

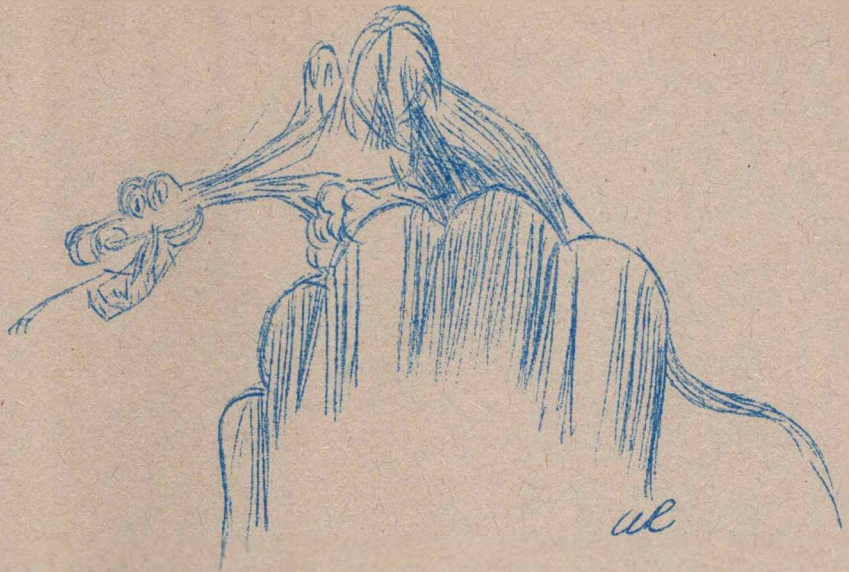
----- the rambling fap 70  
gregg calkins

fapa 152  
august 1975



# WELL,

DIDN'T HE  
RAMBLE... ?



No, he didn't. As a matter of fact, quite the opposite. He sat down to bash out a few pages for FAPA, is what he did, and not even having read the last few mailings they are bound to be pretty hodge-podge. If it hadn't been for the fact that Silverborg needed some publishing done, this issue probably wouldn't exist. Since Bob's 8 pages need to be run off and collated, however, what are three or four more pages?

What, indeed?

First things first, the status is pretty much quo. Charlotte and I are getting along very well, indeed, and have had a fine spring and summer together. About a month ago, I managed to figure out a scheme whereby she was able to buy this house, so now we're no longer renters...although I suppose I am, ho ho ho. We had to do a bit of juggling and closing escrow wasn't the easiest thing in the world, but we made it somehow and it has worked out well. The pool has been truly enjoyable this summer, even if we haven't had much of a summer yet. Funny how a swimming pool puts a different outlook on your concept of temperature. There's nothing I like better, now, than a good stretch of 100-degree weather! The pool isn't heated, you see, and if the weather isn't warm then the pool doesn't get above 70 degrees and while that isn't unbearable it still isn't exactly the greatest. Contra Costa County, for those of you unfamiliar with the Bay Area, always cools off at night, particularly in the early summer. What happens is that the inland valleys of California are tremendously hot and create a vast area of low pressure. The high pressure area of moist cool winds offshore then pours through the Golden Gate and up the Sacramento River causing the famous fog and a vast natural air conditioning plant. Even when the days hit 100 here it is not unusual to need a sweater at night. We'll get our hot weather in late summer and early fall when the inland valleys cool off and the big pressure difference disappears, leaving the cool offshore winds out where they belong. So much for this house, the pool, summer and meteorology.

My house on Las Juntas Way is now sold...as of a few days ago. Escrow there is due to close in mid-September and at that time I should be out of debt and maybe even with a little bit of money in my jeans. Thanks to the tremendous housing market we have here, my equity in that place is sufficient to pay off all of my worldly debts and still leave both Roa and me with some money to go elsewhere. I, of course, am staying here for the nonce, although I may start picking up a GI repossession here and there and building a property stake. If so, since they have to be "owner occupied," I may have to move into each one temporarily but that won't amount to much. Roa and the kids are going into a condominium nearby, I hope, although I haven't been able to determine just exactly what she wants or plans to do...she varies from time to time. (That may be varies, but my conflu is very limited...)



the rambling fap iii

At any rate, things are sorting out around here and hopefully by the end of the year I'll be able to tell the players without a scorecard for the first time in just ages...

The real estate business continues middling to good. My Lafayette office has been open now since February, actually, and I think we'll end the year in the black. It may be touch and go, depending on how things slow down this fall, but I think we'll make it. I'm still short three or four people from what I'd like to have, and I still need one or two more veteran salespersons. I picked up one from my old company, Valley Realty, just a few days ago, so that helps. If I had just two more people who could sell without help from me, we'd be on our way.

The address, by the way, should any of you ever need my services or have a friend moving this way, is: Country Homes, 3450 Golden Gate Way, Lafayette, Calif 94549.

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You ever hear those "tough little engine" Mazda commercials? Don't believe 'em.

After just over 40,000 miles, I've had a complete engine failure. I'm still not in complete accord with what happened, and I doubt if I'll ever quite believe the explanation, but apparently a manifold gasket failed and I lost coolant and my engine overheated to the point where the aluminum shell is warped and the rotors or whatever no longer fit. Damn! I almost traded that car in this spring, too! Then I used my head, for once, and made a rational economic decision and decided to keep it one more year. It seems like whenever I make the right decision something bad happens. Anyhow, I've been without a car for about a month, which in my line of business would be a disaster if it weren't for...ta dum!...Charlotte. We've been sharing her car, believe it or not. She works from 8 to 4:30 and I drop her off and wend my way to work, arriving far earlier than your average real estate trooper, and pick up the working girl on the way home, leaving far sooner than your average real estate trooper. On weekends she prefers to putter around home and pool, so that hasn't been the problem it could be, but of course we've got to have a more satisfying solution than that pretty soon.

The bill is going to be \$800, and now that my house is sold I should have the free cash for the project, so I'll get started on that pretty quickly now. And at the least, it made one future decision easier--now I know I'm going to keep the car for another year. Probably two. After that, the next time it falls apart I'm just going to walk away from the smoking wreckage.

But, you guys out there, heed my warning...Pearl Harbor was just the beginning!

+ + +

My files are so disorganized...books and fanzines are boxed and packed, once again, and I know not where things are or when they will ever see the light of day again. One thing about Las Juntas...that pumphouse out back was the first time I've ever had my entire collection unpacked and on shelves at the same time. Right now I'd like to find "My Fair Femfanne" and see how well it was done fannishly, just for a comparison.

You see, I'm doing "My Fair Agent" for the real estate industry.

My company holds a monthly breakfast meeting, at which time all of the agents from all of the offices get together. The primary purpose is to award the top salesman



the rambling fap iv

type trophies and awards, but there are many secondary purposes, among them good fellowship and a certain amount of entertainment. Last month the people masterminding the breakfast decided to put on a musical breakfast theme and did a number of songs using purely local talent...and some not so talented, but funny. Many of the songs were straight, but one or two were slightly slanted...for instance, I did one about "I'm jist an agent who cain't say no" from Oklahoma...and so on. At any rate, next month's breakfast has been assigned to the Lafayette office for production and I've decided to do "My Fair Agent."

The idea derived from a drunken get-together and has since taken rather concrete shape. In fact, as things would have it, one of the ladies from the Walnut Creek office is participating in a local theater group (Woodminster, in Oakland, which actually is fairly much bigger than "local theater") production of "My Fair Lady" and so the first week after I conceived this idea I found myself watching the play for the first time. Since I hadn't seen the movie, either, and remember Bernard Shaw chiefly for his comment on golf ("a game played with instruments ill-suited to the task") the play was a happy experience for one about to recreate it in real estate form.

Next I obtained the libretto from the library...now overdue, I realize..and set to work. What a ball it has been. I'm almost through the first act, and have taken time out only for the FAPA mailing. I'm doing the entire play, as it turns out, instead of just a short think for the breakfast meeting. The project has generated enough interest and excitement that I've caught the bug. I'm going to do the whole thing, except it for our breakfast meeting--which will be an evening meeting at the lady's house, for this one occasion--and then produce the entire musical for the Board of Realtors some evening this fall or winter as a benefit, probably for the educational fund or scholarship fund.

More, no doubt, of this the next time.

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I really feel guilty neglecting the mailings...there go all of my votes for best MCs in the next egoboo poll, although all is not lost since Redd Boggs says he still gets some and last did mailing comments in 1956. The days just fly by--I can't find time to begin to do all of the things I should do, let alone the things I want to do. I think things will settle down later on this fall, after all of the houses and such are settled, but who knows?

Hard to believe that we are heading rapidly into fall and then winter. Charlotte is already talking about putting together her cabin group for skiing. I'd like to go with her more often this year than I did last year, but still she will go without me quite a bit. I imagine those weekend nights will find me bashing away at the typewriter more often than not. I'd like to ski more this year, though. I went only half a dozen times last year and while I will never be an excellent skier, I still can get down the hills without overt laughter on the part of the spectators and--who knows?--I may even get better. It's also something the kids like, so we can do it as a family. If we get a cabin group for the winter, I may even get a little revenge on Charlotte...I can go up in mid-week and ski when there aren't any lines, leaving her home alone!

Then there's the trip to Hawaii we'd like to take around Xmas...

I may add two pages later, but the next voice you hear will be that of Bob Silverberg, Boy Author.



SNICKERSNEE SCI-FI

Volume One

Autepoc 1975

Number One

HUGO GERNSBACK, EDITOR

Published for the Fantasy Amateur Press Association by Bob Silverberg, Box 13160 Station E, Oakland, California 94661, who is so far out of the whole fan-publishing scene at this late date that he isn't sure if the pliofilm sheet is supposed to go over the stencil or under it, although he thinks it probably goes on top. If he's wrong, that's why you're having so much difficulty reading this, because he did at least remember to disengage the typewriter ribbon. That's pubtalk for this ish, folks.

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So here it is a foggy morning in July of 1975, a nice round 26 years after I entered FAPA, and here I am saving the tattered old membership again, if I'm lucky and Gregg Calkins gets these stencils in time to do the needful.

And what's been happening?

Most recently what's been happening is the Westercon, which took place right here in my own little home town of Oakland just a couple of days ago, and brought such riffraff as Burbee and Perdue and Pelz and who-all else out of hiding. Indeed we had damn near a FAPA quorum on hand, what with Anderson, Benford, Bowers, Breen, Calkins, Carr, Eney, Moffatts, Pelz, Perdue, Porter, Silverberg, Stevens, Tackett, Trimble, Vardeman, and Wood all crammed into the dear old Leamington. (I heard Chalker was on the premises too, but I never saw him.) Amazing how much smaller the Leamington has grown since the 1964 worldcon. It was a weekend for self-indulgences of all sorts, as is perfectly proper at a con, but I was a mite surprised by one of my own indulgences that weekend: I wandered into the huckster room, was smitten by an urge to buy books, and went off on a collecting binge that still hasn't subsided and has involved me in amazingly high finance.

What happened was I decided to treat my 16-year-old self, the poor deprived kid that I carry about in me all the time, to a retroactive treat -- all the hardcover s-f books he faunched for and couldn't afford back in the early 1950's. You know, those Shasta and Prime Press and Gnome titles with the luscious Bok covers and the little notations inside about how the editions were limited to 2500 copies or whatever. Those books were three



bucks or so apiece when they were issued, but three bucks was a lot to a teenager of a quarter of a century ago, and I reigidly limited myself then to buying books that had never appeared in magazine form -- things like Taine's FORBIDDEN GARDEN or Smith's FIRST LENSMAN. Since I was already an avid collector of pulps, which were cheap as soda-pop back then, I already had 'Slaves of Sleep' or 'Wheels of If' in the magazine versions and didn't need to buy them in hard covers, Bok jackets or no! Over the years I did pick up some of the books that I had passed on originally -- and generally I paid only a dollar or two over the price that my boyish self would have laid out. That was how I came to acquire SKULLFACE and HOUSE ON THE BORDERLAND around 1966 at list price -- they were still in print.

In the last couple of years, though, I've noticed that the private press books of the 40's and 50's were moving up in price -- eight bucks, ten, some more than that -- and now they're reaching the twenty-buck plateau, with the rarer Heinleins and Asimovs and such going well beyond that. Library buying is what's doing it -- this university or that socking away the rare first editions. For the first time we're finding out how rare they really are. So in an amazing birst of acquisitiveness I did some socking away of my own this week, everything from GOLDEN APPLES OF THE SUN (the early Doubleday titles are scarce too) to ROBOTS HAVE NO TAILS to FINAL BLACKOUT in one great gaudy burst of conspicuous consumption. I still owe my kid self about fifty more titles, mainly Gnome and Arkham, and if any of you out there have nice dj copies of American s-f titles of the 1947-57 era that you're looking to sell, you would be wise to drop me a note to that effect now. Catch me before the fit passes.

(Collectors who are on the buying end and trying to stash away modern rarities might want to hunt up the Scribner edition of THE BOOK OF SKULLS, by R. Silverberg. In the course of my own book-buying excursions I do of course gossip with the booksellers about current events, and they've all been asking me if I know where copies of that one can be had. The book was not a great success in its hardcover incarnation and was remaindered; for a while there were a lot of copies around, but the supply has now dried up, and except for Sherry Gottlieb of LA's A CHNLGE OF HOB-BIT I don't know anyone who has any. Be warned. The book's been bought for filming and anything can happen.

\* \* \*

I have not only been buying books but writing them, though not at the same frenzied pace. Between October of 1974 and April of



1975 I produced, with much kvetching, a long novel called SHAD-RACH IN THE FURNACE, which will be serialized in Analog early next year and then published in hardback by Bobbs-Merrill. I think it's pretty good. As anyone who has been within earshot of me this year already knows, I am now commencing on a prolonged holiday from science fiction writing, being thoroughly disillusioned about publishers and quite weary of the whole mess. I did not, as they say, go into this business for the purpose of authoring rare first editions, but that's what has seemed to be happening, and screw it. I mean to do a short non-fiction book about sand dunes next fall -- an old left-over contract -- and at present I have no writing plans beyond that. I may do some Hollywood work, especially if a deal now in the very early talking stages turns into anything real, or on the other hand I may just sit back pruning my laurels and catching up on my reading.

What I do more of than anything else, still, is toil in the garden. I roam California's botanic gardens looking for pretty things that will grow in my climate (hi, Don Fitch -- I've been in the LA Arboretum twice this year but didn't see you) and then I scout nurseries until I find them. The succulent garden is pretty well full now, and I went on a eucalyptus binge a few months back, and I know not what will come next, considering that I'll be taking off for Australia and all its botanical temptations in a few weeks. There's not much land left to develop here. (I've been busy lately stripping away large areas planted in ivy and putting in real plants. Ivy is dull stuff that just sits there, sprawling, not even bothering to flower. And eventually invading the rest of the garden. I think I've cleared ten tons of ivy so far this summer and the end is not yet. It's hard work, too, since ivy has tenacious roots, finger-thick, that lace the ground like cables six and eight inches down. But I don't mind hard work all that much, and uprooting ivy is a whole lot simpler than clearing blackberry brambles, which is what I was doing last year at this time. At least ivy doesn't have any thorns. (Yet. I am braced for defensive mutations as my onslaught continues.)

This is the first year since we moved to California that I've done any considerable traveling outside the Golden State. Oh, I went to Toronto for the worldcon in 1973 and to Washington DC last year, but in both cases those were four-day don't-leave-the-hotel trips. Barbara and I toured Baja California in the spring of 1974, but Baja is simply a continuation of California by other means. (We also went to Seattle for a week in 1972, when I was



teaching at the Clarion s-f workshop, and last summer we popped up to Spokeane for the not very interesting Expo 74, but none of this is what I'd call travel in the old Silverberg manner.) California has simply been too fascinating and too close to home; why go through all the hassles of airports and customs and what-not when Big Sur is just three hours away?

But we're coming out of that now. In February of this year I went up to Vancouver to attend the Vcon. I was not in good shape psychologically just then, and it was dumb of me to fly from springtime into winter when I was in that sort of mood, but I did observe that Vancouver is a pretty city and I mean to go back there in sunnier weather and see it properly. In April, Barbara and I went to Denver, again because I was speaking at a gathering; again the weather was bleak and snowy, and I didn't have as jolly a time as I had expected, but it was good to see a new city. (And to meet briefly with the redoubtable Charles Ford Hansen, fabled in song & story.) Between Vancouver and Denver we rented a station wagon and went off to Baja again, this time armed with shovel so we could collect cacti for the back garden. Drove 2800 miles in 8 days without undue strain and dug up all sorts of goodies. I had obtained an American import license -- it is illegal to bring plants into the US without one -- but didn't have a Mexican export license, and I have since learned that it was only by good furtune that we didn't end up incarcerated indefinitely in some calabozo in Tijuana. Apparently it is muy ilegal to rip off cacti or any other Mexican plant; we merrily chugged through the tourist gate in Tijuana with the van loaded to the gunwales with pricklies (all well wrapped and out of sight, but even the most cursory inspection would have turned them up) and subsequently some California nurserymen told me horror stories of friends who had been caught and stashed away on indefinite sentences. Well, I have enough cacti for one garden anyway.

Barbara is now working again -- she is general consultant & troubleshooter for an outfit in Berkely called Autogenic Systems, which makes biofeedback machines for hospitals -- and her travels lately have been truly heroic. Off to New York on company business for five days in May, then down to Anaheim for a biofeedback convention (they also have them, but they sound a lot more sercon, and most of the action is in the huckster room) and then, just this past week, out to Hawaii. Ostensibly she is on a sales tour, though it sounds more like a vacation to me. Oh, and the company also sent her to Peoria for a couple of days in June. (You can't win them all.) She gets back from Hawaii at the end



of this week, but it hardly makes sense for her to unpack, because two weeks later -- gasp, pant -- we go off, this time together, to Australia. Starting up at the northeast corner at Green Island on the Great Barrier Reef and working our way southward into winter and the Melbourne worldcon.

More to come. Assuming she has energy enough for her slated business trips to New York in October and Atlanta in November, we will take off early in 1976 for Yurrop, which we haven't visited since 1970. The pretext for this is the British s-f con, where I'm the guest of honor, but once my conventional duties are performed and I've paused in London to transact a little business we will head for Morocco and wild nights of cous-cous, with maybe a side trip to Tenerife in the Canary Islands, a place of some beauty and of interesting botany. (The Canary Islands have a mild California-like climate, and I'm keenly interested in visiting all such places throughout the world -- Australia, South Africa, Madagascar, the Mediterranean countries, and western South America -- to check out the plants in their native habitats. Most of the ornamentals grown in California, the aloes and bottlebrushes and eucalypti and lavenders and hebes and fuchsias and such, come from places with similar climates elsewhere, while we export a few of our showier native plants to them -- ceanothus, Monterey pine, bay laurel, Monterey cypress, fremontia, etc. A kind of botanical Taff plan that has worked out to everyone's benefit.)

\* \* \*

Do you think I'm wrong to quit science fiction writing? Do you think it shows cowardly caddish behavior to run screaming out of the field? Consider this letter just in from the would-be British publisher of my novel SON OF MAN. He has been in correspondence with his regular printer, who informs him as follows:

Further to our discussions concerning the above publication, I find this letter very difficult to write as the object is to tell you that, very regretfully, we are not able to print this book for you.

In order to put this in context, I would like you to understand that we number several leading Religious Organizations amongst our customers (different denominations) and we print both books and magazines for these.



We also print many jobs for the 'establishment' these would be Universities, Local Authorities and the like. I hope this will help you to understand that for us to produce SON OF M.N. would be very difficult as the publication would not fit in with our normal work, and experience has told us that it could cause us some loss of good will with other accounts.

I hope you do not get the impression that I am offering an opinion on the content of the publication -- as I am certainly not qualified to do so.

I thought I had been through every imaginable kind of publishing snafu in my time, but censorship by the printer was a new one on me. At last report the publisher was looking for someone less timid, but no news. It gives one to despair, anyway. The lesson I learned this past few years is that science fiction is really something produced for kids, and that those of us who want to write or read anything more complex than glorified Captain Future stories are aberrations. Not that this is directly relevant to the above letter, since in Britain printers can be held liable for producing obscene material and so the whole country is riveted to the kind of morality one might expect to find in small Alabama towns. Nevertheless, SON OF M.N. is tame stuff sexwise and I don't think is even blasphemous -- I thought of it as a pretty holy book, in fact -- and I was amused only in the grimmest way by that letter.

\* \* \*

I should put some white space in here. You may consider the material in the lower left-hand corner to be a symbolic Rotsler cartoon. Meanwhile we can continue in the lower right hand corner with an account of my life and hard times. I have also been told this year that a certain book of mine wasn't really s-f because it was 'too much like a novel' -- this not from an idiot printer but from a shrewd editor who knows that s-f is kid stuff and means to keep it that way. I have been cornered at conventions by fans who think Andre Norton's last novel was depressing because it didn't have a happy ending. (I told them go go and read DYING



INSIDE, which of course ends on a note of sweet affirmation.) I have -- oh, hell, why go on? It's been nitwit year and I'm thoroughly sick of the whole deal.

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What else have I done of note since last I filed my annual report with the membership? There's the acupuncture, I guess. Last summer I wrenched my right arm severely in a swimming-pool accident so dumb I don't have the heart to describe it to you, and when after three months I was still having difficulty raising my arm above shoulder level I went off to an orthopedist, who shot me up with cortisone and said I'd feel better soon. I didn't. I did more cortisone a couple of months later and experienced only transient improvement. The orthopedist could suggest nothing more encouraging as the next step than surgery, and so, in my new devil-may-care Californian manner, I opted for acupuncture again.

Went off, at the recommendation of a friend who is one of his patients, to the Reverend Henry Jong of Oakland. Don't know what he's a reverend of. Is a small aged Chinese with an imperfect command of English, who queried me about my complaint, stuck me full of needles, showed me a book of before-and-after color photos demonstrating his ability to cure cancer, broken spines, prolapse of the uterus, and chiggers, and sent me away with instructions to avoid wine, vinegar, and (for a brief time) sex. It all seemed pretty nutty to me, but it had been a fascinating transcultural experience well worth the twenty bucks, lying there on a table in his fourth-floor flat getting punctured for forty-five minutes, and I figured I'd be able to dine out on the event itself for at least six months.

And then I noticed that my arm felt better.

Two treatments with cortisone had accomplished nothing; six months after the accident there had been no, repeat no, sign of healing at all. Two acupuncture visits and I regained about 90% of the use of my arm. You figure it out. The arm is still not entirely whole -- if I raise it violently and suddenly over my head, it'll hurt, and if someone twists it behind my back, as Dena Brown started to do in a playful way at the Westercon last week, it'll hurt plenty; but in normal daily activity (swimming, pruning overhead branches, lifting things, etc.) I feel no discomfort at all. Whereas one day in Jan-



uary, shortly after the second cortisone treatment, I found myself physically unable to lift with my right hand alone a flower-pot being stored on a shelf just over my head. Although there's still that residual pain in the arm under real stress, I haven't gone back for more acupuncture -- I guess I'm afraid he'll hit a lung or something eventually, and the arm's healthy enough so that I'd rather settle for it as is. But I do think that the treatment is effective in muscular complaints. I'm not so sure about prolapses of the uterus, but that's not going to be an immediate problem for me.

It doesn't hurt much, by the way -- acupuncture, I mean. The needle slithers in pretty quickly. (I confess I didn't watch.) Is about as painful as a hypodermic injection, which is to say not very much. What he seems to be aiming for is the nerve, and when he hits it there's a little tingling discharge of energy, followed by a local release from pain. Perhaps what he's hitting is not the nerve but the internal acupuncture node, or some such, but it felt like a nerve.

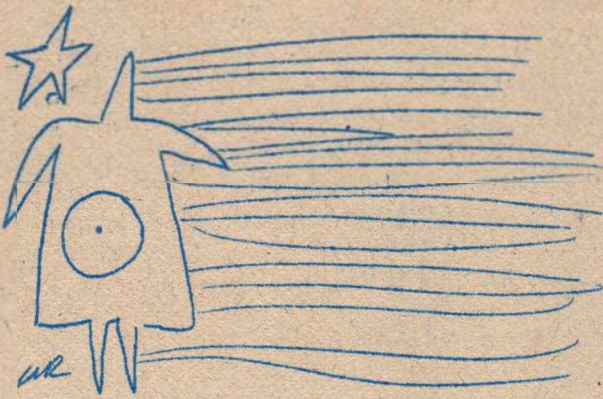
I also had a wisdom tooth pulled under general anesthesia, after having discovered through past unhappy experience that novocaine doesn't have much effect on me. This was a truly phildickian experience; the anesthesia took effect so rapidly that I didn't know I had blacked out, and I remained in the dentist's chair for perhaps fifteen minutes waiting to go under when in fact the tooth had already been extracted and I was being allowed to recover. Eventually I asked the nurse how come the anesthetic hadn't taken effect, whereupon she told me my tooth had been yanked a long time back, and I felt an eerie science-fictiony sensation as of having had twenty minutes or so edited from my timetrack.

In time-honored Silverberg tradition I should bring this to a halt with vague and tantalizing hints of recent opeh-heart surgery or organ transplant -- there I was, strapped to the table, and Dr. Barnard raised his scalpel -- but I think I'll forgo such amusements now and wrap it up on a much less flamboyant note.

The above for the August 1975 FAPA mailing, I hope. Silverberg did it, hastily and without corflu. I do read and appreciate your publications, by the way, and if I fail to do mailing comments it's because I fell a year behind in my FAPA mailings around 1967 and since then have been merrily reading along, one year behind the rest of you. Somehow I can't bring myself to do comments now on mailing 145. But that doesn't mean I'm not striving valiantly to catch up. One of these years....

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## tailgate ramble

I'm sitting here sipping what has become my favorite summer drink, finishing up the last of the stencils before it is time to take this and the FAPA mailing to press. I first drank this drink out of desperation...now I quite like it. I wonder, are there any others out there so de-praved as to drink wine and quinine water?

That's what I said...wine and quinine water. Our vin ordinaire, as often as not, is Red Mountain Burgundy, since that's about as cheap as you can get (Safeway has a brand I drink when I really feel ordinaire) and Charlotte likes to mix it with soda for a wine cooler that is refreshing and not too drunk-making. I've tried, but I really don't like soda. If I'm going to drink a wine cooler, I prefer to buy Sangrria...no, that's not right, I mean Gallo's Spanada. But a couple of weeks ago it was very hot, I couldn't stand the thought of hard booze, even with mix, and I am trying to cut down on beer. That left wine and soda...only, no soda. What to do? Quinine water? Naah, you'd have to be out of your mind. Or desperate.

It isn't bad at all.

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Couple of odds and ends. Our papers have been so full of typographical errors the last few months that one day they even ran a front page editorial apologizing for the large number of errors! As per the usual cop-out, they blamed it on a computer --what the hell did people do for screw-ups before they invented computers? Just take the blame, I guess, and shape up or ship out. If it weren't for the fact that the baseball box scores are often literally indecipherable--Harry, you will have sympathy with me--it would be funny. I only read the morning paper for the baseball scores! That's how serious it is. But the fall-out has produced some amusing errors in the mundane news, and I herewith provide a couple...

"Testimony of seminal fluid in Little case. A pathologist testified yesterday that the body of jailer Clarence Alligood, whom Joan Little says she killed when he entered her cell and tried to rape her, showed signs of sexual activity moments before he died. "It's my opinion that he ejaculated before death," said Gilbert. Gilbert, describing the 11 icepick wounds found on the body, said Alligood died moments after the weapon pierced his lower chest."

Well, goody, goody for him!

"Condom commercials on tv. ... Actually, a press showing yesterday of the two low-key commercials left the impression that even the tiniest tots could take the spots in their stride. In the one shown in San Jose, the color footage depicts a flurry of seagulls and a young man and woman running together on a beach. The contraceptive device is never shown, but an announcer's using Trojan prophylactics."

Well, at least it's the right shape!



the rambling fap xiv

Further, same article. "In the second spot, which was also created for Trojans by Trio Productions of New York, soft music and a pair of hands at work making a piene of furniture..."

Actually, it was more of a dildo.

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Terry Hughes wrote, some time ago: "All across the nation there are fan editors mumbling to themselves about how a certain Walnut Creekian (or is Creeky Walnutian the proper term?) managed to get Charles Burbee to write a regular column for him. What method did you use? Blackmail, eh? Burbee's columns are great and I hope he continues to do them for you. Do you recall the one in which he was discussing how he thought he was the only Burbee in existence? Well, in Washington, DC, there is a store called "The Burbee Chick." Truly! First I thought that it must be a nationwide club of his girl friends. However, I have since learned that it is a chicken restaurant along the lines of Colonel Sanders."

To reply: Please note that I have moved and I am now a Pleasant Hillian, and that solves that problem. I did not blackmail Burbee, although I know enough about him to make the poor man look even older than he is. This may have come up in casual conversation, although I categorically state no letter was ever sent. As for Charles thinking he was the only Burbee in existence, all I can say is that for a great many years there was considerable doubt if he was anything more than a figment of Elmer Perdue's imagination. And you never should have been led so far astray by "The Burbee Chick" as to imagine it was a club of his girl friends. You must remember that Burbee is a member of Southern California fandom, and you know what Laney had to say about them!

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Now that I have Silverberg as a "columnist" I have grown cocky!

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I moant brash.

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Don't argue, you silly savage, kiss me!

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Hard to believe that 5 years as FAPA OE are coming to an end this week. It's been a lot of fun, but there's no getting around the fact that it is also a big chore. It will be nice not to have to worry about changing postal rates, or if this is the mailing the PO Department will decide to bounce all of the bundles back to me after determining that they aren't really 3rd class, after all, or something equally within their powers but not very fair. I'll pass on to the new OE the two rubber stamps I have that were made specially for the FAPA OE...also the stencils for the constitution (still good, since we haven't had any changes for years) and the one with Bill Evans' return address for the FA. Gosh, I'm going to miss all of those things...

I wonder how retirement will feel?