



a Portrait of Peter



Youthful Peter George Estin, whose cartoons have appeared recently in "The Saturday Evening Post", "Collier's", "True" stands out as one of the most colorful personalities in the world of cartoon humor. Almost as well known for his ski racing feats as for his cartooning, Peter has led a full and interesting life which certainly merits description in this publication.

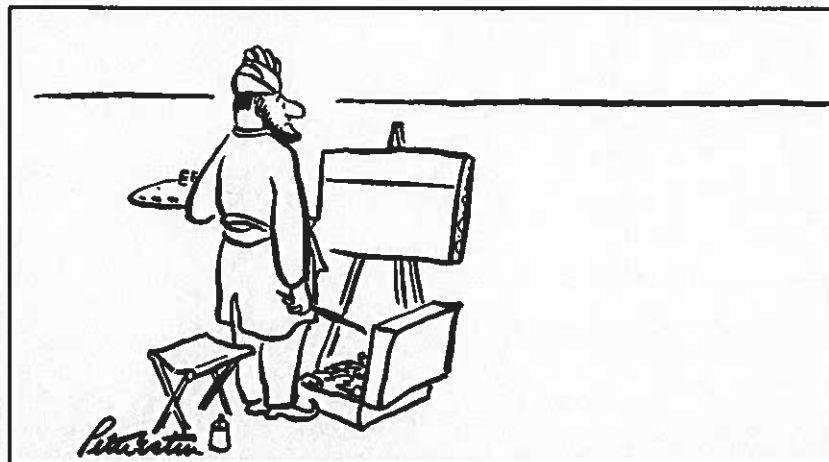
The Estin story had its beginnings in Prague, Czechoslovakia, where Peter was born on June 10, 1927. His father, a Czech of Austrian extraction, was manager of a banking firm; his mother was British born. At the age of eight Peter was struck by scarlet fever, and, to while away the hours during his recuperation, he took up drawing and painting as a hobby.

Peter received his primary education in Prague, mastering Czech and German by the time he was ten. Then, in 1938, Hitler marched into Austria, and the Estins—Peter, his mother, father, sister and brother—left for England. Their next stop was Canada, and on Christmas Day 1940, they finally entered the United States, settling in Boston.

Shortly after the Estins' arrival in this country, Peter made his entrance into the cartoon field—and

in a most unusual way. It seems that, while attending school at Andover, Massachusetts, he became friends with a boy who claimed Gurney Williams (of "Collier's" fame) was his uncle. This fellow went on to present Peter with a letter of introduction to Gurney from him; and so, young Estin began submitting to "Collier's" in 1942 (he was then 15). The aspiring cartoonist used to send great packing cases of drawing board, always accompanied by long personal messages, direct to Gurney's home so the latter would have plenty of time to study them. But just recently (and here's the crusher) Peter chanced to meet Gurney and, during the course of the conversation, asked how his nephew was. Gurney drew a blank, and it turned out he wasn't the guy's uncle after all. That's right; it took 13 years for Peter to wise up to the gag—but it did start him submitting to magazines!

After Andover came Dartmouth College, from where Peter graduated in 1947 with a B.A. Degree. He was a member of the Dartmouth Varsity Ski Team, was elected a class officer—and, of course, contributed his services as cartoonist for various college publications. His





first dollar from cartooning was earned by drawing ads for a campus men's store.

By this time, Peter had become a naturalized United States citizen, so, immediately after graduation, he entered the Air Force as a Second Lieutenant. Discharge from service was followed by an M.A. Degree from Harvard and a brief attempt at the investment business. The reasons behind Peter's short-lived career as an investor can be traced directly to his skiing. Throughout these years Peter had been a top American ski racer—but, even though he was an ace in the field, accidents were bound to happen in so dangerous a sport. Thus, when not winning prizes, Peter was often laid up in hospitals with fractures. As in his youth, he again took to the drawing board to pass the time away, with less and less thought being given to investments.

Peter's last crack-up occurred in 1953, during the International Ski Championships at Stowe, Vermont. By the time his recuperation period was over, his cartooning technique had developed sufficiently to go into the cartoon business on a full-time basis. And so he bade farewell to investments and moved to Greenwich, Connecticut, to be near the New York City markets. As Peter tells us, "The boss had become tired, anyway, of my 'doodling' while supposedly analyzing securities."

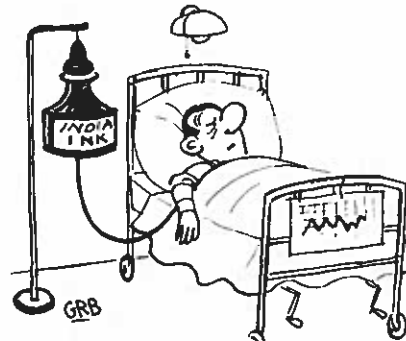
Now that he had settled on his life's work, Peter Estin set about to make a name for himself in the cartooning field. Figuring that the best way to get his name around would be through displaying samples of his work publicly, The Walter Thompson & Co. offered to sponsor a one-man exhibition of cartoons for him in New York City. This proved to be a sage move; for, within a relatively short time, he

found himself illustrating humorous books, doing advertising cartoons, greeting cards and selling to magazines.

Today the Estin trademark appears in some 250 different magazines. Up to now, he has sold over 2000 cartoons (at an average price of \$25)—with his first major sale being a \$75 Ford Publication job to "Clues" in January of 1953. The impressive list of publications to which Estin has sold becomes even more amazing when you stop to realize that the only formal art training he received was a ten-day session at the Cartoonists and Illustrators School in New York back in 1952.

On the personal side of the ledger, Peter is married to a lovely blonde and has three charming youngsters. He had to give up skiing—on doctor's orders—and now engages in slow, safe sports, like tennis. Traveling is one of his favorite pastimes, and he has been to Austria, Switzerland, Germany, France, Yugoslavia and Holland on various occasions. Peter now speaks trace of an accent. Although he writes it pretty well, he prefers to think up captionless situations for cartoons—and, we might add, he has done very well at this particular type of art form.

No article on Peter Estin would be complete without mentioning the BBKA ("Broken Bone Club of America"). This highly selective organization—limited to those who have broken a bone while skiing—works closely with the National Ski Patrol System to aid its work in promoting ski safety. In 1954, Boston's Alexander H. Bright, who was the club's president, announced



that anyone producing more broken bones than his own awesome total of six would automatically become president. Yep — you guessed it! That last bone Estin broke in 1953 was his SEVENTH, earning him the presidency of the BBKA. As proud of his exalted position in the club as he is of his cartooning success, Peter Estin invites all those eligible for membership to write to him at Box 1278; Greenwich, Connecticut.