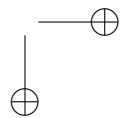
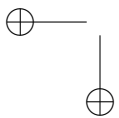
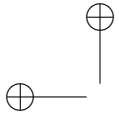


**Moments With
(and Without)
Horace**



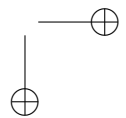
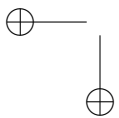


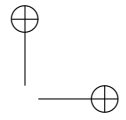
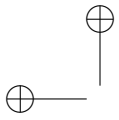


**Moments With
(and Without)
Horace**

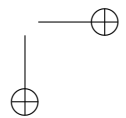
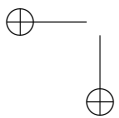
Gardner Wade Earle

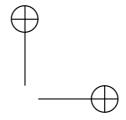
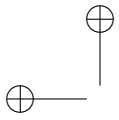
IWP



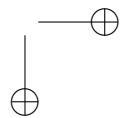
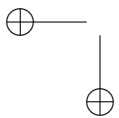


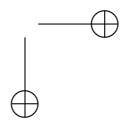
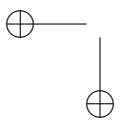
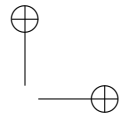
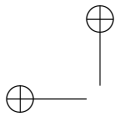
2022
First Published in 1949

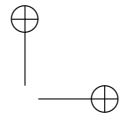




To: -
Q. H. F. AND W. M. E..

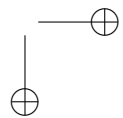
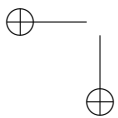


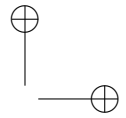




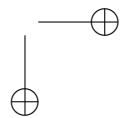
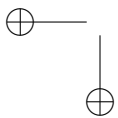
CONTENTS

<i>Prologue</i>	1
I.31 <i>Poet's Prayer</i>	2
<i>Rhymester's Request</i>	3
I.34 <i>To Myself</i>	4
<i>To a Sinner</i>	5
IV.1 <i>To Venus</i>	6
<i>Too Late</i>	7
IV.12 <i>To Virgil in Spring</i>	8
<i>To Virge After a Hard Winter</i>	9
II.7 <i>To a Friend</i>	10
<i>My Pal</i>	11
II.18 <i>Vanity of Riches</i>	12
<i>You Can't Take It With You</i>	13
I.14 <i>Ship of State</i>	14
<i>Powers that Be</i>	15
I.5 <i>To Pyrrha</i>	16
<i>I Wonder Who's Kissing Her Now</i>	17
III.21 <i>My Wine Barrel</i>	18
<i>The Old Keg</i>	19





I.11	<i>To the Present</i>	20
	<i>Time Marches On</i>	21
IV.11	<i>To Phyllis</i>	22
	<i>To Phyl</i>	23
III.17	<i>Storm Signals</i>	24
	<i>It's Gonna Rain</i>	25
IV.10	<i>To Ligurinus</i>	26
	<i>To Lig</i>	27
II.14	<i>The Inevitable</i>	28
	<i>Yuh Gotta Go</i>	29

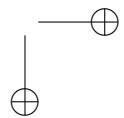
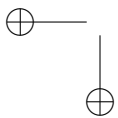


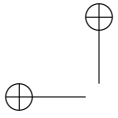


PROLOGUE

These pages
 form a book to bind
The product
 of a hopeful mind.
When gold from dross
 had been refined,
The little that
 was left behind
Is here, the ragged
 parts relined.
Please see the good
 and then be blind
To where the fruit
 is mostly rind.
At least I have
 no axe to grind;
But this I strongly
 am inclined
To say: A critic
 should be kind.

Gardner Wade Earle





1.31 *A Moment with Horace*

POET'S PRAYER

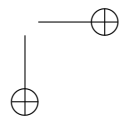
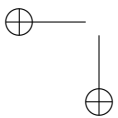
Apolo, Thou the Genius of this shrine,
To whom I pour libation from the bowl,
Give heed, I pray, to this request of mine.

I ask not for the fertile field's rich toll;
Nor herds that roam the sultry teeming plains;
Nor ivory and gold from India's far goal.

Let those who will, go seeking golden gains
From golden wine to pour from golden cup,
And trade for profit with the merchant trains.

I ask for simple herbs on which to sup,
My body sound, my mind in active health;
But this one prayer of all I offer up:

My lyre unfailing, though my age lack wealth.





Same Ode – Without Horace

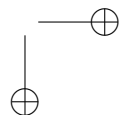
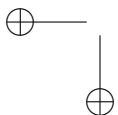
RHYMESTER'S REQUEST

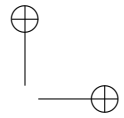
I'm askin' you, whoever runs this place,
To bend an ear. I have a song and dance
That isn't just the ordinary case.

Let anyone who wants to take a chance
Make dough from raisin' grain or fruit or stock,
Or wine to sell from juicy grapes he plants.

Give some one else the stuff to fill his sock
By tradin' with the buyers out-of-town.
I wouldn't board a ship that leaves the dock.

But, be a Pal, and never let me down –
I only want some health, an active mind,
And this, above Augustus Caesar's crown:
A rhyme! A rhyme! Ye little gods, be kind!





1.34 *A Moment with Horace*

TO MYSELF

(Parcus deorum cultor et infrequens)

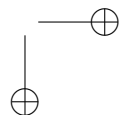
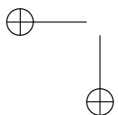
The gods yet live. They may have different names
With changing faces for a modern time,
But acolytes are tending sacred flames.

Desertion of the altars is a crime
Demanding still a votive sacrifice
When rings the summons of the temple chime.

Philosophy and Sophistry suffice
When skies are clear and Pleasure has her sway,
Or Reason gives my doubting soul advice.

But when the clouds are minatory gray
Avenging Fate is cloaked behind their pall.
While voice of Jove is heard in thunder play

I cower, waiting where the bolt will fall!





Same Ode – Without Horace

TO A SINNER

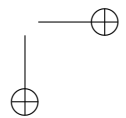
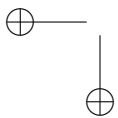
(Who ain't been to church lately)

Ye gods and little fishes, here am I,
But where are you? Or am I nuts to think
You took your fingers from this old mud pie?

Sometimes when I have had too much to drink
I get a feelin' you ain't all the bunk,
In spite of fuss and ceremonial stink.

At least, I guess I'm not completely sunk
In trusting to the philosophic dope
That figures reason cannot all be junk.

Oh well, you never catch me in a mope
When days are bright and all the world is swell.
But am I brave when thunder crashes? NOPE!
I hide 'n plug my ears 'n PRAY LIKE HELL!





iv.1 *A Moment with Horace*

TO VENUS

Now spare me, Goddess; I am growing old.

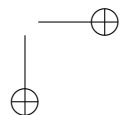
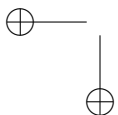
Two score and ten long years have left me weak
For tumults you engender in the bold.

O Mother cruel, of soft desires, go seek
Young Paulus Maximus, a lusty swain,
Whose strength and beauty now are at their peak.

Have him to cense your altars who would fain
Erect your image at the Alban Lake,
And celebrate your rites with youthful train.

But tell me, fair one, why – if thus I make
Denial – why do tears my cheek bedew?

Why do glib words my fluent tongue forsake?
Tell why these arms, in dreams, are clasping you?





Same Ode – Without Horace

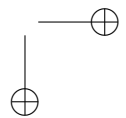
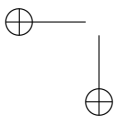
TOO LATE

Now beat it, Venus; I am past my prime.
A chap of fifty can't be out at nights
To chase a skirt. Besides, I haven't time.

You got my goat, I must admit by rights,
So often that it isn't any joke.
I've had my share of lovin' – and of fights.

Go grab some younger, dumb, hot-blooded bloke
Who's fool enough to think you're just the stuff;
And try to find one not entirely broke.

But wait! I guess my "ancient" squawk was bluff;
It makes me weep to think of quittin' now.
Once more I'll neck a dame an' treat 'er rough.
So, park your swans, – I'll show you *what* – and *how*!





iv.12 *A Moment with Horace*

TO VIRGIL IN SPRING

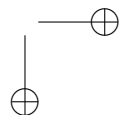
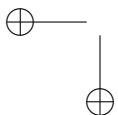
O fellow servant of our common Muse,
Mild Thracian breezes in the van of spring
Now fill the sails and spread the scented news.

The shepherds on the hill play pipes and sing;
The tender grass is turning green again;
The birds that please the gods are on the wing.

But if you feel a drouth that comes to men
When winter is dissolving into joy –
Come quench your thirst with me awhile, and then

Let loose the bonds that harass and annoy;
Or soon the gloomy pyre may be the end
For you whose gold of work has no alloy.

Long hours need some lighter moments, friend!





Same Ode – Without Horace

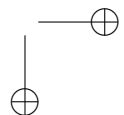
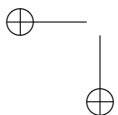
TO VIRGE – AFTER A HARD WINTER

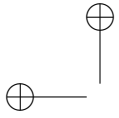
It's spring, Old Sock, an' gettin' balmy fast;
The grass is growin' greener by the hour,
And every breeze is warm as Chloe's past.

The sheep boys tootle toots both sweet and sour,
While birds that know their stuff are gettin' hep.
An' if you smell a smell – why, that's a flower.

But lissen, Virge, you gotta watch your step,
Lay off the grind awhile an' just relax –
Come down to my place an' renew your pep.

I've got a cache of stuff as smooth as wax
To fix you so you can't count up to ten.
A chap like you can work until he cracks,
Unless he takes a flyer now and then!





11.7 *A Moment with Horace*

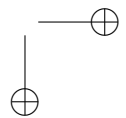
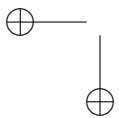
TO A FRIEND

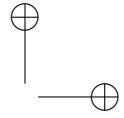
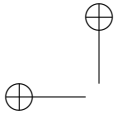
Welcome Pompey, coming from the wars,
Now safe from perils in the foreign strife.
How warm this meeting kindly Fate restores!

Come visit me, and we shall call to life
Those memories of sadness and of joy
With which a real companionship is rife.

At Philippi we saw the gods destroy
Our hopes. And how unvaliantly I fled!
While you did every warlike skill employ.

Recline with me upon the grassy bed
Beneath my laurel tree, and freely savor
Rest, before your time of rest has fled –
– Nor has your chosen wine lost any flavor!





Same Ode – Without Horace

MY PAL

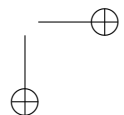
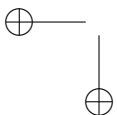
Hiya, Pomp, I'm glad to see yuh back.

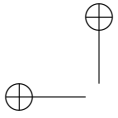
 You're safe from what they're throwin' at the front,
At least until the next war takes a crack.

 It's time again to pull our fav'rite stunt;
Remember how we kept our tonsils wet
 Until each "have another" was a grunt?

And I have not forgot (It gripes me yet)
 The time I dropped my shield and skipped the fight,
While you kept goin' like a whole quartet.

 Oh Boy! Come on – we're losin' time – tonight
We'll drown our troubles and our sorrows too
 In jars and bowls and cups – a gruesome sight –
Two pals together in a Roman stew!





11.18 *A Moment with Horace*

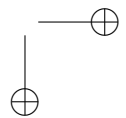
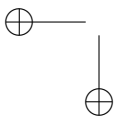
VANITY OF RICHES

Through my abode no ivory or gold
In panelled splendor gleams, nor are there vast
Hymettian marble columns solid built.

But I have friendship from a pleasant past
And genius (of a sort) that makes me sought
By those whose riches have me far outclassed.

While some, with one foot in the grave, are caught
Upon the hook of greed – the poor they drive
From home and field – there comes a blessed thought:

I am content. Glad to be alive,
I importune the gods for nothing more.
And when at Orcus' Hall I shall arrive,
No wealth (or lack of it) will close *that* door.





Same Ode – Without Horace

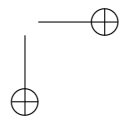
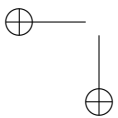
YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU

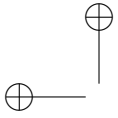
You won't find fancy trimmin's where I live,
Like marble posts, or golden paint and such,
Or foreign junk that all the big shots give.

But I have pals worth many times that much,
And what it takes – a gift, as some would say –
To get across to folks the common touch.

There's stinkers, lousy rich, who day by day
Keep squeezin' others till the time to die,
And then they end up where there's hell to pay.

I got enough. Alive and kickin' high,
I don't ask favors from the small or great.
And when they call us big and little fry –
We'll all line up regardless at *that* gate.





1.14 *A Moment with Horace*

SHIP OF STATE

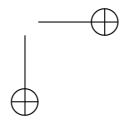
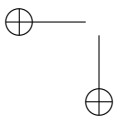
O ship, but lately come to port, beware!

 New billows threaten, bearing you to sea.
Take haven while the weather signs are fair.

 You are not ready, and will never be,
So long your bulwarks are bereft of oars,
 Your shattered mast and cordage hanging free.

Your canvas shows the rents of recent wars
 Against the raging gales that swept abroad;
Your yards are creaking ere new tempest roars.

 And who is guiding you? What gods or god?
The sailors know your timbers are the best,
 But fear unreadiness should Neptune nod
To hurl the Eastern Force against the West!





Same Ode – Without Horace

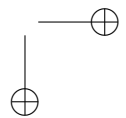
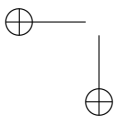
POWERS THAT BE

Whoever guides this old ship, look out sharp!
There's trouble brewin' like you never saw –
The worst since little David played his harp.

Put in for overhaul before the raw
Ungoverned swirl of tempests sends you down
Where Davy Jones proclaims the only law.

You definitely are not set to go to town
With all your gear a mess, if there at all.
Whatever worked on you, did you up brown.

And say, who really holds your wheel, on call
To steer the boat in case of sudden need?
Don't say it couldn't be. There's plenty squall
Whenever East blows West with super-speed!





1.5 *A Moment with Horace*

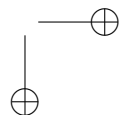
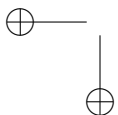
TO PYRRHA

For whom, O Pyrrha, do you bind your hair?
What dainty youth enjoys your perfumed grace?
Who now caresses you as his most fair?

Once I remember to have held his place,
And, credulous, believed you purest gold,
But learned that no one ever won that race.

How soon that hapless wight, however bold,
Will find the sweetest dew congealed to frost,
The warm encircling air grown strangely cold!

His barque of love will then be rudely tossed
In tempests whereof now he never dreams.
Foredoomed is he, I've learned at sorry cost,
Who takes your untried warmth as love's own beams.





Same Ode – Without Horace

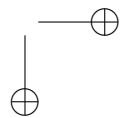
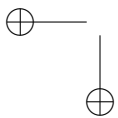
I WONDER WHO'S KISSING HER NOW

What boob, O Cuddles, is your boy-friend now?
What sweet patootie fell for you today?
Who sniffs a little scent and buys your chow?

Oh yes, I know, I once felt very gay
To take your line – bait, sinker, hook, and all.
I trailed along and had my little say.

But what a cropper when that guy does fall!
And finds the Sea of Love is full of mud!
Who flies on wings with you must later crawl.

When mama drops her daddy with a thud,
He'll find you're just a stove without the heat.
His stream of troubles sure will be a flood
Whoever takes you blind as something neat!





III.21 *A Moment with Horace*

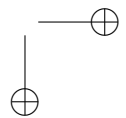
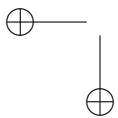
MY WINE BARREL

Of thee I sing, thou rotund goodly cask,
From seasoned timber made, ere I was born,
And holding all that mortal man may ask.

Within thy staves find solace when forlorn,
Or merry jests, or broils, or amorous fire,
Or gentle sleep to ease the hearts that mourn.

When magic mellow Massic I desire,
I draw on thee, thou never-failing friend,
And find thy gracious bounties never tire.

Socratic savants, Cato, all unbend
When filled with that joy-giving juice of thine.
The poor are rich; the meanest misers lend;
A timid mortal, I become divine.





Same Ode – Without Horace

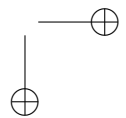
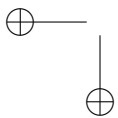
THE OLD KEG

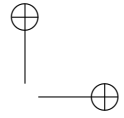
Of booze I chirp, you old pot-bellied keg,
And hope my timbers last as long as yours.
A shot from you and I can shake a leg.

And though you've had me takin' all the "cures",
When in the dumps I shift to high with you,
Then sleep it off and wake among the sewers.

And can I love when full of mellow dew!
And can I pick a fight and sock a guy
If any bozo hints that I'm a stew!

My highbrow friends are just as bad as I.
They talk philosophy – then drain the jug.
You make a coward brave, until he'll try
To slap an up-stage king right in the mug!





1.11 *A Moment with Horace*

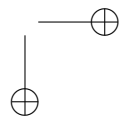
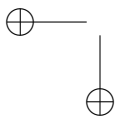
TO THE PRESENT

Ask not what ends the gods have set for thee
Or me. Do not inquire the horoscope
From those who read the charts of famed Chaldee.

How better to accept today, and hope
This season may not be the last we hear
Wild Tuscan waves break on the coastal slope.

Show wisdom. Care for things that now appear –
There's wine to filter; grain is ripe to cut –
Leave far-flung plans and take what's lying near.

Yea, even while we speak, the door has shut
Upon a portion of the passing flow
Of that most precious gift to cherish, but
The *present* tense of Time is never slow!





Same Ode – Without Horace

TIME MARCHES ON

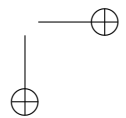
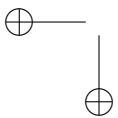
When you have paid to get your horoscope
And wasted dough for “readings from the sky”
You’re simply clinchin’ that you are a dope.

There’s only one thing sure as babies cry –
And that’s today. You better take it now –
It may be all there is before y’ die.

Quit thinkin’ what you’ll do next year, and how.
The wine needs strainin’ and the oats are waitin’
And stuff you’ll use for this and next year’s chow.

And while I’m gabbin’ here and disputatin’,
You know what’s goin’ on for you and me?
The only thing we got ain’t hesitatin’ –

Our *Time* is fittin’ like a busy bee!





iv.11 *A Moment with Horace*

TO PHYLLIS

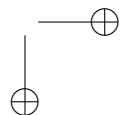
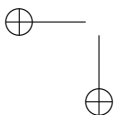
O Phyllis, will you not come share with me
Albanian wine, full nine years old or more,
To honor Venus born of foam-capped sea?

We shall make chaplets from my garden store
Of flowers. Chaplets in your hair are gay
When Ides of April open springtime's door.

Forget young Telephus at least till May
And let my love, the last for which I burn,
Entice you to my arms for one rich day.

That cannot be attained for which you yearn.
Be warned by Phaeton the sun inflamed
On reaching Heaven's heights – without return.

Come, sacrifice to Venus, unashamed
To deck the altar which you once acclaimed.





Same Ode – Without Horace

TO PHYL

O Phyl, I wish you'd come around today.

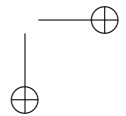
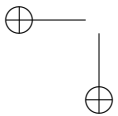
I've got some rare old stuff, three-starred,
To make a lovin' get-together gay.

You know there's lotsa flowers in my yard
To pick. Ye gods! They'd sure look swell on you
In spring. I'll maul you, Phyl, and no holds barred.

That Telephus, who sticks around like glue –
Now shake him once and give poor me a break
Before the smoke has all gone up the flue.

I'm tellin' you, you make a big mistake
To set your traps for such a high-hat guy.
You're just a little bird, and he's a snake.

Now Phyl, why wontcha be my Sweetie-Pie?
I'll never give another dame the eye!





11.17 *A Moment with Horace*

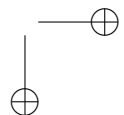
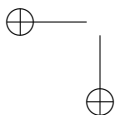
STORM SIGNALS

O Aelius, of ancient heritage,
 Prepare against the morrow's certain storm,
Which strikes alike the simple and the sage.

 That prophet of the tempest, true to form –
The raven – croaks, "bad weather on the way."
 The raven speaks of "wet and not too warm."

So, pile dry fagots high while yet you may
 And store the meats for feasting in the home;
You and your servants face an idle day.

 The east wind even now whips up the foam
Along the shore and strews the restless leaves
 Across the grove. The sky, a darkened dome,
Prepares to weep for him who, careless, grieves.





Same Ode – Without Horace

IT'S GONNA RAIN

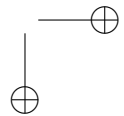
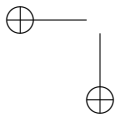
Well, neighbor, are you hep to what's a comin'?
Your blue-blood kin and all your fancy names
Can't stop what's brewin' with that east wind hummin'!

The crows been squawkin' like a lotta dames,
And cawin' for a rainy spell real nigh.
Black clouds are playin' tag-and-chase-me games.

Get in your wood and pile it snug and dry;
Better stock some grub for eatin' in –
You nor your help ain't goin' out to buy.

And don't forget some good old ruddy vin.
Be sure to tap a keg or two of stuff
To give a rainy day a merry spin.

But, brother, if you're caught pants-down, its tough!





iv.10 *A Moment with Horace*

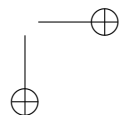
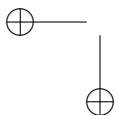
TO LIGURINUS

Ah youth, of damask rosy cheek,
Unlined by time's unfailing trace,
The day will come when you will seek

A mirrored image of the face
You now are careless to employ,
Full confident of every grace.

But pleasures you would then enjoy
Are those that fit your present age.
Alas! The man would be a boy.

I hear you in a futile rage
Inquiring of a wrinkled mask
The question writ on life's last page:
"Will wine of youth burst this old cask?"





Same Ode – Without Horace

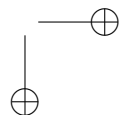
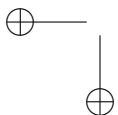
TO LIG

Now watch your step, you callow kid
With bushy hair and pinky phiz,
For time will put you on the skid.

You take for granted all that is
As though you had a lifetime pass
To Paradise; but mind your biz!

Some years from now look in a glass
And tell that bald and wrinkled guy
He's nothin' but a silly ass

To thirst for springs a long time dry.
Come on, you sap, and do your stuff
Before there comes that awful, "WHY
Must oldsters throw a youthful bluff?"





11.14 *A Moment with Horace*

THE INEVITABLE

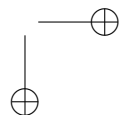
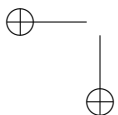
O Postumus, the years glide swiftly by,
Nor can your righteousness or sacrifice
Unmake a wrinkle or undim an eye.

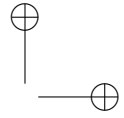
Yea, even should you offer such a prize
As countless hecatombs, you shall not stay
Advancing Age or sequent Death entice.

In vain surviving gory martial day,
Or sailing scatheless on a raging sea,
You reach at last the realm of Pluto's sway.

And whether husbandman or prince you be,
It matters not when comes the fateful sign –
You cross Cocytos to eternity –

And leave your home, your wife, your treasured wine.





Same Ode – Without Horace

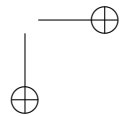
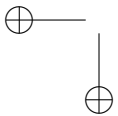
YUH GOTTA GO

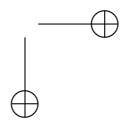
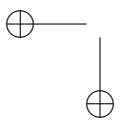
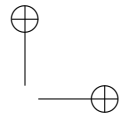
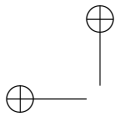
Well Posty boy, Old Tempus fugits fast
And all that you can do is let 'im fly.
Yuh can't bring back a moment when it's past.

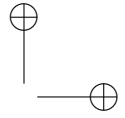
Those wrinkles on your pan, that bleary eye –
Can prayin', praisin', actin' like a saint
Do any good? I wouldn't even try.

You maybe been to war, and no complaint,
Or traveled far without unlucky breaks;
But some day when you think you're here – you AIN'T!

No matter if you played for bigger stakes,
Or dug a ditch, or walked behind a plow,
When Old Man Bones his finger shakes –
Yuh leave it all (and I mean ALL) RIGHT NOW!







Design Isaac Waisberg
waisberg@pm.me

