

# Gilbert and Sullivan Clue to Zodiac

By Paul Avery

One year and one day ago, the killer who calls himself Zodiac put a 9-mm. bullet through the brain of San Francisco cab driver Paul Stine and then posted a letter to The Chronicle boasting of the slaying.

Stine, he wrote, was victim number five. He bragged he would continue his killing spree — choosing victims at random — and that he wouldn't get caught.

Zodiac is still at large today.

And he is now claiming he has murdered 13 persons.

Homicide detectives who've been hunting Zodiac for nearly two years frankly admit he is as much an enigma now as he was on Dec. 20, 1968, when he chalked up his first two victims.

## ARIA

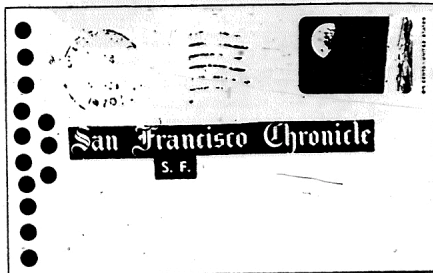
In fact, just about the only thing they feel they know for certain is that Zodiac is a Gilbert and Sullivan buff.

That bizarre conclusion came as a result of two letters Zodiac sent to The Chronicle last July 27. At the request of investigators, the contents have been kept a secret until now.

In the longer of the two letters, Zodiac penned in poetic style a list of types of people he would like to put "underground."

It was immediately apparent that Zodiac had plagiarized several stanzas from an aria in the Gilbert and Sullivan operetta "The Mikado."

It is the entrance aria of



This was Zodiac's latest communication, a postcard mailed to The Chronicle last week

Ko-Ko, the Lord High Executioner.

## MEMORY

Because of numerous misspellings and occasional variations from the original lyrics of W. S. Gilbert, police are positive Zodiac put the words on paper from memory rather than copying them from the libretto.

This has prompted serious speculation that Zodiac — perhaps in the days when he was a student — once performed the role of Ko-Ko.

Here is part of the executioner's aria as remembered with errors, by Zodiac:

"I've got a little list, I've got a little list

"Of society offenders who might well be underground.

"Who would never be missed, who would never be missed."

"There is the pestulental nences who writhe for autographs,

"All people who have flabby hands and irritating laughs ...

"There's the banjo seran-

ader and the others of his race

"All people who eat peppermint and phomphit (blow it) in your face.

"And the Idiot who praises with intusastic tone

"Of centuries but this and every country but his own."

## SEARCH

A quiet search for onetime Ko-Kos has turned up none that could be Zodiac. Obvious differences in physical description and handwriting comparisons have cleared all Ko-Kos tracked down since the arrival of the July 27 letters.

There has never been any shortage of Zodiac suspects.

San Francisco homicide inspectors William Armstrong and David Toschi have, they say, checked out, and cleared, "literally thousands of suspected Zodiacs" named by "wives, mothers, acquaintances, friends, fellow workers, delivery men ...

not to mention police agencies throughout the world." Sheriff's detective sergeant

Kenneth Narlow of Napa county has fruitlessly followed up another 900 tips as to Zodiac's identity since the Sept. 27, 1969, knife slaying of coed Cecilia Ann Shepard at Lake Berryessa.

Hundreds of other leads have been checked out by Solano county authorities because of the murders Zodiac committed near Vallejo. On Dec. 20, 1968, he gunned down teen-agers David Faraday and Betty Lou Jensen and on July 5, 1969, he fatally shot waitress Darleen Ferrin, in each instance at local lovers lanes.

With Stine, these are the five known victims of Zodiac.

Detectives doubt Zodiac's claim he has murdered eight other persons, mostly because he has never identified any victims but the first five.

## WARY

They believe he came so close to getting caught while carrying out the slaying of Stine that he is wary of actually killing again and is content to deluge The Chroni-

cle with correspondence in which he keeps upping his score — on paper only.

The Zodiac investigators concede, however, that there are far more than eight unsolved murders in Northern California and that some of these might indeed be the work of the boastful killer.

They also recall that last November Zodiac said he was going to "change the way" of committing murders he'd followed until then.

"I shall no longer announce to any when I commit my murders, they shall look like routine robberies, killings of anger, & a few fake accidents, etc." Zodiac dime-store stationery.

## TORTURE

In his letters of last July, Zodiac warned that future victims will be tortured before being killed.

Some victims, he said, will be tied over anthills so he can "watch them scream and twitch and squirm."

"Others," he continued,

"shall have pine splinters driven under their nails and then burned. Others shall be placed in caves and fed salt beef until they are gorged.

"Then I shall listen to their please for water and I shall laugh at them."

There is no doubt the July Zodiac letters are authentic. Crime Lab handwriting experts have made comparisons with other known messages from the killer and say the hurried printing and crossed-circle signature are identical.

## CARD

For this reason inspectors Armstrong and Toschi are puzzled by what they believe to be still another piece of correspondence from Zodiac.

Last Wednesday, The Chronicle received a postcard-like note signed "Zodiac." It actually was a plain white, 3-inch by 5-inch file card onto which the author has pasted words cut from an edition of The Chronicle itself. Dated "Mon., Oct. 5, 1970," it read:

"Dear Editor:

"You'll hate me, but I've got to tell you.

"The pace isn't any slower! In fact it's just one big thirteenth.

"Some of Them Fought. It Was Horrible."

It ended with a P.S., pasted onto the card upside down.

"P.S. There are reports city police pig cops are closing in on me. Fk. I'm crackproof. What is the price tag now?"

Thirteen holes were

## The Threat to Death Valley Fish

### Washington

One of the U.S. government's latest worries is what's going to happen to the pupfish out in the Death Valley area.

The Department of the Interior announced yesterday that the U.S. Geological Survey is undertaking a year-long study of the water resources of the Ash Meadows area of the Amargosa basin, along the Nevada-California border.

And none too soon. It seems that the Cuyprinodon, which have managed to survive there since the last Ice Age in water ranging from freezing to over 100 degrees Fahrenheit, are now threatened with extinction.

Cyprinodon are those little pupfish that have been swimming around and reproducing in the salty waters since way back.

Now a special Interior Department task force reports that their existence has become increasingly precarious because of steadily dropping water levels.

"Declines in water level in Devils Hole, a scenic sinkhole in a detached part of Death Valley National Monument, is crucial to pupfish," the announcement says, "because procreation is carried out on a ledge only a few inches below the water surface."

G. W. Worts Jr., district chief of the Geological Survey's Water Resources Division office at Carson City, Nev., suggests one reason may be an increase in pumping for agricultural irrigation.

"Lowering of hydraulic 'head,' possibly in response to the increase in pumping," Worts reported, "may have caused the drop of the pool level in Devils Hole which contains the only known colony of Cyprinodon Diabolis, a remnant of the Pleistocene biosphere of this area."

Pupfish only grow to about two inches, but after all they need SOME water.

Associated Press

punched in the card and a small cross, in which blood was used as ink, was pasted on next to the signature.

The detectives studied the card for two days and for reasons they decline to make public say they feel it "highly probable" it came from

Zodiac.

The post card is now locked in a fireproof steel filing cabinet, four-drawers high, which is jammed full of reports, suspect investigations and evidence relating to the Zodiac case, unsolved after almost two years.