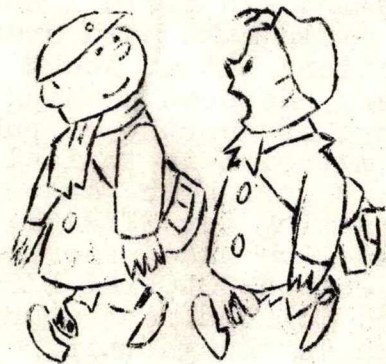


Dick Schultz

# BURP!

No. 18  
OMPA 26  
December 1960



"And then his cane got  
caught up in his beard...."

This is BURP! Number 18, produced for the 26th OMPA Mailing(Dec. 1960) by Ron Bennett, 7 Southway, Arthurs Avenue, Harrogate, Yorkshire, England. This issue is dedicated to the memory of THE NEWS CHRONICLE and to wishing all members of OMPA a very merry Christmas.

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Since the last issue of BURP! appeared some five mailings ago, I've kept my promise not to write so many letters, mainly because of school work and fannish committments which haven't left much time for letter writing. Since then, my life has changed in many respects and I still haven't the time I'd like to write as many letters as I'd like. Apart from a special item for a very special oneshot, I haven't written a fannish story in very nearly two years and all in all I think it must be considered that Bennett is a fannish hasbeen.

In January I moved to a school in Harrogate and now teach about fifteen minutes' walk from home(if I ride on the bike I bought from George Locke it takes twenty minutes). Surprisingly, the move, which has saved almost two hours' travelling time per day, has not given me the extra free time I'd hoped for. I used to leave the Leeds school at four but now I'm lucky to be away before five. The brighter children I now have mean that I have more work to prepare and certainly far more work to correct. Still, now that I've settled in here, I'm happy in my work(shades of the last Kettering convention!)and that's the main thing.

I've also taken up table tennis. I've played club cricket, club rugby, club chess and now I've joined a table tennis club. I've played a few times for the club in the Knaresborough League and find that with practices two or three evenings a week are taken up by the sport. I lack the reflexes to be ever anything but an average player but it constantly amazes me that with my eyes, I can even time a ball to hit it at all, and don't say that you didn't know I hit a ball with my eyes -- you know what I mean.

In the fan field I had hoped to get PLOY out this year so that I could make some crack about "seven years of continuous publication" but it looks as though I just won't be able to make it. There has been nothing in the PLOY programme for any writer with anything worthy of publication to send it to me, especially if the material is topical and whilst I had hoped to get an issue out during the August break, this didn't come to pass. I'm still putting out SKYRACK, though, which is some small consolation and I've made some progress towards getting out the completed version of COLONIAL EXCURSION, the report of my TAFF trip to the 1958 SolaCon. And about time, too. At the time of writing it looks as though this report will reach at least 70 sides.

During the summer holidays, I again made my way down to London and this time stayed at the Parker Penitentiary with Ella and Fred. Once again in London I had a whale of a time, with sidetrips up to Liverpool for their holiday party and to Southampton and the home of Jill and John Adams in order to meet Bruce Burn, Britain's latest import from the dominions.

Once again, too, I got a job in the city. This time the agency hired me out to Marplan, a market research organisation, for the entire six weeks and I thoroughly enjoyed the work on consumer reports, working with the latest Olivetti and Roneo machines. A veritable fanzine factory. So there, Norman Shorrocks!

But to the magazines of the 25th Mailing.....

OFFTRAILS: I loved Eric's opening remark but view with concern the passing of the provision which has allowed our constitution to be split into Constitution and Bye-Laws. Having been in the Editorial chair when the change was in progress, I know all the arguments for the split but still don't think the change over a necessary one. This is of course a matter of opinion. What really does coggle me is the manner in which one point has been allowed to pass into our rules and regulations absolutely unchallenged. It is not, happily, a vastly important matter, but there is the principle of the thing to consider. When the bye-laws were drafted there was the point made that "Officials of the Organisation must reside in Britain" (Bye-law 4), a point that was at no time in any OMPA Constitution. I propose that this bye-law is removed forthwith. Before I'm jumped on with the viewpoint, and a sensible one, true, that such a bye-law is a sensible one in itself, I'll explain. To begin with, I'm sure that everyone will agree that it would be idiotic to have either the Treasurer or the Editor residing outside the U.K. (With the possible exception of having the editor residing in Belgium, perhaps, for the Benelux countries have, I believe, the cheapest postage rate in the world as far as printed matter is concerned) It is obvious that to have a Treasurer residing outside Britain would be anything but practicable, whilst the delays in printed matter to and from Britain to other parts of the world would preclude the Editor living abroad. But what about the President? Whilst it certainly helps to have the President living in Britain this is by no means a necessity, especially with the present day speed of airletters. Why should any OMPA living abroad be forbidden the honour (these days a doubtful one, but an honour nevertheless) of OMPA Presidency because he lives abroad? I know from experience that the actual work of the President is but little and if in the past there has been an unwritten but accepted rule that Officials live in Britain, to have this provision down in black and white and very official looking is a vastly different thing. I would therefore propose the following:

"That Bye-law No. 4 be amended to read 'The Association's Editor and Treasurer must reside in Britain.'"

RANDOM (Daphne Buckmaster). Yes, we have this semi-central heating you describe. \*\*\* English schools are administered by local education authorities, each of which appear to have their own pet schemes and brain children. \*\*\* Yes, Bennett counted the pages in OFF TRAILS on the FAPA system.

SCOTTISHE (Ethel Lindsay). Teachers present Shakespeare in this soul destroying way because the idea is a study of the story's background. The actual story (perse) can be enjoyed somewhat merely as a story by reading Charles Lamb.

MARSOLO(Hayes). About the time I bought my Gestetner, the Los Angeles gang bought theirs and I wondered slightly why the cause for celebration(well, to such an extent). A couple of months ago Paul and Eleanor Turner dropped in and mentioned that the machines are highly priced in the States, which amazes me. I don't know what Ethel or Ella paid for their models but my own hand crank model cost only just over \$100 with a colour change unit and a second hand cabinet thrown in. Some enterprising fan could make a fortune exporting the things under a printed matter label.

GRIFFIN(Spencer). Wonderful presentation. This was particularly appreciated as were the following items:

The SPOTLITE house magazine submitted by Don Ford(How about some advice to budding photographers, Don?), the light style and the illos in ATOZ, the puns and the overall sensible slant of AMBLE No 3, the whole of PHENOTYPE, the reprints and the bacover illo of BURGESS'S LIGHTS(I didn't know that Brian could draw so well!) and the Jeeves personality which came through so clearly in ERG.

UNICORN 2(Spencer)was also neatly reproduced. I agree thoroughly with this point of yours about studying correctly and not wasting time. Though at College I did cut the occasional lecture, for various reasons but usually in order to put in some time studying some other subject. This may sound crazy but on our programme was say "Civics" which wasn't essential to the resultant course certificate. Geography was in my case, and I'd often cut a civics lecture to work on some geographical project. \*\*\* I'm naturally interested in comments on COLONIAL EXCURSION and was somewhat surprised to read that you consider that the report sounds so American. One fan has already accused me of being "two faced" in the report, and therefore, I suppose, anti-American. Meanwhile I plough on.

ZOUNDS 3(Lichtman). I should apologise to Bob, I suppose. I agree thoroughly that Archie is the ideal man to carry the OMPA Treasury, particularly after the excellent manner in which he's been handling the finances of the BSFA since its inception. \*\*\* The mailing contents haven't always been listed alphabetically. I personally prefer it, though, and don't think that it entails very much extra work. \*\*\* A dozen other fans will tell you that "E&OE" means Errors & Omissions Excepted and is used on legal documents, so I won't.

And apologies, too, to Arthur Thomson who will surely say that I can do better. It's nice of him, but I doubt it.

All in all, the mailing was enjoyable without being outstanding and without containing any outstanding item. This is a comment, not an objection, for while the outstanding item is naturally appreciated, the casually discussed points and topics of the commentzines are, I feel, the bread and butter of an apa, and the friendly tone in which discussions are carried out in OMPA are a recommendation in itself. Even though several Big Names have left OMPA, I feel it worth extending a vote of thanks to the source of enjoyment that OMPA always is. - Ron Bennett.

SON OF  
THE  
OLD  
MILL  
STREAM

A COUNTRY COLUMN  
OF CITY LIFE

A few weeks ago I lost a friend and the loss hit me harder than the cynics say it should have done. One day I was reading and enjoying THE NEWS CHRONICLE at breakfast time and the next day I was reading the DAILY MAIL and wondering what had happened to all those fine British principles they used to talk about. Since I read THE GREAT GATSBY, I've never been one to look back and yearn for The Good Old Days, but I'm beginning to change my mind. The loss of the CHRONICLE has made me a changed personality ...and it happened overnight.

For those who are not au fait with the situation, I'll start off by explaining that the CHRONICLE was the middle of the road newspaper. Other national dailies are virtually sickening in their party support, whether Labour or Conservative and even the popular newspapers slant their news so alarmingly as to fool noone. There are the literary papers like THE TIMES, true, but these are extremely pedantic and the tabloids like the SKETCH and THE DAILY MIRROR are noteworthy only for their cartoon pages. THE CHRONICLE was a popular paper that boasted an above average literary content and a Liberal policy that was refreshing even to a diehard Socialist like myself. (Surprisingly, whilst I've always thought that the views of the CHRONICLE leaned slightly to the Right, a Conservative friend of mine regarded the paper's policy as leaning towards the Left) All in all, I think that it can be safely said that the NEWS CHRONICLE stood for Free Speech, with capitals, yes.

Overnight, the proprietors of the CHRONICLE sold the paper and its presses for a million and a half pounds, thirteen pieces of silver if you like, to THE DAILY MAIL. The paper was running at a loss because of insufficient advertising revenue and that was that. Because the CHRONICLE did not cater to mass appeal, its adverts did not reach the audience the advertisers like to reach, in numerical terms of course, and the paper died. In other words, Big Business, again in capitals, dictates newspaper policy. Oh boy! Pay my paper enough and we'll say whatever you wish.

There is also the point that THE CHRONICLE was sold to a paper with widely different political views, for the DAILY MAIL is extremely right wing in its politics. Also, I have yet to hear or read any viewpoint (outside of the pages of the DAILY MAIL) claiming that the actual reporting standards of THE DAILY MAIL are at least equal to those of THE CHRONICLE. The DAILY MAIL is inclined to far more sensationalism than the CHRONICLE ever was. An example is the MAIL's reporting of the Lady Chatterley trial verdict where the paper listed the pages in the Penguin edition in which certain four letter words could

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be found, an excellent way to establish the recognition of the classic's literary worth. Even the MAIL's feature writers cannot compare with those of the CHRONICLE. Paul Tanfield's (that's a house name by the way) man about town columns drop even more names than the worst of the CHRONICLE's features, an equivalent column by "John London." The MAIL possesses a very over-rated "Look how clever I am" John Jelley, but where is the sensible attitude of writers like Elizabeth Frank and Paul Dehn, Ritchie Calder and staff writers like Royer Davis, Michael Hellier and Leslie Mallory.

Primarily, I believe that it's not just the dear old CHRONICLE that has been played as a pawn in the rat race, but more important, I do believe that free speech died with the sale, with the sell-out if you like. Britons never never shall be slaves, ptui!

---oooOooo---

If above I've called John Jelley over-rated, I feel it only fair to mention a writer I consider to be vastly under-rated, namely John D. MacDonald, who turned from writing science fiction to writing the type of slick mystery which appeals to readers of magazines like COSMOPOLITAN or LADIES HOME JOURNAL. At his very worst, MacDonald's stories continue to move along, whilst at his best his stories combine the literary quality of having people think their thoughts and lead their lives with the fast moving pace expected of the modern thriller. His latest novel, SOFT TOUCH (Hale; 10/6d), is very reminiscent of books like Winston Graham's NIGHT WITHOUT STARS or Patrick Quentin's FATAL WOMAN (both of which can also be highly recommended, incidentally).

Jerry Jamison is the ordinary man in the story, the hero with whom the reader can easily identify himself. He is visited by an old wartime "buddy," Vincent Biskay, who is now an adventurer employed by a South American industrialist who is planning to overthrow his country's dictator. Arms are being bought for the coming coup and the money for these arms is to change hands in the USA. Biskay proposes to highjack this illegal cash, over three million dollars and needs a partner for his project. Jamison is married to a boring wife and is leading a boring life and is definitely ripe for such suggestive seed.

Jamison and Biskay carry out the operation successfully, more or less and that's where the trouble starts. Jamison, who is "telling" the story from the first person angle, becomes a murderer and the reader has an intriguing time with his conflicting sympathies for the hero and for justice. The ending is convincing as well as being a clever one.

I particularly liked the manner in which MacDonald allows the money to "turn" Jamison's head and the atmosphere of disquiet he builds round his hero who has to live with - if you'll excuse the cliché - the bed he's made for himself. Altogether, this is a convincing psychological thriller. It's a pity Hitchcock has not yet discovered MacDonald. I'm glad that I have.

- "Penelope Fandergaste."