In a previous article, skohns@kuhub.cc.ukans.edu (Steve) says:

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>
>Hi-
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>(bad blocks & other probs -- hard drive)
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>Lately, I've been having some trouble with the HD. Just about a week ago,
>when I first bought the computer, I started noticing some problems.
>The errors said that there were errors on on of my paritions, and "please move
>data from this drive." I'm familiar with how to solve drive problems on a PC,
>but am admittedly lost here.
>
>For background, I have an Apple //gs, System 6.0, boots to finder, and an AE
>Vulcan 40MB harddrive.
>
>For starters, I tried moving the partitions and files around, folder by folder.
>Eventually, I was able to rid myself (or so I thought) of these errors. I
>primarily used the "Disk..Verify" option under Finder. Then, just today I got
>strange "$0050 system error" while trying to save in the Scrollback Editor of
>ProTerm.
>
>Immediately after this error, it started checking the floppy drives, ignoring
>the hard drive. Then it gave the message "please insert disk AE1" -- which
>is a partition on my hard drive. Since it wouldn't do anything else, I shut
>down the computer, waited and restarted it. Since then, I've been gradually
>more errors in this partition. At this point, AE1 (my boot partition) won't
>even allow for deleting files, or creating a New Folder. It gives a
>"directory error" and "bad block $0000".
>
>***
>
>What should I do at this point? There don't seem to be errors on the other
>partitions. Should I move the AE1 data (on the bad block partition) to one of
>the others? Will this create more problems?
>
>Since I just bought the computer used, I'm not sure I have enough disks to
>reinstall the system files... Are there any "Norton Utils" for the //gs
>(or similiar) that will detect and mark bad blocks so the drive can be used?
>I've tried Copy II plus v8.4, but it doesn't detect any errors during verify,
>but does when trying to make a directory or delete a file.
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>
>Thanks for reading this. Any help would be appreciated!
>-Steve
>

                         MORE VULCAN PROBLEMS

                          by Jim Moores

     In a previous APPLE BITS article entitled "Vulcan - Recovery
After Failure" by Gene Mallard (Sept. 91), Gene described his problems
with his Vulcan hard drive.   I can't claim to have had as serious a
problem as he did, but my problem was in it's own way it was just a
frustrating.

     I was a relatively happy Apple IIe user that was growing a bit
frustrated with semi-severe case of the floppy shuffle. So I ordered
a Vulcan 20 meg. hard drive from one of the mail order companies that
advertise in Incider.   Within a week, the Vulcan was delivered.   I
followed the directions for installing (moderately serious but with no
problems) and was soon very happy with the increased performance.

     One of the things that I use my Apple for is downloading the
FIDONET Apple Echo and the Genealogy Echo from the NEOAC BBS and

saving them to my hard drive. I later load them into Appleworks for
reading and text searches. Almost immediately, I noticed some very
strange and intermittent problems. There seemed to be random special
characters being inserted in the middle of the files that   I
downloaded. At first I thought that I just had a problem with line
noise. But then, I noticed that these same random characters started
showing up in other text files that I hadn't downloaded. I couldn't
think of anything that would cause the problems so I jumped to an
unwarranted but logical conclusion.... I HAD A VIRUS!!!

    Well, I started trying to correlate the occasions that the random
characters showed up with my running of any specific piece of
software....No Luck. Now, the frequency of the problem was maybe once
a month or once every other month, so this was a slow process and very
frustrating. At first the problem scared me so I made backups (using
the software that came with the Vulcan) frequently. Then when nothing
more serious happened I made the backups less frequently as time went
on. I had never heard of a virus that acted so slowly or subtly.   I
remember thinking, "Maybe it's just gremlins".

    Then disaster struck. One night about a year after I bought the
Vulcan, I tried to power-up the computer and it didn't boot. It was
acting like my Vulcan wasn't there and started to try to read the
floppy drive.   I was sure my Vulcan had died and I was one very
unhappy camper. I rushed to the book case and pulled out the Vulcan
Docs and tried to figure out what was happening. I couldn't see that
anything was wrong, so I looked up the 900 number for Vulcan Customer
Service resolving to call the next day.

    The call to the Vulcan Customer Service (I hate it when they
started charging for it) was fairly short and the instructions were
simple and to the point:

    "Check the switch settings on the interface card."

    Wow, I was embarrassed, I should have thought to check the DIP
switch settings.   Come to think of it, I should have verified they
were correct before I installed the card the first time.   The AE
customer service rep was correct, they were set up for a GS, not a
IIe. I fixed that quickly enough.

    "Run an undocumented feature of the Vulcan Partition Manager".

    This would destroy everything on the hard drive (my back up was
several months old but, hey, it wasn't doing me any good the way it
was). This undocumented feature will, they explained, will scan the
hard drive and would seal off all bad blocks on the hard drive.   Now,
I don't really know why AE would not document this feature, as it was
a real help in finding 6 bad blocks on my hard drive (one in the root
directory structure of the hard drive).   I'm not sure if the first
problem (dip settings) was as serious as the second but it was the bad
block that showed up in my root directory that finally did it in.

    After a long session of restoring the hard drive, everything
worked just fine! I felt like I had finally been delivered from the
depths of Computer H*ll. I have been using the hard drive now for two
months since the "Disaster" with no problems at all.

    I will explain how to use this undocumented feature for those of
you who haven't had the problem (yet?). Maybe it will save you a call
to the AE Customer Service.   *WARNING* – this will destroy the
contents of your hard drive, so have a very current backup.

    1)   Boot the Partition Manager from a floppy (not the original,
         would you really like to lose everything if something else
         goes wrong?).

    2)   At the main menu, type "AE". I can't remember if you should
         press return or not, so be careful.

    3)   When the program asks you if you want to save the BAD BLOCK
         file, type "Y".

    4)   The computer will then take off and scan the hard drive for
         bad blocks, informing you on the screen as it finds them.
         Then the software will save the addresses of the bad blocks
         to the hard drive.

    5)   Using the instructions that came with the drive, FORMAT the
         partition(s) on the hard drive.

    6)   Using the instructions that came with the drive, RESTORE the
         partition(s) on the hard drive.

    7)   Cold boot the computer.

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     Well, that's about it  for my adventure into  the scary world  of
hard drive problems.  I hope that  this will help some poor soul  with
hard drive problems.  Maybe, this  Bad Block procedure should be  done
once a year, just to forestall future problems?  Nah....I'm too lazy!


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      _____
     |      Reply-To: aa624@cleveland.Freenet.Edu (James Moores)      |
     |Primary-Sysop - Cleveland FreeNet Apple2 Sig    -- Type "GO APPLE2" -- |
     |  Co-Sysop    - Cleveland FreeNet Genealogy Sig -- Type "GO ROOTS" --  |
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