

# RETRO 31

SAPS 66

JAN 64



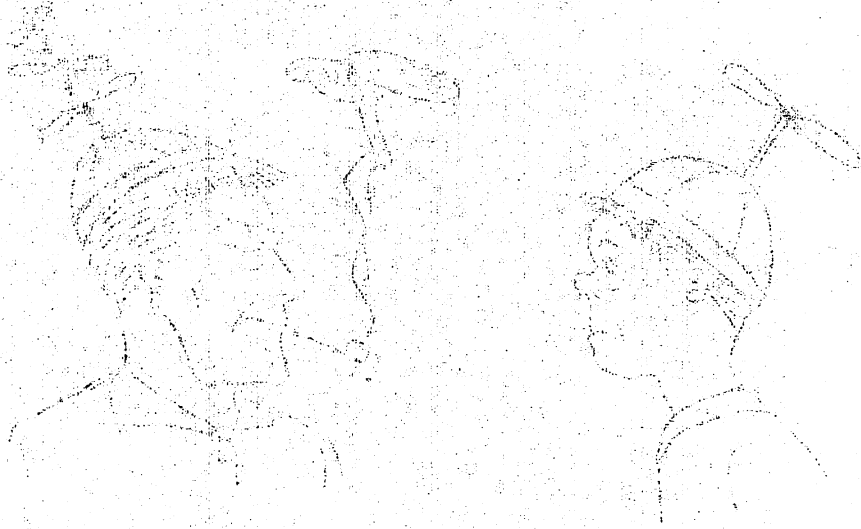
" ? ? ? "

"Why, certainly I'm a tri-apan--  
...Apex, the Cult, and SHFU!"

RECEIVED JAN 2 2 1964

REPORT

27-52 66 JAN 64



Very similar to the drawing of the head of the person in the drawing on the right.

Retro 31 is produced by F M Busby, 2852 14th Ave West, Seattle 98119, for the 66th mailing of the Spectator Amateur Press Society, deadline Jan 15, 1964.

While the Kennedy assassination will not be particularly topical by January, it is impossible today, the day of the funeral, to pass by these events without mention.

The most grievous part is the loss suffered by the widow and children. The country will keep going all right; it always does, and Johnson is a man of much savvy and demonstrated judgment; further, there is no reason to believe him lacking in the other major requirement for these times: Guts. So it's not the nation that bothers me; I just can't get over how it must feel to have one's spouse killed in one's arms.

At this moment it seems fairly certain that Lee Oswald, himself killed in the crowd assembled for Full Press Coverage of his move from Jail A to Jail B, was the actual and only assassin. A paranoid, loner, and jumper back and forth between the US and the USSR, Oswald left a credibly clear trail for detection. I suppose everyone else was as surprised as I was that it should turn out to be a radical leftist rather than a segregationalist who did the dirty work, but so it appears. But it is unfortunate that counterfanatic Jack Ruby has fixed it that now we'll never know or have any chance of knowing what Oswald's motives were-- whether, indeed, he really intended to kill the President or whether he was working off his old grudge against Connally and was a just plain lousy shot.

I wonder if the Dallas police will maintain Full Press Coverage now on Jack Ruby.

We had a little excitement ourselves around here last week. Some idiot drove out of a Yield Right of Way street and gave Elinor her first car wreck, right on the right front door of our Lark. She and Nobby and the groceries all came home in Good Shape and High Style in a taxicab, and we are now driving a 1964 Rambler U-Drive on the cuff of the other guy's insurance company while our little wagon gets fixed up. Neither of us are accustomed to automatic transmission and Power Everything, but to date we have each managed not to pile this one up. [But I don't LIKE Power Brakes!]

Boyd Raeburn stopped by here about 4 weeks ago on his way home from LA. He told us lots of Juicy LA Stories and we had a little shindig with Wally and Tosk and Gregg Calkins and the Tapscotts. The next week Al haLevy stopped by on his way from the Bay Area to Calgary to Israel. He told us lots of Juicy Berkeley Stories and helped me drink beer. In a month or so we hope to see Bill Evans on his annual Northwest Summer Vacation, to tell us lots of juicy DC Stories. All right; who's next now?

Naturally we are all set up around here at our good buddy WWWeber's TAFF win. I mean, we figured all along that Wally was a grade-A number-one choice, but it is not always that all you out there in FanLand necessarily agree with the hometown appraisal. I mean, look at the 1957 OElection, for instance. Of course, Wally has been in the public eye a lot more since those days [for foreign objects in the eye..]

Anyway, it certainly is a happy thing for our little group, and particularly since it appears that none other than good ol' ATom is taking the plunge next. It is not known at this point whether Arthur will have any competition or not; the fact is that practically all the eligible UK candidate types are for him, so why in the world should they run against him just to have another name on the "ballot"? Since the Willis and Berry Funds certainly did all right without "competition"...

Speaking of competition, though, we were halfway hoping to have a Seattle candidate for OE again this year, but maybe the timing is wrong. Tosk distinctly made some candidate noises a few months ago but he's been more quiet of late. And we had a Dark Horse in mind for a while but so far he's balking, not being currently at hand where we can twist his arm just yet. Oh well-- just so you don't get us into war during your 3rd term, Bruce. Or at least not a foreign war...

MC-haters stop reading right here, because guess what's on the next page..!

Well, how about A Few Kind Words on the 65th mailing?

Once again the mailing is a nice size, a little bigger than FAPA's but not excessively so; let us at all costs avoid ostentation.

Spectator 65: The roster of 32 (itself a nice size, and if it had been up to me I would have left it at that, on the way down to 30) includes 12 SAPS-FAPA biapans, with Howard and Dick (Schultz) due to become such before the summer gets very hot.

It looks as if the name might be changed to California Amateur Press Society, with about half the roster from that state at the moment. So go the trends...

Bruce told me that Terry Carr is still a member, that his zine arrived just after deadline and obviously the PO's fault, that this zine was to be mailed to us all as a semi-legal "postmailing" or picking up after the Post Office. But I still do not have my copy this day November the 25th. Rowrbazzle.

Collector 34 or maybe 35 or "October 1963": Nick Falasca's trouble is that he thinks automotive electrical apparatus follows the same laws that govern other or sanely-designed equipment. I found out long ago that this was not true; you approach car wiring on its own terms and still you don't have much of a chance unless you are willing to throw textbooks aside and just follow the directions whether they make sense or not. I still recall the '48 Chrysler I had in Alaska one summer. The generator only charged the battery when the windshield wipers were turned on, and this had been accomplished by the previous owner only exchanging two wires and adding one additional wire so that the generator would charge at all, I finally discovered.

Outsiders 53: Certainly a 2063-foot phallic symbol is the ideal advertisement for "Blanchard in '66". Maybe that is why you are getting out of North Dakota, and I have to admit that it is as valid a reason as I have heard for a long long time.

Whatever gave you the idea that I "didn't approve of the way Metcalf handled the Pillar Poll"? Why, I thought he did a wonderful job ... considering ...

Cult may not be qualified on postmailings but a couple-three years ago it was certainly qualified to be drastic. And took advantage of it, too. Hymns, anyone?

KL: SAPS is a way of interlocking mailboxes but takes itself too seriously. OK?

Son of Labyrinth 31 c/w Blue Paper: Bless you, my churldren.

ZED 805: I'm not sure that the word (and idea) of "Utopia" really applies to the story-world you're cooking up and describe in outline. Utopias are in essence both egalitarian and bland; I think you are after something more like the world of "Beyond This Horizon", which would be a hell of a lot of fun for those who are up to it. And those who are not can wear the brassard and play it safe, but they won't have as much fun or as much action. Do you think perhaps we are overly influenced by Anson MacD?

"By the Waters of Babylon" appeared in the SEP about 1937 or so, I'd guess. I doubt very much that any notion of radioactivity was intended; we tend to forget, these days, that "conventional" bombs (including fire-) are pretty damned awful in themselves. I think Benet meant to show the power of handed-down scare-stories as superstition, re the Great Burning and all that; our hero was the first to go back into the forbidden areas since the original holocaust, remember.

Spacewarp 77 (77? Oh, you must be kidding): I'll match the candy factory across the street from my office against your coffee plant any old day, and give you cards and spades and two flavors of caramel. Furthermore there is a Food&Drugs Lab on the next floor up, and about once<sup>a</sup>week it smells as if they are calcining a delinquent taxpayer. I sure wish the Infernal Revenue people would take care of their own mistakes, but at that I guess it's better than working downwind from Auschwitz.

Kloote and Roscoe deliver me from any extended chugalug contest, but I recognize the technique from the days when a couple of us over here from Wash State College on



a big schoolskipping whingding showed our fraternity brethren at the U of Wash how these things are done. Several of the UW fellas did not make it to the dinner table as I recall, but we unWashed barbarians ate heartily and then headed downtown to really tie one on, as of course we did. But chugalug is really Gastric Roulette.

I had one elephant joke, but the eggplant over there...

Ignatz 34: Well, you're certainly having no dull time, gal, and I'm enjoying your writeup of La Dolce Vita or whatever, so keep it up, please.

Well, I got it: "He said it's by da Vinci" Tom moaned lazily (Mona Lisa-edly)...

Slug 6: I don't know, Wally. Toskey may be so heartless as to someday displace a machine, but you will probably end up helping one, you kindly ol' fiend, you. Otto will of course push his car all around the downtown district from parking ticket to parking ticket, to save wear and tear, if that's what I mean, on Meter Maids.

I see you have unleashed Blotto Otto and Webfoot Soames on us again. O well; it could have been worse; there is always Squink Blog (now THERE'S a depressing idea).

Gad, man; this SLUG reminds one of the lovely old days of 20-page CREEPs.

The Daily Bite: Y'know, for 8 years I've been hearing how you guys (Weber and Toskey to be exact and perhaps even correct) were one day going to trek up into the wilds of the Cascade mountain range unto Lake Footsack which has ice on it in August, and that there you were (both, jointly and severally and no man knoweth whence) perpetrate a THING upon the face of the earth (or forever hold your piece) using only such type materials as could be packed in on foot, for the entire process of publication.

If it were not for the characteristic high-altitude Ditto work I would suspect that you had stayed home and done the whole bit at Stump/while being fed upon by expensive imported mosquitoes. [[House]]

But I think Birdnest Tarzanski is just Webfoot Soames in a clever cytoplasmic disguise. Judging from the color picture you guys showed us, that is.

Open Letter to Lee Hoffman: Sounds like about par for the Concourse, save that you guys don't sound as jittery as I felt during our '61 tour of the gauntlet.

By golly, this is about as enjoyable a cataract of stuff as I've seen in quite a while. And just for the record, I agree fully with the action of having the guard toss out crashers at the Costume Ball; anyone who was at ChiconIII and does not agree must be some kind of nut. Probably a masochist. Come to think of it, I have one suggestion for a modification of the guard policy: if there are nonmembers who want a look at the costumes, the Committee might let 'em in at a buck a throw up to the point of not quite being overcrowded-- it's a thought for the future, anyway. But in any case this shindig is for the paidup members first last and always. And how else?

Spy Ray: My gosh, Eney. There you go warmongering again. When are you going to learn to Witness For Christ before you mention the atom bomb? As a matter of fact the human race could be exterminated with stone clubs if they would line up neatly, and not flinch or fidget. Ban the stone club, fellas; it's too heavy anyway.

My unwillingness to Start Another Stupid Feud in SAPS is not pacifism; it is sheer laziness. (Gee, now I forget what I didn't wish to start Another Stupid Feud about. I guess it's just as well, though, lazy as I am.) The 50¢ mimeo plans were in Pop Mechanics or Pop Science or Mechs Illoed, and appeared just the week or so I mentioned them, so I hope I dated those pages.

Having attended 9 banquets (world and regionals) without necktie, before Chicago went stuffed-shirt about the whole thing, I see no reason to cater to this trend in any way. And in future I damn well won't. What's so sacred about the noose&blanket? And in particular, why should a fun-type hobby enforce discomfort?

"You've given me something, young lady, that I never had before" said Tom crabbily.

Flabbergasting 28: Gee whiz, Tosk; I didn't know your mother is named Sacramento or that you have a brother named Illinois like you say there on your 1st page.

Sorry; should have made it clearer, about the afterobligations of a commissioned officer; the kicker is that the gov't does not have to let him resign the commish if it doesn't want to. Whereas the EM has by law a fixed term of reserve obligation. And while, sure, if they really want to they can come get anybody, in practice it turns out that they always grab the easy ones first-- and sort of waste them at times. With so-called "brushfire wars" it will always be the immediately-available that get the nod, and in case of the Big One, nobody has to worry about one little thing, even.

I've seen the Salton Sea and I'm still not sure I believe in it. HOT there, man.

Of the Oct roster I've met all but 5. Only 1 of the 4 invitees, and 7 of the 12 on the WL. Isn't this a silly thing to keep score on, though?

Enzyme 5: Phil, are you sure you want to run for OE? I mean, let's look at it-- in 1958 you and Ron Parker both ran for OE of SAPS and the next mailing you were both out of SAPS. This August Ron Parker ran for OE of FAPA and the next mailing he was out of FAPA. Like, man, you sure you want to buck a trend like that?

Yeh I'm listening, but I won't ask what does arboridemingacity mean...

Retro XXX or 30: or possibly 11110, for the 1000001st mailing as we say in binary.

Pillars of Fire 5 & 6: Well, #6 mostly, since I just cannot find anything to say about #5 except maybe "Good on you, rich brown"; will that do?

I really don't know as to whether Bergeron was "being Sincere with us", rich. It's hard to tell. He could be coming on exceeding strong in Wrhn while writing bland amiable letters in which he did not mix it up at all. I did feel that he tried a Fast Shuffle on me in what turned out to be the final issue of Serenade, his ShaFAP zine, and when I called him on this (in FAPA) there was no response public or private. It may be that he just goes overboard and then gets too embarrassed to speak up when nailed for it. He does not seem to be a guy who can admit a goof, hardly at all. Which must be a pretty uncomfortable way to be, I'd think; we all make 'em...

The reason for rating [oops-- WEIGHTING] Poll categories is not that there are more, say, MCs than say poetry, but that there are more people doing MCs. To go a little further, we have 36 people competing (if that's the word) in the Editor of Best Fanzine column. In any given year we have maybe 3 or 4 who are really seriously doing much in the way of Art or Poetry. Maybe 20 doing MCs, 15 throwing in enough fact-vignettes to qualify under "Articles", and 5 or 6 doing fiction B.C. (Before Coventry). The weighting isn't and won't ever be perfect, but such as it is, it's an attempt to provide enough points per category to spread around to all those who in the eyes of the voter have some recognition coming... after several years of frustration trying to vote ballots with equal points for each column. Clearer?

After all the schemozzle, it might be simpler to drop the whole bit, dead.

Watling Street 17: Megan Sturek moved to Venezuela in the fall of 1959 to teach school for Standard Oil (or somebody), and got married (or something).

Pot Pourri 31: I'm no great shakes as a stamp man, but I did like your well-documented-and-illustrated rundown on the space stamp situation.

Will you collect these fossil-hunting reports one day under the title "Fossils Can Be Fun" [dedicating it to FAPA or some former N3F Directorate]?

Reprint or no, "Main Chance" is a welldone story, salable or very close to it.

Mest 15: Getting married the day of the winter solstice, eh? I will manfully hold back from any rustic joshing about the longest night of the year, etc.

I shudder at your contemplated change from mimeo to Ditto. Ditto is EVIL.

\*\* "Ten dollars is all I can give you for a used rifle, Mrs Oswald" \*\* [an HG for BEP]

Speleobem 21: Raeburn & Clarke are also producing some fine wild Aylmer oneshots for FAPA, I guess you've noticed-- and I hear they have another one coming up in February. Yeh, I wish we could get either or both into SAPS, but not likely.

I'm a sucker for books using fan-names so I guess I'll have to scrounge up a copy of Lesbo Lodge myself; I'm sure it's available among the great collection of sexbooks at my favorite stand down on 1st Avenue. The only thing is that except for Immoral Motel I don't buy sexbooks there, and I hate to spoil my Image, sort of.

Dean McLaughlin kindly sent me a copy of "The Furry from Earth" in which he gives me a one-line characterization as "the arbitrararian philosopher, F. M. Busby". Gee, I wonder what he meant by that...

The DisTawf Side is a joy again in this (part 4) immediate postChicon installment. The warp&woof of the experience comes through beautifully, and certainly here is some lovely needlework around the edges.

The Wild Colonial Boy 4, and the Unnamable: John, do you read the Inspector Bonaparte (oops, pause to change typeface) stories by Arthur W Upfield? Four of these have recently appeared here in pb, and Elinor & I dig them quite a lot. Today I dragged out volIII (Ane-Bak) of our Idiot's Encyclopedia to see which if any of the Upfield locales I could find on a map of Australia, and found that in at least 3 of the 4 I'd had it all wrong-- somehow thinking that Upfield was writing of the west side of the continent all this time. But by golly I did locate Lake Eyre and The Neales (from "The Bushman Who Came Back", our favorite so far). Mitford, the scene of "Murder Must Wait", is given as being on the north bank of the Murray River and a reasonable stopover for a plane from Melbourne to Broken Hill, so that's fairly close spotting. Edison (of "Venom House") is a small coastal town south of Brisbane. (I don't expect either Mitford or Edison actually exist, of course, any more than do Metropolis or Middletown, USA.) Our neighbor has "Death of a Lake"; all I can remember of this is Lake Otway, which may or may not exist (I find a Cape Otway on the map, though). At any rate, we do find these books interesting for background as well as for plots, and I wondered if you're familiar with any of the terrain mentioned, how you like the books themselves, etc... And how many more are there??

Yes, I think you make yourself quite clear on the Council re the abo settlement: mainly they'd like the abos to go somewhere and die sanitarily and downwind; right? Cr Bloye is a happy exception but he did not seem to be getting very far with it.

Barrett writes a fine trip; I agree with you that it would be a good thing if TAFF were broadened to TOFF and ol' Merv turned up on the ballot. Maybe Wally Weber will put this proposition on the upcoming ballot; if so, I'll vote for it, along with voting for A\*T\*o\*m for this time. It may be tough for costs, but fandom can cope.

The triple coverage of the Sydney excursion is a gasser; wish I'd been there. (AND ON THE MCs SIDE): Pardon, and all that, but N Metcalf undertook (re the Pillar Poll) only "the task and responsibility" of counting and reporting the votes. The OE, one B for Blackhearted Pelz, made up the ballot, which in turn carried the rules for voting. [Any previous beef between Pelz and Metcalf as to the form of the ballot is irrelevant, I'm sure you'll agree.] My gripe at Metcalf in this regard was his idea that he could superimpose his own unwritten rules and throw out votes that did not suit his own ideas of what the Poll should be. Well, we've been all over that... but if the thing bugged Norm all that much he should have copped out beforehand.

Tell ol' Bob Smith that we miss him; he never shoulda left Puckyapunall!

εPor Que? 19: Seeing as how our car is now in for an insurance job of repairs, your tale of grief on a similar deal sort of fills me with like forebodings. What is the name of your (wheeler)dealer, anyway? At any rate I'm glad you ended up taking no guff off any of them, even though it meant delay. We do have better odds in two respects: one, I've had good luck with the garage over several years, and two, we have this U-Drive on the other guy's insurance, which helps a great deal.

Glad to see you hitting the typer early; in fact it seemed such a good idea that I am having a try at it myself. This is still November, isn't it??



Sapterranean 9: Judging from firsthand reports not appearing in nudist zines, those camps seem to be a drag. Too bad; another illusion shattered. If I ever want to go to a nudist camp I'll start my own, I guess. And with no damn volleyball court, too.

Oh, I have no way (and in fact, had no idea) of "proving" that high-IQ results from a (more or less) successful adaptation to stress. It just seemed like a perhaps fruitful idea, so I thought I'd put it on the night run and see if anyone rode it.

I can't of course speak for anyone else, but THIS ConCommitteeman's "criteria of success" (for SeaCon) were about like this: (1) People seemed to have a good time, (2) Nothing Horrible happened, and (3) We came out well in the black. I didn't worry about minor goofs or dislocations, never intended to have any Biggest-EVER deal, had no choice and thus no misgivings about how many Celebrities made it, and all-in-all was highly pleased at how well our gamble-on-innovation (the Hyatt House) came off. Afterward there weren't many gripes, and only two that really bugged me, both of which have long since been settled in one way or another. Was this about what you meant?

The Dinky Bird 8: A sterling representative chapter of "Fellowship of Nothing" and I guess all you people know the only way to deal with this story, don't you? Like, Otto started it, so summinervver make sure he has all the installments; then when he gets back into SAPS 2-3 mailings from now, it is up to him to do the final chapter. I mean, after all, it's only fair, isn't it? HE STARTED IT...

Well, yes, I still coggle at "Die Freischultz"-- because somehow I tend to feel that he does mean it to be in Cherman. [Or am I missing something there, Ruth??]

MMPI = Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory. Pompous lot, aren't they? Gollies, iffen I had a Multiphasic Personality I wouldn't even admit it, let alone try to inventory it. But I guess they take these things seriously in Minnesota.

Yes indeed; nice having longer&better chatter at Westercon with you, too.

Die Wis 10: Well, judging from your baseball games and your knife-ballbat brannigan and the Chilesex bit and smuggling and homemade guns & explosives, Gordon Eklund isn't the only one who had a sheltered childhood. Why, I was all of 18 years old before I ever bombed my first police station. I shudder at you JD types.

Stumping 6: You had all the bad luck in the repro dep't in your household this time. Well, I've had plenty of that with both Ditto and mimeo (incl Gestunker), but was it Herman or Monstro who really needed the bath more than Sheba did?

As you know, the gun articles are fine by me, Jim. Keep 'em coming.

Nope, I didn't learn my stick-figures (Retro29) from Charteris, but from Speer. Actually we all 3 studied under Doctor Fu Manchu, and he was damn' heavy, too.

\*\* "Quit twitching, Laney!" said Tom frantically. \*\*

Niflheim 5: Welcome to the West Coast, Southern Division, you-all.

I'm familiar with the pedestrians who step right out in front of you to see if you can stop. We have them up here, too, and so far I've always been lucky with them or possibly vice-versa. In general, though, they don't seem to last very well.

Without meaning to put down either you or Es Adams, Dave, take my word for it that nobody-- but NObody-- would ever take either of you for a hoax by the other. Gads! Ol' Es gone and married, huh? Why-- it's the end of an era, or something.

You're right, of course. No one can "write commentary and suspend disbelief at the same time". And I found this out the hard way: after writing 48 consecutive monthly prozine-review columns in CRY (1955-59) I got to the point where I couldn't achieve the suspension long enough to enjoy the stuff while I was reading it. So I dropped the column and eventually things got fairly well back to normal.

Welcome, Katherine: you write a nice stick and I hope you'll be with us regularly. [Dave, explain to her how pagecount giffs dual-listing and 2 votes; OK?]

\*\*"This flight's important, Gary; Ike needs info for leverage at the Summit Talk."



Grignolino: I guess I've come to consider my own apa writing as a form of expanded correspondence, and the material that is neither MCs nor editorial as inclosures, on the idea of: "Hey, here's something I wrote the other day that I thought you might like to see". But maybe things will all look different tomorrow; who knows?

I don't think I consciously set "standards" for my stuff in fanzines. Mainly I want it to say what I mean, both in sense and in tone. I want it to read well and easily, both in word-choices and in typography-and-repro. And I like to get a laugh, any time the occasion warrants it. I used to enjoy going on for pages and pages, but in recent years I have come to loathe the processes that necessarily follow the removal of the completed stencil from the typer, so I tend to save my worst attacks of longwindedness for correspondence. Oh-- you knew??

"Love's when you don't hesitate to hit somebody if you think it will do him some good"? A good concept, but one that is very treacherous to apply in practice. You caught some of the pitfalls but missed what I tend to think is the biggest one: how do you know what's good for him? The trouble is, the less you know, the easier it is to get carried away and play God; increased knowledge brings more qualms. Of course, the shielding of someone from the blows of Fate is equally tricky, but then our religions and our politics say that this is GOOD, whether it is or not....

Perdue was clowning about that 48-point typer; he sent me a note written on it saying as how Hoo Boy, wouldn't this ever bug 'em, though. Of course, he may have Put On a few people about it, but obviously the machine could not cut a good stencil.

Mistily Meandering 6: A couple of years ago, Heinlein gave passing mention that "someday" he intended to write another story concerning Lazarus Long; damn, I hope he hasn't changed his mind, because there goes one of my all-time favorite characters.

Labor Day is too late in the year for fireflies, Fred; take in a Midwestcon some year, and prow! the rural Midwest afterward. Elinor saw her first "lightning bugs" about 1 July, 1957, at my cousin's place just outside Lebanon, Indiana.

Fine trip writeup but (Ghod save the mark) no hooks for comment.

Hieroglyphic 4: So you're going to "die for deal old Rutgers" in the classroom, of all places. I wonder why more High School advisers don't keep a few samples of freshman-level college textbooks on hand to give their young hopefuls some idea of just what they'll be getting into? I don't recall having all that trouble making the change; I wasn't used to the quantity of work or the way it was handled, but the style wasn't all that different. Of course, I got through elementary school a few jumps ahead of Dick&Jane readers, too, so maybe that motif has reached the secondary schools by this time, and you're just caught in the bind before "Run, run, run" gets to the college level. Oh, it's cynical out tonight, my friends.

Yezidee 5: If your ditto isn't toilet trained, all the more reason to stick to good old legible nonfading mimeo. Even a housebroken ditto is No Damn Good.

The next time I am divorced for chasing you at a Westercon, please have the courtesy to be there. It's horribly embarrassing...

Ace Mystery: Gee, all you people seem to have gone to entirely different DisCons.

A Concordance to the Lord of the Rwngs: This is really a piece of work; I hope I do not forget which mailing it is in, the next time I get on a Tolkien binge which happens at unpredictable intervals.

And welcome to SAPS, Ed [I trust you got that kick of doing an all-Esperanto fanzine out of your system in the Cult, or wherever it was?].

\*\* "I've finished my exams", said Tom finally. \*\*

...and I have finished my comments on the 65th SAPS mailing, so there, too, like.

## The Rebirth of SAPton Place . . .

It was with three bodings that I approached once again the familiar environs of SAPton Place. I had started my journey with four, but you know how it is with the Greyhound Bus Company.

It had been a long time since I had last seen SAPton Place. Two wars and a hoon had come and gone, and I knew I could expect to see a lot of changes. I had heard about the explosion of the H-(for Hundred)-Bomb over FAPA Flats, but it was a shock to see so little evidence of rebuilding; a few small mailings scuttled around in the debris, but all else was desolation and rabbits.

As the bus wound its way up the hill to SAPton Place, I saw that the big genzine factory overlooking the Flats was gone. And what else, I wondered...

The town itself looked much the same. A few more houses, perhaps-- yes, 36 now, instead of 30 or 35 or whatever it had been. But the faces were different. I knew that some refugees from N'APA Valley had settled here, of course, driven by the great drought and rumors of civil war in Insular Province.

Alighting from the bus, I saw kindly ol' Doc Ballard administering a local anesthetic to an accident victim. Out-of-town anesthetics were too expensive to waste on accident victims, but Doc smiled and set the mallet down and shook hands, and we walked over to kindly ol' Doc Eney's for a couple of shots of his local anesthetic which is slower but does not leave lumps. On the outside, anyway.

"Hellero, kindilo Docko," said a passing townsman.

"Who's that, Doc?" I asked.

"Oh, that's just Ed Baker," he answered. "He speaks only the Universal Tongue, which nobody understands but himself." I only nodded. What could I say?

My first shock came when I went to pay Doc Eney for a shot of the local.

"Your money's no good here," he said. "All we use here is the scrip printed by Boss Pelz. See?" And he showed me a library card. Although my own was long since expired, he agreed to honor it until I could get it renewed.

"Boss Pelz," said Doc Ballard, "runs this town with an iron hand and a 10-foot 4-pound sword." I certainly wished I had my other boding; I was going to need it. "Things have really changed," he went on: he told me, then, of how Nancy's motorcycle had been confiscated for the use of the Boss's enforcer, Dian Girard, known as the Hatchet Lady. Art and Nancy had settled down to raise children and porcupines. "There goes one of the children or porcupines now," he pointed out, and it was so. One of the saddest cases, he told me, was that of Big-Hearted Howard, the coin-operated mimeo czar. "It's been two years," he said, "and Howard still hasn't figured out how to make those mimeos operate on library cards." I shuddered.

"That young fella sitting on the pole over there" said kindly Police Chief John Berry "is Norm Metcalf. He was supposed to be working for City Light but it didn't work out, so he set up in business with his own pole. I don't know just what he's doing up there on top of it, but I hope he isn't trying to follow some of the advice he got, on what he should do with it." It all seemed very apople...

The community health level was about the same, I was told. Ted Johnstone had crawled into a TV set one day and lived there ever since, but neither doctor interfered so long as Ted did not get onto a commercials jag, as happened now and then. Someone had either shot and wounded Walter Breen mistaking him for a bear or else had shot and wounded a bear mistaking it for Walter Breen. Chief Berry, to play safe, had put a closed season on both. There had been some trouble with mononucleosis, until a quarantine had been put into effect against the Expansive Love Camp up on Apex Butte. Professor Toskey and his Associate, Wally Weber, were still in a decontamination chamber after having come to town babbling and raving of having found the fabled Lake Footsack and encountered its legendary ogre, Birdnest Tarzansky. "But our biggest health problem", said Doc Ballard, "is the continued high incidence of cardiac cases. And there is just nothing we can do about it."

"You can't do anything about cardiac cases?" I asked. "Why the hell not?"

"Well, like you were always saying," he answered sadly, "these small towns are all heart!" Realizing what he meant, I wandered off to look for my other boding.