For some years, the Old *Nassau Daily Review Star*, and then its successor, *Newsday* had printed letters to the editor from Thomas Horace Evans, M.D. Dr. Evans' letters were fascinating and, although I'm sure not intend as such, always amusing. Whatever the controversy current at any particular time which drew letters from its readers, Dr. Evans' letter was always guaranteed to present a totally different way of looking at it. I remember one letter in particular, published in *Newsday* around 1947-1948.... The issue at stake was, I believe, something to do with -- perhaps -- traffic congestion. Written in a quaintly 19th century fashion, Dr. Evans' letter evinced not only a more than nodding acquaintance with ancient mythology, but a heretofore ignored aspect (by me, at any rate) of the whole problem of traffic congestion. The problem, according to Dr. Evans, lay not problem of traffic congestion. The problem, according to Dr. Evans, lay not merely in the visible world of highways and parkway systems, but also in the invisible world about us. From my recollection, it all boiled down in the end to an infinite network of transmigration and insects and a vast confusing network in the atmosphere of milling souls looking for a form to inhabit. I don't remember if Dr. Evans' campaign slogan at the time, but I am left with the feeling it might have been Improve our Airway Traffic, those Gnat might be your Uncle!

In the early spring of 1949 I decided to pay a call on the gentleman who had so long intrigued my fancy (although it might have been the fall of 1948). I walked the mile between our houses, surveyed the faded T.H. Evans painted on his house, and knocked loudly on the door. After some wait, the door was opened by a young girl straight out of Faulkner. She was pale all over, dress and long pale hair and even her bare feet. I told her I wanted to speak to Dr. Evans and she replied (with a non-New...
York accent) that he was upstairs resting and she would tell him I was there. I waited on a couch in the living room. A good twenty minutes later. Dr. Evans came out of a room halfway up the stairs. His physical appearance, and the faint odor that accompanied him a combination of mustiness, old clothes, and sickness that one associates with very old poor people … made me think at first that he was very close to death. He looked, in feet, almost already partially skeletonized (belying appearance)….

I can’t recall exactly how our conversation began, only that he was delightfully cordial and in a very short time, most eager to show me and explain to me the various projects that he was engaged in – or had been in the past. He began by going back to the room in which he had been resting, he explained were part of an unfinished work of his. I should but do not remember if they were written in hand or by typewriter … perhaps by hand, since much of the writing was done in Sanskrit. This work, he stated was concerned with establishing the relationship between similar characters and/or symbols and their physical resemblance to stirrup a small bone in the ear. There were at least three specific and major symbols he was concerned with in his writing --- one of which was the Sanskrit word for moon a/o death having the same appearance and the Chinese character for moon a/o death and this academic research had gone into this work --- translating Sanskrit, etc. In an attempt to further my understanding of his thesis, he led my downstairs, and in a cellar area of a surprisingly bright room, which he explained was the original kitchen, were stacked many long metal boxes. He opened one for me. It contained the skeleton of a Eurasian.

The skeletons in various boxes represented all, I think, of the different racial types. He explained it was less complicated – or possible only – to obtain the entire
remains of a body than to acquire only the anvil. Apparently, in order to obtain this particular ear bone.

The conversation then, how heaven knows, changed from death and anvils to music. He showed me scores on which he had worked out a 12 tone system (atonal?) many, many years ago. I recall thinking at the time that it was somewhere around the turn of the century and predated Schonberg’s innovations (and I think he showed me, or mentioned, a published monograph he had written on his idea of 12 tone system ---).

In more logical sequence this time, he modestly informed me that he had worked out a little device which made it impossible for a singer to hit an off key note. He showed me a rectangular box 10" by 4" made of wood which at the time impressed me (teak or rosewood?). Inside the box was nested three or four pieces of wood – all rectangular, but of different dimensions. Somehow, by the arrangement of these pieces of wood, the “trueness” of a note could be pre-controlled. The whole procedure was quite beyond me, and was much more confusing that the correlation between bone and beyond me, and was much more confusing than the correlations between bone and death and moon had been. The ingenious little box and its magic contents he said had been or were going to be mailed, as gift, to Miss Margaret Truman.

Perhaps the common denomination for our next topic of conversation was gift – mail – letter … For he then went back to the half way room and returned carrying two letters. The first he showed me was a letter written by him to Albert Einstein. I recall the letter was remarkably brief and to the point for Dr. Evans. The query he posed to Dr. Einstein was roughly that if a straight line was extended into space, how long would it
be. Dr. Einstein’s reply (surprising to me that he had replied) was even more brief and to the point. In a brief sentence or two he said, in effect, that any scientific thinking person would not ask such a question. Yours sincerely, Albert Einstein. Dr. Evans appeared not in the least dismayed by this response.

Somewhere in the course of this madly wonderful afternoon, Dr. Evans took me about some of the house. He told me it was one of the original houses in Freeport and that in the main room he had the original low ceiling removed and considerably raised in order to accommodate the very large wall old and unusual and to me, fascinating, fragments, paintings and hangings on the walls that no one remains distinctly in my mind. They were all, including the large tapestry or hanging over the mantel, acquired by his late wife during archeological expeditions. The last part of our visit was devoted entirely to talk of her. He was very proud of her accomplishments and interests. He took me upstairs, where he had a large studio built in for her. At the entrance to the studio was a rather thread neatly arranged inside. The cabinet still with its little spools of color and he had planned to give it to the young girl who had greeted me when I first arrived. My impressions of the studio were not very distinct. I remember an easel faithfully holding some creating that Mrs. Evans was presumably at work upon before she died. And many, many hatboxes stacked along the walls bearing the names of reputable 5th Avenue hops, and preserved within the bonnets of the late Mrs. Evans. At the time, I remember being struck by the incongruity of my rather stereotyped notion of the female ethnologist and all these expensive hats. The studio contained many artifacts, fragments, etc., of little. He preferred, instead, to direct my interest and conversation
toward the little sewing cabinet and the hatboxes and the dusty, dry pile of leaves and
dried flowers in one corner of the room. These leaves and flowers were from her grave.

After three hours had passed, I feared he was tiring though he was probably was
far from it and made moves to depart. During the course of our visit he learned that I
was connected with the Hofstra College Library (and I had learned that he still made
regular trips into a NYC Hospital) for consultation purposes.

He gave me, as I was leaving, a wrapped parcel which he said contained two
publications that the Hofstra Library might be interested in acquiring. My understanding
of the gift was that it was to be in the nature of an initial donation. With tremendous
exhilaration I clutched the parcel under my arm, barely able to contain myself until I was
rounded the corner and could then open the papers for myself and see for myself what
ancient documents that contained. Inside, were two recent (6 months) copies of the

*Farmers’ Almanac.*