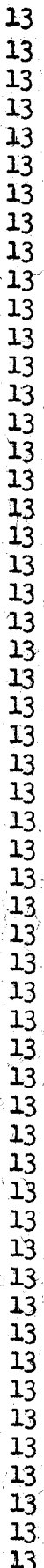


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# THIRTEEN



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Parturiunt Montes -- Nascetur Ridiculus Mus

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Once again from Phyllis H. Economou, 2416 East Webster Place, Milwaukee 11, Wis., (fanzine eds please copy, nothing more to the P.O.Box, please) comes PHlotsam. With luck and postal cooperation, it will be in the 90th Fapa mailing. Ronel, suh, Bill Morse gets five pages on the books this time.

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## S P I N D R I F T ~ ~ ~

THE REST OF THIS ISSUE is run off, and I've left myself just these two pages for Spindrift. This is difficult, because I've a fat folder of things I wanted to write about. I find it much harder to write two pages than six.

UP TO THIS POINT, Dean Grennell, Boyd Raeburn and I have always found ourselves generally in agreement regarding the important aspects of the fan scene -- such as desirable consites -- and TAFF representatives. Now, however, a wide-open, three-way split has developed in this formerly solid front. Not only are we each rooting for a different TAFF candidate, but we are each sponsoring a different one -- Grennell/Sanderson; Raeburn/Ashworth; Economou/Bentcliffe -- which means the difference between mild inclination and fierce partisanship. Just to start off the fight on a nice dirty level -- I think all FAPA should vote for my candidate because I'm a girl. Like, BENTCLIFFE for TAFF! (Your move, DAG - Boyd.)

NEAR THE BACK of this issue you'll find Bill Morse's mailing comments. But not all the way back -- Bill's part of PHlotsam, not just an appendage. Bill's typed comments had the zine titles in lower case, underlined, but when stencilling them, through habit I capitalized them all -- which makes them look like my comments. So don't get mixed up now. (This is not too likely -- and anyone who can't tell Morse-talk from Economou-talk deserves to be confused.)

COUP OF THE MONTH has been deferred 'til next issue for lack of space. Yes, I got it. I got the one and only Burbee Home Brew Recipe, which I will generously share with all of you next mailing. Meanwhile, comparing the two, I'd advise that if you haven't already blown up the joint with the recipe I gave you last time, that you defer experimentation for the time being.

ACTUALLY, LACK OF SPACE isn't the problem this issue -- it's lack of time. Pages could always be added, but the deadline cannot be extended. During the past quarter, in addition to my usual work, I've tackled a formidable 5-8 thousand direct mail promotion which I'm mailing at the rate of 100 per day -- typing labels, mimeoing 2-page letters, folding, stuffing, stamping, sealing -- time just isn't.

COUPLE OF WEEKS AGO, the mail brought an amusing Bundle from Britain. Bill Morse sent a clutch of British weeklies which I wish I now had more space to talk about. However, among them were two weeklies for adolescent girls, 24-26 pages, both running heavily to comic-strip type stories. "BOYFRIEND" was similar to some teen-slanted mags I've seen on our stands -- cloying romantic nonsense -- how Sue overcame Terry's parents' unreasonable objections to their marriage at 16 -- L-O-V-E leaking from every sticky page. "SCHOOL FRIEND" on the contrary, was wholesome as

oatmeal -- youthful female derring-do -- mystery in boarding school (just the hair-brained sort of goings on that landed me in so much trouble when I was in boarding school, trying to imitate such exciting versions of the life.) Third item was a gigantic four-page-spread ad from the TIMES by a firm called "Accles & Pollock, Ltd." I won't go into this now because I might want a filler next issue. The final piece was the prize of the package, chronicling the current activities of our old friend, L. Ron Hubbard. I won't talk about it -- I'll just quote it:

"PLANTS DO WORRY AND FEEL PAIN -- A discovery of immense significance to all gardeners has been made by American nuclear scientist Dr. L. Ron Hubbard, whose experiments at East Grinstead (Sussex) with the effect of light on plants have been related recently in Garden News.

"By using a highly sensitive skin galvanometer (an instrument used for many years to detect emotional reactions in human beings) Dr. Hubbard becomes the first man to show that PLANTS FEEL PAIN AND CAN WORRY IN A WAY COMPARABLE WITH HUMANS.

"Garden News was present at a demonstration given by Dr. Hubbard at his East Grinstead research station last week. After first showing how the emotions of a man -- such as fear of death and anxiety -- registered on the galvanometer, Dr. Hubbard connected a tomato growing on a plant to his meter by means of two clamps. He adjusted the meter, made specially sensitive with transistors, to give a normal reading and then stuck a nail into the tomato. The needle of the meter quivered and began to rise.

"The same reading on a man would indicate extreme anxiety and fear of death,' Dr. Hubbard explained. 'This shows that in some way a plant can 'think' and worry about its survival.' The same 'anxiety pattern' was shown again when a slip was torn from the main stem of the tomato. The meter continued to register a reaction by the plant for many minutes afterwards -- as would be the case with a human.

"Dr. Hubbard and his staff will now carry out exhaustive experiments to check and give practical application to this startling discovery. But already Dr. Hubbard has forecast some of the benefits which he believes will be possible by using the meter for horticultural psychology. These are they:

"1) Readings could be taken of plants in various combinations of soils, water densities and temperatures, and the condition in which the plant would be happiest could be instantly predicted.

"2) The ability to tell at an early stage of growth, the health and reactions of a plant would enable hardier and better varieties to be raised in a fraction of the time it takes today.

"3) It will be possible, for example, to select from a thousand seedlings the six which will make the most healthy and successful exhibition blooms and with absolute confidence, discard the remainder.

"4) The health of any plant could be tested to indicate -- in advance of any visible sign -- whether it was going to catch a disease or blight. 'Plants only catch a disease if they are thinking of dying.' Dr. Hubbard says.

"Dr. Hubbard, who was a student in the first class ever taught in nuclear physics in the U.S.A. was born in Nebraska in 1911. He served with the U. S. Navy during the war but now makes his home in England, where he finds research technicians especially good. He finances all his research which is aimed at increasing world food production, from personal funds and royalties from his writings."

Thanks, Bill -- these were fun.

## PARDON ME WHILE I ANSWER MY MAIL...

No, I'm not planning to initiate a mail column in PHlotz where I print all my incoming mail verbatim, rebutting and refuting to beat all. This would be a dandy way to run up my page count -- especially the long, juicy, elite-typed four-page whopper Ed Cox trun at me last week. But running up PHlotz' page count is not one of my Aims in Life. The reverse, in fact.

However, this past quarter brought in what, to me, amounts to an avalanche of mail -- which just sits here looking accusing while I run about trying to do 20 things before breakfast, none of which have to do with answering mail. However, excerpting tasty morsels of it here, and replying where necessary, will at least be acknowledging it in a sense until that happier day when I can sit me down and do the job write.

So ...

Dean McLaughlin writes regarding the mention of the Tom Swift, Jr. books in the last PHlotz: "FYI, the Tom Swift, Jr. books are being published under the byline of Victor Appleton ll, which is, of course, a house name. The original Appleton was a long parade of different people -- kept hacks, of course -- working under editorial direction such as to make John Campbell seem like the soul of benevolent indulgence. The last I heard, which was some years ago now, was that all of the new "jr." series had been written by one man. (Not identified, I might add. Wonder if it's one of our dirty ol' pros who's ashamed to admit it.) Whether this is still true, damned if I know. Damned if I care, for that matter." ((Are you, perchance, "protesting too much" Deah?))

Eric Bentcliffe (like, Bentcliffe for TAFF!), in answer to my querying why he was not on the FAPA waiting-list -- everyone else seems to be -- replied that he was amply active with TRIODE and OMPA, "However, if you work on me enough ..., I might just end up joining FAPA one of these days." Where has this boy been? Eric, lamb, you just don't up and join FAPA. You Plan Ahead -- years ahead. Fapans have already started enrolling their teen-age offspring on the waiting-list, and if the trend continues, before too many more years, I predict Fappish offspring will be automatically ensconced on the w-l at birth -- like Eton. I (and others) would still like to see you in Fapa -- so if you think you may be able to manage the time for Fapactivity four or five years hence, jump aboard!

Ed Cox reports "What really attracted me to this issue was the comely wench on the cover recovering from a distressing sneeze caused by the lilies she is now holding at arm's length." Studying PHlotsam's cover from this fresh and childlike point of view, Ed's conclusion appears quite logical. I give my All for my Art, but somehow the message just doesn't seem to get through. I'd blow my brains out, except that I'm afraid the drama of it all would escape me. I have also been forced to conclude that John Trimble really does exist. Ed wrote at some length about John -- almost two full pages, in fact. I'd quote it here, but I'm trying to keep my page count under control. Besides, Ed is a nice guy and a friend of mine -- I don't want to get him in trouble.

Bob Lichtman offers a second-hand report in response to Bill Morse's request for first-hand reports about Krushchev. "Several of my friends did see him ... and they reported to Arv and I that he was a rather fat little man with a smile." Illuminating, eh Bill? H Last issue, I mentioned that GW was active in 1952 when I came along. Bob carries it further by saying he saw a letter of his in a pro-zine dated 1940-41, in which he was asking the editor for art originals to offer

as prizes in some contest he was running in his fanzine. Maybe GW is really Gilgamesh. Tucker? ~~H~~Bob also answers my question regarding the use of "-oOo-" -- if I used it first in fandom? I picked it up from Arthur who says he copied it from a steno who used it in Bucharest, Roumania years ago. But Bob found it used by Burbee in Shangri-L' for November 1944, so I guess it's universal.

Bob Bloch's letter was not edged in black as it should have been -- because it announced that he's leaving FAPA. This is very sad news, but understandable in view of the gay, mad, hectic life he's now leading far from bucolic Wisconsin out there in legendary Hollywood. I'll try to quote from his letter without getting all out of breath again as I did when I read it:

"The Writer's Guild blew the whistle and called the strike. No more writing for TV or movies...not a line...no corrections, revisions, nothing. Strike was set for Saturday, midnight. So last Tuesday afternoon I was called by two shows to come right in: they'd been taking their own ill-natured time, but now they wanted first drafts of scripts at once. I went in and conferred. One show, WHISPERING SMITH, a western, went for a mystery idea of mine, very offtrail, in which a sort of Oscar Wilde character tangles with the people of 1870 Denver. Audie Murphy, the star, was on hand -- mild-appearing little guy who doesn't look as if he could kill anybody. So I took the show and promised a first draft by the deadline, Saturday night. The other show had a short-story they wanted me to use as the basis for a teleplay. Some basis! Change the locale from England to America, put in new characters, invent a new plot, change the title -- nothing left but a rather tired switch gimmick at the end. But seeing as how I wanted to do this particular program, I promised another script by Saturday for ALFRED HITCHCOCK PRESENTS. Then I went home and figured...4 days, 2 scripts, 80 pages. That's 20 pages a day. Pretty rough, but I could do it if I cut out the frills, such as eating and sleeping.

"The next morning, before I started, came a special delivery from the Writer's Guild. Surprise! They had decided to step up the strike from midnight Saturday to midnight Friday. So there I sat with 2½ days for the jobs. Well I did it by midnight Friday, and yesterday I had a nice quiet funeral, and today I am back in circulation again.

"Tomorrow I start driving lessons, will do a cover yarn for AMAZING that Cele Goldsmith sent me here, and try to do some work on my novel. And so it goes. Family reports they are well, and I hope to read MY WONDERFUL WORLD OF SLAPSTICK, by Buster Keaton, and a book Arthur would like -- just out -- CLASSICS OF THE SILENT SCREEN, lavishly illustrated. A big picture book, most intriguing.

"Other than that, what can I tell you? Nights get cold, down to 40 or 45, and we've had some rain -- but the days are usually pleasant enough. Flu epidemic hasn't got around to me yet. ~~H~~But it did. ~~ph~~ Still selling stuff: more hard-cover anthology appearances scheduled for THE BEST FROM STAR SF, THE BEST FROM FANTASTIC UNIVERSE, some untitled antho edited by Jerome Ellison...just came out in THE PERMANENT PLAYBOY, and in Arkham House THE SHUTTERED ROOM (another Lovecraft memorabilia item). Have a novel coming in Saint Mystery Library pocketbook series ...am in current (Feb) GENT with article on Hollywood and in March ROGUE with article on horror films. More stories coming in AMAZING, FANTASTIC, ROGUE and IF. So I'm not out of circulation yet.

"But as of Feb. I will be out of FAPA. It's not the \$3.00 dues...just the realization that limited time keeps me from being active and has even kept me from really reading the last two mailings. So with all the eager waiting-listers, I feel it's most unfair of me to hog a place when they are ready, willing and able to get in and contribute."

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We shall now bow our heads and observe two minutes silence.

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Many interesting notes and letters came in with the Egoboo Polls from fellow Faps. These were much enjoyed, but for obvious reasons (43 Polls to tally and total) I found it impossible to reply to any of them. Quick acknowledgments of a few here and a reply to at least one:

Rick Sneary -- thanks for the good suggestion about cutting large heavy paper sacks to size and taping for filing mailings. This will also solve to an extent the problem of what to do with the accumulation of large heavy super-market sacks I hate to throw away. # Wish you would do a Detention Report -- personality impressions are the most interesting part -- and since we unfortunately saw so little of each other, I'd like to hear about your convention.

Don Wilson takes issue with the rating system I used -- and suggests that "1-2-3-4" or "65-64-63-62" would be preferable. I had already announced the system I intended to use, and felt I shouldn't change it. Why not go into the possible advantages more fully in Fapa, Don, for the consideration of the next Veep? But wasn't "1-2-3-4" the system I did use? Except backwards -- "4-3-2-1"? Whatsadif?

Chick Derry poses a question I do want to answer: "Not carping, just asking: If it is fair, as you say, to vote for one's self for office, why not here (on the Egoboo Poll) -- I fail to see the distinction...?" Simple, Chick -- for one thing, in Fapa elections, the candidates propose themselves for office, and voting for another would seem nonsensical. If a candidate doesn't care to make every ethical effort to win -- why run? The purpose of the Egoboo Poll, as I see it, is to applaud the members for their efforts during the year, and to give them conclusive evidence of the degree of appreciation their work has inspired in the other members. One does not normally applaud one's self and, as I'll explain, if this were allowed, it would render the Poll results meaningless. In the Official elections, each member has one vote only and, while this one vote will sometimes swing the election, the fact remains that this is possible only when enough votes have been cast for a candidate by the other members to bring the election into perfect balance. Therefore, even use of such a weighty single vote would not alter the fact that the winning candidate was, for all practical purposes, the choice of the membership. However, in the Egoboo Poll, it is theoretically possible for any single member, determined to make a high showing, to cast a total of 50 pts. for self -- if this were allowed. 50 pts. -- even in this heavy balloting year when pts. count for much less than usual -- would make the difference between 50th place (2 pts.) and 28th place. A member who had received only 2 pts. from others -- or even none at all -- could through his(her) own ballot alone put himself ahead of 29 other members in the final results. Last year these 50 pts. would have meant the difference between 25th place and 8th place. This could not, by any stretch of imagination, be thought to reflect the opinions of the membership, which is why I said it would render the Poll meaningless. And even if only a handful of members voted for themselves, a reasonable number of points, it would still distort the final picture (unless you're convinced that every member is fully qualified to judge his/her own work, and willing to indulge in self-praise), and would be unfair to all those members who would not vote for themselves if they could.

TO ALL OF YOU who said "Hi" or something of the sort, Hi yourself! And for all those extravagant Economou votes, Gee, Thanks! You've got me blushing all over East Webster Place. Boyd said he would glee at my crogglements should I, the Poll counter, place high. Well, I am properly croggled, Boyd may glee mightily, and I await with some trepidation the results of next year's Poll, where I had better not slip too far or I am likely to be Viewed With Suspicion. Which means I gotta work this upcoming year. Shucks, just when I was thinking of gafiating, too.

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Bentcliffe for TAFF -- Because...

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BRICKS, BATS & BOUQUETS INSPIRED BY THE 89th FAPA MAILING --

THE FANTASY AMATEUR/Officialdom: This is becoming a Cilly Cycle -- just when we increased dues, down went the page count in the mailings, up went the treasury. So we no sooner take steps to reduce the swollen treasury when up goes the page count again. And up some more. Mlg. #87 - 437 pp; mlg. #88 - 507 pp; mlg. #89 - 644 pp. This way lies ruin.

LIKE HOGAN'S GOAT/FMBusby: Your guess as to the Y of the "P" was a logical one -- but wrong. I still haven't figured it out, but would have no reason to suppose that Graham would vote for me. The inclusion of Graham stymies almost any explanation I can think of. I simply haven't got to know the guy in FAPA. # Buck Coulson showed up bearded at my New Year's party -- the brush grown for the occasion, he said, just to prove me wrong about bearded fans being Zen-Buddhists. But I never said it -- and now I forget who did. # I think quite a few fans who have sold one or two stories have no great compulsion to write but just wanted to prove they could. # "Nobby & Lisa's house" may be deflating, but it could be worse. My neighbor is now trying to make her 3-year-old (the same one, named Lisa, too) understand why I am not "Brinker's Mommy." # My party was the fan-nishest -- in addition to you-name-it, we had both Jack Daniels and Jim Beam. # Agree with you that it seems impossible that Van Braun is older than Uncle Willie. # Must renew my sub to CRY -- it's expired already. One reason I took so long to subscribe to the rejuvenated CRY is because way back in '52, I sent two quarters for CRY and SINISTERRA and never received anything for my money.

THE CAMBRIDGE SCENE/Stark: This fanzine made delightful reading -- with not a check mark in sight. Just say I enjoyed it, and kinda wish I could visit The Cambridge Scene one day.

HORIZONS/Warner: Just last mailing I told Hevelin I couldn't imagine Warner with an eyestrain publication. Have you come full circle? # This has been said before but I'll say it again here -- knowing fans and Fapans, can you really think that a neo -- any neo -- would be unable to round up a couple of sponsors? The very fact that they didn't know anything about the applicant would impel certain tender-hearted members to sponsorship, on the basis that it would be unfair to turn anyone down without good reason. # It should be an unwritten rule for one-shots that they should never be judged on the basis of how much fun they are to read -- but how much fun they represent. This is often in inverse ratio -- as witness mine this mailing. # Does anyone know how to ease a stapler that doesn't quite jam -- it just catches? It staples all right, but often a corner of the staple doesn't quite come free. Sometimes it has a spell of doing this consistently and I staple with a table knife in hand which I zip between the staple and the machine after each operation. That's usually all it takes, although sometimes it catches hard and has to be pried down from the machine. # Enjoyed "Where Did You Eat? Out" as much as anything you've ever done -- and that's saying a lot.

GALLERY/Derry: I consider the Grennells lucky to find a bakery whose luscious-looking goodies taste like styrofoam. This is one easy way to beat the weight problem. It's always my luck to find bakeries whose foods taste better than they look -- then the bitter, constant battle against temptation. # You are probably a lot more unhappy with GALLERY than we are -- I enjoyed all of this issue and am sorry to see it go.

LARK/Danner: As I promised, Bill, I checked back in my old FA's to find my authority for thinking you were responsible for Myers' entry into FAPA. Officially, his credentials were given as BOY'S HERALD. But in the FA for Mlg. #70 - Feb. 1955, the following is taken from the President's (Jacobs) Message: "Considerable controversy has arisen concerning the legality of Wilfried Myers' entrance into the Fapa. Members have pointed out that his publication, BOY'S HERALD, does not qualify as the 'Fantasy Amateur publication' required by the Constitution for admittance into our group. This is true of course. While no definition is available of what does or does not constitute a 'fantasy amateur publication,' BOY'S HERALD would seem to be a general apazine, rather than falling into our own somewhat specialized sphere. And if this were the only 'zine Wilfried had published he would not be a Fapa member. He did not receive any Fapa credit for the mag -- BOY'S HERALD was distributed before Wilfried's becoming a Fapa member. His first Fapa publication was a couple of pages of somewhat violent repartee to similar pages by Bill Danner. This later material by Wilfried was no different than much of the material that is allowed full credit under our Constitution. And since this material was received by OE Burbee in advance of Myers' official entrance into the Fapa, Myers fully qualifies as a fanzine editor, and thus is legally a member in good standing of the Fapa. It's ironic in a way. Bill Danner is really the cause for Wilfried Myers being in the Fapa. Have fun, chums." So there it is -- Harry Warner was right, and I was too. That was a magnificent job of point-stretching, wasn't it? # Bill Dcnaho reread the Penrod series this past summer and his reaction was violent -- letter came too late to quote, but maybe next issue. However, Twain might "age" better. Having more of the "historical" flavor, they would probably avoid the dated effect Bill complains about in the Tarkington books. I hadn't even heard of the two Tom Sawyer books you mention, which is strange when you say they were as good as the originals. Must find them. # Dog-gone it, I must be more careful. Margins are full of notes here -- and I can't read them. Doubt I'll be really stymied for things to say, though. # Your mention that mimeo stencils can be spliced invisibly reminds me to ask how they can be spliced solidly? I've spliced them fairly often, using corflu on both sides, with no trouble, but last week after I had run off just 20-25 of a long run on a spliced stencil, it separated at the splice and I had to cut another. # Add ads in poor taste -- the one being run in the women's mags these days by some deodorant or other, all about how women have two kinds of ~~sw~~ -- perspiration -- the ordinary old kind and a special variety from glands that go to work just when she's near the guy she most wants to be dainty for. Of course, most deodorant products just act on the workaday glands and leave her unprotected at her most crucial moments, etc. and ad nauseum. Hey, could this be the "pornography in the LHJ?" # Blondie and Dagwood haven't aged but the kids have grown up. # Luckily we get few soliciting phone calls because I'd probably get an unlisted number too. Last week I was washing my hair when the phone rang and it was one of these dames surveying Redbook readers. I blew my dripping stack and hung up. About an hour later, she phoned again! I won't take space to go into details -- but the conversation almost made me cancel my subscription. # Best job I ever saw the post office do was years ago when my family -- name of Berube -- lived in Chisholm, Maine, and operated the "Top-Notch Baking Company." A letter was delivered to us addressed to "Dr. & Mrs. Chisholm, Berube Bakery, Maine." (How and why my dad, who was a dentist, happened to be running a bakery is a long story and beside the point.)



PHANTASY PRESS/McPhail: You have my deepest sympathy for both your mother and dad, Dan -- and hopes that everything goes well for all of you. # Fine Rogers cover here. Also, your reproduction has improved 1000%. I think your new paper makes a great difference. PHANTASY PRESS now has the appearance to match its quality. # The Dockweiler story was well done -- who is he? # It must be interesting to have actually been a part of the infant FAPA and see the changes the years have wrought -- to the discombobulation of some of the returning old timers. # How I'd enjoy a Phanshack like yours; my stuff is all over the house with older stuff stored in the attic in cartons. We have a fine large basement like Dean's, but in its present condition it must be called just an old-fashioned cellar. As we rent the house, it wouldn't be practical to go to the work and expense of converting it into a usable workroom. But I can dream. # It wasn't necessary for you to type out all those goshawful formulae -- we gave you handy titles to use; "The Brisant Fanzine," "Economorruption," or, combined, "The TNT Papers." # If you actually get to Pittsburgh, I just might be delighted enough to honor your rain-check -- but my promises are all the political type. # You didn't actually make top "Unsung Fapan" to crow over -- but you didn't need it this year. As a member of the Top Ten, McPhail can no longer qualify as Unsung. # (Let me whisper this confidentially, Dan -- Raeburn's name is not "Ger" it's "Boyd." And Ger Steward does exist -- I've met them both.) # If as I've heard, Wansborough's duplicating equipment is the same as Morse's, described in his mailing comments here in PHlotz, your well-meant advice won't be of much help. They don't "run the pages through" -- they lay the sheets down one by one, give each a pat or two, and send a prayer winging up to heaven. Or so I gather. I boggle. # You forgot the WisFanzines in your 88th recap -- Involutia & Demi-PHlotz. Looking forward to the rest of Marion's Detention Diary.

LE MOINDRE/Raeburn: If you're so scornful of "sloppy-sentimental" types who say the French have no word for "home" -- why are you so upset by the misuse of this sacred word in the signs "Homes for sale"? # "Aseptic" means germ-free. Does meningitis come both with and without germs? Is it optional? Kidding aside, Boyd, I hope you're fully recovered now. That was a bad siege. # What's March 7? Glad to hear an Authority say he doesn't like Sarah Vaughn. I've heard her occasionally, and thought her singing execrable, but I wondered what was wrong with my taste because she's such Big Stuff. # Cotton used to swing, but with the government in the cotton business now, it's a dead market. Trading is just about at a standstill. # It's all right to pull up stakes and head elsewhere if there's an elsewhere you believe would be more to your liking. But this isn't always the case. I gripe about a lot of things in this country, but can't think of any place I'd be more all-around satisfied with. And I'm certain the same applies to most English, Canadians and people in many other countries. Under such circumstances, I've a lot of respect for people who do try to improve things, instead of just griping as most of us do. There are so few of them. And in the case of women's organizations, like the League of Women Voters, the members are derisively labeled "do-gooders" and they are often figures of fun to the do-nothings who gripe the loudest -- despite the fact that they accomplish much that is worthwhile both on the local civic level and nationally. I'm not a feminist, and I'm not a Leaguer. I'm a do-nothing myself -- but bothered by it now and then. Slightly. # I meant someone in Fapa will inevitably start a gloomy-Monday series of childhood reminiscences. I'm sure some of us would be able to dredge up out of our bruised little psyches harrowing tales to equal the traumatic experiences of mundane literature's kiddies. In fact, Marion Bradley's making a good start here, and I've followed her lead. # I could cope with the poor registration on the Gestetner -- so it's up and down, it's still pretty -- but it doesn't like to feed legal length, and as you know, I shove a lot of legal at it. # "Rally Round the Flab, Boys!" must be the motto of TOPS -- the "Take Off Pounds Safely" club. # Golly, Boyd, you can cram a lot of commentable stuff into a little bit of space!

QABAL #4/Grennell-Raeburn: Cover here is the last word in futility. # See how much I've learned about guns, Dean, after all these years in the vicinity of Fond du Lac -- couldn't imagine what you meant by saying you have a shotgun "again." I'd have called all that clutch of long-barrelled guns on the wall downstairs "shotguns." Or are they rifles? And is there a difference? # Boyd, are you sure the film was really attached to those stencils? Would seem a silly arrangement -- who's that accurate? I used to use film stencils where the film looked attached, but was actually held on by little gummy patches which you could pull away and stick back on again. I have little trouble with offset with my Gestetner now, except sometimes on white paper. But running off the Poll results, I learned not to fancy things all up with rows of ".....s" which offset like mad. # Here is another MAD non-fan. The few I've seen have been faintly amusing, but not enough to seek them out. # If people enjoy singing folk music, or working-man music, I suppose they have a right to do so, but I do think they should indulge in private. To haul out a guitar and start braying at a party is taking advantage of well-bred people who've been taught that when someone sings, you must stop everything and listen. Perhaps if it weren't for this sort of conditioning, it wouldn't be such a nuisance. Uninvited entertainers should automatically be exceptions to the rules of good manners. They are about to open an Espresso House around the corner near the Downer -- don't know how we've waited so long. I think the reason Coffee Houses all run to folk singers is that they cater to the young "non-conformist" crowd who are the greatest conformists in the world. They know what they are supposed to like, which at the moment is folk music -- and Lieder is corn which is square which is death. # Always enjoy your little tales about quaint Canadian customs re drinking or censorship. Of course, there are a few tales to be told about us, too -- the shrimp story for one. Gina Clarke told me that one, after you dangled it then so coyly withdrew, and if I hear from her within the next couple of days I'll beat you to telling it -- if you intend to tell it at all -- or at least it'll be a draw. I've asked her if I may use it but time is almost not any more and no word from PQ yet. # If most of Quebec's regulations are Church inspired, they will inevitably deal more with censorship of all kinds, and other measures intended to safeguard the sexual virtue of the community. Sin is usually identified with sex and drinking is taken pretty lightly -- strange, in view of the frequent charge that drinking leads to sexual misbehavior. # I've heard about English "pubs" all closing at 10 P.M. All the books talk about this 10 P.M. curfew, but I gather the "pubs" are sort of working men's clubs, not really "night spots." But if night clubs may stay open -- why the early pub-closings? This is rank discrimination against the poor downtrodden working man and someone ought to write a song about it. Of course you're not the one I should be asking this question of -- a convention in London does not an Englishman make. But you brought up the subject -- or at least made me think of it. Anyone's free to answer -- Bill? Ron? Mal? # Roger Dard's reactions sound just like a 30ish B Movie. Or Susie Wong -- we still have the Sinners-With-Hearts-of-Gold with us. But Chinese nowadays -- theoretically they have more "justification" I guess. # We had a jolt the other night in the weather report, too -- and this was on the radio, not tape. It was unseasonably warm, rainy and extremely humid, with more of the same promised, when over the radio this announcer said crisply that the outlook was "much colder -- present humidity 2%." He was cut off in mid-syllable and I rushed to the phone to dial the weather report. They reassured me that I wasn't nuts -- it was warm, going to be warmer, and the present humidity was 87%. But I'd still like to know what happened.

QABAL #5/Grennell & Half of Fandom: Wonderful Bjo cover here. # Last time I looked, Earl and Nancy Kemp had only three kids, not four! And they are all such quiet children, they don't even seem like four. # By furiously not-thinking about this fanzine, I'm able to manage to almost not-comment, thus fitting the page. This sounded like y'all had a ball!

A FANZINE FOR GER STEWARD/Hoffman: Reading this, all I could think was "Lordy, how uncomfortable!" Five people in a Volkswagen, and slogging through muck heaving at bogged down cars, and wet clothes, and the Great (ugh) Outdoors in the (shudder) rain -- and that appalling line, "I bought my own sleeping bag!" This is not, to be dashinglly original, my cup of tea. I must have a wide streak of the feline in me -- love to be comfy, cozy, warm and dry, wearing silken clothing in a silken environment. Then do I purr. Not that I can't cope with discomfort and adverse environment -- I'm a resourceful little copier -- but only when it's forced on me. And I'm baffled by the types who seek it out. Nevertheless, this was very well written, and Annapurnishly interesting.

OOLONG/Pavlat: Missed you this time. Hurry back!

THE SHAW RETORT/Pavlat: And here's another Fascinating Fapazine inspiring no comment except that I wish there were more pros around to keep the series rolling. And also that glancing through it right now, I've set it aside to read all over again. I think perhaps an equally interesting series might be why fans are fans. Or would that require psychoanalysis?

FAPHELION/FMBusby: Fans being human, once the TAFF returns were in in a short campaign, wouldn't all too many of them be inclined to say the devil with it if they had no particular interest in the winner? I think people are much more apt to be steamed up about TAFF, and contribute more, as long as they think their favorite has a chance of winning. Losing Consite bidders are a different matter -- for many of them, it's still their con just as long as they may be able to attend, and it's in everyone's interest to make it a good con. # I think you missed the most important quality about fans that makes them enjoyable to other fans. Surely, they have communicative skill -- but more important, they have something to communicate. A favorite neighbor of mine has more communicative skill than anybody -- I love her, but often wish she had an Off-Switch. # We've moved around a lot, and I associate places and times with pop songs. I don't know them anymore, but used to know them all and whenever I hear any of the old timers now I say, "Mary St., Miami, 1952," or "Stamford, Conn., 1944," or even "Waterville, Maine, 1938." I find myself right back in boarding school; at a U.S.O. dance, or working on the Journal in Florida while the radio plays. # If you check your Constitution -- Sec. 9 -- you'll discover that 33 votes or signatures can accomplish anything in FAPA. Anything -- including disbanding. # Lynn has a gift for backing winners. Not only consites, but TAFF candidates. Arthur has advised me to back anyone I want to, but put my money on Lynn's choice. # Fully agree with you on the right of private organizations to set their own entrance requirements. The trouble arises because the "outs" want to be "in" -- and they want to be in where they can't, whether because of entrance requirements, or membership limits like FAPA has. People generally have little inclination to associate with other people they consider "out" too, even when they can define no basic difference. Thus, all the outraged screams when anybody proposes that the FAPA waiting-list form their own APA, although basically we are all fans and, theoretically, another fannish APA should be quite identical. (Of course, I stress the theoretically -- everyone knows no other APA could be like FAPA.)

FANZINE INDEX/Pavlat: This is wordlessly marvelled at.

THE RAMBLING FAP/Calkins: Gregg, for once you've managed to turn out something (#19) in which I find but a single checkmark -- although I read it with the usual interest. The single check is beside your "Production Notes" -- and indicates my delight in your increased activity, and hope that you'll keep it up!

DRIFTWOOD/Kidd: Like the apologetic little guy on your cover -- who (or what) is he supposed to be? # What happened to Miss Bardot's falsies -- I mean rumors -- on the bottom of page 5? # Unfortunately I've not also seen the August Rogue. I'm always hearing about things I'd like to read, or see, long after they're unavailable. Most maddening of all was my brother-in-law saying that while he was stationed up in the Far North, he read something about Arthur (business) and went about pointing out the item to all his buddies, impressing them with the fact that "this is my brother-in-law!" -- but he just can't recall whether it was Coronet, Reader's Digest, or possibly something else altogether -- or when the issue was dated. This is frustration! # Enjoyed all of this, but it was quite uncommmentable.

STAND BY FOR REPERCUSSIONS/A&JYoung: So the repercussions didn't -- TEW paid back the treasury -- and we're all Oné Big Happy Family again. ojoy.

WRAITH/Ballard: But I do like the idea of the host country nominating the TAFF candidates -- didn't I say that? This method would please the most people, I feel. # It's usually a mistake to reread a loved book (that you haven't read during maturity) or see again a memorable movie. Tastes change, like taste. No adult can ever experience the unsurpassed flavor of a strawberry ice cream cone in childhood. But there's nothing wrong with the ice cream.

THE RAMBLING FAP/Calkins: O.K. Gregg, you can take over from me as Veep if you want to, and the membership is willing. Ron sucked me in too, with all that talk about how the veepship is a snap and no work and all that power and glory and like that. Believe me, I've been working almost full time during the last quarter, tallying those 43 interminable ballots (incidentally, I'll send the next Veep a sample of the tally sheet I finally worked out that simplifies things greatly), and I've had a Constitutional Controversy -- or what might have developed into one -- trun at me, and more mail than I've seen in five years. "Nothing to it," I croak at midnight. # I don't think the "!" is appropriate for THE RAMBLING FAP -- that's an easy-goin' sort of title -- but it's an absolute necessity for OOPSLA! What I mean -- how can you say OOPSLA! without lilting it with an exclamation point? What I never could figure out, tho, is how you happened to choose that title in the first place. I like it, but it sounds like the name of a Parisian Revue, with swirling skirts, legs and ruffled pants -- and it takes a bit of getting used to to accept all the guns and boots and outdoorsy atmosphere. Naturally, after seven years -- going on eight -- I'm beginning to associate the word OOPSLA! with both guns and ruffled pants. Très gai. # As I've mentioned elsewhere, Wetzel was contributing to fanzines to my knowledge back in 1952, and according to Lichtman, goes back to 1940-41. # Hurry, hurry, hurry! Wisconsin fandom has been depleted by one Bloch -- and that's a whopping depletion. You've been talking moving to Wisconsin longer than it took me to get here. Whatcha goofing off so long down there for? # We have a Pig, and we have a Project. Gifs full Pig, we have our Project. Why not get a Pig, too, and make Pittsburgh a Project this year?. # Have you yet discovered Southern Comfort? Vastly superior to HSP-66, if I'm not hurting Danner's feelings. # Gradually -- very gradually -- we're succumbing to the TV idea. But not for the ball games. We much prefer radio for baseball. At world series time year before last, we had fine seats all reserved in a neighborhood lounge to watch all the games. We sat through the first hour or so of the first game, then headed fast for the car, drove down to the lake front where we parked and listened to the game as we enjoy it. It seemed to us you can see so little of the total action on a TV screen and the commentary is so sketchy compared to radio, that much of the game is missed. I'll watch a ball game in a ball park, but would rather listen to the whole thing than see bits and pieces of it.

TARGET:FAPA/Eney: And foosh yourself, Dick -- in Demi-Phlotz I said nothing about rape being winked at in war time, although I doubt that instances of exuberant troops dallying with the females of a newly-captured town belong entirely to history. What I said was, "In wartime, murder is applauded and medals awarded." As you insist that murder is punished with as much rigor in wartime as in peace, you apparently have your own pet euphemism for the shooting down of planes with people in them, for the bayonetting, burning and blowing up of humanity in wholesale lots. And the individuals who succeed in shooting down the most planes, of heaving a grenade with the deadliest accuracy, receive medals, ribbons and citations. It may (?) be justifiable and/or it may (?) be inevitable, but it's still murder. # Out of curiosity, I did try to assume that position with my feet -- and almost had it before my back went out of whack. # Your Q-cover reads like an outline for an Immortal Storm sequel.

ANYTHING BOX/Bradley: Enjoyed the recipe section -- and the male Fapans who are not culinarily inclined still have 600 plus pages of mailing to read, so give us more. There are quite a few of us amateur chefs around now and fan recipes seem to taste better than prosaic old Betty Crocker's. We like our pork chops browned then baked in a fairly large baking pan with little mounds of rice poured into all the crevices between chops and chicken rice soup poured over all, adding water during baking until the rice is properly done and all liquid absorbed. All possible fat should be trimmed from the chops first, though, so the dish will not be greasy. # Who is "Kerry" -- the Kerry art is striking? # The Operantics section was a bit beyond me, but you obviously had fun writing it, and we who are not opera buffs still had 600 plus pages to read -- so O.K.

VANDY/Coulsons: Is that front page illustration your "vaguely rebuild farmhouse?" #Buck, you mention the love pulps being replaced with True Confessions. I'm not certain, but I think T. C. is at least as old as the love pulps, if not older. # "An ilk is a sick elk" tickled me. # I'd call "The Daughter Of Time" an historical detective novel -- and put it where it won't get lost. # Juanita, the art work in here is excellent -- only thing is it all seems to be illustrating something and until I got used to Coulson art, I kept looking vainly for the connection. On the first page of "Eggs and Marrowbones, did you omit a vital part of the illustration? What is the girl with the ferocious creature supposed to be sitting on anyway? #In the hotel bar at the Detention I stuck to Southern Comfort, club soda and lime which is pretty hard to spoil. They were so good, I almost didn't mind waiting each time for them to distill the Southern Comfort. # Maybe I ought to go back a few fanzines for the reference, because I'm confused. You say, "But I still don't see it ..." referring to Pat Boone's "pretty boy" look. I'm sure I never said I thought Pat Boone an exciting specimen of masculinity. Rossano Brazzi is the only movie male who's addled me in years. # Any waiter would know better than to dare question a woman's apparel. But they know males are easily browbeaten and will either don the flamboyant neckwear or walk away -- but no lip like they'd get from an aroused woman. Imagine the explosion if a waiter even let on he noticed a low-cut blouse. # Here's another fanne (how do you pronounce that word?) who wandered into fandom unescorted -- and remains that way. # Mostly I buy classic-type clothes that do not go out of style, except maybe for a hem adjustment now and then -- and was so pleased with myself when I did not wind up with a closet full of sacks.

FANZINE REVIEW No. 1/ Madle: This qualifies as activity, Bob -- but I hope you step in and start talking to us soon. Maybe if you and Rusty start talking science-fiction to each other, you'll both feel more at home -- and we'll step in and join you. I seem to detect a slight trend in this direction lately -- especially since receiving SPECULATIVE REVIEW from the Washington group.



TO WM. DANNER ESQ./Morse: I boggle at the incredible frustration of 21 hours printing on that last BULL MOOSE! Have you any hair left, Bill, or did you pull it all out and scatter it to the winds? # Startling and amusing how similar so many of the comments were on BULL MOOSE. Over and over, with but the slightest variation of wording: "If this weren't so interesting, I wouldn't have bothered to decipher it. But I read every word."

A PROPOS DU BAREAN/Caughran-Ellik: Well, we got the overwhelming response on the Egoboo Poll. Where do we go from here? For further thoughts on this subject, see my vp report. # Jean Grennell is an anthropology buff. In fact, Jean is interested in so many things, she could write some darned interesting Fapa-zines if she tried (and the kiddies would let her). # "Wansborough mumbles when he mimeographs" -- second funniest line in the mailing.

POO/AYoung: My that Underwood Electric has a loud voice! Positively deafening. # Much as I would like to see a number of waiting-listers in the group right now, I haven't yet read about a practical method for hustling them in that I could agree to. This proposal that a sample mag be circulated so we can judge the merits of the applicants would only serve to confirm the ability -- or lack of it -- of those experienced fanzine publishers/contributors whose stuff we're all familiar with, but would serve to keep out, or delay, potentially valuable but inexperienced new members who would need a little while to get into the Fapa swing of things. Many of our favorite present members started out unimpressively and improved regularly with every mailing until they reached present eminence. # When lectured by these Holders-of-Absolute-Convictions, I never attempt to argue, but have a standard response, "Well, now, is that right? I never realized that." # Speaking of Boggs and mail reminds me that the incredible happened a few weeks ago -- Redd mailed me a card in Minneapolis (not air-mail) at 5:30 P.M. one day and it was delivered to me here at home the next morning at 10:30. Before applauding the P. O. though, contrast this with the service I received on my last Fapa mailing. The first ballots in the Poll were returned by Ron Ellik and Marion Bradley. I received them the day after my mailing arrived. Ron's had travelled 2000 miles beyond Milwaukee, been filled out (after due consideration, I trust) and returned 2000 miles, while my mailing was ox-carting it here. At least somebody's getting mail service -- but what's the P.O. got against me? # There's nothing wrong with blue stockings -- it's just your conditioning. Trouble is, I've been conditioned too -- I don't like them anymore, and I bought two pair. Can anyone suggest a nice practical use for four sheer pale-blue stockings? # No, Arthur did not have to compromise his principals, and Ted White has nothing to do with it. I've got ample fallibility of my own -- I don't need to borrow any of Ted's. # Why does Mt. Wilson forbid women? All the Exchanges (but one, which recently capitulated) bar women, too. I have no desire to join an Exchange or intrude on Mt. Wilson -- but never could figure out what they're afraid of. # Most entertaining part of POO this time are the several quote-coverish lines, most of which you qualified by such phrases as, "if that's a sentence," "if I may put it so," etc. Particularly liked "You'd be surprised how similar the clarinet is, though I admit the oboe is even more so" -- "So my views on hot & cold running weather are just the reverse of yours, but for the same reasons" -- "I usually get to bed two or three hours ago."

AMATEUR'S JOURNAL/Derry: Enjoyed seeing these, Chick -- and Arthur read them with interest, and was even briefly impelled to subscribe. The impulse was brief though -- these services are legion (we have three of our own) and the "experts" usually all contradict each other, and even themselves. As a matter of policy now, he doesn't read any of them anymore, but likes to make up his own mind uninfluenced by anybody. Then the stuff is sneaked into his house by FAPA!



SEASON'S GREETINGS/ Rike: Read all of this with interest, but have no observations except that the Condit article was Real Beat -- and this whole fanzine reminded me of a Calkinszine in appearance. Everything about it from the type to the paper to the lettering was Calkinsish. Immense improvement over the old Rikezines which I remember as the Ultimate in illegibility. Interesting, too.

THETA/Harness: Enjoyed Karen's poem very much. # At the rate California is magnetizing fans from all over the country, the day will come when Califandom will be FAPA, with Hagerstown, Kennerdell and Wisconsin as the remote Fapan out-worlds. (By then Gregg will have joined WiSFandom in its struggle for identity and survival far from the Motherbody.)

EYETRACKS/Coswal: An experience there should be a name for (like "deja-vu") is the common one -- to me at least -- of hearing reference to, or reading about, some person or event or thing for the first time in years, then find references cropping up everywhere I look. When I was small, John McCormack was one of my mother's favorite singers and we had a number of his records. I hadn't thought of him in perhaps 15 years, when the other night I heard several of his records on the radio. The very next day, reading CELEPHAIS, I ran across Bill's reference to McCormack. Somewhat of the same thing, except in reverse, happened when I read your Fapazine here. I met Emile Greenleaf for the first time at the Detention, have never seen him referred to anywhere before -- but the very next day after I received a card from him saying he was in this area and planning to visit, I read his name on the first page of EYETRACKS. Odd thing is that I can see no valid reason why you should have dredged him up out of your own memory at this particular time -- you simply mentioned him as a correspondent of yours back in 1943 and that he disagreed with you at that time. I'm sure I probably disagreed with somebody back in 1943, but would be hard put to remember it now. Maybe people ebb and flow in cycles and it is now Emile Greenleaf Time.

CELEPHAIS/Evans: Checked that McCormack "coincidence" to mention here, but it tied in so neatly with the Greenleaf affair that you can read it upstairs. # I loved the Oz books, but during my sister's childhood -- and probably through her children's childhood as my mother now lives with them -- the Oz books were banned from our house. My mother has had a horror of them ever since the day when my sister was quite small and desperately ill (she was not expected to live), and mother and I walked into her hospital room to find her sitting bolt upright in bed, eyes overbright, face flushed with fever and obviously delirious. As we walked in, she cried excitedly, "Mother -- Mother -- the cowardly lion was here -- and the tin woodsman -- and ...!" That was as much as she could speak before falling back on the pillow, but even now I still feel the horror remembering her glittering eyes and ecstatic smile. # Please do dig up that issue of Playboy with the article on the Pious Pornographers -- referring, I gather, to the alleged pornography in the LHJ. Can't believe I'm all that unperceptive and am intensely curious to know what such a statement was based on. Have you ever read a copy of the Ladies Home Journal to see if there's actually foundation for this "expose" -- or are you merely accepting at face value some writer's clever idea for making a buck in Playboy? Could be, but it simply sounds to me (a long-time reader of the magazine) like one of those glibly sensational statements that are swallowed whole and later regurgitated as fact. # In answer to your delicately worded question as to whether "not what ((now that?)) you are elected, are you going to do something as implied when you were seeking votes, or are you going to act like a regular Congressman?" -- I assure you, Bill, I intend to act fully in accordance with Fine Old Political Tradition.

SAND IN THE BEER/Rapp-Eney's frank: Pity us more often, Dick. Delightful!

BUNDLE-STIFFS/Bradley: Couldn't disagree with you more about printing your own stuff in Fapa. It's pretty hard to get contributions from other members because they're all too busy writing for their own zines. And somehow, I always feel a bit cheated if there's not enough of the publisher in a Fapazine. Through your mailing comments and articles we get to know you, and I don't feel Fapazines should be a showcase for other people's work with the publishing member simply a shadowy figure behind the scenes. Writing for Fapa has no relationship to writing fiction for money, and for you to feel that you should write only for money is as pointless as for a lecturer or actress to refuse to speak to friends because she feels her words should be reserved for the stage. # I can appreciate the impact of the "long black stockings" reference. I knew a girl like that in school and always felt sorry for her because she was a complete outcast. Not only the long black stockings, but also high laced shoes (where were they ever found?). Probably she had the potentiality to be a charming person, but children cannot tolerate anyone too far from the pattern -- and her own agony and self-consciousness made her completely unapproachable even to those few who tried. I also suffered much the same self-consciousness, and the heartache of being a figure of fun -- but for the opposite reason. My clothes were too right. That sounds crazy, and it is, but it's true. And the pain of being "different" was just as sharp. When I was in fifth grade, business forced my dad to move us to a small French-Canadian town from a sizeable city. From the beginning, I found myself a freak because I was unable to speak French -- and many of the kids even in the upper classes of grade school spoke only broken English. And, of course, we had the craziest customs -- like dinner at 6:30 when everyone else had dinner at noon and supper at 5:00 p.m. They'd all laugh like crazy when we were all playing outdoors after supper and my mother would call me to come to dinner. But worst of all were my outlandish clothes. Babyish, they called them. I wore sweaters, skirts and blouses, cotton dresses, or wool plaids, with long ribbed cotton stockings and brogues or flat sandals -- the standard schoolgirl wardrobe. But the girls in that town were not the standard schoolgirls. They all had permanents, silk stockings (actually cheap rayons), sleazy "silk" dresses clinging to their formless little-girl figures, and often high heels. They thought I looked completely absurd and lost no opportunity to let me know it. And my mother was completely adamant. The reason for the state of affairs in that town, I think, is that the parents, many recently migrated from Canada, were an uneducated lot, few having gone to school at all (and often putting up tremendous opposition when their kids wanted to continue into high school). They felt quite inferior to their youngsters who were learning a different type of life, and the kids, realizing this, seized the reins completely. They were appallingly rude and scornful to their parents who had little or no control over what they wore or did. Thus, they patterned their clothes and hairdos on Hollywood -- and, as many of them were 15 and 16 in grade school, it was not always so wildly unsuitable as it was for me. The only area in which the parents still exercised iron authority was in their dating. Some of my friends still had to take a kid brother or sister on dates when they were 18. Things have changed there now though -- the official language is English, and they're much closer to being an average American community. # Offhand, I can think of four members who are dog people: Danner, Hickman, Bushles (one for each) and me. # What are "the techniques for re-incarnation memories?" Sounds interesting. # That horrible pun on my name is ample incentive for me to keep my weight down! # You live in cowboy-country (I think) -- is the "nasal whinny" you complain about in country-and-western singers regional? # Loads more check marks, but no more room. Marion, please do mailing comments more often -- you do them so very well!

FANMARK GREETING CARDS/Caughran-Trimble-Bjo: LOVED these!

SHIPSIDE/Trimble: Ah, yes, this composing on stencil! I'm willing to be tolerant about your "seterling" publication, but do mind sentences like "(ctsy Wm. Rotsler; whose name, as a matter of policy)." This sort of thing holds up reading of the entire mailing, while I try to figure it out. #When I first moved to Wisconsin and admitted to DAG that I do not read Astounding, he forthwith loaded me down with the issues of that reputedly seterling publication containing the Children of the Lens, apparently confident of thereby accomplishing a quick conversion. The first installment of this serial lost me completely but I slogged doggedly on until I lapsed into coma about half way through. I adore Doc Smith, but Children did nothing to cause me to see the light about Astounding. # Elmer, charge it up to naivete, but I could see no cause for raised eyebrows in that Villa Capri entry, except the use of my name. In fact, I could make no sense of that one at all. Was the "(Phyllis)" part of the entry -- or was this item supposed to be of particular significance to me? Seems unlikely, but if you were wigwagging me, I don't want to appear rude by ignoring you. Enjoyed this -- and the last sentence of your first paragraph is a gas! # I did not particularly care for Bjo's Introduction To A Fantasy, except for the delightful art -- but Search for a Hero was wonderful! More!

A FANZINE FOR /23 Fapans/Hoffman: Wish I had had your Physics teacher. This was one subject I couldn't begin to grasp and dropped out, hopelessly befuddled after six weeks of it. I lacked a gift for the Sciences, but think the teaching had much to do with my ability or lack of it to comprehend a subject I had no flair for. Geometry lost me in much the same way -- I dropped it after a few weeks of bewilderment -- but tried it again the following year with a different teacher and breezed through with a high 90s average.

FAPATHY/Silverberg: Gazing bleakly out the window on nine inches of "surprise" snow -- and hearing ominous warnings of more -- I enviously visualize you and Barbara lolling on a Puerto Rican beach. Our Bhoyd is there too right now -- are you together? # One of the liveliest hours at the Detention was Thursday night in the lobby. I was right in the middle of a hot debate -- but in an unaccustomedly silent role. I was sitting on a sofa between Forry Ackerman and Ed Wood when Ed lit into Forry for not being gentler when he wrote Laney's obit for SFTimes. If Forry couldn't write exclusively pleasant things about Laney, was Ed's contention, SFTimes should have called on someone who could to handle the job properly. One must only eulogize the dead, no matter what. As I recall, Forry's defense was a bit feeble -- not that he had no arguments to justify his handling of the subject, which he thought truthful rather than derogatory -- but mostly because he was outshouted. I found it quite entertaining as Ed always is when in a vehement mood -- as witness the fanzine ed's panel bit. # I think that your negative view of the reason for all the death taboos -- "all stemming, no doubt, from a fundamental unwillingness to recognize the fact that protoplasmic organisms eventually degenerate past viability." -- could be translated into the positive fear that they do not. And if they do not -- mightn't they be capable of who can guess what horrible retribution for any indignity of word or action directed against their ex-animate selves? And despite any intellectual overlay, I think this is instinctive atavistic fear. Could you pinch a corpse without at least a little ripple of apprehension? Speak kindly and treat them well (see them off in a \$1000 burst of glory if you go bankrupt doing it) -- or their shades will come back to haunt you. # Although these eight pages will insure you another year of membership, hope you won't slide along on them -- nice to have you around more often.

HUGO GERNSBACK/Moskowitz: This was interesting reading and beautifully produced. Congratulations on a fine job, Sam!

FAPREHENSIVE/EBusby: I double-take on one word you use quite often. I had always thought "tadhood" a synonym for "boyhood." Just tried to check, but my dictionaries do not have "tad." Is it just me, or do most people equate "tad" with "lad"? # If Bill sends me that article from Playboy, I'll let you know just what they consider pornography appearing in the LHJ. # My religious training stressed that earthly happiness was completely unimportant -- even undesirable. The only purpose in life should be to achieve happiness in the next world. I was taught that if you deliberately and humbly seek misery and mortification in this world, you'll be building up a sort of celestial credit balance in the next. All I can hope is that I'll be allowed to buy my harp on the time-payment plan. # Cannot understand what you mean when you say "I do not believe anyone would survive a traumatic childhood." Elucidate, please, Elinor.

OTHER PEOPLE'S MAIL/Shaws: Appears you gained your objective. Latest reports have it that the Faircon group have just about settled on a compromise regional con for 1964. If the issue isn't dead, it's moribund.

WILD FUMBLES/Young-Tucker: You seem to be as confused as everyone else, Andy, about who hosted the party suites. The only one I'm certain of is the Kyle party on Saturday night in the 17th floor suite. Other than that, whenever I wasn't at one of the smaller room parties, I headed for the 19th floor identical suite, where the activity was apparently non-stop. Only at the end of the con, when I asked Boyd where he disappeared to every night, did I learn that the 18th floor suite was a similar beehive and I'd missed this one completely. Think the 18th was hosted by Pittsburgh, but haven't the vaguest who had the 19th. This is a dreadful admission for such a chronic guest as I was, but nobody else seems to know either. My confusion came about at the shoe-autographing session when somebody announced that we were all invited to a party on the 18th floor -- or was it the 19th? He couldn't quite remember. So I tried the 19th first and concluded the 18th was an error. Others of us apparently reversed the procedure and the 18th became Home to them. Yes, it was A Good Con. # If you travel two blocks south of our house, you'll find yourself on East North Avenue.

IBIDEM/Lyons: I suppose you are aware that your cover is Highly Irreverent and would never be permitted in PQ? # Your quote from POINTS sounds like my mother. She has always had great faith in my writing ability -- I could be a Great Writer easily if I'd just settle down and apply myself. But the little fiction of mine she's seen, mostly the Weird Tales type, only inspired her to ask plaintively, "But why can't you write nice things -- like Lloyd C. Douglas?" # Very much enjoyed this outline of the contents of your little old grey folder. Would enjoy even more if you'd elaborate on some of these tidbits -- the "Naughty Naughty" censorship aspects particularly. Probably I find this so amusing because of the utter irrationality of it. This usually seems to be the end result of most censorship attempts. The project eventually evolves into a great grinding of personal axes until the original purpose is forgotten. This happened in Miami, when the emphasis during meetings of a censorship board set up to "clean up the comics" shifted entirely to hot discussions of whether traditional Miami Beach cheesecake should be banned. Legs happened to be one female member's bête noir. # You can't very well write about Pogo as a homosexual symbol now -- Harry Warner stole your thunder with his psychological expose of Dennis the Menace. # Your grim battling for egoboo in your PHANTASY PRESS comments makes it obvious why your projected fanzine PERSONA could not possibly be. No egoboo for anyone in phony names. # Magically speaking, Arthur's suffering severe gafia. # "Story" won you fiction votes from here. The first part reminds me of the guy who refused the soup in Atlantic City.

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\* E M B E D   E N E Y   I N   A M B E R \*

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INVOLUTIA/Janke: Curtis, what are all those ominous sounding words on that delightful cover? Are you needing a bit of a rest cure after the mighty deluge of words you've poured at us all year? That'll be OK, if you must -- but don't go away. Coast a little while and you'll feel much better. # I must finish m.c.'s tonight, and it's just not marching. Nothing makes sense. Tell me why, next to your reference to Freudians under Olympus, would I have a note "genitive, ablative, dative"? This, I presume, was supposed to spark a thought. Foosh. # So I've gained a pound or two over the holidays -- you don't have to shout it throughout all fandom! Or did you have something else in mind when you said, "Even as Phyllis, my sax is too heavy for my neck."? # A dog's belly is the only part not covered with fur. I think they sprawl wantonly like that on their backs to let the breezes play on their belly -- so cooling, you know. # What do you do with dandelions when you're not making salads out of them? Horrible thought. # Wish I could remember what lady (English, I believe) made the sensible remark that people ought to do exactly as they pleased at all times -- as long as they don't do it in the street and scare the horses. # Before you plead with me to wear my blue stockings, ask Dean the effect of waking Easter morning somewhat hungover, and with about 3 hours sleep, to be confronted by two blue legs in one's own kitchen. He blenched -- alarmed me it did. # You like to live dangerously, man -- pigeonholing women like that. Four strata, already! You should see the Alec Guinness movie "The Captain's Wife," or if that wasn't the name of it, it should have been, to see what befalls men who compartmentalize women. But you're just a tad, yet. You'll learn... # One final word back where I started. Cut down on the mailing comments Curtis, if you must, but don't cut them out -- and don't go 'way!

KLEIN BOTTLE/Carrs: That ATOM cover came out fine -- but the work! # Bill Rotsler was entertaining as always. This is entertainment, isn't it? Or do Rotsler-type happenings really happen? Somebody gave Bill votes in the Poll for fiction, with the comment that he certainly hoped it was fiction Bill writes. # Haven't you been reading the articles lately about how they go about creating a teen-age singing idol. Voice is the last thing they care about. That's a piddling detail, easily arranged. # Are all the Laney Memoirs actionable/unprintable -- or just the most interesting parts? # Condolences on losing TAFF. Can't help thinking that one reason the fanzine fans seem to have little chance in TAFF is because every time they split the vote. Must have been as hard this time for many fans to choose between you and Bjo -- especially with both of you in SAPS -- as it must have been last time to decide between Boyd and Eney. # Your comments re Martinez' SAMBO were brutal, but your opinion was reflected in the Poll. It saddens me to see Sam way down there at the bottom, when he was giving us such delightful stuff a few years ago. Sam -- where are you Sam -- c'mon back! # I should have a few of those nonfan traits which you claim all wives have. With two hoarders in the house, storage becomes a problem -- which is why we now need a seven room house with attic and cellar. Think of the rent we'd save if we didn't save.

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From the New York Times: "NEAT TRICK: A press release from the local offices of Twentieth Century-Fox stated unequivocally that the first 250 patrons attending the opening Wednesday at the Paramount of 'Journey to the Center of the Earth' would receive 'autographed copies of the Pocket Books edition of the classic Jules Verne novel.' Mr. Verne passed from this mortal coil in 1905 but he apparently never disproved the theory that nothing is impossible for enterprising publicists."



# B I L L M O R S E C O M M E N T S...

FANT AM - Various....Gor! What a waiting list....Phyllis: are you SURE the requests to do something about the mess in Washington refer only to Fapa? Not that there was not a fine old Fapish mess, mind you...

CELEPHAIS - Evans....From page 14, I am a good man....As I remember, Red Ingle and the Natural Five were still going in '49-'50. Jo Stafford recorded with them once or twice - remember Erutan Yob and the Alphabet song?....Duplex in Alberta was semi-detached bungalows sharing front door and bathroom, but with separate kitchens. Your US version is called a maisonette over here....According to Maria, who should know, Bei Mir Bist Du Schon is not only mispronounced to make it rhyme - it is a badly constructed sentence anyhow....I hear the Michelin X is a fine tyre until you get a blowout or even an ordinary flat - means a new cover regardless unless you are willing to pay a lot and wait a long time to get the outside straightened. That comes from the owner of a Grey Lady Alvis....Pirelli are now developing a version where you merely change the tread: deflate the tube, slip off the old tread, slip on the new one and reinflate. Handy in snow and ice - you fit on supergrip treads with metal studs.

OOLONG - Pavlat....Fanzine Index was obviously a labour of love and was fully appreciated by me. Information inserted as requested.

LARK - Danner....Believe it or not, but I've never read Dickens' history....I believe a New Zealander has whooped a Black Frightening up to 198 mph, using a small nose-fairing to reduce wind-shock. It didn't last long as a record, because an American (Johnny Allen) got going and put up the speed to 209 or thereabouts, using a "rebuilt" 650 cc Triumph. When he said "Rebuilt" he was being scrupulously honest - the only likeness was in the engine. It was built into a long-wheelbase frame having a total of 5 degrees steering lock (lock!), had special gearing and ran on a highly unusual concept of fuel. The thing was completely encased, like a thin sided cigar, and Allen must have had a lot of guts to have driven it at any speed at all, let alone 200 plus, because any sort of a wobble or especially a tyre blowout would have meant a complete loss of control and probably a complete loss of Johnny Allen. The record took some time in getting recognition by the International Motorcycling Federation, because unofficial timekeepers were used, but I believe it is now accepted. I hope so, because Johnny Allen, who appeared at the 1956 Motor Cycle Show at Earls Court, is a most friendly and likeable type....I'd like to borrow those Clyner Scrapbooks sometime....Was that Harold Lloyd film called Movie Crazy? It's the only one of his I can recall seeing, and I seem to remember it was talkie....The British Consumer Research Quarterly reprinted an American article evaluating some seven European small cars, and in that the VW came first, just ahead of the Morris Minor. It noted that for the average English road the Minor would handle better on corners and thought this was due to the engine position. Certainly the Minor is the most comfortable of the British small cars I have ridden, and I've ridden in most. I'm 6 ft 1 in and weigh about 210 lb., so I know about the limits of comfort in small cars. Probably if the Minor 1050 (?) had a real 1 litre engine it would be really top line....That "Your Hermes must be an Ambassador" remark to Boggs really crogged me: they are both prop-jet airliner types in the UK.



A PROPOS DU BAREAN - Caughran/Ellick...This idea of planning to marry several times (Wood's letter) was discussed by Nancy Mitford in a patchily funny book called "The Blessing." Her frightf'ly nice English heroine married a Frenchman for love, and lived in Paris in the immediate post WW2 years, meeting odds and ends of UNRRA types. The one obnoxious American was described with a pen dipped in acid; he stirred a few memories for me, but his purpose was to show the Mitford distaste for anything that is not high-born, titled, independently wealthy and either French, Italian or (third best) English. He gave a Duchesse "a little apersoo" into the sex life of the American upper middle class that croggled me completely. Nancy Mitford believes passionately that God is white, Christian, well born, Conservative; and European in the same order as given before. Most of the book, though, is damned funny if you go for the oblique style humor.

IBIDEM - Lyons...C.S. Lewis might object to your description of him as a stef writer. He was and is a theologian....Odd about Canadian censorship; I got a complete and unabridged translation of Rabelais from the HBC store in Edmonton. Much more vigorous than the UK translation, which left all the really telling humour in French. Glad you bought a Victor: it's not a bad car, though designed strictly for the expert eye. I used to see them going for initial test runs at Luton, before they were shipped, every one bearing a little sticker saying "EXPORT - Canada" ... Ralph Richardson, not Jack Hawkins.

LE MOINDRE - Raeburn...Lyttleton is the leader of Britain's best trad. jazz band. That is sticking my neck out a long way, but I just don't care, that's all. Humph. is an Old Etonian, plays trumpet. I must say I agree with his views on the teenage idols and their songs - it all boils down to the spoiled little brat wanting the moon and the moon of the kid next door as well (Nnyaaah, or I don't like you any more). If I have to like that crap in order to understand the new generation, I suppose I'll have to stay ignorant....Going on to your remarks about skiffle, surely you'll admit that it is just a teeny bit less revolting than those godawful dreary lovesongs? Most of this bilge was let loose when Johnny Ray came on the scene, but did you ever look at an Al Jolson performance when you were feeling just the merest trifle jaundiced? There is a film (British) going the rounds called Expresso Bongo; if you want to see how we got skiffle and then rock, go and see it (if it comes your way). It includes a song which the composer intended to be bitingly satirical and which turned out a hit all by itself. It is called "The Shrine on the Second Floor" (Mum's Bedroom), is overflowing with that popular blend of molasses, sentiment, and quasi-religious yearnings that makes me feel sick, and was wildly popular - I'm not sure, but I believe it made the Top Ten one week. The show was intended as an expose of the British publicity agent's tactics, but misfired thataway in being insufficiently acid. In consequence, it made a popular hit....I remember Alberta's odd liquor laws and the surprise I had when I found that the signs "Men" and "Women" referred to the separate bars. On radio programmes every brewer advertised his ginger ale. ("Seven oclock, but it's Sicks for quality ginger ale"). There was one brewery in Edmonton which had a sample room (so help me). Anyone could drop in and help himself to a few bottles straight from the fridge; the odd thing is that I never saw any of the city luses there, nor anyone the worse for the booze; it seemed to be treated more as a coffee shop, with people looking in for a glass on their way past. Would you care to explain why Canadians take salt in their beer? If it improves the taste that much, one would expect the brewer to add it to the bottle.

DRIFTWOOD - Dunn....First of the cryptics....Flotsam is goods lost by shipwreck and floating; jetsam is goods jettisoned and remaining just under the water. Floating Sam and Jetted Sam....Each of those little paras in this issue seemed to be referring to some item in the previous mailing, but I just couldn't tie which down. That made the cover so appropriate.

QABAL - Grennell....I like your version of the pub crawl (page 7 para 1). The Trocadero ballroom in Edmonton was, like all the others, officially dry. If you stood a bottle on the table beside your coke or ginger beer, one of the waiters would glide up, murmur an excuse me and put the bottle quietly on a ledge under the table. Ah me, those quaint oldfashioned Canadian customs.

FAPHELION - Buz.... No doubt Socialism sounds helluva dull when you have a fairly high standard of living, but when you have nothing it is beautiful to contemplate. Example 1: - the Russians are perfectly well satisfied with the material advantages they have received since the Revolution. Example 2: - the Hungarian rising in '56 was largely led by sincere Communists. They were not out to restore private enterprise or Capitalism: they only wanted a less oppressive regime. The general life and conditions of the peasant in Hungary is infinitely better than it was 20 years ago, when they lived in feudal squalor. Every once in a while, some piddle headed moron dribbles out the one about Hitler being the last bastion against Communist Russia (though for all that, he signed a non-aggression pact with Stalin): that line is about on a level with the one that justifies Mussolini because he made the trains run on time (he shuffled the time tables). Now, I doubt if any other Fapan saw a German concentration camp in the days when the original inhabitants were living in them, and I know there are still those who believe such things were just Allied propaganda. But I was there, Chas, and I saw what I saw, and as long as I live I'll never forget the least detail. We moved into a little village called Bergen one day and we couldn't figure the foul smell in the air, so we called the locals to find out where it came from. "Smell? We smell nothing," they said. So the major sent scout cars out in each direction, to follow their noses and report, and one group came back looking green and sick. They had found Belsen. It was too much for any mind to accept at first, all those heaps of skin and bone that looked as if they couldn't possibly have ever been people. There were so many bodies that the graves were dug by bulldozers and the same machines shovelled in most of the bodies and then covered them up with earth again. The officials of Bergen were driven up and made to help by carrying some of the bodies over to the graves; God knows why we did it, but it seemed right at the time; I doubt if they learned anything from it. At the time, a request was made for anyone who could come and tell what he knew about the place: no one came. Back last Fall, they were invited again. As the man who made the request put it: "No-one has come forward and I don't think they ever will." Later, when we got to Berlin, I obliged some Jewish friends in England by trying to trace relatives they had not heard from since 1939. I got heart-sick of hearing the story from neighbours (Jewish themselves, very often), because it was always the same story: "The Gestapo came for them one morning about 3 a.m.; we heard they were sent to Auschwitz, but nothing was ever told to us." For a while I had nightmares and hated having to go to sleep and I tried all ways of forgetting. I think I never will, although the more emotional side of it is past....All this may not seem very a propos of why socialism looks drab to you, Buz, but it may give you an idea of why the lower orders of the Eastern European states welcomed the Russians and still prefer them to the Germans. It is the people who HAVE things, especially those with titles and culture, who most resent Socialism; the Germans had a deep respect for the high-born, and treated them with kid-gloves unless baited; the Russian boot went on to everyone alike at first and nowadays is greatly relaxed from the lower orders, who LIKE Socialism; under it they may not be free (but then they were not free before) but they do have more purpose in life; more hope, more colour, more comfort, than ever before in their history. You may have noticed that neither Hungary, nor Poland - nor East Germany, for that matter - had an actually anti-Communist uprising: it was anti-regime, which is a vastly different thing.

PHANTASY PRESS - McPhail....These notes are being written during the Christmas season, a time of Peace on Earth to Men of Goodwill, and I cannot think of anyone to whom that original version of the message applies more aptly. In fact, I sometimes think it was written especially for you. I often wonder who altered the wording to its present and rather pointless state....How's Polly's magazine?

INVOLUTIA - Janke....Second of the cryptics. If you mean what you seem to mean, once again I'll be terribly sorry. We seem to be falling apart and I hope it will be only a temporary thing. Your repro. has always been a delight to the eye, though you never seem to think so. In general, Jazz and jazz both leave me more or less unperturbed, so I never had much to comment on your zine, but it will be a pity if you leave us....I've sent Phyllis some choice details of L. Ron Hubbard. It seems you are way ahead of me, because I'd thought he was still Stateside. Be damned if he didn't appear on TV last month with his tales of plants feeling pain just like humans. ("Dr. Hubbard, whose grandfather owned half the state of Montana, is an American nuclear scientist who graduated in engineering and psychology...") We were shown (on a "Hubbard Electrometer, for use in Scientological Clearing") a plant feeling acute pain, but told that apples and lettuce only feel a little anxious when you eat them. Haw. And all dead-pan.

TARGET:FAPA - Eney....I doubt if 20th Century Fox made much capital out of the Nolan preview. They had a photog in the place taking pictures of us pretending to be scared, delighted and what have you, before the show started, but I think they were unlikely to have been printed. Rich Elsberry insisted on reading his Quannish all through this part of the show - as far as he was concerned, that is what the lights were on for. And who shall blame him, seeing that the Quannish was a fine ish?.... Sorry, but repro trouble spoiled my spelling - the word is Erks and has slowly been discarded in favour of Bods, anyhow....Hope you CAN supply that print - I'll settle through Sanderson, if you prefer.

FAPREHENSIVE - Elinor....It near broke mine as well....There is enough source material in this country for a biography of every post-Conquest king and for most of those before 1066 as well, going as far back as Caesar. Partly palace records, partly monkish history, partly letters. I'm using the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for a little personal research at the moment. Hope you'll see the results in PHlotz or Bull sometime this year. It is recorded of Richard LionHeart (NOT in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle) that he "did penance for vice and received absolution, resolving to return to his iniquity no more." That was at Messina, December 1190. In the Spring of 1195, still Crusading, he was warned by a hermit to "be mindful of the fate of Sodom and put away his unlawful deeds lest he be visited by the vengeance of God." Soon after - Tuesday of Easter week - he became violently ill, confessed, did penance again and sent for his wife to join him. After that his ailment, whatever it was, left him. The recorded evidence is available, and Richard 1 is the only one of the four English kings usually supposed to have homosexual tendencies (William 2, Richard 1, Edward 2 and James 1) about whom there is anything so solid to be adduced. William had tendencies resembling modern invert; Edward had some odd boy friends and avoided his wife; James slobbered over his pretty-boy favorites - (literally slobbered); that is all that is definite: various historians interpret it in various ways. Remember that this would not have been held against the king in those days because he made the law and was above it; as long as he was as just as seemed proper at the time, no one gave a damn what else he did. The only uprisings against the Crown in history have been either inspired by religious bigotry or led by discontented barons....Have you read "The Paston Letters"? They are absolutely authentic and give you a vivid insight into the life of the Englishman before the Tudors.

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For Scandal while it's Hot ..... read PHlotsam, your TIMELY Fapazine!

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BINDLESTIFFS - Bradley....Fandom lost much of its appeal when Merwin quit. Sam Mines was too ponderous in the letter columns, though he tried real hard. By then Astra Zimmer had quit too, along with Ricky Slavin Kater and Gwen Cunningham, though Joe Gibson was still with us....Your remarks about childhood awoke more memories. My father was the only railwayman in our district to work through the Railway Strike and the General Strike; going to school I used to get kicked and thumped all the way there and all the way back again in the evening. I was six at the time, so most kids were bigger than me and older; the one time I hit back with real determination, I got hell for fighting when I reached home. All over now....Sorry, no drum, no feed mechanism, nothing but a flat plate, hand feeding by laying each sheet in turn on the plate and lining it up, and a hand ink roller....When Dorothy Sayers was writing her twelve plays on the life of Christ (for the BBC) called The Man Born To Be King, one newspaper editor suggested that it was improper for any scholar ("however wise") to depart from the sacred English original text of the Bible....Maria is going to try the Reesesippies in Anything Box: we went slurp just reading them.

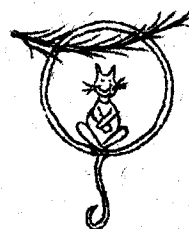
GALLERY - Derry....If you go, I'll be sorry. You didn't stay long this time, but it was good while it lasted.

PHLOTSAM - Phyllis....The more I read of Phlotz the more I wish we had both met many years ago when we were both single. If what Janke wrote in last mailing's Involuntia, that goes twice as much....((Something missing there -- but what's this got to do with Science-Fiction anyway? ph))..I sat and giggled for half an hour over "Ah Sweet Thespis." It reminded me of the story of the first Lord Birkenhead, who was No Gentleman. During the Suffragette agitation early this century, it was a customary thing for the more militant of Mrs. Pankhurst's young ladies to chain themselves to the railings of the houses of the country's rulers, among whom his lordship was known to be Great. When one of them did so outside the Birkenhead town house, he sent out his butler with a jug of cold water which was carefully poured out in a gentle trickle from the lady's skirt to run across the sidewalk and into the gutter. The young lady was rapidly released and nothing of the kind occurred again outside That House....George Orwell wrote of "a not un-black dog chasing a not un-small rabbit across a not un-green field." Sir Ernest Gowers quotes a surgeon's evidence given before a Royal Commission on the Sanitary Laws, in 1869: - "a disease hereditarily transmissible and spreading among the Non-fornicative section of the population." Gowers' book "The Complete Plain Words" was written at the request of the Civil Service Commission, to show Civil Servants how they should write their letters and minutes, but it reached a far wider public than that, as it well deserved to do. Price five bob (75¢) and well worth it. As the Economist reviewer said: "the Stationery Office must have enjoyed publishing this book. It is great fun to read." I agree with him - Gowers is brighter than Fowler and far more witty....Jim Busby is - or was in my Canadian days - a pretty fair ballplayer. He seemed to fit the clues in your crossword puzzle....I got great pleasure out of The Daughter of Time, as well as one or two points not known to me before. Can't think how I missed this book....We share your attitude towards city life. When we moved into Maidenhead, we told each other how nice it would be to be able to pop up to London for a night out every now and then. In the end, we never did so; we never went but once and that was not a night out: Maria had her hair restyled (delayed birthday present) and I took Philip and Geoffrey to see the Zoo. Maria also visited the Ideal Home exhibition and came back full of ideas for us. Geoffrey was tickled pink by the elephants and kangaroos; he loved the tropical birds and the owls; he just could not believe the giraffes. We were home by seven thirty pm....We were slightly less impetuous than you and Arthur: seven months....I hereby promise my vote to Eney at the next election.

\* These were Morse-type mailing comments -- spelling errors and typos by phe \*

# THE 13<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF CHRISTMAS

... and a black cat in a pine tree



I took down the Christmas tree today, and I feel a little sad.

The bubble lights and the red bells that glowed in the window have gone out for another year. The pine cones from the Maine woods are back in the bottom of the big carton; atop them rest lightly the grey boxes with dividers which drably house fragile, colorful globes, gay with stripes, or spidery gold and silver wire-work, or stencilled mot-tos -- "Merry Christmas," "Silent Night." Tenderly wrapped in cotton batting and tucked into nooks are the odd-shaped, shabby ornaments treasured from my childhood Christmas trees -- the pink-and-silver trombone, the red-and-white clown, Santa in a crimson suit, the dainty humming bird whose incredibly fragile needle beak is still intact after over two decades, although he has long lost his feathery tail. The squatty little auto could not be found this year and probably rode out of existence on last year's tree. It was time, though; the little auto could not have felt happy these last years with all those monstrous, bright behemoths lined up outside the windows. Like all the other ancient ornaments, the little auto's colors were flaked almost entirely away, besides its lines being all wrong.

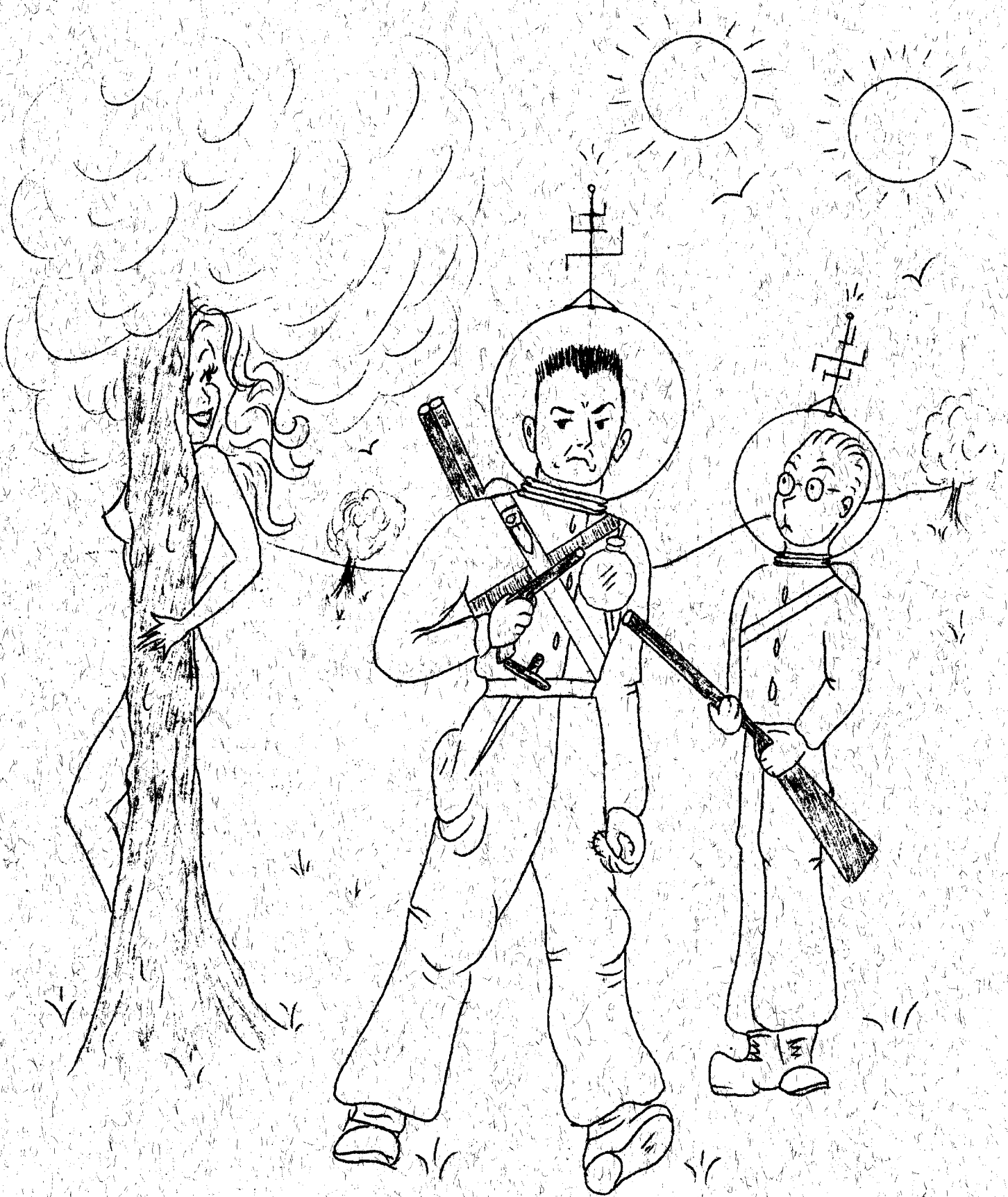
Not wrapped in cotton at all, but tossed in the box any old way, is the grinning, long-tailed, black celluloid cat, swinging on a blue celluloid hoop. Most cats don't swing on hoops by their tails, but this one does, gleefully. Nobody has ever taken any care of the black celluloid cat, but he has 109 lives and will be with me forever. When I could scarcely toddle, all the bright, pretty, break-at-a-breath baubles were "mustn't touch" and spanked hands -- just for round-eyed looking. But the black celluloid cat always swung on his hoop from the lowest branch where he'd grin at me as he'd loop-the-loop at the touch of a small finger.

Loosely coiled on top are the tarnished tinsel garlands, looking tawdry and worn. But, somehow, when on the tree against the green branches, they miraculously sparkle and glitter like an old beldame with a precious, short-lived elixer of youth. They make a nest for the tree-top, spun-glass angel with the insipid face and the crease in her golden right wing. Every year I intend to replace her bland shabbiness, but somehow never have found anything else that seemed to belong on the top of my Christmas tree.

For days I've been telling myself that I must take the tree down -- it's out of season -- but have been unable to part with it. Through a wonderful, merry, holiday season it glittered gaily, and during our party last week it seemed to double its scintillation, with all the bubble-lights bubbling more madly and every globe shimmering and dancing all night long with the rest of us. Then there were the evenings when, with the FM on and the house lights out, we'd sit talking quietly by the lights of the tree alone, and on those evenings they glowed softly instead of scintillating. I just couldn't bear to let it go.

But this morning I awoke in a mood indigo. Suddenly the tree seemed brassy, brittle and drab -- its artificial gaiety an affront to my somber mood. Away with it! I thought, and couldn't wait to fiercely tear it apart, oblivious of the dried needles pricking my hands until blood showed. Scornfully, I threw it out on the curb, and plunged into an orgy of cleaning until every piece of furniture was aseptically polished and each offending pine needle searched out and drawn into the hungry roaring maw of the vacuum. The boxes of ornaments went into the attic. The holidays are over.





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