ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Sands of Time from a letter to Harold Preece, post-marked November 24, 1930.

Robert Ervin Howard from Diablerie, May 1944.

Sonora to Del Rio from The Junto, no date.

Midnight from The Junto, September 1929.

With a Set of Rattlesnake Rattles copyright 1937 by R. H. Barlow for Leaves, Summer 1937
THE HOWARD COLLECTOR
The Howard Collector

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Editorial Notes

The Howard Collector is dedicated to the memory of Robert E. Howard and will contain material by and about him. Frequency of publication, or continuation, will depend upon reader response. Quality articles within the scope of this publication will be welcomed; the only payment will be a copy of the issue containing the article.

Howard used three known pen names: Patrick Howard, Patrick Ervin and Sam Walser (Walser was the name of a paternal ancestor). Unpublished poems have been found bearing the by-lines Patrick Mac Conaire Howard and Robert E. Patrick Howard but as far as I know nothing was ever published under those names. A questionable pen name, Robert E. Ward, exists.

In the interim since the publication of ALWAYS COMES EVENING (1957), a considerable amount of verse by Howard has been unearthed. E. Hoffman Price supplied a strip of microfilm from the effects of the late R. H. Barlow containing unpublished poems. Lenore Preece furnished copies of poems from existing copies of The Junto and from letters to her brother, Harold Preece. Three previously published poems were located in obscure publications.

The Junto was an amateur journal of the Lone Scouts, "published" by certain literary minded members in the central Texas area. It consisted of one typewritten copy
per issue circulated from member to member on its mailing list which probably never exceeded twenty. The first editor was Booth Mooney; later Lenore Preece assumed editorship. Many of the issues edited by Mooney were destroyed in a fire years ago.

Fans of Conan, Howard’s hero of the Hyborian Age, or devotees of the school of saber-hacking fiction in general, are urged to subscribe to Amra (Box 9006, Rosslyn, Arlington 9, Virginia, 5/$1).
Facts of Biography


The Sands of Time

by Robert E. Howard

Slow sift the sands of Time; the yellowed leaves
Go drifting down an old and bitter wind;
Across the frozen moors the hedges stand
In tattered garments that the frost have thinned.

A thousand phantoms pluck my ragged sleeve,
Wan ghosts of souls long into darkness thrust.
Their pale lips tell lost dreams I thought mine own,
And old sick longings smite my heart to dust.

I may not even dream of jeweled dawns,
Nor sing with lips that have forgot to laugh.
I fling aside the cloak of Youth and limp
A withered man upon a broken staff.
ROBERT ERVIN HOWARD

BY E. HOFFMANN PRICE

Gentlemen, this is the hand that shook the hand of Robert E. Howard! Line forms on the right, quit shov- ing, and don’t step on the women and children. My claim to be the only writer who ever met Robert E. Howard, face to face, in the heart of the post oak belt of Texas, has not thus far been refuted.

Get your road maps. Cross Plains is thirty-two miles from Cisco, which town is where highways U.S. 80 and 283 intersect. From whatever direction you approach Cross Plains, you have a piece of driving to do. I say it was worth doing.

He was broad and towering, with a bluff, tanned face and a big, hearty hand, and a voice which was surprisingly soft and easy, not at all the bull-bellow one might expect of the creator of Conan and those other sabre-hackers. I should like to speak of Howard’s parents, with whom he lived, and to whose home he welcomed me, but I must stick to telling of the man who made Cross Plains famous.
For the next few days, I was busy trying to combine two images: that of the actual man, and that of the one who loomed up in those stirring yarns, and in those salty letters I’d been getting from him since 1928. The synthesis was never effected. As a matter of fact, writers rarely do resemble the fan-image!

Howard’s expression was boyish, not having yet squared off into angles; his blue eyes, somewhat prominent, had a wide-openness which did not suggest anything of the man’s keen wit and agile fancy. That first picture persists a powerful, solid, round-faced fellow, kindly and somewhat stolid. At times, I got the fantastic notion that the father rather than the son must have been the author. I cannot remember ever having met another man who had eyes as penetrating as Dr. Howard’s; clear, ice-blue, vibrant with expression, seconding his voice and gestures. White haired, shaggy browed, a face marked in rugged lines: the father’s speech and spirit seemed an outward expression of the inner something which made the son a writer.

The post oak belt, so called because of the stunted trees of the region, does not have the New England literary tradition. A writer, I gathered, is regarded as a harmless freak. That Howard earned considerable sums, right from the start, when he was fifteen, and eventually better than doubled the figure set forth as the average
income of a pulp fictioneer, merely made him conspicuous. He must always have felt himself to be, whether he wanted to or not, someone and something apart from the standard model Texan. While guiding me from the house to the barbershop, he said, abruptly, "Ed, I am God damn proud to have you visit me."

He meant precisely what he said, and he said exactly what he meant, no more, no less. Since I was a fellow freak, he didn’t have to mince around. I said, "I’ve looked forward to this a long time, but I fail to see what you have to be proud about!"

"It’s this way," he explained. "Nobody thinks I amount to much, so I am glad to have a chance to show these sons of ______-s that a successful writer will drive a thousand miles to hell and gone out of his way to see me."

As a matter of fact, I’d spent a year starving. I’d even quit writing and tried making expenses by repairing Fords for the Osage Indians, up in Oklahoma. But since Howard had predicted two years previously that I’d make a go of it, he considered the issue settled: I was a successful writer!

To this day, I do not know how seriously he underrated his standing in Cross Plains. I do however know that on the day of his death, the local paper published as a reprint from a magazine, one of his last yarns. Between that 6000 word piece, and the obituary, Robert
E. Howard got more space than any other citizen of Cross Plains ever got, before or after. Yet, during his life, he did undoubtedly feel that the townsmen wondered why the son of a man as esteemed and solid as Dr. I. M. Howard fooled around writing for magazines.

In the sense I have implied, Robert Howard was without a doubt a lonely person. This feeling of isolation often revealed itself. Once he asked, with characteristic abruptness, "Ed, have you any enemies?"

His tone told me that he had lots of them, that he expected my answer to be yes, and that purely rhetorical query was to start me off on a subject vital to him. In many a letter he had told me of the post oak region, a land of hard working, hard fighting, hard hating people, a land of feuds which, even in his time, might well have equaled the heights of the Hatfield-McCoy tradition. So when I answered, "Not that I know of," Howard was stumped.

It was plain that he accepted my statement on faith, rather than plausibility.

Howard lived in a realm of wonder and fantasy. After hearing my reasons for considering certain early yarns, such as *Kings of the Night*, *Mirrors of Tuzun Thune*, *Shadow Kingdom*, and the "Brule the Spear Slayer" epoch, far superior to the Conan series, he agreed and said, "I dreamed them, so they’re naturally more real-
istic than those I deliberately wrote.”

He composed instinctively, without any conscious attention to form. He told me, “Of every three stories, I scrap two and offer the third; it’s easier than trying for conscious technique which would give me perhaps only a third as many stories, all of which would sell. What in hell’s the difference, I like to write!”

Howard’s westerns are superior to all but his few outstanding fantasy yarns, and because characters like Buckner J. Grimes were drawn from life, and not cooked up from fancy. Those characters, for all their Paul Bunyanish extravagance, are real, speaking the speech of the country. Dr. Howard and his son often garnished their conversation with quips and phrases which I had already, or would later read in a published western.

The news of Howard’s death hit me between the eyes; but when I picked up the newspaper which contained his last published story, I forgot that the author was dead. For the time of my reading, he lived, and I was able to laugh, and right down to my ankles. Gentlemen, when you write copy which can do that for your friends, you are really writing!

It was a first person story; Buckner J. Grimes, and Robert E. Howard were for the time one and the same person. For a little while, the author had come back from the dead. Chaw on that for a moment.
During his thirty years of life, he lived in two worlds. The transition from one plane to the other must have seemed far more natural to him than to the ordinary person.

He loved the whopping story; and he said of Sir Richard Burton, "Ten to one he was a damn liar in a lot of respects which is what makes a good story teller!"

Howard once told me that whenever, as a boy, he ran out of fiction, he'd saddle up his horse, and ride out to raid the skimpy libraries of country schoolhouses; he'd jimmy a window, make his selection, stuff it into a gunny sack, and gallop home. Maybe this was one of his whoppers, but if it isn't true, it ought to be.

Though he drank beer, he refused to smoke, and the explanation he offered me, very solemnly, was this: "The most contemptible son of a ---- I know of smokes, so I won't!" Then he added, "Well, I'm not any too consistent; I breathe, and so does that dirty ----!"

And now I must re-read *Man-Eating Jeopard* for to read it is to hear Robert E. Howard. The trouble is, I can't answer back, I can't tell him that within a few weeks after his death, I sold my first adventure story, and to one of the magazines in which he had been a top flight contributor and that a month or two later, I started a series of westerns, inspired largely by his inimitable characters. These were not imitations, because Howard couldn't be imitated, yet they follow the pattern: and the
hero, Simon Bolivar Grimes, is my version of Buckner Jeopardy Grimes of Knife River, Texas, who as everyone who reads the story and knew the author must know, was Robert Howard as burlesqued by himself.

My series of western burlesques has an unusual vitality: in seven years, I have sold twenty-four of the sequence without a rejection, and since we all know that no imitation could be so durable, I leave it to you to draw your own inferences as to the source of this character's appeal. Robert Ervin Howard encouraged me during the tough days of my start, and he has been contributing ever since; with Texas stubbornness he still lives.

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE
OF THE HOWARD COLLECTOR

SOLOMON KANE!
Sonora to Del Rio

BY ROBERT E. HOWARD

Sonora to Del Rio is a hundred barren miles
Where the sotol weave and shimmer in the sun—
Like a host of swaying serpents straying down the bare defiles
When the silver, scarlet webs of dawn are spun.

There are little 'dobe ranchoes, brooding far along the sky
On the sullen, dreary bosoms of the hills.
Not a wolf to break the quiet, not a single bird to fly;
Where the silence is so utter that it thrills.

Maybe, in the heat of evening, comes a wind from Mexico Laden with the heat of seven Hells,
And the rattler in the yucca and the buzzard dark and slow
Hear and understand the grisly tales it tells.
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Gaunt and stark and bare and mocking rise the everlasting cliffs
Like a row of sullen giants carved of stone,
Till the traveler, mazed with silence, thinks to look at hieroglyphs,
Thinks to see a carven pharaoh on his throne.

And the road goes on forever, o'er the barren hills forever,
And there's little to hint of flowing wine—
But beyond the hills and sotol there's a mellow curving river
And a land of sun and mellow wine.
MIDNIGHT

BY ROBERT E. HOWARD

Red leaned his elbows upon the table and cursed. The candle guttered low. The bottle was empty, and a slow fire coiled in our brains—the fire which devours and consumes and destroys but never leaps into full wild flame.

I looked at Red with bleared eyes. He hid his face in his hands. He was thinking of a woman he knew. The cards, greasy with handling and stained with whiskey and candle tallow, lay scattered between us. The desire for gambling was gone, and there was no more whiskey.

"Cheer up, Red," I said. "Listen—I’ll tell you: Somewhere in the world the sun is coming up like a red dragon to shine on a gilded pagoda; somewhere the bleak silver stars are gleaming on white sands where a magic caravan is sleeping out in the ages. Somewhere the night wind is blowing through the grass of a mysterious grave. Somewhere there is a gossamer sailed ship carving a wake of silver foam across the dark blue of the Mediterranean. This isn’t all, Red."

"Oh, Christ," he groaned, reaching for the empty bottle, "I wish I had a drink."
Letter: Dr. I. M. Howard to
Frank Torbett, dated
June 22, 1936

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Torbett and Thurston:

I write you all as you must already know of the tragedy which occurred in my home on June 12th. I had a letter from Dr. J. W. and he had the newspaper account. I am sending you the local paper's here which fully covers the account of his and his mother's deaths and burial. I have known all along that Robert might do something rash and even desperate when his mother died but I did not think he would do it before she went. He had told me he was not going to live any longer when his mother died. Robert was a most devoted son to his mother and to me also. But I am sure that when a small child the thought he could never give her up crystallized and grew in his mind until he could never erase it. When he was growing up he had no companion except his mother. I was in (and) out as any country practitioner is; never had time to cultivate and shape his course through the years. He had witnessed much of her suffering. Since Robert was a small child his mother has been from a semi-invalid to a complete invalid, and for two years she has suffered more than
any one except Robert and myself. (I) knew this same sympathy that he had felt always grew and deepened until he became totally unbalanced. And each time he saw her grow worse he began to prepare to suicide and finally when he saw she could live no longer he lost himself and nothing could stop him and he went.

Man’s destiny is written for him or else he writes (it) himself. I do not think man has anything at all to (do) with it. He is born with pen in his hand and told to write and he writes it daily until he finishes his chapter, then he goes out of this world. I do not see why Robert left me. I am so lonely and desolate. But he could not help it. Mother had to go; her body was worn out completely. There was nothing left. Robert carefully planned it. Some day when I see you I will tell you all about it.

Good bye. God bless you all.
WITH A SET OF RATTLESNAKE RATTLES

BY ROBERT E. HOWARD

Here is the emblem of a lethal form of life for which I have no love, but a definite admiration. The wearer of this emblem is inflexibly individualistic. He mingles not with the herd, nor bows before the thrones of the mighty. Between him and the lords of the earth lies an everlasting feud that shall not be quenched until the last man lies dying and the Conqueror sways in shimmering coils above him.

Lapped in sombre mystery he goes his subtle way, touched by neither pity nor mercy. Realizations of ultimate certitudes are his, when the worm rises and the vulture sinks and the flesh shreds back to the earth that bore it. Other beings may make for Life, but he is consecrated to Death. Promise of ultimate dissolution shimmers in his visible being, and the cold soulless certainty of destruction is in his sibilances. The buzzards mark his path by the pregnant waving of the tall grasses, and the blind worms that gnaw in the dark are glad because of him. The foot of a king can not tread on him with impunity, nor the ignorant hand of innocence bruise him
unscathed. The emperor who sits enthroned in gold and purple, with his diadem in the thunder-clouds and his sandals on the groaning backs of the nations, let him dare to walk where the rank grass quivers without a wind, and the lethal scent of decay is heavy in the air. Let him dare—and try if his pomp and glory and his lines of steel and gold will awe the coiling death or check the dart of the wedge-shaped head.

For when he sings in the dark it is the voice of Death crackling between fleshless jaw-bones. He reveres not, nor fears, nor sinks his crest for any scruple. He strikes, and the strongest man is carrion for flapping things and crawling things. He is a Lord of the Dark Places, and wise are they whose feet disturb not his meditations.
Verse Index

This index is probably very nearly complete but there is a good possibility there are some few omissions. The number of lines is given following each title. For the sake of brevity the letters ACE following a title indicates that it appeared in the collection ALWAYS COMES EVENING (Arkham House, Sauk City, Wisconsin, 1957); DM indicates that it appeared in August Derleth’s anthology of verse DARK OF THE MOON (Arkham House, Sauk City, Wisconsin, 1947). The abbreviation (aj) following a periodical title indicates it is an amateur journal (or fan magazine). The Cross Plains Review is the weekly newspaper of Cross Plains, Texas. Poems that appeared in The Junto have been indexed as unpublished inasmuch as their appearance therein hardly constituted publication. It is not known whether any of the fragments were ever completed though it is believed that more of The Dust Dance appeared in destroyed issues of The Junto. The headings are bits of verse used to head chapters or stories. Bibliographic data is not given on the stories as this will be given in a forthcoming index. Data is given only where the verse appeared independent of the story.
Published Verse

PATRICK HOWARD

A Lady’s Chamber - 17

_The American Poet_, April 1929

Skulls and Dust - 23

_The American Poet_, May 1929

ROBERT E. HOWARD

Always Comes Evening - 20 - ACE, DM

_The Phantagraphe_ (aj), August 1936

_Stirring Science Stories_, February 1941

_Uncanny Tales_ (Canadian), September-October 1948

An Open Window - 4 - ACE

_Weird Tales_, September 1932

Arkham - 4 - ACE, DM

_Weird Tales_, August 1932

Autumn - 12 - ACE

_Weird Tales_, April 1933

Babylon - 16 - ACE

(originally untitled; titled by Glenn Lord)

Black Chant Imperial - 24 - ACE

_Weird Tales_, September 1930

But the Hills Were Ancient Then - 24

(originally untitled; titled by George Scithers)

_Amra_ (aj), November-December 1959

Chant of the White Beard - 8 - ACE

Crete - 16 - ACE

_Weird Tales_, February 1929
Dead Man’s Hate - 28 - ACE
  *Weird Tales*, January 1930

Desert Dawn - 14 - ACE
  *Weird Tales*, March 1939

Dream and the Shadow, The - 14 - ACE
  *Weird Tales*, September 1937

Dreams of Nineveh - 20 - ACE
  *Golden Atom* (aj), Part 1, 1959-60

Easter Island - 14 - ACE
  *Weird Tales*, December 1928

Emancipation - 20 - ACE

Forbidden Magic - 14 - ACE
  *Weird Tales*, July 1929

Fragment - 35 - ACE
  *Weird Tales*, December 1937

Futility - 16 - ACE, DM
  (virtually identical to “Moonlight on a Skull”)
  *Weird Tales*, November 1937

Gates of Nineveh, The - 16 - ACE
  *Weird Tales*, July 1928

Ghost Kings, The - 12 - ACE, DM
  *Weird Tales*, December 1938

Gods of Easter Island, The - 14 - ACE
  (originally untitled; titled by Glenn Lord)

Harp of Alfred, The - 18 -ACE, DM
  *Weird Tales*, September 1928

Haunting Columns - 14 - ACE
  *Weird Tales*, February 1938
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Heart of the Sea’s Desire, The - 28 - ACE
(first copy located was untitled; titled by Dale Hart.
Second copy later located under title “Mate of the Sea”)

Hills of Kandahar, The - 28 - ACE
Weird Tales, June-July 1939

Hymn of Hatred - 12 - ACE
(originally untitled; titled by Glenn Lord)

Invective - 4 - ACE
(originally untitled; titled by Glenn Lord)

King and the Oak, The - 24 - ACE, DM
Weird Tales, February 1939
THE COMING OF CONAN, Gnome Press, New York, 1953

Last Day, The - 14
(see also note on “The Last Hour”)
Weird Tales, March 1932

Last Hour, The - 14 - ACE, DM
(virtually identical to “The Last Day”)
Weird Tales, June 1938

Laughter in the Gulfs - 18 - ACE

Lines Written in the Realization That I Must Die - 24
- ACE, DM
Weird Tales, August 1938
SKULL-FACE AND OTHERS, Arkham House,
Sauk City, Wisconsin, 1946

Mate of the Sea
(see “The Heart of the Sea’s Desire”)

Men of the Shadows - 34 - ACE
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Moon Mockery - 14 - ACE, DM
   *Weird Tales*, April 1929
Moon Mockery - 34 - ACE
Moonlight on a Skull - 16
   (see also note on "Futility")
   *Weird Tales*, May 1933
Moor Ghost, The - 16 - ACE
   *Weird Tales*, September 1929
Niflheim - 34 - ACE
Nisapur - 20 - ACE
   (originally untitled; titled by Glenn Lord)
One Who Comes at Eventide - 16 - ACE
Poets, The - 28 - ACE
   *Weird Tales*, March 1938
Prince and Beggar - 18 - ACE
   (originally untitled; titled by Glenn Lord)
Recompense - 24 - ACE, DM
   *Weird Tales*, November 1938
   FANCYCyclopedia, John Bristol, Forrest J. Ackerman, Los Angeles, 1944 (under "weird fiction")
   *Criti-Q* (aj), #1 (circa 1951-52)
Remembrance - 14 - ACE
   *Weird Tales*, April 1928
Retribution - 22 - ACE
   (first copy located untitled; titled by Glenn Lord. Second copy later located under title "The Song of Mur-
tagh O’Brien” by Robert E. Patrick Howard

Riders of Babylon, The - 22 - ACE
  *Weird Tales*, January 1928

Road of Azrael, The - 8 - ACE

Rune - 34 - ACE
  (original title “Rune of the Ancient One”; retitled by Glenn Lord)

Rune of the Ancient One
  (see “Rune”)

Sands of Time, The - 12
  (originally untitled; titled by Glenn Lord)
  *The Howard Collector* (aj), Summer 1961

Sea, The - 48
  *The Cross Plains Review*, June 29, 1923

Shadows on the Road - 46 - ACE
  *Weird Tales*, May 1930

Ships - 22 - ACE
  *Weird Tales*, July 1938

Singer in the Mist, The - 14 - ACE, DM
  *Weird Tales*, April 1938

Solomon Kane’s Homecoming - 44 - ACE, DM
  *Fanciful Tales*, Fall 1936

Song at Midnight - 28 - ACE
  *The Phantagraph* (aj), August 1940

Song of a Mad Minstrel, The - 40 - ACE
  *Weird Tales*, February-March 1931

Song of Murtagh O’Brien, The
  (see “Retribution”)
Song of the Bats, The - 21 - ACE
  *Weird Tales*, May 1927

Song of the Don Cossacks, A - 16 - ACE

Song of the Pict - 14 - ACE

Song Out of Midian, A - 24 - ACE
  *Weird Tales*, April 1930

Sonora to Del Rio - 20
  *The Howard Collector* (aj), Summer 1961

Soul-Eater, The - 14 - ACE
  *Weird Tales*, August 1937

Tempter, The - 40 - ACE

To a Woman - 12 - ACE

Untitled Couplet - 2
  ("All fled—all done...")
  *The Cross Plains Review*, July 3, 1936
  *Weird Tales*, October 1936 (in "The Eyrie")
  *The Cross Plains Review*, November 24, 1960
  *The Howard Collector* (aj), Summer 1961

Voices of the Night: Babel - 19 - ACE
  *The Fantasy Fan* (aj), January 1935

Voices of the Night: The Voices Waken Memory - 24 - ACE
  *The Fantasy Fan* (aj), September 1934

Which Will Scarcely Be Understood - 45 - ACE, DM
  *Weird Tales*, October 1937
  SKULL-FACE AND OTHERS, Arkham House, Sauk City, Wisconsin, 1946
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Headings

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Inside & Science Fiction Advertiser, September 1956
THE SHUTTERED ROOM, H. P. Lovecraft &
Divers Hands, Arkham House, Sauk City, Wisconsin, 1959
(both above appearances were in Lin Carter's article
H. P. Lovecraft: The Books under heading People of
the Monolith)

Blood of Belshazzar, The - 10

Fearsome Touch of Death, The - 4

Kings of the Night - 4 - ACE

Lion of Tiberias, The
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Phoenix on the Sword, The
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Chapter 3 - 4 - ACE
Chapter 4 - 4 - ACE
Chapter 5 - 4 - ACE
Criti-Q (aj), #1 (circa 1951-52)

Pool of the Black One, The - 6 - ACE
LOST CONTINENTS, L. Sprague de Camp, Gnome
Press, New York, 1954 (heads Chapter 11)

Queen of the Black Coast
Chapter 1 - 4 - ACE
Chapter 2 - 4 - ACE
Chapter 3 - 4 - ACE
Chapter 4 - 6 - ACE
Chapter 5 - 5 - ACE
Red Blades of Black Cathay - 12 - ACE
Scarlet Citadel, The
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  Chapter 2 - 4 - ACE
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  Chapter 5 - 2 - ACE
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Thing on the Roof, The - 8

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Zukala's Mating Song - 28
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ROBERT E. PATRICK HOWARD
Echoes From an Anvil - 54
All fled—all done, so lift me on the pyre;
The Feast is over and the lamps expire.