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Winter 1942

At the time this is being written, the writer's address is;

Corporal Lynn Bridges
873rd Chemical Co.
Herbert Smart Airport
Macon, Georgia

Just what that address will be by the time this mailing appears is a deep mystery.

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I'm taking advantage of an all too short furlough to write this, and have hopes of this issue of INSP making the mailing, something which the last issue failed to do. Oh yes, there was a #3 INSPIRATION, only nobody except myself ever saw it. That should make it quite a collectors item, since even I don't know where the one and only copy of it is. I had about a page and a half written, when the army decided that I'd spent enough time in one place. Then, for a period of about two months I never had the same address for over a week, and just didn't bother trying to keep up with fandom.

Now I've had the same location for a month, so maybe I can get back into fandom once more.

Needless to say, I'm composing directly onto the stencil, a process which seems to work as well as any other. One serious handicap, tho, is the lack of any correction fluid, an item which I usually use in copious quantities. Of course I can still correct those one letter errors by pressing the stencil fibers together, but what can I do about those full line mistakes which are certain to come along before I finish these few pages?

Color of the Color

As it has in so many places, the war has cut quite a hole into Detroit fandom. Rudy Sayn, one of fandoms best artists, is in the army. Dick Kuhn is probably even busier than Rudy and myself. He's going to medical college, working in his spare time, and taking a certain amount of military training as a member of the Enlisted Reserve Corps. That undoubtedly means that ECLIPSE is suspended for the duration. I only hope Dick can still find time to mimeo this FAPA mag for Don and myself.

This issue seems to be pretty well set. I'm going to take care of this half of the mag while I'm home, and Dick assured me that he'll be able to do DBT's part of it. But how future INSPs are going to be mimeod is a question I can't answer.

A lot of discussion is going on asto just what to do with those of us who are in the armed forces, so far as keeping up with activity is concerned. I like, generally, Speer's proposal in the Fantasy Amateur to suspend the keeping up with requirements for the duration. I'd prefer to have it changed, tho, to suspending requirements only for those on overseas duty.

We who are still on this side of the oceans can, without too much trouble, continue to be active in FAPA. That is, we can do it with already promised use of pages in fanzines of the few civilian members who are left. At times we might be so busy as to cause us to miss an issue, but that frequently happens to those who aren't in uniform, and it shouldn't be too much trouble to write something often enough to keep up membership requirements. Of course, that opinion is subject to immediate change should it develop that there aren't enough fans left outside of the service to take care of printing mags for the rest of us. But in such an event; FAPA itself may as well fold up for the duration.

So forms financial requirements are concerned, my present army pay is at least equivalent to the three times that amount which I made as a civilian. There is no good reason why a fan in the service shouldn't pay for stencils, paper, and cost of mimeographing of any fanzine he has done.

In my own case, and I imagine in a lot of others, I can easily get the use of an army typewriter and thus cut my own stencils. I'd like to discover how many FAPA members who own mimeographs are willing to take the job of printing a FAPAzine for some member in the armed forces provided the stencils were already cut, and how many of these would also be willing to take the job of cutting the stencils. Allthis, of course, with the understanding that full payment would be made for paper or any other cost involved.

With enough volunteers, there is no reason in the world why fandom can't continue, for a while at least, keep FAPA going as well as ever! Without such, support, as more and more fans go into uniform, FAPA may as well give up for the duration.

So -- how many of you are willing to give a few hours of time, but not expense, once every three months, to help some fan in uniform?

I sometimes wish that I were more musically inclined, then maybe I could understand what the MUCLEUS is about. Not that I don't like music, because I do have a certain fondness for certain types. I even like Gilbert and Sullivan, although my only contact with it has been seeing "The Mikado" (movie version) a couple of times, and hearing Nelson Eddy recite a few lines now and then. I know just enough about it to wonder how this same Sullivan could have written "The Lost Chord."

But I still enjoy NUCLEUS, especially those verses. They flow along surprisingly smoothly, and I doubt if Gilbert bimself could have done better.

I like arguments, so I'm going to get into this one about whether or not NOVA is worth the amount of dough that's sunk into it. Ashley's right — it is nobody's business but his how much money he sinks into his hobby — but I'm still going to do some arguing.

The reason for spending that amount of money is to get a better fanzine, right? Otherwise it would be just as well to use dimestore equipment. So far

as appearance goes, NOVA is just about the best thing that has been presented so far in fandom. But appearance isn't everything. NOVA's material is also good, and there is little to find fault with there. My own complaint with NOVA has to do with it's haphazard appearance and distribution.

This isn't completely the editors fault. Like everyone also these days, they are quite busy people indeed. But still I can't help wondering what NOVA were like if its resources could be combined with the time and ability of some of the other famzine editors. That, I suspect, is what a let of others are wondering and what is really in back of these comments against NOVA.

My travels in the army haven't so far led to a meeting with another fan, but I've come close. Not long ago, for instance, I arrived one night at a certain Air Base deep in the wilds of Georgia. The next day, before I had a chance to meet him, Lt. Donn Brazier was sent from that same Air Base to a new station in Mississippi. I doubt if I come any closer to meeting another fan than that for a while.

Since it happened long enough ago so that it's ne longer a military secret, another tale of a near few mosting can be disclosed. Most of my company was sent, several menths ago, to that horbed of Southern Fandom, Columbia, South Carolina. As luck would have it, I was among the handful who stayed behind.

But I haven't given up hope yet. Who knows, when we march into the model streets of Tokyo I may find another fan, and there among the ruins of the palace of ex-emperor Hir hito we can discuss fondom to our hearts content.

Yegodsnowthey verothedoings one of this necursed 2. Cinter-lineations turi (* 1/2)

I, who used to be one of that small group who read all the pros, must now make a heartrending confession. I rarely read any of the pros -- except of course ASTOUNDING, and strangely UNKNOWN. I, who used to abhor fantasy, now make a fantasy mag one of the two pros I still read.

And, since copies of pros are now discarded as soon as they are read, and therefore are in no position to be referred to, for the first time a Bridges fanzine appears without even one comment on any particular story!

I haven't lost interest, it's just due to a lack of time. Before I finish one ASTOUNDING, another one is on the stands. So there's no need to buy other mags since I don't get a chance to read them anyhow. Occasionally, I do buy one of the other prozines, but I haven't yet gotten a chance to read one of them.

The Compbell editorial of a month or so ago concerning the possibilities of jet power for cirplanes is semewhat out of date. According to an article in one of the popular aviation monthlies, the Italians, of all people, have achieved an cirplane capable of taking off and flying on jet propulsion alone: Flying on jet propulsion is nothing new, the Italians have done it before. The incredible part is being able to take off without the mid of a propellor or similar device.

At low speeds jet propulsion (taking in air, heating it, and then expelling it to furnish power) is admittedly inferior to an ordinary motor in effic-

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INSPIRATION

ioncy. Therefore a plane with power enough for a jet takeoff should be able to top anything now in the air so far as speed is concerned! Details of the Italian flight are, of course, unknown. But it could have happened.

Almost all modern warplanes use the jet propulsion principle to a certain extent, as the best method of setting rid of air used for cooling the engine. Only incidental is the fact that the expelled air adds materially to the speed of the plane. Where all this leads to in connection to science fiction is the knowledge that jet propulsion is very closely related to rocket power itself. When jet power is so seriously discussed, and used, it's quite certain that rocket power itself isn't so far away.

It's common knowledge that our navy department, and probably all other navy departments on this globe, are experimenting with actual rocket power, as distinguished from the hot air jet, to give added impotus to take-off flights from the decks of aircraft carriors where space is invariably at a promium.

In case cayone is wondering just what the difference between nocket and jet propulsion is — rocket propulsion is obtained by expelling the fuel itself and using the thrust to move the vehicle forward; jet propulsion uses air which is picked up in flight, heated, and then expelled to provide the thrust. Jet power, therefore, requires air and can be used only in an atmosphere—while rocket power is under no such handicap and is most efficient in a complete vacuum.

In an atmosphere the hot dir jet is more efficient, as the plane's fuel is used only for hoat, the mass required being furnished by the atmosphere itself. When, as they are certain, rocket spaceships do appear I suspect that they'll travel in the most economical manner, using rocket power between worlds and jet propulsion in an atmosphere. For sheer jet power efficiency, I wonder just how such nower could be obtained in the hydro-carbon atmosphere of one of the outer planets. A tank of liquid oxygen, a battery to furnish the needed electric spark, and the planet's air should combine to produce quite an effective power plant!

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About a month go a letter from one of the leading fans contained the statement, as nearly as I can remember it, that "fandom is breaking up, far more than anyone seems to realize." Whether I'm supposed to be saddened by that knowledge or not I don't knew, but if the truth must be known, I'm not. Of course, I don't went it to go too far, but I can't see where things would be harmed greatly should quite a few of the "casual" fans lose interest and give up activity. Frankly, I think fandom is topheavy with those who aren't really interested, or whose interested has changed from an active interest in science-fiction and fantasy to a more interest in fandom without regard as to what that fandom means or how it started. Tou all know the type — the ones who openly boast that they no longer bother with the pro mags, or with my type of science or fantasy literature.

Fandom is overloaded with these non-readers, or as one of them once put it "fans of fandom", and it is these who will be first to leave fandom in any sort of "breaking up." I fail to see where their loss will have any serious, or for that matter, anything but a strengthening offect on fandom.

As for the "real" fans, the ones who are vitally interested and who do most of the work required to keep fandom going, there is little likelihood of their losing interest, war or no war.

Most interesting item in the last mailing was YHOS and the first letter or article or whatever it was in that fanzine. It tops everything else I've over seen in FAPA so far as offering possibilities for discussion is concerned. I suspect that it will lead to a long and bloody controversy, and one in which I may as well join.

There are quite a few parts of the article with which I must agree. But, idealist that I am, I must take exception to that main statement that "war is valuable in this immature state of our civilization." It's always seemed to me that something else could just as well be substituted for war. Our own country's favorite pastime of figuring out means of saving time, doing things just a little faster and better, offers a partial solution.

Trouble is, without war there just doesn't seem to be the incentive for progress that there is during times of stress. War doesseem to be valuable in fostering invention, but I feel that some other incentive could be substituted for armed conflict. There is no doubt but that war and mechanical progress go hand in hand to a certain extent. During peace—time for example, air lines for the most part are more interested in profits than in advancement. Advancement, too, is more apt to take the lines of comfort and dependability. During war, all that is changed. The army and navy want performance and they want it now — and they get it.

But there is no reason in the world why such progress couldn't just as well take place during time of peace. Instead of the necessity of war, incentive could be furnished by the profit motive — which remains one of the best motives in the world for accomplishing things, communists and other radicals to the contrary. We have something approaching that system already, and all that's needed is an expansion of it. Athletes will strive to win for several reasons — for the thrill of accomplishment, for the applause of the audience, to prove themselves superior to the opposition, whether it be an individual or a team. Inventors and technicians, if their work was brought into the limelight, could do things for much the same reasons.

Why this system hasn't worked any too well, so far, is I suppose because man is still essentially schething pretty close to the wildenimal. Physical accomplishments still rate highly, other accomplishments do not. The crew of an airplane, even during peacetime, which sets a new record or flies to a new place makes the headlines; the designers and builders of the plane do not.

I think that the human race has developed for enough now for such a system of race survival and improvement to work. If I'm wrong, then the writer of the YHOS article is right and war is necessary to keep only the strong and survival type cultures of humanity alive and flourishing. If I'm right, wars aren't necessary, and the strongest and most capable cultures will stay on top because of superior rate of advancement.

Speer (at least I think it was Speer) once asked how I figured that I got.

6½ lines to an inch, when everyone knows that all typewriters have the same
line spacing whether they're pica or elite type. It's done by an involved
process of reasoning requiring the use of a ruler. Some elite typers do have
the standard 6 lines to an inch, but mine happens to have 6½. And, I'm quite
certain, I have seen typewriters with 6½ lines to each inch.

Better check your typewriters, fans, you may be doing more writing than you think!

When I started this I'd intended 5 pages to be the limit, but there's still some time left before I take these stencils over to Dick's to be mimeographed, so maybe I can write an extra couple of pages. Of course, there is the problem of finding a subject to write about, but sometimes I can get by with no subject whatsoever.

Away back on page 2 of this issue a few remarks were made on what should be the status of those of us in the armed forces, in the USA, in regards to FAPA membership. Nothing was said about what should be done with those outside of the country, so now I'll attempt to clear up that problem.

A certain hard-hearted section of my nature impels me to remark that fens who can't keep up with requirements, no matter what the circumstances, should be dropped from the membership lists. That, it seems, is the only possible way in which FAPA can be kept as active as ever after a lot of us leave for overseas duty. But such a solution, I'm pretty sure, wouldn't meet with the approval of the majority.

How's thisfor a substitute plan? At present there is a waiting list for membership. That list is short, true, but there are probably quite a few fans who would be interested if they thought openings were available. Why not, then, increase the FAPA membership list to 75? Practically all fapazines are now mimeographed and 75 copies would be no harder to make than 50, and half the current membership could be absent and FAPA would be as large as ever!

Then when the current unpleasantness is over we'll have a bigger and better FAPA than ever. 75 members now isn't too great a number. There are at least that many active fans scattered around, and with generally better means of duplication the old problem of obtaining enough legible copies is no longer a problem.

So here's a vote for an increased membership list as the only way of insuring a strong and vigorous FAPA during the emergency, and as a means of providing for an even better organization after the emergency is over.

It's been several minutes since the last line was written, and in the intervening time I've been looking blankly at the keyboard of the Royal in hopes of discovering something further to write about, and wishing I hadn't undertaken the task of writing two more pages. One insidious idea has occurred --I could review the last mailing. But, a long time ago, I vowed that reviewing mailings was something which I'd never do, so I gotta think up some other ways of filling up space.

Just think, with my old pica typer I'd probably be finished by now.

Musical Note: As this is being written (October 31) Berlin's "I'm dreaming of a White Christnes" is already a favorite among northern soldiers stationed in the sometimes sunny southland for the winter.

(I know this has nothing to do with fantasy, or science-fiction, or fandom, but it does mean that at last I have this page filled up!

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The other day Dick turned over to me a copy of the program book of the Second Midwest Conference, autographed for me by a number of those present, to whom I give thanks. Judging from the autograph page, quite a select and interesting mob was there, and I'd have liked to have been with them. But alas, I got home a month toollate for that to happen.

I note with a touch of sadness that mine wasn't the name among those present last year that was absent this time. Millard's name isn't there, nor are Reinsberg or Korshak to mention only a few.

But there were quite a few new names and I'd have liked to have met their owners. Some of them really travelled quite a ways to get there, making the Conference an even longer ranged affair than it was last year.

Anyhow, thanks to all of those who autographed that program for me, and I hope to get the chance to meet some of those I've never seen -- Phil Bronson, Sam Russell, Oliver Saari, Harry Schmarje, to mention only a few.

Only a little over half a page to go now, and then we can take these stencils to Kuhn for printing. After this page is finished I shall, no doubt, remember quite a few things which I'd intended to say but didn't. It always turns out that way, and I've never gotten into the habit of jotting things down as I think of them and then assembling everything when I get ready to do these few pages.

Banging out a few pages in this manner certainly doesn't help so far as accuracy is concerned. Glancing back over the stuff already cut I've spotted quite a number of glaring boners in the way of spelling and grammatical errors. I really know better, but until the day when I take more time to do these things, errors are bound to occur. But I think the meaning of most of the things I've said is clear enough, and if it isn't I can only say that I'm doing this mainly for my own pleasure, and if you don't like it there's really nothing you can do about it.

I sometimes wonder just what Tucker has against me. Here I've been a Corporal for the last 5 months and whether it's in Fanzine Services or in LeZ, Tucker always lists me as a rivate. It's discouraging. I think I know the reason. Tucker can't spell Corporal!

This just about finishes another INSPIRATION. Why that title was ever chosen is still a mystery to me, as it's certain that the title has little to do with the contents. At least this is the biggest, if not the best, issue of INSF to appear in its brief career.

Whether there will be another issue for some time to come is, as always, doubtful. But I have hopes of making the next mailing at least. Incidentally if anyone would care to correspond with me, something I've been doing little of lately, I'll do my best to answer all letters. I'm in a better position for writing now than at any time since I've been in uniform. Although my time is at somewhat of a premium I have the use of a typewriter and can usually manage to write a word or two in reply to anything I get.