

Nov 1988 DETOURS 30 Fantasy Amateur Press Association Mailing Number 205 EUP EUP  
Produced by cheerful old Russ Chauvenet 11 Sussex Rd Silver Spring Maryland 20910  
EUP As you feared, this is yet another Entirely Uncalledfor Publication EUP EUP

Highlights of the 204th Mailing

"I learn from my mistakes, which is why I know so much."

-- Arthur Hlavaty

"Imagine Ben's Beat harboring a genius. Why not?  
There is room for two!"

-- Ben Indick

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"(Josephine Saxton) mentioned that she has a constant tele-  
pathic link with her cat, whom she regards as being more  
intelligent than most people."

-- Janeen Webb (Australian SFR)

.....

"I still have lots of boxes unpacked since the move into this  
house 31 years ago."

---Harry Warner Jr.

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"I made a speech denouncing dumb formula fantasy trilogies,  
and read from a recent horrible example, whereupon everybody  
ran out to the huckster room and bought copies."

-- Bob Silverberg

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"Adding the discussion of epistemology was a crowning touch  
which really slammed both doors on the coup-de-grace."

-- Milton Stevens (ct. to Mal Ashworth)

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"Are you sure this discussion of TAFF isn't taking place in  
Swedish?"

-- Janice Eisen (ct. to Richard Bergeron)

011000110

"We founded (FAPA) and we tried to keep the baby going, blowing  
on the flame as it were."

-- Don Wollheim (to Moshe Feder).

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"Is 'Norte Dame' north of 'Sud Dame?'"

-- Bob Rodgers

(Poking fun at a typo by B. E. Brown!)  
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## THE MAILING COMMENTATOR AT LARGE (204)

- ROGER SJOLANDER      BOSH 9. Enjoyed your account of beautiful fiancée's shortcomings.. My own dear wife of 44 years has the same drawbacks (lack of interest in fanzines, distaste for sf) and yet, since I have my own shortcomings (which I'm too modest to boast of here), I remain untroubled by hers and our marriage has enjoyed serenity, as may yours! ... Too bad you don't respond to Napoleon's come-on that every soldier is a potential Field Marshal. Now you may not even make General!
- BOB RODGERS      ADVOCATUS DIABOLI 8.      You warm my heart by your liking for Arthur Waley's "Translations from the Chinese."
- ERIC LINDSAY      GEGENSCHHEIN 54 Bored by the software in the IBM world?! You astonish me. It's an endless wealth of riches!!
- ARTHUR HLAVATY      DILLINGER RELIC 58. Brad Foster's cover is nice. I sympathize with your goal to find employment among those to whom your skills are strange and arcane. That works beautifully. For some time prior to my retirement my job was to write programs for people to run on their office PC's. Using my programs was easy for them, but as far as writing the programs themselves went, they were totally out of it. They regarded me with flattering awe, all innocent of the fact that in other divisions of our Agency there were dozens of programmers smarter and more competent than I.
- BEN INDICK      BEN'S BEAT 10a. My sympathies on loss of 10. But what prevents you from taking the copies of (say) page 1, and placing them back in the paper feed other side up, so as to print page 2 on the back of page 1 (as you see being done for DETOURS)?
- JOHN FOYSTER      AUSTRALIAN SF REVIEW "Reactionary Utopias" by Gregory Benford contains the best critical writing I can remember reading. Benford looks at the whole picture and recognizes the significant items. Moreover, he is never too eager to make his point. He disarmingly stops to praise certain merits of an author's writing, during a discourse illuminating said writer's shortcomings. This helps us comprehend the whole subject, and makes his criticism seem well rounded and helpful, never polemic or argumentative. His analysis of "The Dispossessed" and other LeGuin works both enthralled and instructed me, without requiring me to agree with everything he said. To find writing like this in FAPA is heartening indeed!!
- The barrage of review of George Turner's "The Sea and Summer" made a surprisingly good impression.
- The reviewers touch on enough of the book to make it fortunately unnecessary to read it, while their varied comments illuminate one aspect or another without too much overlap. Apparently someone in Time T a few centuries down the pike is writing a novel about life in Melbourne in time X, which is in the past for time T but in the future for us of 1988. Time T is vaguely limned as utopian, while Time X is distinctly dystopian. All the essential action seems to take place in Time X, with the promise of Time T mainly serving as a reassurance to the reader that there will be an ultimately happy future if only one can wait long enough.....
- Tom Shippey briefly dismisses the book as a metaphoric reflection of Victorian society. John Baxter explicitly has it "Here, unsullied by changing fashion (or copy editing) is [the] well remembered tone of

Victorian ... abnegation," and sniffs: "It's my considered critical opinion, expressed often elsewhere, that George Turner can't write for cumquats ... It is apparently his intention in this book to celebrate the bleak, bare acts of survival and existence, pursued without artifice, without pleasure." ((ED NOTE: As I didn't know what a cumquat was, I made off to the dictionary. It is a small Chinese orange; I suppose some like them, some don't.)).....Russell Blackford tells us that "The Turner future is grim -- a grubby stinking dystopia has resulted from political expediency and the complacency of all of us..... Yet this is a book to respect -- powerfully written."

Martin

Bridgstock says: "Triple whammy --- world population; Greenhouse effect; Automation. Entire novel set in Melbourne, pop. now 10 million. ((This explains Australian fascination with the book!! -- ED)) But where are the goods automation should produce? Virtually everything in Turner's world is in short supply --- except people." (And yet he goes on to say:) "I am inclined to regard *The Sea and Summer* as the best Australian sf. novel yet produced. Its message is stark and fearsome and undoubtedly correct in general if not in the particular."

John Foyster is seemingly most interested in Lenna of the Autumn People (in time T) in the far future (the historian supposedly writing a novel about Time X). "It's Lenna's world which contains the science fiction appeal -- the scientist at work, the struggle of ideas.".. Bruce Gillespie and Yvonne Rousseau join in the chorus of praise, leaving John Baxter in a minority and indicating a remarkable Australian appetite for cumquats. Your editor has never seen so many interesting reviews of the same book presented one after another like this.

ROBERT RUNTE

ARE YOU TALKING TO ME? 4. Interviewing

contains a lot of astonishing information.

10 hours to transcribe a 1 hour taped interview?? And your report on 'um', 'uh', regressions, incompletions, etc. is a big surprise. I can't hear my own voice. When I want to say something, I have to listen to it with my mind before I speak, an automatic process after 58 years of deafness. Unless I am kidding myself my speech should be innocent of all those glitches you cite. On the other hand, I don't always have good volume control...NEOGENESIS: Glad to have your clear explanation of why we won't get to see real SF on TV in the near future.

HARRY WARNER Jr.

HORIZONS The early steamships prudently retained masts and sails in case of need....

You display typical candor in revealing the dark side of your character -- your hatred of my beloved Orioles. Since they started from almost nothing (the remains of the St. Louis Browns) in 1954 the O's have exhibited courage and character, not to mention great baseball, in climbing to the heights. Come over some frosty winter night and I'll show you movies of the '70 Series win over the Cincinnati Reds.....When you talk to Speer in *Horizons* now, you walk through a looking glass into a world I never knew. ... You have a clever mind. I missed that loophole allowing a President who has served 2 terms to be elected someone else's VP; then serve a 3rd time if the new President conveniently dies. Is there a plot line in this? .... The Supreme Court has never prohibited the free exercise of religion. Just said kids don't have to pray in school.

(HARRY WARNER Jr. - ctd.) I have an ambiguity problem. I think that abortion is wrong, but I also think that overpopulation is a very serious problem. When I read that the population has increased by x million, the impact of the news that there have been y million abortions in the same time interval is diminished. I am not sure you are altogether free from your own ambiguity problem. While you clearly oppose abortion, we learn that your "disgust with the behavior of the general public grows more immense all the time." And you make a gloomy forecast that "within 20 years or so .. the average young person won't be able to cope with the task of turning pages, as drinking and drugs continue to destroy mind-body co-ordination." Why, then, do you wish to increase their numbers by eliminating abortions? Perhaps you could fight back by selling contraceptives.

BOB SILVERBERG      SNICKERSNEE      Yes, we'd miss you. Stick around!

A. LANGLEY SEARLES      THE ANNEX 3      Enjoyed your account of provision for summer ice. On our farm in Virginia we cut ice from farm ponds in the winter and stored them deep below ground (well packed in straw) in an old ice-house that dated back to 1810. Of course, we always ran out before the end of August, so welcomed the Rural Electrification Administration.

GRAHAM STONE      SOME COMMENTS ... Your dispassionate treatise gave Ahrvid Engholm's choice of words a bit more attention than it deserved but was excellently done.. ... Yes, Kriegspiel is known in the USA as you describe it. The best alternative form of chess is to reverse the positions of the black King and Queen with no other changes. A whole new universe of unexplored openings awaits. Unfortunately this idea has never been exploited.... Philip Bridges, one time local sf. fan, had a Jetan set with which we played on occasion without much satisfaction. The King escape resource was a bad feature. I don't have many of H. G. Wells' books around, but I have one which might have escaped you: "Floor Games for Children," which tells about making wooden pieces of various sizes and the things that can be done with them.

RICHARD E. GEIS      RICHARD E. GEIS      You are singularly gullible in your naive belief in whatever SPOTLIGHT chooses to print. The idea that Hitler did not undertake to exterminate the Jews is unsupportable, as the evidence is voluminous, even if no one has erected a Holocaust Wall with six million names. You are also wrong in your statement that the "Liberty" was sunk by Israeli attacks. There was appreciable loss of life on board but the ship itself did not sink.

ROBERT LICHTMAN      King Biscuit time 7      I liked your views on the Pavlat Poll. Nice to see your MC's. Surprised to learn good old G.M.Carr is still flourishing in SAPS after all these years. I, for one, no longer have the energy to argue with her. But it was fun once, in the long ago years.

REDD BOGGS      SPIROCHETE 44      Thanks for putting us in touch with Jean Young again after a long hiatus!!

- JANICE EISEN            ELECTRIC CITY EXPRESS 2    A friend I knew 45 years ago claimed to be able to control headaches. He said he had the mental ability to lower his blood pressure, and that when his blood pressure declined, the headache went away. As I never had the problem, I never needed to learn this technique. Good luck. .. You can do a lot to make prison a less oppressive experience. "Stone walls do not a prison make, nor iron bars a cage. "Minds innocent and quiet take that for an hermitage." Therefore those sentenced to life without parole can still be treated with the carrot rather than the stick. .. I suffer from another ambiguity: I agree that, having forbidden murder, the State should not itself take life; and then comes a crime so revolting and heartless that I feel the criminal does not deserve life. .. It's not hard to guess that when you mention Heinlein as one of "the holy trinity of sf. authors" that you intend the other two to be Isaac Asimov and E.E. Smith. (Correct me if I am wrong!) There's a very friendly feeling to this fanzine.
- FRED LERNER            LOFGEONORST 13    You are a kindly critic. Just from your own remarks I'd have panned more than one of the books you reviewed.
- STVEN CARLBERG        Pied-à-Terre 7    Welcome back. I smiled at your enthusiasm for "Have Space Suit - Will Travel." You almost made me feel young again; well, younger, anyhow.
- DON C. THOMPSON       RIM-I-NIS-CENT    A pleasant set of experiences. If your Leading Edge is compatible with my TANDY 1000-SX, we could exchange 5¼" floppies
- TOM PERRY             QUESTYNG PARTY    Bah. Your PA sign claiming 2200 ft. elevation as highest spot east of the Mississippi couldn't be more wrong. Mt. Mitchell in NC is 6,684 ft. high, and a dozen other Eastern states, including PA, have high points higher than 2,200.
- ART WIDNER            YHOS 44    Alan Hunter's cover is great. Puns - OK. Rotsler - mild recollections of times past. My wife liked Magenta Widner's talk. So did I.
- MOSHE FEDER           HYSTERESIS       Interesting that Wollheim recognized 17 of the current 65 members. I had ~~to~~ smile at "Sam Moskowitz. Well, we've heard of him somewhere."
- GREGG T. TREND        TREND'ART        1 new FAPAFan; 2 photos; 3 poems; 4 drawings; 5 paintings; 6 sculptures; 7 sonatas; 8 violin solos; 9 choreographed ballets; 10 fiery political speeches... now that's REAL ART!!!..... Seriously, I liked the poem 'The Astronomer' and the drawing of the two men. Technically the other drawings are excellent but produce effects that don't appeal to me.
- JANICE MORNIGSTAR    MOVING TALES      Delighted to hear of the good influence Cameron has on your convention life ... quiet time in the afternoon, early to bed, early to rise....the GOOD LIFE!!

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A fortunately timely end to MCs on FAPA Mailing 204 by ole Russ Chauvenet

## MEMOIRS of RUSSELL CHAUVENET

## I Fight a Duel

In 1938, as a just penalty for my sins, I entered Boston College as a freshman. Although I was a mere 18, I was sufficiently precocious to be in the same boat with the protagonist of Housman's poem who is made to say "But I was one and twenty, .. No use to talk to me." Therefore I valued my own opinions at a rate considerably above their going market value in the world at large, and I was not slow to express some skepticism about the tenets of the Catholic faith which were not always well received by my fellow students. There was, however, a good leavening of non-Catholics in the student body, and the enlightenment of Boston College was such that the Inquisition had not been re-established at that fine institution. Nevertheless I was a constant irritation to one particular classmate (destined, as I believe, for the priesthood) and one day I showed him the following poem by Rupert Brooke:

## HEAVEN

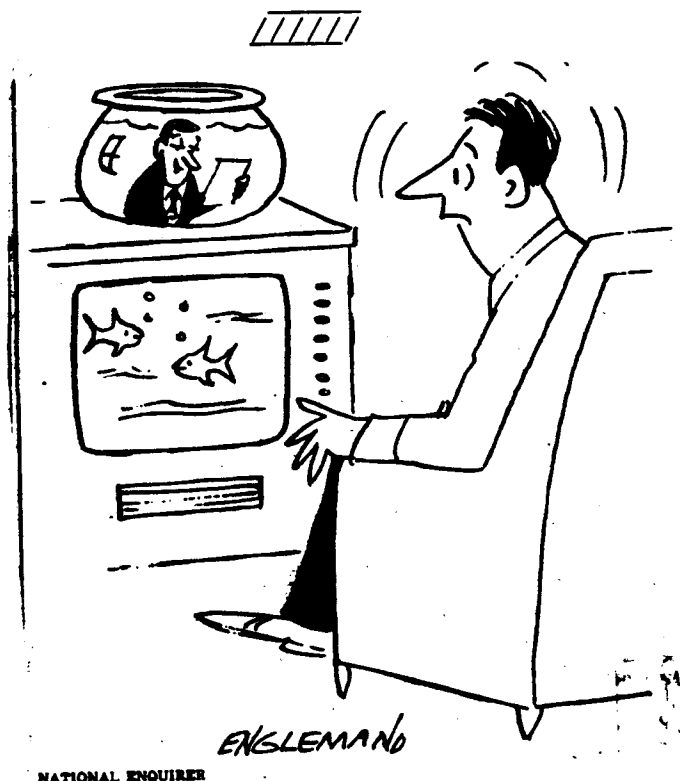
Fish (fly-replete, in depth of June,  
 Dawdling away their watery noon)  
 Ponder deep wisdom, dark or clear,  
 Each secret fishy hope or fear.  
 Fish say, they have their Stream and Pond;  
 But is there anything Beyond?  
 This life cannot be All, they swear,  
 For how unpleasant if it were!  
 One may not doubt that, somehow, Good  
 Shall come of Water and of Mud;  
 And, sure, the reverent eye must see  
 A Purpose in Liquidity.  
 We darkly know, by Faith we cry,  
 The future is not Wholly Dry,  
 Mud unto mud! -- Death eddies near--  
 Not here the appointed End, not here!  
 But somewhere, beyond Space and Time,  
 Is wetter water, slimier slime!  
 And there (they trust) there swimmeth One  
 Who swam ere rivers were begun,  
 Immense, of fishy form and mind,  
 Squamous, omnipotent, and kind;  
 And under that Almighty Fin,  
 The littlest fish may enter in.  
 Oh! Never fly conceals a hook,  
 Fish say, in the Eternal Brook,  
 But more than mundane weeds are there,  
 And mud, celestially fair;  
 Fat caterpillars drift around,  
 And Paradisal grubs are found;  
 Unfading moths, immortal flies,  
 And the worm that never dies.  
 And in that Heaven of all their wish  
 There shall be no more land, say fish.

My classmate read this with some interest, then he turned to me and said "This is all very clever, but if you think for one

moment, if you even dare to suggest....." and as he paused in all but speechless indignation, I quickly responded "YES, I do think, I do suggest, I do believe!!" "All right, I'll fight you!" he challenged. "Ah, an invitation to a duel? That gives me choice of weapons. I choose ice cream cones at ten paces, and my second will call on yours." Somewhat to my surprise, he accepted the terms, appointed a second, and negotiations proceeded swiftly. It was agreed that each contestant would choose the flavor of the ice cream thrown at him. The duelists would strip to the waist, and the contest would take place after lunch in the gym locker room. An important rule was that no ducking or dodging was permitted; anyone breaking this rule would be considered a loser and in disgrace.

A considerable number of interested spectators gathered for the hostilities. We stripped to the waist, and my second, Ralph Alman, gave me the quaint instruction, "For God's sake, don't miss!" My opponent accepted a strawberry ice cream cone, while I hefted a vanilla one. Our seconds broke off the pointed ends, leaving us the gobs of ice cream enclosed in the remainder of the cone. The umpire gave the signal, and my opponent hesitated for an instant. Deciding to take my second's advice, I aimed for the broadest target and threw at the middle of my opponent's chest. The throw, slightly off target, splashed on his torso just above his belt buckle, doubtless sending a certain amount of melting icecream down into his pants. Shocked for a moment, but if anything more determined than ever, he fired the return missile. It was a critical moment in my life. I was truly determined to move no single muscle no matter what the trajectory of the hostile ice cream had in store for me. I stood there proudly immobile, not blinking an eye, as the strawberry icecream sailed past my left ear, a clean miss by at least a couple of inches.

And, afterwards, the opponents became a little more friendly. We respected each other and did not again go out of our ways to heckle each other about our different opinions on religion or anything else. So this incident in my remote past is still a pleasing memory.





## THE GOLDEN GATE

This novel by Vikram Seth (Random House, 1986) is unique as far as I know. It takes the form of 590 sonnets in iambic tetrameter. That's 8260 lines and perhaps roughly 60,000 words, a considerable feat. One of the critics quoted on back cover considers the characters so conventional that they would self-destruct in prose, but credits the verse to setting them "glowing from within." Another is more taken with the cat Charlemagne than with the humans, and indeed the cat has a significant part to play. Since we have already quoted Graham Stone as saying that the mention of verse in connection with sf brings a chill to the heart, we must reassure him that this is not sf, altho some of the dramatic tension (what there is of it) comes from one of the characters working for the defense establishment, while others are out there making active protests against anything having to do with nuclear weapons.

The tetrameter moves the story along well; the plot is mainly concerned with kaleidoscopic changes in personal and sexual relationships between the central five characters. There is a good feel for San Francisco and, to be sure, the bridge of the title, which the author seems to love as much or more than his characters.

Tho Seth gives us his version of doomsday:

"Then, locked inside their lethal closet,  
Go codes received, launch keys in place,  
Bright crew-cut zombies will efface  
All human kind. Too late to posit  
What made them fire from the hip.  
A flight of geese? A faulty chip?"

he also pauses for thoughtful vignettes:

"They walk, not daring to do violence  
To the still night by force of speech.  
What do friends need to say that silence  
Will not do better. ...."

Quite often he injects a playful note:

"She is the drummer in a band  
Well known and feared throughout the city:  
The striking sounds of Liquid Sheep  
Rouse distant suburbs from their sleep.  
Unlinked alike to tune or ditty, ...."

or the whimsical

"Thus the young yahoos coexist  
With whoso list to list to Liszt"

So altogether I found this an enjoyable work and had a good time reading it.

Back cover is an elaboration on a pattern by rediscovered JEAN YOUNG.  
Front cover is a modification of a cartoon in The Sciences in which the original road sign read "Approaching Eternity." LRC made the changes.

# Around The Corner

Around the corner I have a friend,  
 In this great city that has no end;  
 Yet days go by, and weeks rush on,  
 And before I know it a year is gone,  
 And I never see my old friend's face,  
 For Life is a swift and terrible race.  
 He knows I like him just as well  
 As in the days when I rang his bell  
 And he rang mine. We were younger then,  
 And now we are busy, busy men:  
 Busy with playing a foolish game,  
 Busy with trying to make a name.  
 "Tomorrow," I say, "I will call on Jim,  
 Just to show that I'm thinking of him."  
 But tomorrow comes--and tomorrow goes,  
 And the distance between us grows and grows.  
 Around the corner!--yet miles away.....  
 "Here's a telegram, sir....."  
 "Jim died today."  
 And that's what we get, and deserve in the end:  
 Around the corner, a vanished friend.

The excitement in FAPA as we get to the third shelf in the built in bookcase in the upstairs guestroom is undoubtedly GREAT!

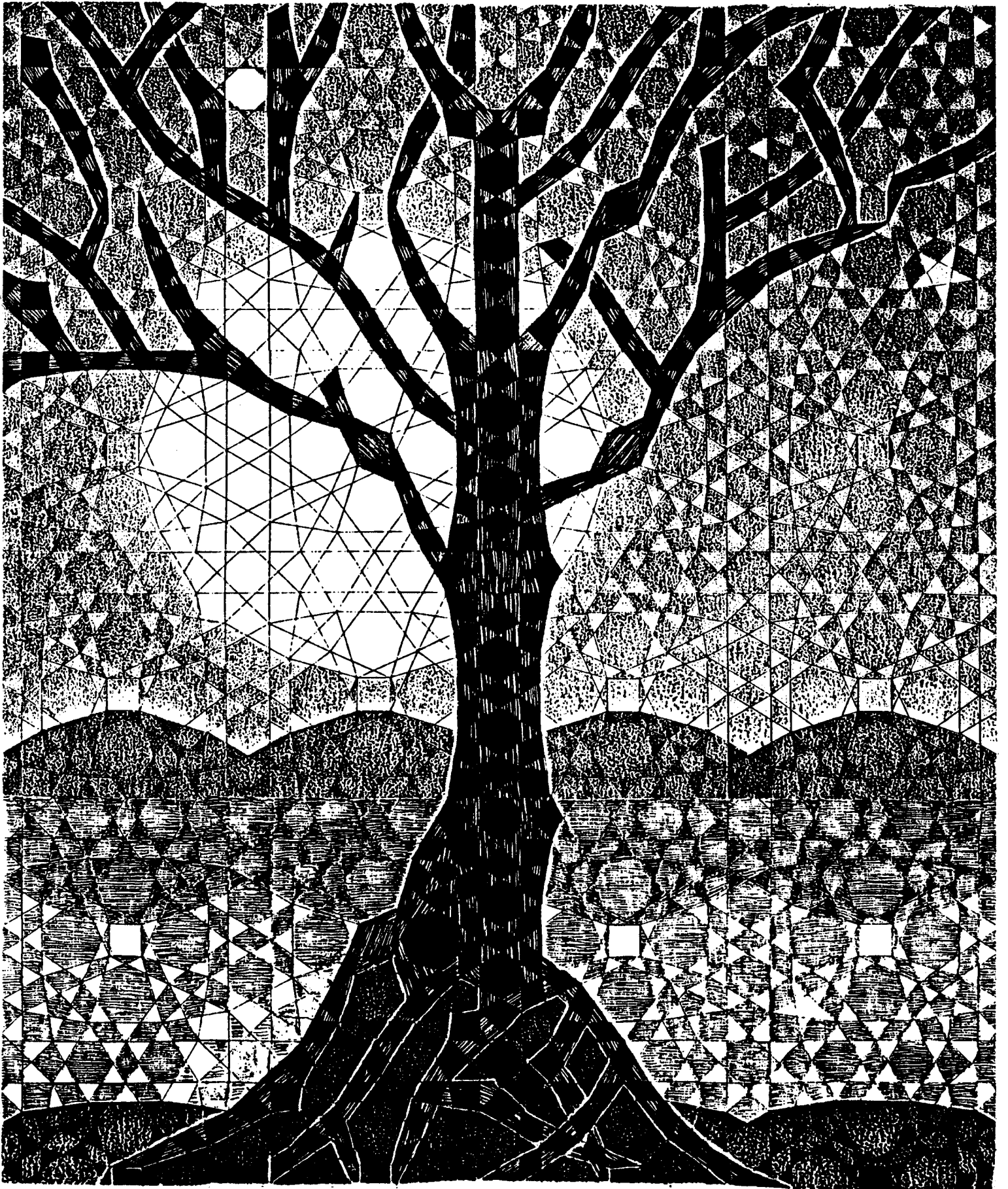
Hand Shadows  
 Tales of Tortola  
 Lenz on Bridge  
 These Lovers Fled Away  
 Moved with Compassion  
 Shadows on the Tor  
 Coming of Age  
 Pride & Prejudice  
 Sense & Sensibility  
 Rudder Grange  
 Contact  
 Swift Sword  
 Akenfield  
 The Outermost House  
 I Met a Lady  
 My Several Worlds  
 Earth Magic  
 Autobiography  
 Autobiography  
 Autobiography  
 World & Its People  
 H.M. Tower of London  
 She  
 King Solomon's Mines  
 Allan Quatermain  
 Life & Morals of Jesus of Nazareth -- Assembled by Thomas Jefferson  
 Anatomy of Two Traitors -- Wayne Barker and Rodney Coffman  
 The Ballad & the Source; The Swan in the Evening -- Rosamond Lehman  
 Intelligent Man's Guide to Science (2v 1st ed.) -- Isaac Asimov  
 Assignment in Brittany (A World War II thriller by:) Helen McInnes



- Henry Bersill  
 Florence Lewisohn  
 Sidney Lenz  
 Howard Spring  
 Henry Maule  
 Susan Brand  
 Candida Lund  
 Jane Austen  
 Jane Austen  
 Frank R Stockton  
 Carl Sagan  
 S.L.A. Marshall  
 Ronald Blythe  
 Henry Beston  
 Howard Spring  
 Pearl S. Buck  
 Francis Hitching  
 Mark Twain  
 Bertrand Russell  
 Charles Chaplin  
 Charles F. Horne  
 Col. Carkeet James  
 )  
 ) H. R. Haggard  
 ) (1 volume)

Some comments are in order. I loved the Haggard stories in my early youth, quite as much as "The Three Musketeers"; more than Walter Scott's "Ivanhoe" or "Quentin Durward." .. The three autobiographies are as individual as you could wish and make a playful contrast on this shelf. McPhee is a marvelous craftsman, and this story of a semifinal match in the US Open Tennis Champ. between Arthur Ashe and Clark Graebner is splendidly told, with cleverly intertwined flashbacks giving the biographies of both men. .. Beston's "Outermost House" is one of my collection of fine "nature books" that got brought upstairs so I could read a chapter or two before bed when the mood strikes. .. Howard Spring's two novels are enchanting by their ability to take you into a convincingly real time and place, eg. English countryside in the years before World War I. .. Earth Magic is Hitching's attempt to organize a theory about the placement and meaning of the English megaliths of which Stonehenge is merely best known. Apparently those who erected them tried to align them along certain lines of force called "lay" or "lea" lines; he cites a traditional Devonshire air: "As I was going to Widdecombe Fair, All along, out along, down along lea..." Thomas Jefferson did a cut and paste job on the 4 Gospels in an effort to assemble a coherent biography of Jesus, and the result is pretty good. SWIFT SWORD is a very impressive account of Israeli victory in June 1967.

Ex libris Louis Russell Chauvenet the dilettante, the eclectic reader Exlib!



Tree moon