

# HURKLE

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## I'M A SAP

Those of you who have read my criticisms of the SAPS in Sky Hook may be surprised to find me back here. I resigned from this apa in the spring of 1948 and felt no desire to return till, at the Cinvention, Henry Spelman III urged me to come back. Though he used no high pressure methods, for some reason I was almost convinced then and there that I should re-enter the SAPS. A few weeks after the con, I wrote to the Third and shortly was hooked.

I must admit that my primary purpose in returning to the SAPS is to obtain that handful of sterling mags that appear here. Unfortunately, I note from last mailing that Spacehound's Gazette is faltering -- and this is one of the publications I particularly wanted to receive. I hope JoKe isn't out. The publications of Rapp and Coslet are also among those I like to obtain, and it is nice to see both of them producing voluminously in the SAPS. In the last mailing there were a few other good mags besides these -- surprising to me. I trust it wasn't a flash in the pan.

## SPOOKS FOR SALE

Want a ghost? You can buy a pair of them for \$260, or \$130 each. Each ghost is made of 14 kt. gold, of all things, and "flaunts" a tiny ruby in its fat tummy. What's more, they have sex, and there is a right and left ghost to each pair. These unusual ghosts emanate from Mermod-Jaccard King of St Louis, "jewelers to America for 118 years." You should, according to this New Yorker ad, "wear them in pairs on your new black suit lapel."

## A NEW EDITOR TAKES OVER

It was like a dream. I breathed proudly on the prism-shaped nameplate setting on my desk. It flaunted my name in fancy letters and under it blazoned the simple title, "Editor." Wiping it carefully with my coat-sleeve, I gazed at it teary-eyed for a moment, then seated myself behind the desk and pressed the buzzer that summoned my secretary. She came in like a chorine prancing down the runway.

"Funny," I remarked, "but you look exactly like Ava Gardner."

She perched intimately on the corner of my huge desk. I gazed at her awhile till I realized there was work to do. "Take a note," I ordered briskly.

Miss Longgam -- for that was her name, Gloria Longgam -- opened her notebook. "Put an ad in the papers," I told her, "advertising for a new secretary."



She wrote, struggling over the spelling of "secretary," then closed the notebook, and stuck the pencil in her hair. "Ain't I satisfactory, chief?" she husked, leaning forward till I sniffed the exciting parfum behind her dainty ears. It smelled wonderfully like the odor of cellar-stored pulp magazines.

"You would be if you could only type," I assured her, and whipped out a handkerchief to remove the Nuit Rouge stain that she left on my left ear (I had spoiled her aim by ducking). "But I, dear Miss Longgam, am going to marry you!"

"It's about time," she murmured, Nuit Rouging my intellectually-broad forehead. "We've known each other for two minutes."

"I could never afford a wife before," I explained musingly. "All my income went to buying Astounding every month. But no longer will I have that expense -- now that I'm Astounding's new editor!"

Yes, I was Astounding's new editor. John Campbell had been called to Washington to take over as head of the Atomic Energy commission, and in casting about for a successor as ASF editor, he had noticed my "File 13" column in Spacewarp. "That's the man! That's the man I want!" he told Miss Longgam excitedly. "Send for him immediately" -- and he wiped Nuit Rouge from the nape of his neck.

So here I was, sitting in Jawn's leather-upholstered chair, behind his great desk. Vast editorial decisions spun like nebulae in my teeming mind. Mental relays clicked. Conductors hissed. "Send in my artists!" I ordered Gloria, my fiancée. I ducked at that, and a hearty lip impression in Nuit Rouge enhanced the bust of Ray Cummings that reposed behind me.

The artists shambled in, a sorry bunch of paint-bedaubed, little men with pencils stuck behind their ears and camelhair brushes clenched in their teeth.

"Al," I said, jabbing a digit at Canedo, "your symbolical covers are de-lousy."

"I know, chief," he mumbled, "I tried to sell the originals down in the Village, and finally had to junk them. But John liked them."

"I don't," I snapped. "You're fired, Canedo."

His face lit up with a strange smile. "Now! Now!" he panted. "I can go to art school! I've always wondered what art school is like."

I dismissed him, and turned to Cartier. "Edd, how would you like to work on a gigantic portfolio of wacky pix showing a whole gallery of gnomes, kobalds, witches, ghosts, and other fabulousities?"

Cartier clasped his hands together in ecstasy. "That would be double peachy," he told me with dewy eyes.

"Fine," I nodded in friendly fashion. "You'll have a lot of time to work on any old portfolio your little heart desires, Edd. You're all through here."



Orban and the others stared at Cartier as he leaped through the window shouting, "I can't live without Street & Smith! If Unknown is revived, you'll be sorry!"

The rest of the boys had sort of got the drift and were sneaking out of the office. I nonchalantly lighted a cigarette and relaxed.

"Call the janitor, honey," I told Gloria after the artists had departed, "and have the place fumigated. Then phone Paul."

"Paul? He just left, along with Quackenbush -- "

"No, no, not Orban. Frank R. Paul. Also get in touch with Chuck Schneeman and Elliot Dold. Tell them to come back and name their own price, if necessary. Wire John Grossman, a fan out in Iowa. From now on, Astounding is going to have the best stf illustrations in the entire field!

"And now" -- my eyes began to gleam frenetically -- "send in the writers!"

(To be continued next issue, maybe.)

#### PUPTENT POET DIVISION

In the 9th mailing Art Rapp reprinted some stuff he wrote while in the army -- stuff he'd written, apparently, to let off some steam about the desolation of the Lone Star state, and G.I. life in general. Having written quite a few items of similar nature myself, I delved into a file folder poetically labeled "Old War Relics" and tried to find something to use here.

First, here's a couple of poems out of the "Old War Relics" file. This first one was written about an actual captain, personnel officer of the 289th Infantry Regiment, 75th Infantry Division, an outfit I served several months with while I was being returned home. He was an effeminate man whose only friend in the whole regiment was a miserable little puppy on whom he lavished much attention.

#### An Officer's Dog Speaks

I am a little puppy,  
A Captain is my master;  
And I'm his dog 'cause I run fast  
But the Captain runs much faster.

I much prefer enlisted men --  
That Brass Hat gets me down;  
It's not because I like him  
That my nose is wet and brown.

When I don't come as ordered,  
He eats me out. What's more,  
If I, without his knowing, leave,  
It's AW 104.



He talks to me in childish tones  
He uses on French hags;  
He checks me 50 times a day  
To see I've got my dogtags.

He hates his men or they hate him --  
I wonder who hates which?  
They think the Cap's a puppy, too,  
They call him "son of bitch."

"He treats us just like dogs,"  
So soldiers' bitches ran --  
But my complaint's he treats a dog  
Just like an enlisted man!

The next poem was written four or five months before "An Officer's Dog Speaks," and commemorates the summer I spent with the Assembly Area Command in France between VE- and VJ-Day helping with the job of redeploying outfits in Europe to the so-called "CBI" sector. I believe the title is a pun on the commander of the AAC, a major general named Lord.

Praise the Lord and Pass Me Two Stars, Too

When I became involved in "redeployment,"  
I finally learned what Myrna Loy meant  
When she said (as she must have said, for nearly everyone  
says it now and then) that "War is hades,"  
And my thoughts, if uttered, would certainly shock  
certain parties including a few oldfashioned ladies;  
For instead of going pubbing in the U.K., or resting on  
the Riviera,  
Or dunking myself in the Shannon and guzzling Irish  
whiskey in the land of De Valera,  
I am now a Com Z Commando, fighting for AAC, now in  
its heyday,  
And I probably will be fighting here until V-J Day.  
I think it's a hell of a way to fight a war, especially  
-- to be specific --  
When the AAC's way over here and the war is in the  
Pacific.

G. I. JOURNAL

Maybe I'll reprint another poem or two from my khaki career next issue. I'll finish up this section with a couple of news-items from a burlesque news-bulletin I "published" sporadically while at Sissonne Sub-Area, Assembly Area Command, in France. Pages of similar stuff were dished out to enliven (?) the bulletin board in our office, and I've preserved a few of the several hundred issues of this "newspaper" among which I note the following reports:

Washington, D. C. (AP) -- Another old army tradition, that of standing reveille, is to be discarded in the near future, high-ranking War Department officials indicated today. "It's all due to the acute food shortage," one officer explained. "If there is reveille, the men have to get up, and of course if they get up, they are on hand for



breakfast. Otherwise, they sleep through breakfast -- thereby saving the army many rations." The discontinuance of reveille will save the government \$20,987,639 worth of food annually, it was estimated.

Sissonne, France -- Dogs will not be allowed at Service Club dances, ARC officials declared today. The announcement distressed many Sissonne GIs who had planned to bring their girl friends to dances.

## CONTRIBUTORS' CORNER

# Heirloom

by RADELL NELSON



I'm idly running my fingers across the keyboard, thinking, what to type, what to type. The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. I just thought of someTHING.

I thought of the reefer hanging from my mouth. It smokes so slow and easy-like, and makes me see THINGS. There in the corner it is. Is it? No, it isn't. I just imagined it. But it was so real, real, real, real.

Sometimes that's how they are. I remember the guy who gave me my first stick of tea. Name was Sam and he was a very tall, tall, tall guy, tall and pale from smoking the weed.

I went down to his place and he was smoking the weed and he said, "Rad, don't you sometimes get tired of doing the same old things the same old way every day? Don't you get bored?"

"Sometimes," I said.

He said, "You should try the weed. Then you won't never be bored".

"Why?" I asked.

"They make you a new world out of smoke and make the old world seem like new. They make trees and lights and houses and wine, women and song (HA HA), wine, women and song (HA HA) all out of smoke," he said. "Try one."

I took one and lit up and almost choked to death on the smoke.

Then he said, "You'll get used to it. I used to know a guy who smoked them all his life. He told me about something the guy before him had been told by the guy before him. This first, last guy, oldest guy, guy who first smoked the weed 'way back when Jesus was on earth, told the second guy who smoked his tea about a THING that was after him. He said the thing was just sitting in the smoke world waiting for people to eat. He said the THING would get him and pretty soon it did. The second guy passed on the habit to the third guy and the THING got the second guy, and so on. As soon as the guy passed on the habit to another guy, the THING would get him, so the weed and the THING lived happily ever after. The End. The THING never took a guy until he had passed on the habit, because that would cut off his food supply.



"You already did pass on the habit," I laughed. "you just passed it on to me."

"I'm not joking," I said, blowing some smoke in his face. "Look. I'm smoking."

All of a sudden he stopped yelling and said, "The THING'S coming. I hear it running through the night, past farmhouses and churches. Past railroads and gas stations. Running, running. I hear its claws, its long razor claws scratching the dirt road, the tar road, the cement road, fast, faster, fastest. Now it's coming through the outskirts of town. Now it's racing down the main drag. It's turning the corner, coming up Jefferson street, its claws scratching, scratching. It's coming closer, closer, closer! IT'S HERE!"

I thought he was nuts so I ran down the hall calling for help. Two guys from another apartment came out and we went back to Sam's room and listened at the door. There wasn't a sound, so we went in. Sam was gone.

He said, "Listen, buddy, why don't you go somewhere else to get coked up. This is a respectable joint."

Wait! I hear footsteps, and a scratching sound.

Who's there? Oh, it's only Art. Come in, Art.

Don't look at me like that, Art. I'm just sitting here and smoking a stick of tea. Ha ha. They're good.

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