

Classics (Part 3)

More really old and mostly unattributed stuff.

Collected by Walter Driedger, P. Eng., 2001 Nov 12. [walter\(at\)driedger\(dot\)ca](mailto:walter(at)driedger(dot)ca)

This Adobe® file is available for download at <http://www.driedger.ca>.

Planning

There was a young man from Japan
Whose Limericks never would scan.
When told this was so
He said, "Yes I know.
"I always try to get as many words into the last line as I possibly ca

If at First You Don't Succeed

If at first you don't succeed, ask yourself, "Is it plugged in?"

If at first you don't succeed, get a bigger hammer.

If at first you don't succeed, try, try again. If you still don't succeed, STOP and think about it. You are doing something wrong.

When all else fails, use bloody great nails.

Stress

"The three stages of stress are irritation, tolerance and death." (Dr. Hans Selye, the discoverer of stress as a medical phenomenon.)

Examples of this in the automation field:

- 1 – alarm horns are irritating
- 2 – alarm horns are disabled
- 3 – something blows up

- 1 – fuses blow
- 2 – bigger fuses are installed
- 3 – the place burns down

"Stress is the spice of life." (also by Dr. Hans Selye.)

The Deacon's Masterpiece or, The Wonderful "One-Hoss Shay", A Logical Story

by Oliver Wendall Holmes

(1)

Have you heard of the wonderful one-hoss shay,
That was built in such a logical way
It ran a hundred years to a day,
And then, of a sudden, it-ah, but stay,
I'll tell you what happened without delay,
Scaring the parson into fits,
Frightening people out of their wits,
Have you ever heard of that, I say?

Seventeen hundred and fifty-five.
Georgius Secundus was then alive,
Snuffy old drone from the German hive.
That was the year when Lisbon-town
Saw the earth open and gulp her down,

Left without a scalp to its crown.
It was on the terrible Earthquake-day
That the Deacon finished the one-hoss shay.
And Braddock's army was done so brown,
Now in building of chaises, I tell you what,
There is always *somewhere* a weakest spot,-
In hub, tire, felloe, in spring or thill,
In panel, or crossbar, or floor, or sill,
In screw, bolt, thoroughbrace,-lurking still,
Find it somewhere you must and will,-
Above or below, or within or without,-
And that's the reason, beyond a doubt,
That a chaise *breaks down*, but doesn't *wear out*.
But the Deacon swore (as Deacons do,
With an "I dew vum," or an "I tell *yeou*")
He would build one shay to beat the taown
'N' the keounty 'n' all the kentry raoun';
It should be so built that it *couldn't* break daown:
"Fur," said the Deacon, "'t's mighty plain
Thut the weakes' place mus' stan' the strain;
'N' the way t' fix it, uz I maintain,
Is only jest
T' make that place uz strong uz the rest."

(2)

So the Deacon inquired of the village folk
Where he could find the strongest oak,
That couldn't be split nor bent nor broke,-
That was for spokes and floor and sills;
He sent for lancewood to make the thills;
The crossbars were ash, from the straightest trees,
The panels of white-wood, that cuts like cheese,
But lasts like iron for things like these;
The hubs of logs from the "Settler's ellum,"-
Last of its timber,-they couldn't sell 'em,
Never an axe had seen their chips,
And the wedges flew from between their lips,
Their blunt ends frizzled like celery-tips;
Step and prop-iron, bolt and screw,
Spring, tire, axle, and linchpin too,
Steel of the finest, bright and blue;
Thoroughbrace bison-skin, thick and wide;
Boot, top, dasher, from tough old hide
Found in the pit when the tanner died.
That was the way he "put her through."
"There!" said the Deacon, "naow she'll dew!"

Do! I tell you, I rather guess
She was a wonder, and nothing less!
Colts grew horses, beards turned gray,
Deacon and deaconess dropped away,
Children and grandchildren-where were they?
But there stood the stout old one-hoss shay
As fresh as on Lisbon-earthquake-day!

Eighteen hundred;-it came and found
The Deacon's masterpiece strong and sound.
Eighteen hundred increased by ten;-
"Hahnsum kerridge" they called it then.
Eighteen hundred and twenty came;-
Running as usual; much the same.
Thirty and forty at last arrive,
And then come fifty, and fifty-five.

(3)

Little of all we value here
Wakes on the morn of its hundredth year
Without both feeling and looking queer.
In fact, there's nothing that keeps its youth,
So far as I know, but a tree and truth.
(This is a moral that runs at large;
Take it.-You're welcome.-No extra charge.)

First of November,-the Earthquake-day,-
There are traces of age in the one-hoss shay,
A general flavor of mild decay,
But nothing local, as one may say.
There couldn't be,-for the Deacon's art
Had made it so like in every part
That there wasn't a chance for one to start.
For the wheels were just as strong as the thills,
And the floor was just as strong as the sills,

And the panels just as strong as the floor,
And the whipple-tree neither less nor more,
And the back crossbar as strong as the fore,
And spring and axle and hub *encore*.
And yet, *as a whole*, it is past a doubt
In another hour it will be *worn out*!

(4)

First of November, 'Fifty-five!
This morning the parson takes a drive.
Now, small boys, get out of the way!
Here comes the wonderful one-hoss shay,
Drawn by a rat-tailed, ewe-necked bay.
"Huddup!" said the parson.-Off went they.
The parson was working his Sunday's text,-
Had got to *fifthly*, and stopped perplexed .
At what the-Moses-was coming next.
All at once the horse stood still,
Close by the meet'n'-house on the hill.
First a shiver, and then a thrill,
Then something decidedly like a spill,-
And the parson was sitting upon a rock,
At half past nine by the meet'n'-house clock,-
Just the hour of the Earthquake shock!
What do you think the parson found,
When he got up and stared around?
The poor old chaise in a heap or mound,
As if it had been to the mill and ground!
You see, of course, if you're not a dunce,
How it went to pieces all at once,-
All at once, and nothing first,-
Just as bubbles do when they burst.

End of the wonderful one-hoss shay.
Logic is logic. That's all I say.

Progress

If it works, it's obsolete.

If it's in print, it's out of date.

Lunch the HP Way

by Stephen Harrison and Noel Magee, ca. 1978.

I had a 9:00 meeting with my sales rep. I needed to buy an entire new series 70, the works. He said it'd take about an hour. Three hours later, we'd barely got the datacomm hardware down on paper, so he invited me downstairs for lunch.

This was my first experience in an HP cafeteria. Above the service counter was a menu which began...

| | |
|--------|--|
| MMUs | (Main Menu Units) |
| 00010A | Burger. Includes sesame-seed bun. Must order condiments 00110A separately |
| 001 | Deletes seeds. |
| 002 | Expands burger to two patties. |
| 00020A | Double cheeseburger, preconfigured. Includes cheese, bun and condiments. |
| 001 | Add-on bacon. |
| 002 | Delete second patty. |
| 003 | Replaces second patty with extra cheese. |
| 00021A | Burger Upgrade to Double Cheeseburger |
| 001 | From Single Burger. |
| 002 | From Double Burger. |
| 003 | Return credit for bun. |
| 00220A | Burger Bundle. Includes 00010A, 00210A and 00310A |
| 001 | Substitute root beer 00311A for cola 00310A. |

My eyes glazed over. I asked for a burger and a root beer. The waitress looked at me like I was an alien.

"How would you like to order that, sir ?"

"Quickly, if possible. Can't I just order a sandwich and a drink ?"

"No sir. All our service is menu driven. Now what would you like ?" I scanned the menu.

"How big is the 00010 burger ?"

"The patty is rated at eight bites."

"Well, how about the rest of it ?"

"I don't have the specs on that, sir, but I think it's a bit more."
"Eight bites is too small. Give me the Double Burger Upgrade."

My sales rep interrupted. "No, you want the Single Burger option 002 'expands burger to two patties'. The double burger upgrade would give you two burgers.

"But you could get return credit on the extra bun," the waitress chimed in, trying to be helpful, "although it isn't documented."

I looked around to see if anybody was staring at me. There was a couple in line behind us. I recognized one of them, a guy who nearly mowed me down in the parking lot with his cherry-red '62 Vette. He was talking to some woman who was waving her arms around and looking very excited. "What if... we marketed the bacon cheeseburger with the vegetable option and without the burger and cheese ? It'd be a BLT!"

The woman charged off in the direction of the telephone, running steeplechases over tables and chairs. My waitress tried to get my attention again. "Have you decided, sir ?"

"Yeah, give me the double burger - excuse me, I mean the 00020A with the option 001. I want everything on it." She put me down for the Condiment Expansion Kit, which included mayonnaise, mustard and pickles with an option to substitute relish.

"Ketchup." I hated to ask. "I want ketchup on that, too." "That's not a condiment, sir, it's a Tomato Product." My sales rep butted in again. "That's not a supported configuration." "What now ?" I kept my voice steady. "Too juicy. The bun can't handle it." "Look. Forget the ketchup, just put some lettuce and tomatoes on it."

The waitress backed away from the counter. "I'm sorry, sir, but that's not supported either, the bun can take it but the burger won't fit in the box. The sales rep defended himself. "Just not at first release." "It is being beta-tested, sir."

I checked the overhead screen. Fries, number 000210A, option 110. French followed by option 120, English.

"What the hell are English Fries ?" I turned to the sales rep. "Chips they call them. We sell a lot of them."

I gave up. "OK, OK just give me a plain vanilla Burger Bundle." This confused the waitress profoundly. "Sir, Vanilla as an option is configured only for series 00450 Milkshakes." My sales rep chuckles. "No ma'am, he just wants a standard 00220A off the shelf. I wondered how long it had been on the shelf. I didn't ask.

"Very good, sir." The waitress breathed a sigh off belief. "Your meal is now on order. Now how would you like it supported ?" "Support ?" She directed me to the green shaded area at the bottom of the menu, and I began a litany with my Sales Rep that I'll never forget.

"Implementation assistance ?"

"You get a waiter."

"Implementation analysis ?"

You tell him how hungry you are and he tells you what to eat."

"Response Center Support ?"

"He brings it to your table."

"Extended materials ?"

"You get refills."

I stuffed some money at the waitress and told her to take it. She gave me my check on three sheets of green-bar paper. I studied it on my way to the table, and decided it'd pass as an emergency napkin.

Table ? My Sales Rep had been bright enough to order us a table. He hadn't been bright enough to check on a delivery date. The table waiter slouching in his corner surveyed the crowded room, looked at me and said "Two weeks. But I can get you a standalone chair by the window right away."

I handed him the tray. A woman rushed up to me with two small cups of chili and sauerkraut for the hot dog somebody else had ordered. The room began to grow dim, my eyesight faded...

I woke up clutching the water-glass at my bedside table. It was five AM, four hours till my meeting with HP.

I had had a vision; I did what it told me to do. I dialed my office and I called in sick.

On the Value of Vendor Data

Have you ever received a copy of a catalog when asking a vendor for information on the widget he just sold you? It reminds me of the rather interesting young lady I met at a party the other day. Eventually I asked her for her phone number and she told me, "It's in the book." When I asked her for her name she told me, "That's in the book too." All the information is there and yet, somehow, it doesn't seem to do any good.

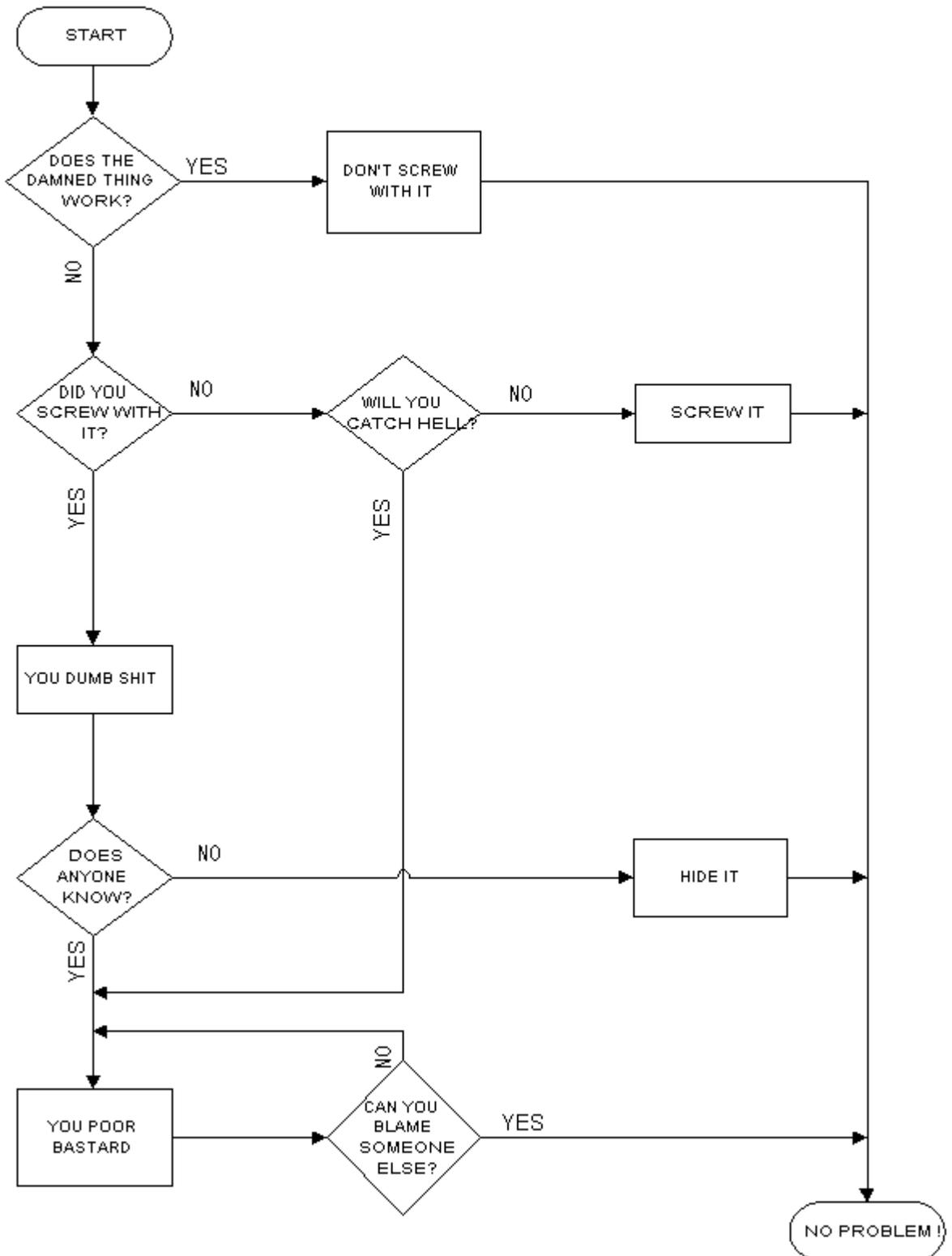
Product Quality Statement:

"We Are Not Happy Until You Are Not Happy"

Product Disclaimer:

"Items Ordered My Or May Not Be Delivered As requested by the customer. Deliveries will be on or after the required date. Pricing is subject to change without notice. As an ISO 9000 registered company we thank you for your patronage."

PROBLEM SOLVING FLOW SHEET



Universal Disclaimer

This product is meant for educational purposes only. Any resemblance to real persons, living or dead is purely coincidental. Void where prohibited. Some assembly required. List each cheque separately by bank number. Batteries not included. Contents may settle during shipment. Use only as directed. No other warranty expressed or implied. Do not use while operating a motor vehicle or heavy equipment. Postage will be paid by addressee. Subject to CAB approval. This is not an offer to sell securities. Apply only to affected area. May be too intense for some viewers. Do not stamp. Use other side for additional listings. For recreational use only. Do not disturb. All models over 18 years of age. If condition persists, consult your physician. No user-serviceable parts inside. Best if eaten before date on carton. Subject to change without notice. Times approximate. Simulated picture. No postage necessary if mailed in Canada. Breaking seal constitutes acceptance of agreement. For off-road use only. As seen on TV. One size fits all. Many suitcases look alike. Contains a substantial amount of non-tobacco ingredients. Colors may, in time, fade. We have sent the forms which seem to be right for you. Slippery when wet. For office use only. Not affiliated with the Canadian Red Cross. Drop in any mailbox. Edited for television. Keep cool; process promptly. Post office will not deliver without postage. List was current at time of printing. Return to sender, no forwarding order on file, unable to forward. Not responsible for direct, indirect, incidental or consequential damages resulting from any defect, error or failure to perform. At participating locations only. Not the Beatles. Penalty for private use. See label for sequence. Substantial penalty for early withdrawal. Do not write below this line. Watch for falling rock. Lost ticket pays maximum rate. Your cancelled cheque is your receipt. Add toner. Place stamp here. Avoid contact with skin. Sanitized for your protection. Be sure each item is properly endorsed. Sign here without admitting guilt. Slightly higher west of the Mississippi. Employees and their families are not eligible. Beware of dog. Contestants have been briefed on some questions before the show. Limited time offer, call now to insure prompt delivery. You must be present to win. No passes accepted for this engagement. No purchase necessary. Processed at location stamped in code at top of carton. Shading within a garment may occur. Use only in well-ventilated area. Keep away from fire or flame. Replace with same type. Approved for veterans. Booths for two or more. Check here if tax deductible. Some equipment shown is optional. Price does not include taxes. American money accepted at par. Not recommended for children. Pre-recorded for this time zone. Reproduction strictly prohibited. No solicitors. No alcohol, dogs, or horses. No anchovies unless otherwise specified. Restaurant package, not for resale. List at least two alternate dates. First pull up, then pull down. Call toll free before digging. Driver does not carry cash. Some of the trademarks mentioned in this product appear for identification purposes only. Record additional transactions on back of previous stub. This supersedes all previous notices. Some types of changes may be lost. Warrantee void if opened.

This page, and all contents, are copyleft 1996 by Liquid Bass, Inc.

<http://dial.uwaterloo.ca/~ccmclare/disclaimer.html>

some additions made subsequently.

Walter Driedger, P. Eng. 02 Feb 24

ACHTUNG! Alles Lookenspeepers.

Das Komputenmaschine is nicht für gefingerpoken und mittengrabben. Ist easy schnappen das Springenwerk, blowenfusen mit Spitzensparken. Ist nicht für gewerken by die Dummkopfen. Die rubberknecken Sightseern keepen das cotton-picken Hans in die Pockets, relaxen und watchen das Blinkenlights.

By order: das Management.