the thing. The fox is gone to earth.
A Lament of Gastritis
about 1976

Ah, how I used to spend my days
In labor fruitful
and then go home and take my ease
and get a snootful.
But now my tummy's on the blink
and feeling fretful:
I hardly ever take a drink
and never get full.

I drank my cup of bitter bile
(the doctors call it barium)
and had my X-ray taken -- smile! --
to light up my interium.

Despite me moral turpitude
they found no ulcer there at all.
I feel a proper gratitude,
but one detail remains, to gall:

"No booze for you. Your liver's fat
as any European goose,"
the doctor said, and more than that,
"From now on out, you're off the juice."

When now and then I sneak a belt
in movements furtive,
I know the cost that will be felt
in organs hurtive.
And if I ever pull the tap
and get a headfull,
my liver and my conscience zap
me something dreadful!
Ballade: All Who Love Know Sorrow
1980

A wise man said that love's unwise:
a bargain with time and shadow,
and time corrodes all that we prize.
The bride forebodes the widow,
the friend of youth in dust is laid,
and all the cheer we borrow
is doubled and doubled when repaid,
and all who love know sorrow.

When you and I as fond allies
could halt all melancholy,
our pressing lips and loving eyes
were no account of folly,
but now I pay with wept goodbyes
and you are earth tomorrow.
Farewells are born in love's young sighs
and all who love know sorrow.

Friends and lovers are soon away
and even life is fleeting.
Strength and youth will never stay.
Parting's the cost of meeting.
What fool would say to pleasure, "Nay,
since time's accounts are thorough?"
They're poorer still who will not pay
though all who know love sorrow.

l'envoi: On every breeze a summer flies
and all, forgot tomorrows.
Yet never was quoted a cheaper price
than "all who love know sorrow."
News item:  Canada geese, protected and fed, have multiplied to the point of becoming a year-round nuisance in some parts of New Jersey.

(To be sung to the tune of the Canadian national anthem, "Oh, Canada.")

Oh, Canadas: our homely native goose,
Though edible, you're no other earthly use.
In summertime, all geese should go to the "True North, Strong and Free,"
But all year round, through goose manure we tread most carefully!
God keep the geese -- gloriously free --
In Canada and far away from me!
Oh, Canadas, we scrape our boots for thee!

The Biochemist's Toast

1986?

Now you all know that I'm not one
to moralize and preach
but now I raise my glass in praise
of C$_2$H$_5$OH!

Feed me any other stuff,
you'll find me slow and balky,
but I'll come running quick enough
for a drop of ethyl alkie!

So shelve your distilled H$_2$O
and shove your NH$_3$
and pour another ounce or so
of lab alcohol for me.

Chorus:
It's tax exempt. It's used for "research."
It makes you stagger. It makes you lurch.
It eats your liver. It makes you belch.
So pour some lab alkie for me, or elsh!
A True Story
1986

I put black plastic on my pepper patch
To keep the soil moist and warm
And keep it covered, so I don't have to scratch
Out weeds every morning from my little pepper farm

Last week I put the black plastic down
And two mallard ducks came waddling round.
You could watch their ducky little minds go round:
They couldn't quite make out just what they'd found.

It was black and shiny, a little like water.
When the wind blew over, it would ripple and flutter,
'Til one duck said, with a quack and a waddle,
"I think I'll just take a swim in this puddle."

So he waddled right out and set down his boat:
But nothing much happened -- he just didn't float!
The other flapped over, expecting a splash,
But nothing much happened -- it just wouldn't wash.

They must have thought, "What's wrong with this stuff?"
"It's not very much like water -- it's tough!"
So one gave up and he left at a waddle,
But the other one -- well, he started to paddle!

He knew how to do it -- he had the knack:
One webfoot at a time, front to back.
But that won't work on a black plastic sheet.
The only thing that moved was his feet.

I laughed at that duck, 'til I thought it through.
It's something that could happen to me or you,
If we dive right in when things seem familiar.
We might end up doing something even sillier.

Don't laugh at a duck on a black plastic sheet --
He's no more confused than some people you meet.
Geese on the Grass, Alas
1986

There's no bird quite like your Canada Goose:
He's tall and good-lookin', but he's not much use.
Oh, you could eat one, and 'e'd taste just fine,
but here they're protected, and the law draws the line.

Now a public lake or an industrial pond
Is a place of which a goose could grow fond,
And a goose may be silly, but he's not really dumb.
Give 'em food and protection and -- Whoosh! -- here they come.

Now, a goose should go north in the summer time --
Fly to Canada. That's where they got their name!
But here in New Jersey, as it's often been found,
You've geese under foot about all year round.

They're big and stubborn and hard to shoo.
They just keep on doin' what it is that geese do.
They don't read signs that say "keep off the grass"
And they leave behind -- evidence -- where-ever they pass.

Walking through the habitat of Canada Gooses
Gives us good reason for scraping our shoeses.
Big Day Blues
1986

It's May 17 and I'm a total wreck.
I've got birder's lumbago and warbler neck.
I fell in the swamp and I've got a cough.
I held my binox till my forearms fell off.

I've been driving since one like a bat out of hell:
My accelerator leg is starting to swell.
One foot feels like molten lead,
and the other one is just about dead.

I threw my neck out when a hawk flew above,
I wrecked my car for a damned rock dove,
that knee-brace there was an alder flycatcher.
Now, why in hell did I become a bird-watcher?

I'envoi: Prince, if I seem a little quizzical,
I heard someone say that birding isn't physical.
Garbage
Sung to the tune of "Boll Weevil." (1988?)

Oh, the Break of Day is a garbage barge,  
come from up by Long Island Sound.  
Went all the way down to Belize,  
then had to turn around:  
Just a-lookin' for a dump!  
Just a-lookin' for a dump!

That garbage barge is like an old hound-dog  
that goes from stump to stump,  
Waitin' until he's all alone,  
just a-lookin' for a place to dump!  
Just a-lookin' for a dump!  
Just a-lookin' for a dump!

I had a baked potato last night  
and I threw the skin away.  
Now it's a hot potato  
floatin' out on New York Bay!  
Just a-lookin' for a dump!  
Just a-lookin' for a dump!

The Garbage Man got a mighty rough job,  
and he sure works long and hard,  
'Cause ever'body says, "You dump it somewhere,  
but not in my backyard!"  
Just a-lookin' for a dump!  
Just a-lookin' for a dump!

One of these days, if we just keep on  
-- and don't you know we will!  
We can put a sign on the whole damned world  
that says "Sanitary Landfill!"  
And we'll find that dump!  
It'll all be a dump!
Paranoia

About 1993 – Sung to the tune of “Amapola, the Pretty Little Poppy”

Paranoia, those funny little fears
That trouble me for years and years
Incessantly.

Paranoia, I really don’t enjoy yah,
You complicate my daily life
Incredibly.

I’m afraid of falling over
On the street I run for cover
And I never trust my lover,
Though she treats me just fine;

And I know that people hate me
Lie about me and berate me
Laugh at me and always slight me
Behind my back all the time!

Paranoia, those funny little fears
Have troubled me for years
And years gone by.

Paranoia! Paranoia!
How I fear that all my fears
Are paranoid!
Four Metaphysical Poems
1991-3

1. The Paradox of Joy

Like the sparrow, quick to fly
There is joy in all we know:
in the vastness of the sky,
in the perfect morning snow.

Joy unbounded -- not unending:
in an instant flown away.
All our seeking, close attending
somehow cannot make it stay.

Like the sparrow, high above
all the sorrows on the ground
on the wings of bounding love,
there the joy is to be found.

Like the sparrow, tiny, gray,
hidden among the bigger things:
there the joyful moments lie.
There the joyful sparrow sings.

Like a sparrow, hidden deep
in the brushlands of the mind
lies the joy we dare not seek:
if we seek it, never find.

Be the sparrow! Fly away
when the holy moments come!
Be the joy, and never stay.
Make the Secret Place your home.
2. A SEA OF WORDS

When we are small, and when we learn to speak,
we set ourselves upon a Sea of Words,
and as the sea can nourish folk with food,
so too the Sea of Words can nourish minds.
And as the sea can bear us forth from home
to countries new to us and sometimes strange,
the Sea of Words can bear us forth also
to minds and wisdom other than our own,
and on beyond, to lands no eye has seen.
But as the sea can toss us on its waves
and tax us with the tempest and the fog,
the Sea of Words can vex us equally,
with falsehood, thoughtless, windy talk and worse,
with fog of wild conjecture, hope and fear
as empty as the words that bring them here.
And as the sea can bear us down below
to drown and rot among the wrack beneath,
so too the Sea of Words can bear us down,
as when we say, “I know no words for this,
and so it cannot be, it must be wrong.”
And so we see a newborn insight die,
drowned in a Sea of Words. And so it is
whenever we go away from home by sea,
we leave the sea as soon as we arrive,
setting our feet on shore. And so again,
we sure must leave the Sea of Words behind
if we will set our feet on Insight’s shore,
and walk the hills of Understanding there,
and see Enlightenment’s towering peaks beyond.
3. Invocation

Creator Spirit, holy song,
sung by every mouth unknowing,
beloved grace-note, sweet and long,
ever rising, ever growing,

Song of Life, Will to Be,
Creator Spirit, sing through me!

Master Builder, demiurgos,
architect of hill and fountain,
patient of the passing epochs
all to raise the folding mountain,

Unfolding Vision, Will to Be,
Creator Spirit, build through me!

Creator Spirit, spring of peace,
from the rock of calm upwelling,
Cease from thirst and heartache’s ease
healing love beyond all telling,

As I lie dying, Will to Be,
Creator Spirit, comfort me.
4. What Use is Thought?

What use is thought? The hawk can fly, 
apotheosis of the sky, 
without a thought, one with the breeze, 
one with the world, and all she sees. 
What use is thought? The hawk can fly!

What use is thought? A fish is free 
from doubt and ambiguity. 
A tree, all thoughtless, seeks the sun 
and all is beauty, and is one, 
apotheosis of the sky.

If I am the hawk, is thought the sky 
the breeze, the wings on which I fly? 
If I am the fish, is thought the sea, 
the sun that lures me like a tree? 
Without a thought, one with the breeze.

No: Love's the lure, and then the sea 
I swim in is Creativity; 
Aspiration is the sky, 
but thoughtless, I can never fly, 
one with the world, and all she sees.

What use is thought? The question's wrong. 
What use is Love, what use a Song? 
The hawk, its wings, one entity, 
and flight its natural unity. 
and thoughts are wings to such as I.