

EGGARDE



AGARD
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EN GARDE!

A FAPA PUBLICATION

WHOLE NUMBER IX.



Quite Quickly Qonstruced by---
AL and ABBY LU ASHLEY
Of 25 POPLAR, BATTLE CREEK, MICH.
MARCH, 1944, MAILING.

THE LITTLE MAN WHO WASN'T THERE
or the
MICHICON DELUSION ACT

A very effective method of gaining reader-attention is to open one's article or story with one or more statements of a startling nature. So.....

CLAUDE DEGLER-DON ROGERS WAS NOT INVITED TO THE RECENT MICHICON!

NOR WAS HE EXCLUDED FROM SAID MICHICON!

IN FACT, TECHNICALLY SPEAKING, THERE WAS NO MICHICON!

Fandom rightfully expects an explanation of the so-called "Ashley Atrocity". Herewith, we present a true statement of what actually happened.

In June of 1943, we purchased Slanshack. It was occupied by tenants who had been renting from the former owner, but they assured us they would be out inside of a month. Expecting to move shortly, we told Walt to come on up and sleep on that famous living-room floor at 86 Upton until we got possession of the house. But instead of one month, things dragged along for five of them. It finally took a little legal urging to get possession. So, with the gang expected to start arriving Saturday afternoon, we started moving o Friday noon---moving three full van-loads of stuff---and the whole thing was complicated by the fact that the former tenants were moving out at the same time. In fact they didn't get all their belongings hauled away until late Friday evening. So much for that part of it.

Now when Jack Speer stopped off here on his way back from LA, he could stay only a few hours. But he promised to return for a longer visit if we cooked up some sort of Michicon. Shortly after this we got word from Tucker that he'd be up for a long-promised visit for a week. Because of travel conditions we had definitely decided there would be no Michicon in '43. Contributing to this decision was the fact that so many members of the Mid-West FFF were either in Service or clear across the continent and unable to attend. But with Tucker coming and Speer willing to, something had to be done. We finally decided to stage a private get-together to inaugurate Slanshack. By special invitation we chose a group we thought could make it to Battle Creek, and would constitute a congenial gang for the two days to a week they would be here. But due to a misunderstanding, Tucker announced it in Newscard as the regular Michicon. On the face of it this shouldn't have made any

particular difference. If it had been a regular convention held at some hotel, it wouldn't have. But after all, there was a limit to the capacity of Slanshack. Then there was the matter of calling it a Michicon. At least to us, that name stood for the annual Mid-West shindig. However, we let the name ride, and even used it on the autograph booklet, though no Mid-West business was transacted at any time during the affair.

All of which brings us up to Friday evening. The house was jammed from one end to the other with furniture and unpacked cartons of belongings. Three big van-loads is a lot of stuff. Well, we all took off for a restaurant, and after eating returned to tackle the job of trying to straighten things out enough so we'd have something that a lot of imagination might construe as a place to sleep for the night. We returned-----and found Degler. Degler---hungry and tired and not a bit too proud to beg. He had some weird notion that Abby Lu could drop everything, and by means of a major miracle whip up a meal for him out of that mess. Such blind, ignorant faith was almost touching----almost. The touch came later.

Frankly, I was rather at a loss to know what to do about the situation. The CC bull the guy had been spreading, and the way he'd been carrying on other places, had got all of us pretty disgusted with him. Everywhere he'd been during the previous year he'd managed somehow to spread dissention. His printed reports on everything were always distorted. Nor had his several former visits particularly endeared him to us. Here we had a nice group arriving with prospects of a good time and no friction. Was this arbitrary rule of open house for anyone claiming to be a fan so inviolable that one must risk spoiling a gathering of a score of fans merely to give an unfelt welcome to one uninvited individual? And when that individual arrives not only uninvited, but unexpected, twenty-four hours too early, and at a time when none of us were in any mood or position to welcome anyone, can any stretch of ethical concept demand that we greet him with open arms?

I finally decided in the negative. Being owner of Slanshack, I knew the others were waiting for me to handle the situation. I called Degler aside and tried to explain things to him. But I'm afraid he mentally brushed aside anything I said. He claimed to have received an invitation to come, whereupon he rushed posthaste to get here in time. As nobody attending the affair sent such an invite, no other fan has ever admitted to doing so, and as Degler failed to produce the invitation for our inspection, we could only conclude that it existed nowhere but in his imagination. I told Degler that none of those present, or to be present, approved of his recent activities, or his Cosmic Circle guff. I pointed out that everybody would be a lot happier if he were absent from the gathering. But somehow he wasn't impressed by my frantic logic. He didn't even have the decency to show a touch of discouragement. He bounced right back by demanding to know whether I actually intended to exclude the Indiana FFF from the Mid-West Convention. I patiently tried to explain that it wasn't a regular Michicon, and why it wasn't. But it all appears to have gone over his head. All he seems to have got out of my explanation is the screwy notion that the Mid-West FFF had died or been abandoned (witness the so-called revival under Jenkinson as announced in one of his sheets).

I spent half an hour or more of much needed time trying to get some comprehension of the situation through Degler's skull, but all I got for my pains was his voluble but unintelligible attempt to sell me a bill of CC goods. Finally I told him I had to get back to work, and pointed out again that more fun would be had by all if he failed to attend. Degler still seemed unable to believe anyone could be such an unbeliever as to spurn Superfan and his great Mission to fandom. But just in case the impossible was happening, he cast about for other methods of achieving his objectives. He began telling me what a swell guy he'd always thought me, and how he'd always supported the NFFF, and still did, and what a swell mag NOVA was, etc., ad nauseum. In an abused tone he related his tale of overcoming insurmountable obstacles to get here, and told how much he'd planned on seeing Tucker to discuss certain things with him. It was very pathetic---or would have been if he'd been a better actor.

I told Degler for the severalth time that the fans weren't due until the next afternoon, and that if he came around then, providing Tucker wanted to talk to him. I certainly had no objections. I even volunteered that I might discuss things with him at greater length if I had the time then. Whereupon I turned back to job of straightening things up. But Degler followed around at my heels like a hungry hound. A desperate gleam came into his eyes. He began speculating aloud about how he was going to manage to eat and sleep with the mere 60¢ he had to his name. When I ignored him he came out baldly and asked me to loan him a few bucks to finance a room and his meals. The cost of the moving and attendant expenses had pretty near strapped all of us. We just hadn't any money to spare. Then he decided we could at least put him up for the night. I asked him to look around and tell me just where he could be put. In fact we were going to be damn lucky if we managed to rig up a place for ourselves to sleep. Degler got more and more desperate. He started wondering aloud for my benefit about just what he could do. He supposed he could sleep in the depot---but then, they probably wouldn't let him. Of course there was the bus station---but it might not be open all night. I assured him it probably would be, but he didn't seem quite convinced. His plight became so piteous under his frantic flow of words, that I'm afraid I entertained thoughts of weakening against my better judgement. But Walt and Jack got me aside and strengthened my resolve. As they pointed out, giving him money then would simply insure his mooching presence for the next few weeks, or until we refused to tolerate him longer. Mooching can be reduced to an art, and Degler had obviously made great progress in this direction. Before he finally left, Degler tried to borrow money from everybody in the house. He left muttering bitterly about "Exclusion Acts".

Friday morning he showed up again. Abby Lu was the only one present at the moment, the rest of us being across town after a few odds and ends we'd left behind. He told her he'd wired home for some money, and that he wanted to see Tucker. She reminded him that Tucker wasn't due until late in the afternoon. So he left again, saying that he'd be back later. That was the last we saw of him.

Degler certainly wasn't made to feel that he was WANTED, for he wasn't. But he definitely WAS NOT EXCLUDED!

MATTERS OF ETHICS

There has developed in Fandom a general recognition of certain ethical concepts pertaining to fans and their activities. But the actual degree of their acceptance is open to question. The ideas of most fans on this subject seem to be rather vague and uncertain.

Generally speaking, while they may violently disagree, most fans are inclined to be tolerant of the rights of other fans to their own ideas and peculiarities. When some individual fan has violated some point of Fandom's unwritten Code, several of his fellow-fans have jumped him verbally, pointing out the error of his ways. The erring fan, whose mistake was usually an unthinking or unknowing one, has thereupon avoided repetition of his error, with the result that the incident was soon forgotten. However, recent happenings have thrown the situation into a different light.

A number of years ago, a certain minority group of fans set about an attempt to control all Fandom. Whether they might possibly have ever succeeded is doubtful. In any event, they incurred the censure of Fandom when they forcibly ejected from a meeting several fans who objected to their methods. As a result of this act, while still active to a limited extent, they were, to all effects and purposes, banished from Fandom. More important, however, was the general agreement among fans that, hereafter, no fan should be refused participation in any fan activity or gathering. On a number of occasions, and in a number of ways, this agreement has been circumvented, but the methods of doing so have been devious, inconspicuous, and often unconscious. Outwardly, Fandom has remained adamantly determined on this one point. Yet, today, one might be justified in wondering how much that agreement was based on emotion, and to just what extent logic played a part.

Today, we are faced with a fan who has violated not one, but most rules of fan-ethics. He appears to have acted under the assumption that the end justified any means, and his apparent goal (not necessarily his announced one) seems to have received no more approval than his means of attaining it. What is probably a good majority of Fandom feels we would be better off without this individual. But due to this "Anti-Exclusion" complex, there has been largely confusion about just what action should be taken. Several ineffectual or unacceptable methods for eliminating this fan have been suggested. But, as Fandom in general cannot make up its mind what course is proper, it is not surprising that no acceptable method of dealing with the situation has been forthcoming.

It becomes increasingly obvious that the time has arrived to consider codifying our accepted rules of ethics. We need to examine anew our ideas of proper fan behavior. We need them before us in black and white so there can be no doubt about what we mean, and no room for hedging. We need a printed, generally accepted code of ethics, available to the new fan, to better enable him to avoid mistakes. Does unauthorized use of another fan's name, fanzine or organization title, etc., constitute a breach of ethics? When, if ever, do personal attacks on another fan become libelous, and therefore unethical? Are there, or are there not, conditions under which

expulsion or exclusion are warranted? Do the rules of fan-hospitality demand toleration of a confirmed moocher, or one who is personally obnoxious? When situations arise that place all Fandom in an extremely bad light, or that become intolerable to the majority of fen, are we to be able to act with swiftness and dispatch? Or must we stammer and fumble, and prove ourselves unable to cope with even our own small affairs, to say nothing of those futures on which we expound so lengthily.

There is no call to overdo this matter of ethics. Fen are, by nature, individualists, and a large degree of tolerance is indicated at all times. But there is a limit to everything. It is up to us to face the facts and set those limits---not only for our own mental clarification, but for the enlightenment and guidance of those new members who are ever entering our ranks. We must always be ready to lean slightly backwards in an effort to give an offender the benefit of the doubt, yet we must be able to say, "Up to this point, you may say and do as you wish. Beyond this, you encroach on the rights of others. Beyond this, you forfeit all further consideration, and may expect summary treatment."

A definite, accepted code of ethics will go far toward keeping Fandom a peaceful, harmonious, smoothly-functioning group. True, there is an extremely small minority that favors chaos and turmoil. It thrives on the excitement of feuds and dissention. But by far the majority of fen are concerned with things more important than continual bickering.

So let's make this matter of ethics a subject for a great deal of discussion. Sometime in the not too distant future, I'd like to present to the NFFF a written code of ethics, for consideration and possible approval. It is generally conceded that FAPA contains the cream of fan experience and opinion, so it is to FAPA members that I look for the needed ideas and suggestions before going further with this task.

What do you think?

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EVOLUTION

Evolution has been defined as "progress from the simple to the more complex". If one of the primitive cave men had wished to give you an orange, he doubtless would have said, "Have an orange." But we of today have evolved. We have progressed. We live in a civilized world. Today, the giver of an orange would protect himself and avoid any misunderstanding by hiring a lawyer to put the whole business in writing thusly:

"I hereby give and convey to you, all and singular, my estate and interests, right, title, claim and advantages of and in said orange, together with all its rind, juice, pulp and pits and all rights and advantages therein, with full power to bite, cut, suck

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and otherwise to eat the same or give the same away with or without the rind, skin, pulp or pits, anything hereinbefore or hereinafter or in any other means of whatever nature or kind whatsoever to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding."

And then another lawyer would come along and take it away from you.

Ah, Progress!

Monkeys chatter constantly while a seal always spouting off in insect buzz from

A PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE FANTASTIC SENSE

The world goes right on solving its problems in the old crude, hard-working ways. But turn the job over to a fan and.....

Well, take for instance the snow removal problem so real to the Northern States. The world uses strong backs and shovels. But a fan would spread tarpaulins along the streets when it began to snow. Just think how simple it would be then to roll up the tarpaulins, shake the snow out of the canvas into the river (being careful to sort out any of the cars that might be included), and have nice clean streets without all that back-breaking labor!

dawn to dawn and people talk too much or give you the good old piscatorial age quiet

COINCIDENCE

One day we picked up a lovely female passenger in our taxicab. She wanted to go out to the American Legion Hospital. She dropped a remark about this being her first time in Battle Creek, and that she didn't know anybody here. We felt that such a situation was exceedingly tragic and should not longer obtain. So we introduced ourself. In the ensuing conversation we learned that she was a nurse, was from Cincinnati, Ohio, and was going to work here. We idly remarked that we had a friend in a hospital in Cincinnati. She asked what his name was, and we told her, Charles Tanner. She then exclaimed, "Why, he was one of my patients!"

About six months later we picked up another nurse at the hospital where we had taken her. We asked this nurse if the other one still worked there. She informed us that the gal had left just a week before. Then we told her about the strange coincidence. She informed us that she was from Cincinnati too, and wanted to know the name of our friend there. We told her, and she burst out, "Why he was my patient too!"

One encounters the strangest things driving a taxi!

Putty is used to fill cracks so we will fill this one with it putt putt putt putt

Slanshack's newest member is Chloe, a black cocker. She is very smart and eats anything. She just loves all kinds of raw vegetables, even including onions and radishes, and she loves coffee & coca-cola. The other day she was gazing longingly at Moon Pool. Maybe she reads!

" with jaundiced eye."

COMIC CIRCLE COMMENTATOR: Having put our copy to the logical use suggested in the first paragraph, we find ourselves unable to comment. But we do seem to remember a chuckle or two in connection with this publication.

FAN-DANGO: Very interesting reviews. However, as we feel no impulse to add to your comments, we refrain from reviewing reviews.

LE ZOMBIE COVER: We seem to have seen this all before. This must be where we came in.

HPL TENTATIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY: Another of those much appreciated bits of hard work.

PHANNY: Unusually good cover. *** "Genius and Super-man" extremely thought-provoking. It strikes us that some determination of the motives directing his use of his superior mind is necessary before any of your questions can be answered. Assuming "genius" to be an ordinary man with extraordinary mental faculties, and the possibility of obtaining a quantity of fairly accurate data on the motivations and workings of such a mind, it might be possible to extrapolate a plausible conception of "superman", his superior abilities, and his probable limitations. Does such data exist in available form at present? Has anyone ever attempted to study the mental methods of genius? *** "Aspects of Internationality" a fine article. As with any consideration of such a topic as this, it all boils down to the fact that people do not think. In fact, the present educational system of this country definitely discourages thought. Further, it goes to such amazing lengths to avoid any possibility of individual thinking that one has reason to wonder if there might not be an organized conspiracy to reduce the populace to a state of virtual ignorance. But to even hit the high spots of this subject would take many pages, so I will save further remarks for a future article.

LIGHT: Tale of "Light's" resurrection was best in issue. Liked Nanek's poem. The horror in Recordemon was quite goocy and not too subtle alright. But why don't you really let yourself go sometime? Anyway, keep it coming.

The FAPA CORRESPONDENT: Drop me a line Harry, and tell me what brand of stencils you've been using and what you pay for them. I've just run onto a new stencil source, and might be able to help you out. As for your typer, did you ever consider having a set of new type faces mounted on the thing. Of course, even that might not be possible under present conditions, or the cost might be too high, but it might be worth investigating.

THE FANTASY COMMENTATOR: A really neat publication. Its policy is as admirable as it is unusual, and the material more than welcome considering our own interest in book collecting.

MILTY'S MAG: So you see, Milty, Slan Center isn't likely to end up in Michigan anyway, wherefore we'll be looking forward to your

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presence. Had intended to hold forth on the co-operative phase of the project in this issue of En Garde, but lack of time and space prevent. We always enjoy your mag, so keep it coming as regularly as possible.

THE PHANTAGRAPH: We second your plea for all the unknown, lesser known, and unfinished works of A. Merritt. Hope your fears about the screened covers prove groundless. They have been one of the bright spots in the Mailing.

ADULUX BESKAN: We had begun to consider this a total loss. Then we spotted "coffee arz doughnutlu". That saved it. Even without the doughnuts we would like it as long as there was coffee.

RAY: We find here, points inspiring argument. But considering the water that has passed under the bridge since it was written, we doubt the worth of arguing those points.

PHANNY - 2 III: Exceptionally interesting review department, and it was much enjoyed. Alphabet article contains much thought-food for one interested in languages, auxiliary and otherwise. We're slightly amazed at how far you've gone into it. Best crack in the issue was calling the CC the "One Man Multitude."

SUSTAINING PROGRAM: We love your smooth running-comment reviews. That, and the variety of other topics you touch upon lightly, is why Sus-Pro is one of our favorite FAPazines. But that is the extent of our comment this time for the reasons set forth in the paragraph following.

CONFESSION

As with all previous issues of En Garde, this issue is being composed with extreme haste in a frantic struggle to meet the deadline. Ever since the first issue, we've been promising ourselves to start working on it right after finishing the Mailing. And every time the result has been the same. But FAPA really represents our greatest interest in Fandom. Not that other phases of activity don't interest us too. But we'd like to really go into all the lovely topics for discussion that are always cropping up in FAPA, or are suggested by something else in one of the zines. Now the time has come when we shall no longer suppress this desire. In the next issue we shall let ourselves go to whatever extent we feel the urge. And to make this possible, we shall start working on the next issue long, long before the deadline. (EEE, Jack, and Walt start counting on their fingers in an effort to figure out how many times they've heard that before.) As for this issue, we ask your forgiveness for brevity of comment on the rest of the mailing. We want to say more, but simply haven't time.

THE COSMIC CIRCLE AND FANDOM: Ah!

DECIMAL CLASSIFICATION FOR FANTASY FANDOM (Swisher's mistake. That should be FICTION): We like this system. One of these days we shall make an automatic card-sorter, or its equivalent, and your system will work nice for this purpose. Then think of all the fascinating comparisons one could make.

A: To what lengths one will go to avoid being outdone!

THE S-F REPUBLICAN: This seems to be dated, though it has no date.

STEFNEWS: Rather enjoyed this. But our notebooks all have three rings.

FAN-TODS: We loved that cover, in view of its dedication. Demn it all, this is one of the cases where we are the most regretful over lack of time for adequate comment. Its getting so we simply revel in Fan-Tods.

MATTERS OF OPINION: Another case where we yearn to plunge into lengthy comment, but are forced to use restraint. Your discussion on the word "fan" deals with something that has bothered us for a long time. We too feel the need for a different name. But as long as we consider making a change, why not go all the way and get away from those ubiquitous "f's". Is there any good reason why the name cannot be chosen arbitrarily? And wouldn't a name composed of more pleasing sounds be preferable? Stray thought: In the outside world it is almost impossible to change a name thusly. But could we make such a change in Fandon---make it completely, and in a short space of time? Or would there always be hold-outs who would refuse to accept the new term? It might make an interesting experiment.

FULL LENGTH ARTICLES: This we shall really cherish. Let that brief comment signify, in inverse proportion, our appreciation of this effort.

BANSHEE: How well we understand the sentiments expressed in that last sentence.

THE UNKNOWN MADMAN: May he remain so.

CRUISE OF THE FOO FOO SPECIAL JR.: Amazing how fascinating these travellogs always are.

CALIBAN #2: We like the reviews.

Caliban #3: "Un Jerque" really got told off! Got a kick out of "Alpha-Man" for some reason or other. "Cushlamocree": we'll resist the obvious cracks.

CALIBAN #4: Devilish looking monster on the cover. Your appreciation of Slan Center project is encouraging. If it is ever to become a reality, that is the sort of enthusiastic support that is needed. One of the chief aims of the revived NFFF is to provide a National organization for all fans. You will hear more about this point.

THE TRIVIAL TRIANGLE TROUBADOR: It is remarkable, but not surprising, what scant effect ridicule has on the Mooching Moron.

WALT'S WRAMBLINGS: We like the new format as well as the contents.

A TALE OF THE 'EVANS: Welcome back!

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BROWSING: Even with the quantity of books we've acquired in the last couple years, you have an amazing number that are missing from our library---and you're only down to the "E's". Perhaps we shall list our titles the same way one of these times. After all, a large part of the fun of collecting is comparing collections.

INSPIRATION: The usual pages of friendly rambling that we find so pleasing. In connection with the negro discussion, we will print as a separate publication in the next mailing, the material on this subject that we deleted from NOVA #3. ((Incidentally, NOVA #3 is all stenciled, partially mimeoed, and should be out very shortly after you receive this Mailing. It would have been out before this but we had to pause to get our Fapazines out of the way, and things were further complicated by a breakdown of the mimeo, causing delay while waiting for new parts.)) Glad you enjoyed your visit to Slan Shack, Lynn. We assure you the feeling was mutual.

MEET FAPA: Hope it was satisfactory.

BRITISH FANTASY SOCIETY BULLETIN: The British lads seem more efficient organizers than we Americans.

EN GARDE: We rather liked the cover on this one ourselves.

GUTETO: We glee to note the evolution of Guteto into a somewhat more personal---more Fapazinish--- publication.

FANTASNIDE: Tantalizing!

BEYOND: Nice art, considering the limitations of the medium. As for dreams, we have been planning to publish our own book on the subject as soon as we collect a little more data. You see, we have wanted for some time to experiment with printing and binding an amateur book, and this subject seems to give a fairly good excuse.

FANFARE: This issue is just too utterly utter. And those ads are simply excruciating. One of the best humorous efforts FAPA has seen for many a day. As for format and artwork, you have certainly been doing some wonderful work, Art.

FANTASY AMATEUR: Thanks, LRC, for routing the bad, bad people who were about to cut our official position right out from under us. However, as Abby Lu has had no direct part in EN GARDE for some time, or in any other FAPA participation except helping with the work when we were OE, and reading the Mailing, she will probably drop when our membership comes up for renewal. Liked the OE's long message. Would like to see long ones every time.

POST-MAILINGS

CLAUDE DEGLER AND THE FAPA: We're inclined to agree that ignoring Degler will have little effect on the situation.

SHEAF OF CCCOMENTATORS: Amazing amount of BTU's in this pile of paper. In every great evil some small good may be found---if you look hard enough.

FEN: Enjoyed Fassbeinder article. Poem on 4c was good too.

FAN-DANGO 3-A: Hope to bring this matter to a head soon. Whatever the outcome, it needs prompt settlement.

MIDGE: Interesting.

PHOTO: Very interesting. Should go far toward accomplishing its aim.

COVENTRY SAMPLE: Sounds good. Think we'll risk a dollar if plans for its publication have not changed.

CAUSTIC SQUARE BULLSHOOTER: If ridicule had been effective, Degler should be clear out of Fandon and completely forgotten by now.

DECIMAL CLASSIFICATION: We haven't time now to compare this with Speer's in the same mailing. Perhaps we can consider this subject in a future issue of En Garde.

PEOPLE STORIES: Lovely cover, interesting material. Interior back cover pic suggests a horse on somebody.

THE F.A. LEAN 3: Better late than never, say we.

THE PEACE WITNESS: We don't approve collective homicide either, but we gravely doubt that the mere spread of Pacivistic propaganda will ever really be effective. What is needed is to open our eyes and face some unpleasant truths about the actual cause of wars. Then do something positive about it. Are the majority of the world's peoples capable of that?

TOWARD YESTERDAY: Rather enjoyable issue on the whole.

Hope that covers everything. If we've missed anybody, please accept our apologies. And may we remark that this was certainly a huge Mailing---something we greatly approve.

When we can't think of anything clever to say in those interlunations we wonder

THIS 'N' THAT

We, Al Ashley, have pretty well run the draft classification gamut now. For a long time we were 3A. Then we were reclassified to 1A. Then we went to Detroit for our examination---and ended up in 4F. Maybe, someday, we'll write up the story of that exam. Anyway the result came pretty much as a surprise to us. In case anybody wonders why we were rejected, we herewith end their wonderings. It was because of Bilateral Assymetry, Quadratic Podex, and Cranial Varicosity.

Neil De Jack seems to have gone across. Got a change of address card the other day giving APO address. Haven't heard from Dalvan Coger since he visited us on furlough a few weeks ago. Hope he hasn't gone too.

