1220

A REPORT CONCERNING THE PREVALENCE OF THE ONE-SHOT SYNDROME AMONG THE FEN OF THE UPPER MERSEY AND THE TRENT DELTA

"So-oooo", you are now saying, ".....so this is what a one-shot looks like!" Admit it, when did you last see a one-shot? A current one-shot, not something you found in a pile of 1950's fanzines? Damn long time we'd bet. Hence the founding of "The Royal & Antedeluvian Order For The Preservation Of One-Shots".

Arthur Boak was wr ng. The circles in which he moves, if in fact he moves in circles, may merely talk about producing one-shots, but this little lot are sufficiently unbalanced to actually produce. Truth to tell, the raison d'etre for this is simply to do Gray down.

"All one-shots are crud", we can hear you saying. So what? Much of the stuff that's floating around masquerading as fanzines today is crud, and at least the one-shot has the virtue of being spontaneous crud.

Anyway, we feel that such spontaneous crud is an integral part of the fannish scene and what is more, a part of that scene which is in immenent danger of vanishing forever into the mists of serconism and pseudo-sophistication. Besides, we've bugger all else to do. Loooo-ooooong Sunday afternoons after two drunken orgies are rather difficult to use up in some acceptable fannish manner. Flat 185 currently looks like the debris left over from some embalmers convention.

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NATURAL BREAK 1

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Brian Robinson, a fan of low repute,
could do many strange things with a flute,
but the performance that brings him
this ill-gotten fame
is his obscene rendering of
"The Patriot Game".

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Robinson's flute playing actually moves people to tears with it's ethereal beauty. It usually reduces Skelton to a mere shadow of his former self, an occurence that frustrates Cas more than somewhat. As I type this, Mike 'Vroom-vroom' Meara is improvising to "Puff The Magic Dragon" on the guitar.

And damn well too, I might add. However, all this is beside the point, which is:- Why do people have this strange unnatural urge to produce one-shots? Surely it cannot be to commemorate the quality of Robinson's flute playing, good though it may be. No, my friends, the reason is far nearer to the core of human essentiality than that. (Pass me the cider ,Skel.....thanks). Now, what was I saying? Ah, yes, the true reason is simple, which could be the reason why none of us have succeeded in deducing it yet. It is quite simply that each and every fan sees the river of time's passing, flowing endlessly by at his feet like

the booze at a fan-gathering. He feels in the deepest depths of his drink -sodden soul that something must be done to capture the experience before it slips through the sieve of memory, and who else but he is in the ideal position (number 73, I believe) to do this thing of which I speak (whatever it is, because this sentence is getting so long that I've forgotten what it was) than the fan-ed, with publishing facilities at his feet, as it were.

So, we have established that this is something which is definitely not going to slip away. But why a one-shot? Why not 38 pages (that had you worried for a moment, I'll bet) of shit incorporated in a regular zine? Well, If you've seen the result of Gerald Bishop's visit to Stockport, or rather that part chronicled in HELL 5, that is a bloody daft question. Nobody, but NOBODY, makes that mistake twice.....and nobody who sees it will even make it once.

So then, Mike and Pat de-bussed in Mersey Square on Friday evening, and stood like a pair of idiots waiting for the appearance of those who were supposed to be meeting them. Paul and I would have been there early, but we had to wait for Cas to get ready, and then mooch downhill at her speed, instead of our usual breakneck pace. Shepherding them back towards the flat I foolishly offered to carry Mike's case, and he accepted with a sigh of relief, knowing full well the burden he was about to unload.

(Well, the booze we'd brought was so potent, it had to be stored in lead bottles, folks). Having eventually arrived at ye flat, we adnorxicated our flimpogulators and prepared ourselves for another bout of boozing, natter, boozing, sex, natter, boozing, eating, sex, boozing etc. etc. which would be far too boring to relate here, so I'll change the subject.

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NATURAL BREAK // 2

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> RAT - O - KILL (Hamelin) Ltd. today went into voluntary liquidation. A spokesman for the company told shareholders that competition in the [illegible] of pest control had recently become exceptionally fierce and that many of the larger organisations could no longer compete with the small, one-man business.

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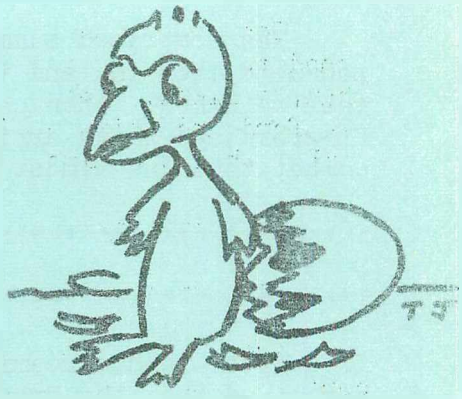
Well, the drunken festivities were not supposed to take place until the morrow, but have you ever known fen to sit around in a house full of booze? Of course not, so they went out for a drink in the Tiviot, there to meet Pete er, whatsisname. Owing to the lateness of the hour our happy band of heroes were unable to get properly stoned, and so proceeded back to Skel's pad to perform a simple fannish remedy.

.....calling in at the chippie on the way. Suitable esconsed in 185 we munched, and drank, and munched.....and the booze flowed copiously. Despite the record player blaring Judy Collins out for the entire world to hear. Skel collapsed on the air bed and lapsed into a state of unconsciousness rare even for him. Pat did likewise on 'tother bed, and stayed a-slumbering despite having Mike's bulk sprawled all over her. Cas had long ago given up in disgust waiting for Skel, and moved bedwards, leaving Robinson wide awake.



This worthy eventually succumbed to sleep on the floor, which was naturally enough bloody uncomfortable. At some time during the night Skel sloped off to keep Cas company, turning the record player off as he went. The thought that he might wake B-Ro and tell him that the bed was unoccupied never occurred to him. Surprise of the morning was that Pat had managed to slip from beneath Mike and end up on the sofa. What Mike thought of this desertion is not recorded.

Yes it bloody well is, or will be now at any rate:- Pat, though lumpy in some rather strange places, is at least more comfortable to lie on than a half-inflated airbed, which I found admirably demonstrated Newton's umpteenth law of motion, viz., that if the sleeper wriggles one way, the bed wriggles equally and oppositely, thus depositing said sleeper on the floor unless he is very careful.

Awakening the next morning at the positively pukeworthy hour of 8.30 a.m., we decided on the course of action for the day, to whit, a lightning tour of Stockport's recorded music emporia.

I must point out that I (I being Cas) did most of the hard work of carrying the worthy Meara's case, as I trogged up the dreaded Lancashire Hill with it, so don't think that B-Ro is a gentleman. After an excuse for a breakfast we all trotted down to the murky depths of Stockport, Paul, Brian and Mike to look round the record shops whilst Pat and I went for a cup of and a natter. We met an hour or so later and dared each other to enter a most exclusive furniture shop. Beautiful stuff it was but OH SO EXPENSIVE, it's an awful experience having a salesman come upt to you and ask if he can be of any help, when you know you've not a cat in HELL'S chance of ever being able to afford it. BOO HOO.

Then back for lunch. Lunch comprised of hot-dogs. The hot-dogs comprised of too many onions and a hot-dog sausage contained within (and without, and all over the floor) a too small bread roll. Each one looked like a do-it-yourself hot-dog. These were all bolted down (to stop them wriggling) and off we sped to the big city for to buy some records again. The women tagged along again to investigate all the dress shops from which Cas was able to work out that the gear for her wedding would cost about fifty quid or so. Skel says "What wedding?"

Tea comprised summat or other, during which meal Cas' parents just happened to drop in, and their "we're not stopping" lasted.....well, longer than we liked. Then came the fun activity - clearing the place up before Presford and Anita arrived, clearing the furniture out of the way for the combat that was almost certain too ensue.

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yet another natural break

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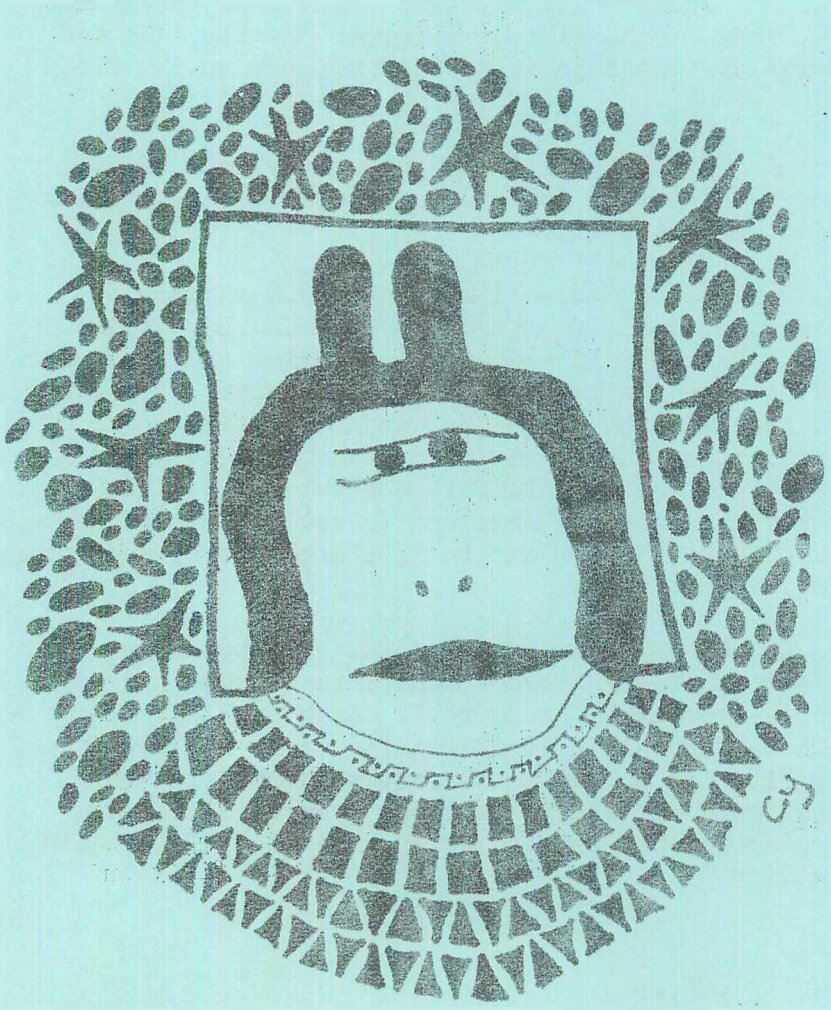
After much screaming and swearing down the flat's intercom, it was ascertained that the Presfords were without and would like nothing better than to be in a somewhat different situation, i.e. within. We were pleased to note that each of them entered bearing a bottle, though subsequent events gave rise to the suspicion that something a little cheaper than alcohol was contained therein.

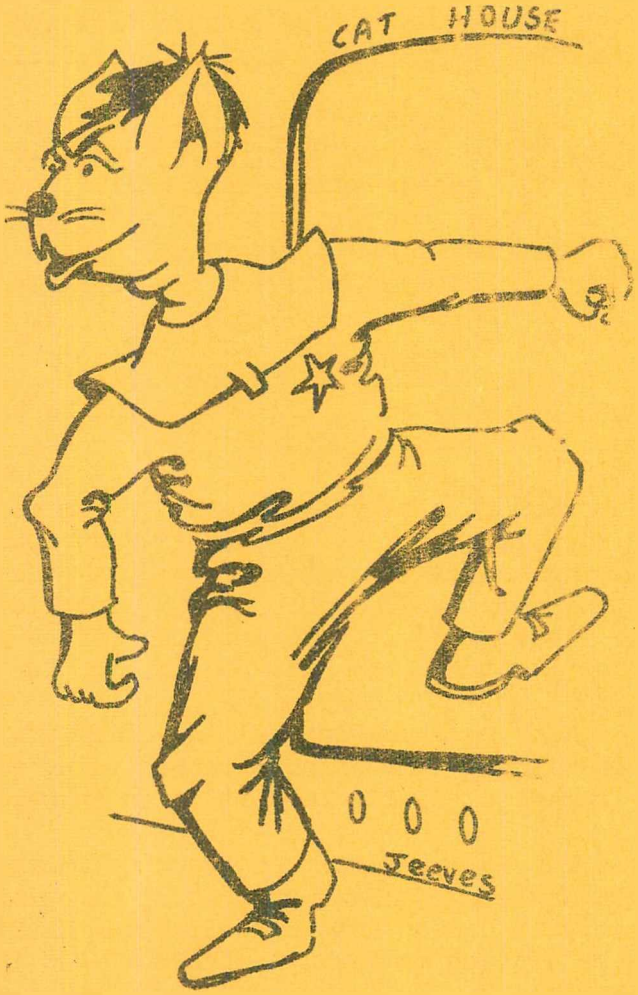
Events then took their usual course, viz. everybody got pissed out of their minds in as short a time as possible. The aforementioned subsequent events consisted of Presford experiencing an intense urge to try on Cas's long, dark, wig, which he did, and believe me he looked REVOLTING - something like a cross between Rasputin and Shirley Bassey. The resemblance to the latter was further enhanced when Pete put on one of Cas's long evening dresses - luckily for Cas, she wasn't wearing it at the time. Unfortunatley for the last remnants of fandom's sanity, vast quantities of photos were taken by fandom's ace snappers Brian and Mike, and will be revealed to the world in the form of photopages. YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED!!!!!!!!!!!



But this had to end sometime, and did, when the

would-be David Bailey's ran out of film. They'd only used up seven rolls a total of summat like 150 shots. Presford, for reasons known only to himself, proceeded to pick Cas up and whirl her round a la all-in wrestler. Robinson tried to emulate this feat with Anita, but the debilitating effects of the alcohol proved too much for him. Presford may have thought that the sight of Robinson and Anita in a tangled heap on the floor looked a little odd, but we hasten to assure him that it was just one of those things.

Some creep suggested that we listen to a Blaster Bates L.P., filthy words and all, which we duly did. Mike wasn't really in the position to appreciate the track about the photographer - never having travelled "forty miles there, forty miles back, shit himself and left his lens cap on". Poor lad!



Another day crawled wretchedly over the horizon and commenced with a rather staggered breakfast, everybody wandering into the kitchen to burn their own toast. This was an eminently satisfactory solution to the problem of making small talk, as nobody seemed to stand still long enough to be talked at. It was sometime on the Sunday that Skel and Brian revealed their plot to take Pickersgill for a ride. Having heard that FOULER 7 was completed on stencil, and had been for ages, these two had hatched a plot with almost animal cunning. A letter was to be sent to Greg offering to run FOULER 7 off for him, in the interests of fandom in general, as long as Greg sent up the stencils and paid for the paper. The two arch-fiends would then run off two copies for themselves and send the soggy stencils back to Pickersgill. After some censure from the Mearas the print run was raised to 5 and the operation went ahead. By the time you read this one of two things has occured. Either,

(a) There are five copies of FOULER 7 in existence.

OR,

(b) Greg wouldn't send the stencils for some reason.

In order to find out which, see HELL 6 or LURK 3, and turn to the zine reviews.

Brian, feeling remorseful about his despicable failure to write a LoC on LURK 1, decided to make up for it by writing one for LURK 2 on the spot as it were. This he proceeded to do. but gave up after filling two sides in record time.

It was about here that all this talk of putting out a one-shot reared its ugly head. Having spent a considerable amount of time bemoaning the lack of enthusiasm of fans for putting out one-shots, we then spent a similar period trying to work up enough energy to begin. First of all we had to have a title; having rejected various obscene and other suggestions, we hit on the idea of everybody writing a letter of the alphabet on a piece of paper, and compiling a title from the results. We came up with the letters F W U B E.....

Having abandoned that idea after a few desultory attempts, we settled on the title you see here; bad though it ~~[illegible]~~ is may be, it does at least fill up the space quite well. Then came the seeming eternity whilst we all tried to evade responsibility for starting it all off. Then came the explosion. Words splattered onto paper with a natual fluidity. Not surprising as everybody was now drinking again.

"But," you are all asking, "....what significance can we attach to the mystic number 1220 in the title?" Well, that's obvious isn't it? Isn't it? Oh, well 1220 is 185 to the base 5. Let's face it, they don't come any more base than base five.

That is merely Skelton's opinion of himself - he's just too generous to keep it to himself and insists on spreading it around. The evening is drawing to it's inevitable close, the Meara's having to brave the busride home in less than an hour. Pat seems to have been drinking more than anyone else: she just came out with "if we get stoned [illegible] it'll make the strip home more bearable". Now there's interesting.

Mind you, the Bacardi and cider that Brian has been drinking hasn't been without it's effect; on beginning the preceeding section, he was heard to remark: "Paul's left it in an awkward place".

Pat is at present engaged in trying on Cas's long, dark wig, of Presford fame, and, contrary to general opinion, she looks utterly revolting - nearly as bad as Pete himself did. HELP!! Pat is now trying to fit the wig on me - s'not my fault if the next bit is indecipherable - gurk!!!!!!!!!! "Oh, ducky", "He looks like Gerb from a side view", "No, more like Anita", are just some of the more printable remarks being bandied about. What's more, the fucking thing is getting tangled up with the keys of the typer. I resign.

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NATURAL BREAK // 4

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"Have you heard the one about the Spanish nymphomaniac.....who wouldn't let a dago by."

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APOLOGIA..... It would appear that on page seven we have misquoted Blaster Bates. The correct quotation, taken from the track "Geronimo" on his L.P. "T.N.T. For Two", should have read.....

"forty-two miles there, forty-two miles back etc etc..."

Our sincere regrets are hereby extended to Mr. Bates and the Big Ben Recording Company.

This heap of mid-brown excretory matter has been shat upon the world by these Spanish arses and two delightful rear-ends who are better (?) known as Paul Skelton, Brian Robinson, Michael Meara, Patricia Meara, and Cas. It is primarily intended for the 67th Mailing of the Offtrails Magazine Publishers Association, dated 1st October, 1972. However, since the chief reason for putting out shot of the single variety is to achieve a degree of immediacy we shall not be holding all the other issues until after the date of said mailing. So, if our friendly neighbourhood AE cannot find it in his heart to concede us our due activity credit, then he can go and suck a Zube, or somesuch. WE DON'T CARE, I TELL YOU!!!!! Yet if he should be so kind, then the credit should be shared equally betwixt memberships 219 and 226, even to the extent of ¼-pages if neccesary. This colophon thingy is situated in a box to spite the aforementioned Michael John Meara, whose hatred of 'fill' boxes signifies both a morbid fear of death and an intense dislike of a certain Pete Seeger.

Should any fen wish to go poking around in any dark holes (??? why are you fen such filthy bastards???) he should have a poke in the vicinity of either 185 Pendlebury Towers (a daunting if somewhat monolithic phallic symbol), Lancashire Hill, Stockport SK5 7RW; Flat A, 5 Kedleston Road (if you can get through the door!!), Derby DE3 1FL; or, as a last resort, 9 Linwood Grove, Manchester M12 4QH, though at this last you may expect to be violently repulsed, unless by some happy chance you happen to be female.

COMMENTS ON THE 66TH MAILING....we, at a glance, liked..... OOTT 10, Viewpoint 8 & Supplement, Erg 39, O.U.R. 6, Lurk 2 & Hell 5. But disliked French Connection 1, Fanzine Fanatique, Spacefreak, and Bestavarapupeta Cumbum 1. Opinion is reserved on F.H.T.V. 7 and Arcanum 0.