

Perpetrated by ARCHIE MERCER of 70 Worrall Road, Bristol 8. (Eng).

Yngvi is a Louse

A MERCATORIAL PUBLICATION

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THE NOT-NEARLY-FILLETED-ENOUGH SHAMBLES for the 35th Mailing and/or thereabouts.

OFF TRAILS 35 (The Kenches of Linn) There are two ells (still) in "Worrall", Ken. If they ever get around to changing the spelling, I'll let you know.

SIZAR 9 (Burn the perpetrator) "Curate's eggy" = "good in parts". The reference is to a historic "Punch" cartoon showing a curate breakfasting with his bishop, to the (approximately) following dialogue:

BISHOP: "I'm so sorry, I'm afraid they've given you a bad egg."

CURATE: "Oh no, I assure you, parts of it are excellent." ≠ Whether your public analysis of certain individuals will in the long run prove to have been a Good Thing or a Bad Thing or neither, one wouldn't know yet. Provisionally, though, I tend to approve of the idea.

BURP! 21 (The King of the Dues) Every Mailing should have a BURP! Even a small one's better than none. (Though in extreme cases a HARROGATE CRUDDIN QUARTERLY might do instead). ≠ Re Colin Freeman's first point, I am at present plugging to have TAFF elections decided by a committee - seriously. Doesn't seem to be getting anywhere though - everybody else seems to like elections for their own sake. ≠ Inasmuch as Yiddish is a dialect of German, I should imagine that it would be richer language than English, yes. ≠ I'm under the impression that my IQ is probably well below Mensa level, possibly below overall average level even. I'm not moved to put it to the test - it'd be embarrassing to be proved even lower than I thought.

SOUFFLE 4 (alleged) (Have an Austro) Supposing Japan, Indonesia and such places do (as you suggest) form a common market or a political alliance or both. I'd personally be happier - far happier - to see Australia and New Zealand in such a combination than outside it. I don't necessarily expect all Aussies and NZers to see it that way of course, and I myself favour the continued interchangeability of our respective populations. ≠ The notion that nobody has the right to criticise anything unless he knows the correct technical terms to do it in is of course popular amongst those with small minds and <sup>large</sup> technical vocabularies. (This re your VAGARY review). ≠ The Cheslin "engine" story is the best Cheslin fiction I remember having come across. It's sort of with it, somehow.

WHATSIT 3 (The man who spells "Worrall" with only one ell) But I was arguing, in effect, that G&S can't be enjoyed to the full in performance. By the time you're with the words, the tunes begin to pall. Or something.

ENVOY 12 (Good ol' Ken, he's here agen) Now somebody wants to start looking for evidence that "Shetland" actually means "Land of bogs". ≠ To abolish gambling by legislation is impossible. Instead, I'd turn it to good purpose by making its promotion a national monopoly. (Which isn't quite how you put it, Ken). In that direction, even without going that far, I'd make income-tax-payers eligible for prizes on a sort of Ernie-type system. In order to qualify for a prize, the taxpayer would have to be fully-

paid-up to date - within reason, natch. If he was convicted of deliberately understating his taxable income or otherwise illegally dodging, he'd be disqualified from the draws for life, but would still have to pay tax. The prizes would vary. Some of them could be straight sums of money - a thousand pounds, for instance - but some would have to be directly related to the tax paid by the winner, for instance say three time's that year's tax. It'd have to be something like that, to make the scheme attractive to the big-earners. / When I was at school, one of the boys introduced a war game. You drew up a board replete with rivers, forests etc, and two capitals - one at each end. Each player (two only) started out with a set number of divisions of various types - infantry, cavalry, tanks, armoured cars, artillery and sappers if I remember. Each different type of div could move at various speeds across various terrains. Nobody could cross a river unless the sappers were present, and so on. Anyway, after a game or two had fizzled out I came to the conclusion that stale-m<sub>o</sub>tiness (to coin a word) was practically implicit in the setup as it was. There was just one possibility, I thought. So the next time I played, I gathered up my cavalry and armoured cars (which moved at the same speed in most cases) and started a quick early blitzkrieg-type dive for the opposing capital. As soon as my opponent (the boy who'd introduced the game in the first place) saw what I was doing, he started screaming blue murder - that wasn't the way it was played. Well, it was that or stalemate - so I quit after that. / I liked Studebaker's column, it heralds Good Things to come.

OUTPOST 4 (Far-Flung Fred) The cover's improving again, but nowhere near your fabulous first two. The interiors are better, though several of them appear to be strongly Atom-derivative. Likewise the bacover. / All good clean stuff. Well, all good stuff and as neat as nobody's business. If the entire contents were crud, OUTPOST would be one of the best crudzines ever. They're not, and it's not.

CONVERSATION 21 (Hick the Wanderer) The trouble with your over-logical analysis of What's Wrong with the National Economy is that modern economics has very little to do with logic. Look at Israel, for instance. It's like the bee that is reckoned to be aerodynamically impossible - but still flies.

ERG 15 (A Soggy would a-woeing go) I like the cover. It's not what one would regard as typical Jeeves artwork - I approve though. / The trouble with P.4 is that every couple of lines I found myself dashing over to my card-index to bring it up to date. And if it hadn't happened on P.4, it would've on P.9. / The OFF switch is all very well, but if somebody gets it into his head that he's paid for a set and a licence, and therefore has the right to be entertained all the time, you try telling him different. We minority-types are thankful to find any time devoted to our particular tastes. Lucky, too, really. They could easily get along without our money and purchasing-habits. (I'm not speaking personally there - I have neither telly nor wireless, and am perfectly happy that way). / I should've headed this "the man with Bentcliffe on his back" if I'd looked. Could do with more of the same.

THE NEW ASHMOLEAN etc etc etc (William Anthony Parker McDaniel) Hello, mate, whoever you are.

/ "--- it had a name. And it stayed that way until Melrose Music published it and old Mr. Melrose didn't like the sound of the 'rat' part, so, on the sheet music, he changed it to Muskat Ramble. But the copyright still reads Muskrat

Ramble by Edward Ory." - Kid Ory, "How I Wrote MUSKRAT RAMBLE" (from a record sleeve). ≠ Re your VAGARY review, you say "The average fighting man will not use euphemisms to refer to the enemy, his equipment, or his leaders". Right enough. However, you overlook the fact that neither will he call them by their real names if he can find something more expressive - though overdone - to use instead. I think we need a new term - "negative euphemism" perhaps. ≠ One could hardly call Anthony Boucher "William Anthony Parker White", no. But "Bill White" or "Tony White" why not?

SCOTTISHE 31 (Ethel, the Sight for Sore Eyes) Right - now I can put the Mercatorial finger right on the place. This Scotland/England lark. On P.6 (I've just counted), Ethel, you say that from their earliest schooldays the Scots are taught to regard the English as - if not exactly enemies still, definitely others. Then in his letter, Colin Freeman says "I have never thought of the Scots as foreigners". And there it is, the entire position in those two statements. I don't think of the Scots as being foreigners, any more than I do the Yorkshiremen or the Geordies. (Oh - I'd better say that a Geordie is someone from the counties of Northumberland and Durhan, more particularly the Tyneside area where they meet. Dunno why, any more than I know why somebody from Liverpool way will answer quite cheerfully if addressed as "Scouse".) Where were we? Oh yes. The Englishman accepts Scotland as another region of Britain - or of England, because he's unfortunately got into the lax habit of using the two words indiscriminately. The Scotsman is basically unwilling to accept Scotland as a region of anything. ≠ I have always considered that those responsible for advising the Queen to adopt the style of Elizabeth the Second were deliberately provoking the more nationalistic Scots. I agree a double-number (such as James the Sixth and First) is clumsy, but it could have been got round by her reigning as her (so I understand) second name, Alexandra. Or I see no reason why she couldn't have adopted any other name to reign under if she wanted to.

This sort of trouble never happens under a republic.

COMPACT (Run for the hills - she's here!) That front cover is FABULOUS. Atom at his absolute best. Which is pretty good. ≠ I'm by no means uncritical of Atom's work as it goes. His more serious stuff usually leaves me cold, and much of his throwaway material is just that. But when he sits down and concentrates on doing a superbly detailed cartoon of this type, the result - as here - can be magnificent. ≠ Incidentally, on the subject of artwork, somebody said something about the comparison between Atom, Eddie and Jin Cawthorn. I've just said what I think of Atom above. Eddie's work has to my mind improved immeasurably over the last couple of years. But overall, a far greater proportion of what I've seen of Jin's work has appealed to me than has that of either of the other two. ≠ While you've been moving - or waiting to move - once, I've moved three times. The first occasion - Hykehan to Cheltenham - was by heavy lorry, all mixed in among a load of oily gear-wheels. I reckoned to have some half-ten of assorted luggage, not counting my scooter (which also travelled on the lorry - I went in the cab). Most of it, by weight, was fanzines, books and records. The next move - when Cheltenham and Gloucester proved hopeless for employment prospects - was to Bristol, as part-load in an orthodox pantechicon. I rode the scooter this time, but even so the comparatively short journey cost more than the previous much longer one had done. The third move was just down the hill and round the corner, and I transported everything by hand, over a week or so. Private enterprise, mate. ≠ I think "Bear of Britain" was by Edward Frankland, but I wouldn't swear to it. Or come to

think of it, maybe I'm thinking of another book altogether, about King Alfred. (Sorry - should've kept my mouth shut).

SAVOYARD 9 (Dear Old Pelz) Was "Brigadoon" Lerner and Loewe? ~~The two most~~  
~~overpaid men in~~ the business - and that's saying a lot. The name somehow strikes me as fake-Scotch rather than the genuine article, so I tend to suppose you right as to the continental provenance of the original story. ≠ Since I wrote that "simultaneously inactive" crack about Walter Breen, it has come to my notice that he's been somewhat more active than it had appeared - it's just that the Post Office has an awkward habit of keeping his activity from me. One could certainly wish him to be more active in OMPA, though.

BINARY 100 (The fan who's beginning to go grey round the Temples) Gus Poll's improving,  
 for a start. ≠ At the time of the Belgian case, a letter in The Times quoted a thing about a one-time possible case for suppression-at-birth. I forget the exact details, but they were cast so as to appear overwhelmingly against the baby's ultimate chances. The punchline was that the baby was the infant Beethoven. This is one of the instances where I only restrained myself from writing to The Times myself (I've decided against it on principle on the grounds that it's Out Of My Class). <sup>with difficulty</sup> The point that struck me about it was that had anybody who possessed the appropriate historical knowledge ever bothered to speculate as to the possible course mainstream "good" music might have taken if in fact Beethoven had been removed from the scene before his due time? It'd be interesting to see some informed comment on this - why isn't Harry Warner in OMPA? ≠ Well since you've made your cake, you'll just have to lie on it.

MORPH 30 (The Winged Fancy of Waterloo) Oh. Well, in that particular instance, by a definitive recording of a piece of music I mean one adequately performed according to the appropriate standards involved. Thus an adequate performance of a Beethoven symphony would involve a full-size symphony orchestra, whereas an adequate performance of a Strauss waltz could (and possibly should) involve a considerably smaller combo. ≠ I didn't even use the rotary - it was done for me, while I kept the stencils and paper in order. Not unlike this is quite a come-down. And standing there rolling while the blank pile never seems to get any smaller I hate. Even more do I hate setting the apparatus up, and putting it away again afterwards. D'you mean to say you don't positively dislike all that sort of thing?

HEX 4 (The Sound of Bedding Wells) As another Mr Wells pointed out, perhaps the most dramatic instance of the non-correspondence of race and language is that the entire negro population of the New World speaks one or another European language by way of native tongue. ≠ 1745 was not two centuries earlier than Sherman. Two centuries earlier than the Sherman tank, perhaps. ≠ OK, if Huntingdon, Hampshire and Marylebone you want, Huntingdon, Hampshire and Marylebone you shall have with pleasure. Pin your ears back. Huntingdon is probably best known in America as the place that the probably mythical Robert, Earl of Huntingdon was the probably mythical Robert, Earl of. It's a small sleepy town in sort of marginal fenland country, situated on the north bank of the River Ouse. (The Fenland Ouse that is - Ouse, like Avon, is a river-name we have quite a line of). The south bank is occupied by the twin-town of Godmanchester (which I rather think, though I'm not entirely sure, should be pronounced Godman Chester rather than God Manchester) which is if possible even

smaller and sleepier. (The Ouse is comparatively wide for an English river thereabouts, but certainly sleepy enough.) I understand that Huntingdon and Godmanchester now form one borough. Anyway, Huntingdon (with or without Godmanchester) is probably the largest town in Huntingdonshire, which is named after it. Huntingdonshire (or Hunts) is one of England's smallest counties, in an area that abounds with small counties. It's mainly flat and agricultural.

Hampshire (postally abbreviated to Hants - I wouldn't know why) is the old Wessex heartland. It takes its name from the port of Southampton, although Winchester (further inland) is the traditional county town. Other important towns include Bournemouth and Portsmouth (both on the coast) and Basingstoke in the north. Bournemouth is a well-known resort. Portsmouth includes a resort (Southsea) but is best known as a naval base. Winchester is utterly historic. Basingstoke's a pretty useless sort of a place.

Most of Hampshire consists of various ranges of chalk downs radiating from Salisbury Plain (over the border in Wiltshire). Its rivers are said to provide good fishing. The north-east corner of the county contains the Aldershot garrison area, which is even less attractive than Basingstoke. The south-west corner contains the New Forest, largely composed of scrubby heath though there are wooded sections. The Isle of Wight, which lies just off the coast, is theoretically part of Hampshire though it has long been a separate administrative county. (One of several that are not included in John Roles's traditional and arbitrary "40"). It, too, is mainly chalk downland.

Marylebone, then. The borough of St Marylebone (supposed to derive from a Church of St Mary le bon) (which is surely the wrong gender for a start) is one of the London Metropolitan Boroughs, and stretches north from Oxford Street. The northern part of the borough includes St John's Wood, famous for its Victorian love-nests and more recently for artists, and part of Regent's Park, one of London's biggest parks. Marylebone proper (it's pronounced sort of "Marribon" by the way) is the southern part of the borough, more or less between the park and Oxford Street. Most of it was laid out on open land by the Portland/Portman family, and thus the streets are mostly straight and parallel - which is unusual in this country. These include Baker Street, Wimpole Street, Harley Street etc. The principal exception is Marylebone High Street, the original village street, which still preserves the meandering plan (and much of the dimension) of an earlier era.

The Portman Estate was originally a fairly well-to-do residential area. Nowadays it's mainly a well-to-do business area - largely in the original premises. The eastern end of the Marylebone district is part of the clothing-trade area. Broadcasting House, the B.B.C. headquarters, is situated in Marylebone, more or less in the middle of it.

Under the government's plans for the reorganisation of London government, the Borough of St Marylebone is at present scheduled to be merged with the Borough of Paddington (west of the Edgware Road) and the City of Westminster (south of Oxford Street). These streets - and boroughs - meet at Marble Arch, just by the spot where once stood the notorious Tyburn gallows. The Tyburn stream, from which the gallows took its name, has long been confined underground, but its course is through Marylebone and Mayfair and (I should imagine) into the lake in St James's Park.

Good enough, Chuck? What'd you like next time - Durhan? Derbyshire? Lulworth? (I'm playing fair - or showing off, if you prefer - all the above data is from memory).

DETROIT IRON 1 (Rootin' Teuton Dick Schultz) I wasn't exactly complaining about you and Ken having the same zine title Dick, just that I couldn't tell which of you was which - which would apply what-

ever either of you might call it. ≠ The details of your attitude to Things Germanic were of considerable interest. I'm rather like that myself - not with gaudy uniforms so much, but I am pro-German, other things being equal. I can't speak the language to any extent worth talking about, but the sound of it sung - or even just spoken - is more expressive than most languages. Much of Europe's best music seems to have German origins. German architecture, landscaping etc usually seems more picturesque than most people's - certainly than British. ≠ I did not know that Bjo Trimble was born on the same day that Napoleon was born. Nor, quite frankly, do I believe it - not if it's the French emperor you refer to. The same date, perhaps. ≠ Bristol's island, however, is distinguished from the general run of islandry inasmuch as the local population appear to be altogether unaware of its existence. In trying to sort out a how-to-get-somewhere, if I chance to mention the word "island" - which seems the obvious reference - they don't know what the hell I'm talking about.

NOTED 'Twas a Good Mailing. Even so, I haven't said anything about SHADOWFAX 2 (Gordon Eklund) or CURIOSITY SHOPPE (George Spencer).

WHO'S WHO Sundry SAPSazines I chance to see frequently exasperate me by not Naming Names in the mailing comments - which are thereby rendered even more obscure than they would be already. Therefore, just for the benefit of AMBLE's extra-apan readership, I'll just mention that OFF TRAILS was from Association Editor Ken Cheslin, SIZAR from Bruce Burn, BURP! from Ron Bennett, SOUFFLE from John Baxter, WHATSIT and ENVOY both from Ken Cheslin (again), OUTPOST from Fred Hunter, CONVERSATION from Lynn Hickman, ERG from Terry Jeeves, THE NEW ASHMOLEAN and the rest of it from Ted/Dave McDaniel/Johnstone, SCOTTISHE as always from Ethel, cOMPACT from Ella, SAVOYARD from Bruce Pelz, BINARY from Joe Patrizio, MORPH from John Roles, HEX from newlywed Charles Wells, and DETROIT IRON from Richard Schultz. Now I'll never do it in six pages.

AFTERTHOUGHTS I forgot several Marylebone features of some importance - Marylebone Station for one, albeit it's only one of London's second-string terminals. Then Madame Tussaud's waxworks, with the Planetarium next door. I might also mention that one of Bobbie's favourite shrines is in the borough (the St John's Wood part). ≠ There was something else somewhere, but it won't come. Never mind. I may remember it in time for the last page or something.

## T H E L A I R

THE RIVER OF STARS (Edgar Wallace) I've "collected" this on the grounds that it's a marginal "Sanders" book. Some of the action takes place in Africa, and Sanders and Abiboo are introduced as minor characters. Anyway, it's not all that bad a story, with a really original protagonist.

THE GOD OF THE WITCHES (Margaret A. Murray) This has just come out in paperback (Background Books) and I've grabbed myself a copy. It makes highly interesting reading, of course, and if it proved less startling than I'd rather hoped, that may be due to (a) her general arguments being fairly well recognised nowadays, and (b) its being apparently the middle book of three, and possibly the least startling of them. (Why can't people (re)publish things in the proper order?)

Checking up on what Parrinder (Pelican Witchcraft) has to say about Murray, I find that whilst some of his criticisms seem to be distinctly across the purpose, and very likely deriving from a fundamental difference in attitude - he

writes as a Christian whereas she writes as an anthropologist first and foremost • there still remains one very important one. That is that Murray appears to be willing to accept the verdict of the courts in all cases. Therefore, everybody who has ever been convicted of witchcraft is to her a witch, even though in a great many cases (particularly under the various reigns of terror) they were most probably nothing of the kind. Bobbie? Anyone? Comment?

Another point that suggests itself to me now is this: the witch-religion, as Murray sees it, is or was a direct survival of the pre-Christian religion. Now it is generally understood that the pre-Christian religion of the Teutonic lands (including Anglo-Saxon and later Scandinavian England) was what might be termed Asgardism - Odin/Woden/Wotan and all that crowd. The Celtic lands had pantheons of their own that were no further removed from the Asgard pantheon than either was from the Greek Olympian one. All these pantheons were basically (I gather) Indo-European in type. Anyway, they held sway in immediate pre-Christian times. Now if the witch-cult is a survival of this, one would expect the appropriate pantheon still to be recognisable, though inevitably altered with the passage of time. Apparently, however, the appropriate pantheons are patently not so. Therefore, it seems to me, the witch-cult could only be the survival of a pre-Indo-European religion, that underlay the I-E pantheons as it is said later to have underlain Christianity. In which case, I am now wondering, what did the witch-cult have to survive that long, that Asgard and co didn't? Again, Bobbie? Anybody?

Finally, Bobbie, I think you said somewhere that you understood that Gardner (another bloke now - I hope you're all keeping up) just wasn't with it? Anyway, I notice that Murray writes a short introduction to his book. She doesn't actually say anything, mind - but she writes the introduction nevertheless.

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 NUMBER THREE IN the series of Famous  
 Freds that Jim Carthorn has drawn is

#### FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

well-known philosopher and bighead.  
 All I can say is - ain't Nietzsche  
 wonderful?

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 HAVE A LETTER. Or part of one.  
 It's from COLIN FREEMAN and bears  
 the following date: 21 March 1963.

"Someone has probably gamed  
 you up on the cricket lark by now ((no))  
 but just in case:- Where both teams  
 score exactly the same number of runs,  
 the result is not a draw. It is a tie.  
 A drawn game occurs only when the allotted  
 time runs out before a definite result can  
 be achieved. If time runs out and the team  
 that's batting has not yet passed the total of  
 the other side, two things could happen if they  
 had more time. They would either pass the total  
 of the other team, in which case they would win -  
 or they could all be bowled out before they reach



this total, in which case they would lose. Hence it's a drawn game through lack of time. It is very rarely that there is a tied game." ((That's a game?))

AFTERTHOUGHT ON THE LAIR Re "The God of the Witches" again, I was somewhat crog- gled on P.110 at the following sentence: "But for centuries both before and after the Christian era, the witch was both honoured and loved." Like when did said Christian era end? These sort of things one should know.

HOW DID THE "L" GET INTO BRISTOL? - contd If you remember, I suggested that since Bristol derived from Briggstow, the terminal "l" might be a back-formation from the adjective "Bristolian". I have since had it pointed out to me (by a local) that locals frequently stick a terminal "l" on to the word "idea", pronouncing it as "ideal", and the "l" in Bristol (he suggested) could have arisen the same way. Which is at least as good as my theory - even though locals tend to spoil the case by dropping the terminal l-sound in Knowle, a Bristol district.

FRAGMENT "You are old, Father William," the young man said.  
"It's a lie," he replied. "I'm no older than you."  
- "And yet you incessantly stand on your head."  
"Well what else can one stand on at seventy-two?"

THERE'S A MESSAGE that goes with the Pat Scott McLean illo alongside, to the effect that any resemblance to a remarkably similar picture by the same artist that has probably appeared elsewhere can be explained - but not if I'm going to hold this to eight pages again.

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THERE IS NO TRUTH IN THE RUMOUR  
THAT {dnq}  
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THE RIGHT TO do whatever you like is the right to be free. (Official)

THERE'S ANOTHER MESSAGE that goes with the Pat Scott McLean illo that was going to go here, to the effect that it's too long for the space I've left, so it'll have to wait till next time.

SURREALIST DOLL - you wind it up, and a little green hand comes out and switches you off.

AND IT REALLY is the first of April (pm) today. No significance - simply cold fact.

NO MORE DOR in '64, according to STARSPINKLE. I admit that the Barea deserves a Con, but the sudden abject overturning of the "Mordor" bid does come as a bit of a shock. Sup- posing South Gate had acted similarly in 1957? Never mind - LONDON IN '65 is of course paramount.  
1 April 1963 (pm) AM

FRAGMENT "Roll up, ladies and gents, roll up, have a look at Cerberus the two-headed dog."  
"But I thought Cerberus had three heads."  
"He did, lady - he's trying to give 'em up. Roll up, roll up - - -"

"If ifs and ans were pans and pots, Etymologists would do their nuts."

WHAT WILL YOU DO IF IT NEVER HAPPENS?