

CRY 134

DECEMBER

1959

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PLANUT

stories



THE GOON GOES WEST

A Sweeping Novel of Fan Adventure

by JOHN BERRY

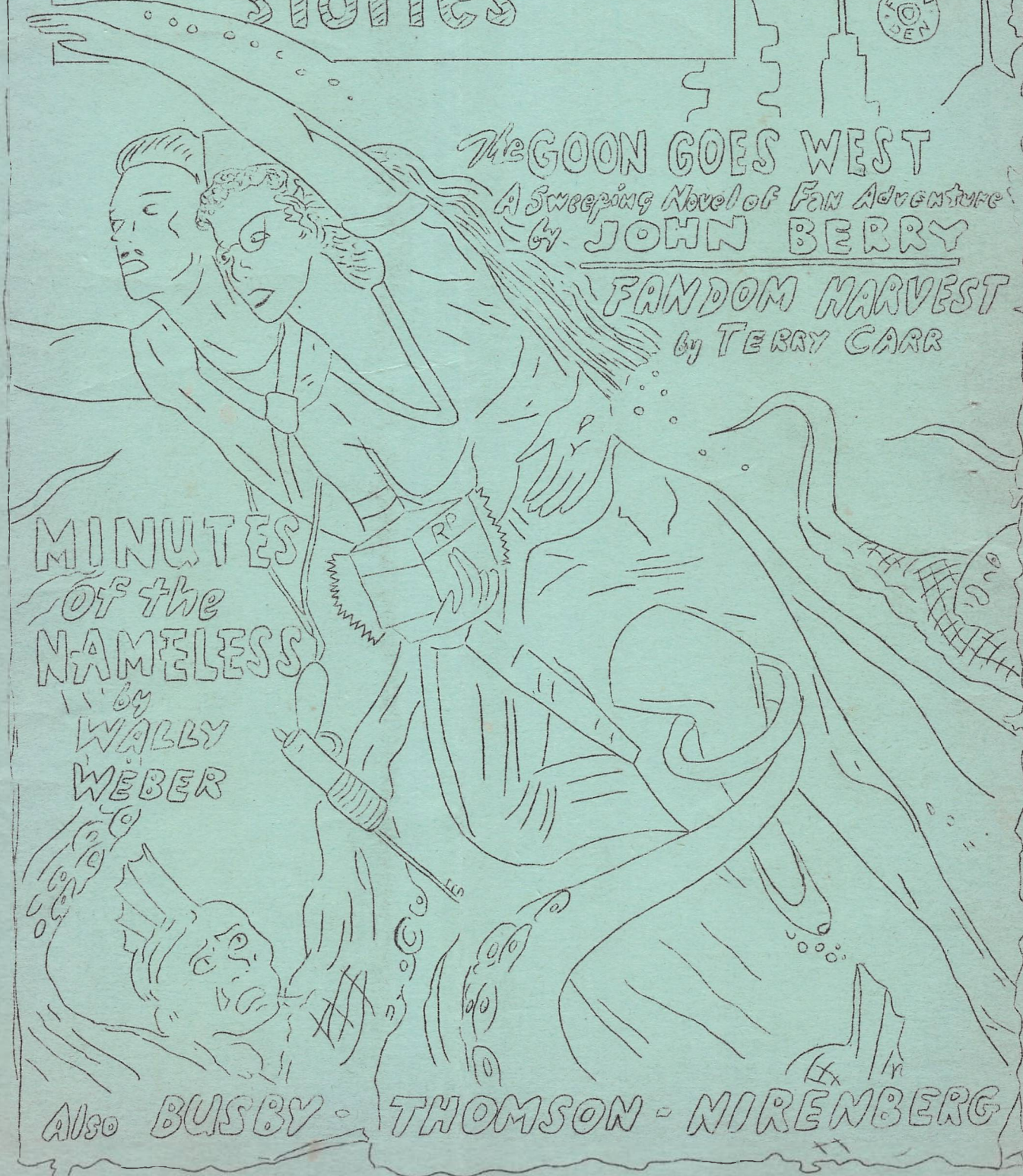
FANDOM HARVEST

by TERRY CARR

MINUTES of the NAMELESS

by
WALLY
WEBER

Also BUSBY - THOMSON - NIRENBERG



No doubt you've all deduced by now that this is actually the C * R * Y you have here: CRY #134, it is, & the Dec '59 issue. From Box 92, 920 3rd Ave, Seattle 4; Wash, with sterling-area subs available from John Berry, 31 Campbell Park Ave, Belmont, Belfast, Northern Ireland. Ordinarily (see below, regarding next month's Annish, which is likely to be the exception to our rule), subscriptions are 25¢ per copy, discounted for quantity at 5 issues for \$1 or 12 for \$2. The equivalent UK rates are 1/9, 7/-, and 14/-, respectively. Publication is monthly; hopelessly so, in fact: CRY is usually cranked out on the first Sunday of the month for which it is dated. Sometimes, to give ourselves a break on special occasions such as the Annish, we publish a week early as we're doing this time; we try to remember to announce this in advance...

Quite a few of the CRYstaff managed to get out of town over CRYday this month, what with Thanksgiving and all. Wally Weber headed for Ritzville; Jim Webbert caught a plane for Salt Lake City; Otto Pfeifer drove up to Vancouver, B.C. (Otto has been on the Inactive List for a number of recent CRYdays, but he's still considered one of the Staff until he gets out an injunction against this sort of thing); Tosk was out to Auburn for Thanksgiving but is back in town and will be around tomorrow for Pubbing, along with Wally Gonser, Elinor, and me. Thus, the CRY makes the scene, regardless.

Now, for This Month, we have:

Cover by Don Franson ("The Stealing of the CRY", as immortalized in <u>Gemzine</u>):	page 1
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((About 11pm last night, "Fandom Harvest" arrived by Special Delivery, and thanks, Terry. But that's why we have the unusual situation of items following the lettercol, in order to make everything come out right without blank pages or etc.))

Art Credits: ATom 7, Nirenberg 37 54, Weber 42, Boycon 60. Kinda short-shrift, this..

Stencils cut by: Wally Gonser 1, Wally Weber 6, Buz 8, Elinor 38 (OhmIGHOD!)

Dupering: Jim Webbert & I ran off pp4-30 last Sun-Mon, slipsheeting all the way on that verschtunken green paper, on account we forgot to stock up on the white. The rest of the zine takes its chances with Tosk and me and Wally Gonser, tomorrow; prayforus.

Yearly production: CRY appears to total 494 pages (disregarding blanks) for 1959, so the 496 pages for 1958 still stand as the high-water mark, & we still have Hope.

Next Month comes CRY #135, the CRY's Tenth Annish, and for this one occasion, the page count limits are up the flue. Featured will be Chapter 4 ("Detention For the Goon") of "The Goon Goes West". The Science-Fiction Field will doubtless be Plowed out-of-season by Pemberton. We'll be chopping up the backlog, and are even in the market for new unscheduled material, for once-- but no straight fiction, please; save that for the prozines, along with the Feghootnik bits; OK? Mostly the Light Touch for ol' CRY.

If (as expected) next month's Annish goes over 70 pages, it's going to notch two numbers off everybody's subscription; price will be listed as four-bits. Major contributors will get the Courtesy Copy as always. However, anyone depending on letter-excerpts or single illoes for inclusion on the Circ&Mail list might be well-advised to enter a minimum small sub by way of insurance, because these deals will probably draw the usual two-bit credit, and we'd hate to cut anybody off at this fruitful time.OK??.

We're into the Final Heat on this TAFF deal: Bob Madle, 672 Ripley St, Brookville, Alexandria, Virginia, is the place to send your vote-and-contribution. I suggest that you could best serve this Good Cause by voting for Terry Carr and inclosing at least a buck (preferably more). Of course, it's perfectly legal to vote for a measly 50¢ and mark your ballot for Bjo or for Don Ford (both fine people), if you can't afford the best. Bless you, anyhow, so long as you do contribute. --Buz.

THE GOON GOES WEST -- Chapter 2: The Heat is On (Continued from last month)

Whilst on top of the Empire State, Sylvia White had some difficulty in controlling her skirt. Vagrant gusts of wind swirled round, taking her skirt with them. This happy accident happened to several other women on the flat roof, too, and I was pleased to see that Bill Donaho had seated himself against the wall in an advantageous position to witness this phenomenon. I quickly joined him, but by this time the females had developed a technique which counteracted the wind. Pity.

A thought occurred to me whilst gazing out at the panorama below. I recall that in Ron Bennett's excellent account of his visit to the Empire State, he mentioned that he had been told that a Wellington bomber had crashed into the Empire State in 1945. I should hate this information to get around, because in fact it was a United States aeroplane, a North American Mitchell which actually perpetrated the dirty deed. The Wellington was a British aeroplane, and was obsolete at this time. I must confess that this information, gleaned from 20 years' study of aviation, makes that 20 years study worth while. I was hoping that someone would come up to me and tell me it was a Wellington bomber which crashed into the building. But no one did.

We moved from elevator to elevator to elevator to get to the ground floor. I don't know the mechanics of those elevators, but I've gone down three flights in Belfast and almost had my stomach come out of my ears. At the Empire State we whipped down 86 flights in such a very short time, without any sensation whatsoever.

Back on 5th Avenue (was I really on 5th Avenue???) Bill held a conference, and we went in a drug store for cokes. Ted White wanted me to try a Pepsi-Cola, but the store didn't stock them. The atmosphere outside was so terribly hot and humid anyway that the iced coke was like a cooling salve on my parched throat.

Outside the store, Eney parted from us. He had to make a long car journey to pick up Jean Young. Ted and Sylvia also went their own way, and I was left with Bill. He suddenly stepped into the road, and a car came whizzing up, and Bill ushered me inside. The taxi roared away, and it suddenly struck me that in New York CARS DROVE ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE ROAD. I was just about to scream a warning, when I recalled that, right enough, every country (except Sweden and Britain) drives on the right hand side of the road. It was frightening at first. I travel about a great deal by car in Belfast, and leaning out of the right hand window I expected to see cars going the other way. Instead I saw pedestrians.

After ten minutes the car pulled up, and I saw that I was at Pier 81. It flashed through my mind that maybe the Americans wanted to get rid of me in such a hurry that they couldn't wait to get my luggage, but Bill smiled in his wide happy way and told me that he was taking me on a cruise round Manhattan.

A CRUISE AROUND MANHATTAN?????

With a heart pounding with enthusiasm, I followed Bill onto the ship. We went on the top deck, and sat on two seats on the right hand side of the ship. The sun burnt down, and even though I was only in my shirt (I had trousers on, idiot, I mean I had no jacket on) the heat still beat down and down. Yet I didn't perspire. We don't have too many really hot days in Belfast, and when we are lucky enough to see a strong sun, I always perspired. But here, with the temperature well up in the 90's, no sweat. In my opinion it was so hot that the sweat evaporated as soon as it formed. The ship moved off, and I think Bill saw that the heat was becoming too much for me. He went down to the bowels of the ship, and came up with large cardboard cartons of iced lager. How cool it was, how soothing, how good it tasted, too. Bill made many such journeys before the ship returned to Pier 81 three hours later.

My one regret about the cruise was that I hadn't got my camera with me. Bill purchased a guide book, with lots of wonderful pictures in it, but I would have loved to have had the opportunity to take some historic pictures myself. We saw some fabulous sights... even more fabulous when I discovered that there are people who have lived in New York all their lives who haven't done the trip. They don't know what they are missing. They don't realize that in three hours they can see more of their city than they ever thought existed. I must be honest and confess, though, that my heart ached when I saw the Statue of Liberty. I seemed so small that I just couldn't believe it. Of course, I was sitting by Bill

Donaho at the time, so perhaps it suffered by comparison. But the statue seemed so insignificant, after the build up of many years. Heck, it was big and vast, but the photographs I've seen of it in the past must always have been taken from sea level. On the top deck of even a small ship, there just wasn't the expected effect of majesty and height. Of grandeur, yes, but majesty, no. I may be wrong in this. I may have been expecting too much. For instance, the Empire State I thought to be much better and more fascinating than I expected. The Statue of Liberty didn't quite measure up in my estimation. There is of course one reason. I had lots of lager, and I could feel a dull headache, and, as it transpired, I was on the verge of a severe attack of heat exhaustion. Maybe my disappointment was a result of these three causes. But it was a short-lived disappointment. I travelled some thirty-eight miles round Manhattan, and I was filled with awe at what this great metropolis had to offer to the sight-seer. We passed under some seventeen bridges, some small, some mighty, like the George Washington Memorial Bridge and the Queensboro Bridge. This latter is unique because a part of the bridge consists of a large building, the floors of which are numbered downwards, i.e., the ninth floor is actually the bottom floor. The United Nations Building looks especially imposing from the sea, much more so than when passed by car. I could go on and on and tell you about all the most interesting places, but perhaps this book would assume the category of a guide book. I'm lucky because I have the official guide book, and to merely flip through the pages brings the whole exciting three hours back to life again.

Bill Donaho, with heat exhaustion and everything, you'll never know how much I enjoyed myself!

Bill ordered another taxi, and was dropped off somewhere in the centre of Manhattan. He gave me two dollars, told me it would suffice for the fare, and told the taxi driver to take me to Cooper Square. I didn't really feel too well at this time, and of course it was the heat, although, as you've read in Chapter One, the plane was crowded and I had no sleep. A combination of the two began to affect me. But I shrugged it off, and the taxi dropped me at the Nunnery. I couldn't even see the meter in the taxi, but I slipped him the \$2, and he seemed happy enough.

The Nunnery was deserted.

I bathed my face in cold water, and felt better. I went into Bill's room and sorted through his pile of records. He had hundreds, and wonder of wonders, they were all classical pieces. I had a little concert to myself. I picked out Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture, Sibelius's Symphony Number 2, and the first movement of Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Concerto. The Hi-Fi boomed out in a massive cascade of sound...and I've always liked classical music played at a high decibel count. I waved my hands about, and whilst the 1812 was on I lashed myself into a fury.

Soon, the fans began to arrive. Ted and Sylvia, Dick and Pat Ellington came, and a little later Bill Donaho came back, armed to the teeth with new hunks of Hi-Fi equipment. There and then he assembled a new loudspeaker.

Later, Bill said he was going to take me to dine at a Spanish restaurant he knew in Greenwich Village. Ah, my heart fluttered once again at the mention of what I knew to be the artistic quarter of the city.

We took a bus to El Faro's. I like American buses. There is nothing ostentatious about them. There is no conductor, as there is in buses in the British Isles. You simply clamber into the bus, drop your 15 cents into a transparent receptacle by the driver, get your change, if any, and assume your seat. The system works wonderfully. Conductors are absolutely unnecessary. The movement will never spread to Great Britain, however. The drivers are so busy, and some cars drive at least 30 m.p.h.....

El Faro's had air-conditioning, and after the humidity of the outside, it was quite a shock, and I found myself shivering. No one else did, however, and I knew that although I didn't really feel too bad, I wasn't by any means my usual self. The decor of El Faro's was suited to its name, and the waitresses also looked a little Spanish, with off-the-shoulder blouses, and elaborate earrings. Donaho was the perfect host. He told me I was going to get a surprise dish, and that it was exotic. He ordered two bottles of claret, which he poured liberally, and I awaited this food phenomenon. Donaho had not exaggerated.

Imagine a large dish, in fact, two large dishes, almost full of rice. Mixed up in the rice were clam, lobster, shrimp, chicken, and other delicacies which I couldn't identify. This type of food was completely new to me. I copied the rest and filled my plate several times with the contents of the two big dishes. I ate and ate, and washed it down with a most excellent claret. The general atmosphere of the fans, the sparkling conversation and the novelty of the setting made me feel quite warm inside. I forgot my headache, and felt on the crest of the wave.

We left El Faro's, and walked through Greenwich Village. Some artists had their works of art propped against the sidewalk, or on window sills, and we stopped to look. The village was clean and had a certain undefinable atmosphere about it. I was quite taken with the place.

Bill led us to a place frequented by Greenwich Villagites, known as FIGARO'S. Artist-type people sat at chairs drinking through straws, and we edged through the throng and reached a quaint place at the rear of the building. Actually, it was a square formed by four walls, and it had no roof. It was dimly lit, and had wooden seats, and a tree here and there sprouted from the paved floor. We met Sandy Cutrell there, escorting a girl with long hair named Nina who fitted the place exactly.

We ordered drinks. Bill said he'd order for me, and after fifteen minutes the waitress (and what a beauty she was, too) brought back a high glass with ice cream in it, and other tasty ingredients. I sucked it through a straw, and was it good?

Soon after we left, and slowly walked back to the Nunnery.

Some strange people were at the Nunnery, listening to jazz records. By strange, of course, I mean that I didn't know who they were. I felt tired and hot and just a little unwell, and I decided to retire to the guest room.

Here again, now, I've got to tell you about the cockroaches. I want my story of my trip in America to be factual, and in retrospect, the cockroach incident was really quite funny, although the essential humour of it didn't hit me at the time. The Nunnery isn't the only place in New York to have cockroaches. My observations have lead me to believe that most places in New York have them. In fact, I remember once in the Army, in Germany, I had a scuffle with cockroaches, big ones too. But the Battle at the Nunnery was just out of this world. It was incredible.

I brushed aside the fabric guarding the guest room, and switched on the light. Cockroaches flitted about everywhere. HUNDREDS OF THEM. I shook my head in disbelief, and looked into the other rooms. No cockroaches. I looked at and under Terry's bed (he was on the 9-5 shift). No cockroaches. In fact, the guest room was the only place where they were to be found. And unfortunately, I had the guest room. What to do? I'd battled with the blasted things before, but only isolated groups, not whole militant regiments. With compressed lips and eyes full of fear, I peered round the fabric again. Suffering Catfish. They'd called up reinforcements. And at the move of the curtain it seemed to me as if they'd swung round and poised themselves for a frontal assault. I retreated in confusion. Then a thought struck me. When I had been in the kitchen earlier that day I'd seen two long blue round cylinders which bore some sort of blurb which stressed their power to inflict great losses on the insect world. Should I accept the challenge and give battle? Whoosh. I had no alternative. The cockroaches had captured the guest room, and the honour of the Berrys (and the Berry Family Tree stretched as far back as Hastings in 1066) was dependent upon my decision. I gritted my teeth. I gave the sprayer a preliminary flick, and the noxious liquid shot forth. I stood with my chest out. I muttered a silent prayer to Roscoe. I tried to recall if I'd told my wife about the \$3,000 insurance policy. And I strode forth to the guest room. The cockroaches seemed surprised to see me. For one moment, they were struck dumb with the utter audacity of this mortal who had dared to offer combat. I leaned slightly forward, as I'd been taught in the army. I spaced my feet wide apart, and balanced my body firmly on them. And as the first assault group almost reached my feet, I blasted forth. I sprayed from right to left. I knew no mercy. I fought for my life in particular and the prestige of fandom in general. I would not budge an inch. The line wavered and withdrew. The cockroaches huddled in the middle of the bed, and the ones on the walls drew a little higher, like a Venetian blind being lifted. I took a deep breath whilst I could, and waited for the next move, which I knew



was sure to come. Suddenly, three distinct prongs of cockroaches separated and waddled towards me. I sprayed them unmercifully. I gloated in sheer triumph and their bodies shrivelled up and lay in twisted piles. But I found myself retreating. One foot, two feet. I sprayed, both jet and nozzle, but to no avail. The cockroaches on the walls were straining to reach the fabric, and cut off my retreat. What could I do? I had to admit I was beaten. And I had caused so much devastation in their ranks that I knew they'd show no mercy. They'd crawl all over me all night. Then I had the answer. The ONLY answer.

I shouted for Bill Donaho at the top of my voice.

He came in in his underpants.

"Quick, Bill, get a sprayer," I yelled. He didn't wait for why's or wherefores. He thumped across the floor, and in seconds he was by my side.

"My Ghod," he shouted, when he saw the array that faced us. And he crouched by my side. I felt that with this sterling character by my side, right would triumph. The cockroaches had obviously met Bill before. They retreated again to the limits of the lights, and I swear I almost heard a buzzing noise as they plotted their strategy.

Ponderously, inevitably, they advanced. But now I saw their Master Plan. No less than a concerted attack from all sides, INCLUDING THE CEILING. The airborne formation proved to be too formidable. If we lifted the sprayer to attack them, the ones on the floor scuttled forward in darts to right and left. The wallbound ones, who seemed bigger than the other ones, moved forward in a sheer sheet of insectry. Bill was game, I'll say that for him. It was his house, and he was letting them know who was master.

As we fought a valiant rearguard action, he told me all about his previous conflicts with them. "So that's where they went," he panted, cutting a swathe through the packed ranks. "We all carried out a campaign against them last week, and thought they'd all gone."

In the nick of time, we backed through the fabric covering, and into the safety of the main room. "Bill," I breathed, "my suitcase is in there."

He looked shocked. "I'll give you covering fire," he finally decided. I made certain that the position he took up was one which gave me the most chance of success, and with a final cry of aggression to try to raise my hopes, I rushed in, grabbed the suitcase and rushed out again. Bill wasn't quite accurate with his fire, but having read on the cylinder that the fluid didn't stain clothing, I dismissed it from my mind.

"You'll have to sleep in Terry's bed," said Bill.

"Won't he mind?" I queried.

"People are always sleeping in his bed," Bill laughed.

To the strains of a jazz band recording and a soft shoe shuffle from the front room, I lay on Terry's bed. I didn't feel tired at all. I looked through the masses of books which lined the wall, and decided to be mundane. Ninety percent of the books were soft and hard cover editions of science fiction stories, but I chose a Raymond Chandler Phillip Marlowe story. Chandler has always fascinated me. He is one of those writers who, for some unknown reason, finds it necessary to exaggerate all the time. It seems queer to me, but there must be some psychological reason for it. To a factual writer like me, it seems totally unnecessary.

As I read, something distracted me. Marlowe had a bedroom next to the heroine's, and was about to open the door, but dammit, I had to look up. I saw a most uncanny sight shadowed on the far wall. Two huge cockroaches, about three feet long, were chasing each other. THREE FEET LONG. I looked behind me, and saw a large bedside lamp shade, and two cockroaches were chasing each other round and round the rim. The light from the lamp reflected their shadows on the far wall. Was it fate? I remembered that I had once written a story "Earwig Oh? Again," dealing with fans who suffered at the hands of insects. Now it was happening to me. Well, who was I to interrupt a potential cockroach seduction? I left them to their devices, whatever they were, and returned to Marlowe's!

I read about ten pages, and gradually slipped over to sleep. I don't know how long I was asleep, but something woke me up, and I saw that a cockroach scout had located me, and sat looking at me on the pillow. I knew there and then that I was going to vomit. It was a final accumulation of all the things which had happened to me in the last twelve hours....no sleep on the aeroplane....the great excitement at this chance-in-a-lifetime fan tour of America....the heat, which, during the early hours of the morning became even more humid, if such a thing were possible....the strange and exotic food at the Spanish restaurant, though it was my fault entirely that I had made an absolute glutton of myself....all these things meshed together. I got up from the bed and ran through the kitchen, across the flat roof where people were sitting and talking, up some metal steps onto a higher flat roof, across this roof to a wall which overlooked Cooper Square. I lay against this wall, and, wonder of wonders, from somewhere a soft cooling breeze emerged. I gulped great breathfuls into my lungs, and suddenly, the squealing brakes and screeching sirens, which had gotten into the background of my senses, became excessive.and my head began to spin. I lay against the wall, and vomited....and vomited.....

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At about eleven am on Friday, the 28th of August, Sandy Cutrell picked me up in his Volkswagon, and with Tom Condit in attendance, we drove to Dick Ellington's apartment. By the time I reached the apartment, which was many flights up, I felt like Sherpa Tensing. (In case you don't know, he climbed Everest.) Pat made us tea, and it was exactly like the tea I got back home, except it was made with little teabags, which I found cute but ostentatious. As a matter of interest, the tea Pat made was the nearest approach to home brew that I tasted in America. Americans seemed surprised when I seemingly adulterated my tea with milk and sugar.

We talked for a time, and then Pat suggested we go to Greenwich Village for a meal. I liked the idea. My nausea from the early morning had gone, and although I felt weak, the

heat had not yet become torrid, and my stomach felt empty. We piled into Sandy's car, and drove to the Village. Unfortunately, we couldn't find a place to park. Eventually, we came to a lovely vacant space by the kerb, into which his car fitted just exactly. A green car was behind us, and I saw a card on the windscreen which announced that the car was in the service of the local detective department. I grinned to myself, and turned to Sandy. "What does p-o-l-i-c-e mean?" I spelled out.

He looked blank. "There is a police car behind," I told him, "and you said it isn't permissible to park in New York on Fridays."

He didn't believe me. He gave me a look which demonstrated that he had expected such a sneaky show of humour from me. Condit looked out of the back window, and panted out confirmation. Sandy gripped the wheel, there was a blur of speed, and we were about five blocks away in as many seconds. It was no good. We could not find a place to park. Sandy let us out and drove away, and Pat, Tom and I (and the Ellington baby, of course) went into a restaurant. It was about 1 pm, and the place was crowded. It took some time before we were served. I had a bowl of hot soup and coffee and felt GOOD.

When we left, Pat headed in one particular direction, as if she were following a compass reading. Oblivious to traffic and passersby, she strode her way. Eventually, on Fifth Avenue, she stopped and went into a hotel. Tom and I stayed outside and played with the little girl.

Ten minutes passed by, during which time Tom and I controlled Marie Louise as a collie dog controls sheep. We followed her in and out of the hotel, stepping into the way when she directed her energies to places where little children shouldn't play, such as the roadway, for example.

Pat came out, and asked us to follow her. We went up in an elevator, and a bellhop took us to a room. What a room. The furnishings were superb, the decor artistic, the bed COMFORTABLE, the 21 inch TV screen ostentatious, the tiled bathroom and toilet smooth, and the view through the window magnificent.

"Is Bloch coming?" I asked in my innocence.

"This is your room," said Pat. "Is is air-conditioned, and in your present state, you won't get any rest unless you do have air-conditioning."

I sat down on the bed (and how delightfully it accommodated me) and looked in amazement at Pat, then at Tom.

I stammered and stuttered.

"But...but this room must be terribly expensive," I panted.

"That's all been taken care of," she said.

"By whom?" I asked.

"I'm not going to tell you," she said firmly. "It isn't me, I'll say that much. You have to have an air-conditioned room, and that's final. We want to get you in good shape for your tour, and we want you to come to Coney Island with us tonight. So I suggest you go to bed now, and have six hours good sleep, and we'll ring you about seven, and if you feel up to it, and only if you feel up to it, we'll call for you."

Pat and Tom left the room, and I lay down on the bed, and pondered. I had heard Pat say to Tom that the rent was \$14 per night. Gosh. That was the equivalent of five pounds in British currency, and only a really rich dignitary could afford such a lavish room. Question, who had paid for it? (Pat had told me that the room was booked until Sunday night, that was fifteen pounds in British currency.) Suffering Catfish. It was incredible that anyone could be so kind. I knew I needed a good sleep, in the coolness so apparent in this room. But, question again, who was responsible for the payment? I think I know who it was. I am almost certain. I taxed this person about it, and he (or she) looked at me blankly, and denied any knowledge of it. This is of course the sign of a true benefactor. To this person, and he knows I know it was him (or her) I can only say, in all humility, that because of this extremem generosity, I rapidly built up my strength. You see, this kind person didn't only stop there. He (or she) arranged for a "DO NOT DISTURB" notice to be put on my door. I don't know what he (or she) said to the management, but when I opened my door one day, outside I saw a large basket filled with fruit, pears, grapes, peaches and a big red apple, with a card expressing the good wishes of the management. To this unknown person (and I know it's you) I can only say how sincere-

ly I appreciate it all. You are kind, and because you refuse to accept the credit for this most generous act, I recognise even more the sterling qualities you possess. The only reason I don't print your name is because I may just be wrong. I know I'm not, 99.9 per cent sure of it. But YOU know how I feel.

With these thoughts in my mind, I lay down on the bed. I didn't take any of my clothes off, I don't think I had the strength. I rested my head on the pillow, and took one last unbelieving glance round the room, the epitome of luxury, before things became blurred and finally vanished.....

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The telephone awoke me. I recognised Dick Ellington's voice. He asked me how I was, and I told him the truth, that I felt in fine shape....that six hours' really deep sleep had done me the world of good. He said he would come and pick me up, but I told him I could find the Nunnery all right, and that I would walk round in about half an hour.

I got up off the bed and stretched. I went into the bathroom. The bath was so comfortable-looking I was almost tempted to bath, but I decided not to go to extremes. Instead, I had a shower. I tried to get a blend of hot and cold, but due to some defect (probably in my reasoning power) I could only get ultra hot or horribly cold. Whilst I twiddled the knobs I leapt adroitly in or out of the spray as the temperature dictated. I towelled myself with a towel that had a half-inch pile and was as big as a blanket. Maybe it was a blanket. I felt but good after a vigorous towelling.

I dressed, putting on my Harris Tweed sports jacket, opened the door, and bingo. A blast of heat stood like a barrier. I almost literally had to force myself forward to negotiate it. I made a great decision. I decided to go to Coney Island in my shirt.... my shirt and BRACERS...or suspenders, as they are called in America. I'd spent a week in Newcastle, County Down, a seaside resort, and my unconventional display of bracers caused a local controversy which spread to the local paper. To wear bracers was JUST NOT-DONE. But I had seen so many peculiar garbs in New York, especially in Greenwich Village, that I decided to take a chance. So with my bracers on permanent display, I gritted my teeth, twirled my moustache, took the elevator, crossed the foyer, and out into the street. No one looked...or at least, no one looked with any undue surprise or fascination.

Although I'd never traversed the route before, in twenty minutes of trial and error I found the Nunnery. A bunch of fans were waiting outside the Nunnery...Sandy Cutrell, Ted and Sylvia White, Bill Donaho, Pat and Dick Ellington, Larry and Noreen Shaw, and two people I'd never met before, and who were introduced as Jerry Marshall and Val. Jerry Marshall, it appeared, although not of a fannish disposition (relatively speaking, whatever that means) was a frequent visitor to the Nunnery. Val was his girl friend, a coloured girl of considerable beauty and charm, and with a really sweet temperament. It was unanimously decided to go over to a bar called rather esoterically, the 'Landmine'. We had iced Lager, Sylvia White had a Cola, and Pat Ellington invited me to play bowling with her....she pointed to a miniature bowling alley along a side of the room. If the ball knocked some of the skittles, various scores were illuminated on the scoreboard. The main idea was to try and knock all the skittles down with one ball. We had ten tries each, and several times I managed to knock all of them down with one bowl. The scoring seemed complicated, but the general consensus was that I'd won. I felt pretty good about that.

We went outside, and split into three groups, arranging to meet at Coney Island. In my group were Bill Donaho, Ted and Sylvia. Sandy drove off in his Volkswagon, with, I think, Larry and Noreen, and the Ellingtons and Jerry and Val crossed the road. It became a battle of wits as to which of the two remaining groups could get a taxi first. Bill Donaho stepped in the road many times in an attempt to flag one down, but it just wasn't our night. The Ellington group seemed to fare no better. They stood across the road, thumbs rampant, all to no avail. Suddenly, at my shoulder, I sensed an evil presence. I looked round, and saw a really rough looking negro. He had a long scar down the side of his face, and he looked real mean. He spoke....it seemed guttural to me, and Sylvia asked me if I understood. I shook my head. She said he was asking for a

handout. He addressed himself to Bill. Bill shook his head. "You're getting nothing, boy," he said firmly. The negro persisted. It was all very uncomfortable. Then a taxi drew up. We opened the door and scuttled inside. The negro stuck his head through Bill's window, and muttered away. I don't know what he said. I fancied I heard the word 'kill'. The taxi driver snorted and pulled away from the kerb. He explained that it was a good idea to give a handout in a case like that, because 'sometimes they become really violent'. I got the point all right.

The ride to Coney Island took about half an hour. It was fiannishly a pleasant time. I had a long talk with Ted White about various things. I refused to look out of the window, because I could tell by the squeal of brakes that the driver had another deadline to meet.

And Coney Island. What can I say about it? Is there another place like it in the world?

We left the taxi at the place we had arranged to meet the others. I was introduced to root beer. Pretty soon the others arrived, within minutes of each other. Bill Donaho led us to the CYCLONE. It was an infernal machine. It consisted of five little round trucks, attached to each other, which, suitably filled with idiots, disappeared into a mass of tunnels. Some moments later, it was ejected, and people staggered out of it, and we in the queue moved forward. We tried to get all the fans in the train at the same time, but couldn't manage it. I was in a little truck with Sandy Cutrell. We moved forward into the darkness. Suddenly, the truck became alive. We went up and down and sideways at violent speeds. I closed my eyes and hung on. I felt as if I was a refugee from an Edgar Allan Poe story. When I thought my last moments had come (I swear we looped the loop) the train came into the light again. "Let's have another go," said Sandy, full of enthusiasm. I tried to grin. I was not going to appear chicken. So I had to go around the blasted course again. It was even more horrible the second time. I swear if Cutrell had asked me to go round again I would have raised my fist to the sky and shouted supplication.

We staggered back to terra firma again, and Donaho was talking in horrible detail about the switchback. "It's much worse than the Cyclone," I heard him say. I imagined I could see him wink at the others, and that it was merely a joke. It wasn't, though. Donaho never said anything more factual in his life. We paid our money and got in the trucks which were to take us over the switchback. The truck moved off and turned a corner, and started to climb. We climbed for a considerable time..and finally we were poised at the top. So slowly the trucks negotiated the summit, and then gravity took over. It seemed to me that we were dropping vertically. And at the bottom of the drop centrifugal force plastered me to the bottom of the truck, and we whizzed upwards again, leaving my stomach behind....and I don't think that particular one ever came back! Up and over again. Once or twice I opened my eyes, just for the hell of it, and I saw Bill Donaho, who was next to me, with a gleam of pure happiness in his eyes, delighting in the torture. We whipped round a bend at an angle of about sixty degrees, and I can say without any doubt whatsoever that if centrifugal force had not squashed Bill against me, I would have performed a double flip at the apex of the bend before taking off for places west! The ride seemed to last forever. I opened my eyes again, and we roared round another bend, and I saw faces then the tops of buildings then the sky, and I just didn't give tuppence what happened to me. Slowly, we shunted to a half. I pulled myself out, and swayed slightly, and then turned to Bill, but he had handed the attendant more money, and signalled for me to get inside again. I grinned weakly and turned to the exit. I had lived through the terrible thing, and I felt that honour had been satisfied. But never, NEVER again!!

Bill Donaho, to my knowledge, went round the switchback five times. I had always previously regarded him as being perfectly sane, but when a man is such a glutton for punishment, who can tell? Rumour has it that Cutrell went round five times, too, but this I refuse to believe. He shows much more perception than to be so foolish.

I observed Jerry Marshall at the balloon stand. The far wall was covered with inflated balloons, and if so many were punctured by darts, beautiful fluffy dolls could be won. Marshall was at the stall for a considerable time. I don't know how many darts he

purchased, but a continuous series of shafts flashed from his fingers, and in time, he burst nearly all the balloons. Two of the stall attendants helped him, too; I think they regarded the complete annihilation of their balloons as inevitable, and Jerry Marshall gave me the impression of being the sort of man one didn't argue with. In fact, at one stage of the Balloon Bust, Jerry complained that he had handed over a \$10 bill and received the change for \$1. These stall attendants are mean, and in this case, two of them argued with Jerry, but he got his other \$9, as I knew he would. Eventually, possibly to get rid of him, the attendants filled his arms with big teddy bears and dolls and statues, and he took them and gave them to Val. I was very touched with what she did. She gave Sylvia and Noreen each one of the biggest and fluffiest of the dolls, and so the women were happy.

I went for a walk along Coney Island beach with Larry and Noreen. We talked about a great many things, some mundane, some fannish. Eventually, we went to a previously arranged rendezvous, and met the others. Cutrell and the Ellingtons decided to stay at Coney Island, but it was well after 1 am, and in deference to my fragility, the others decided on a home run. Jerry called up two taxis, and gave them certain directions, and the taxis played ducks and drakes with each other until, half an hour later, we drew up outside a hotel. At first I thought it was my hotel, and they were dropping me off, but we all got out.

"Jerry is taking us up to his apartment for a drink," explained Noreen.

We went up via the elevator. What a magnificent suite Jerry had. Someone mentioned they thought he'd been at another hotel, but Jerry explained that he'd had a party there and the management had objected. We sat around, and Jerry suggested drinks. We all nodded, and Jerry picked up the phone, and asked for drinks to be sent up. He wasn't pleased with the answer. It seemed there was no one they could send up, and the bar was closed, and they had no drink anyway. Jerry looked pensive. Then he spoke into the phone. He told them the position. He said he had guests in his suite, and that they wanted drinks, and that, by golly, he was going to make sure they had drinks. He gave them an ultimatum. He wanted a bellhop up immediately, or else..... He put the phone down, and we waited.

Fifteen seconds passed, and the door was rapped. Jerry opened it, and a bellhop stood quivering at the threshold. Jerry asked him in. Jerry asked us what we wanted to drink, and relayed the order to the bellhop. Jerry said it would be a good idea to bring some food up, too, and the bellhop nodded vigorously. Then came the climax. Jerry peeled off a \$100 bill and gave it to the bellhop. I closed my eyelids lest I lose my eyeballs.

Spurred on by the incentive of a good tip, the bellhop produced all sorts of wonderful drinks and eatables.

Jerry picked up the phone, and rang some mystic place called 'Birdland', presumably a jazz hall of some sort, because I recall Ella Fitzgerald singing a song 'Lullaby of Birdland', and I asked Jerry if that was the same Birdland, and he said it was. He invited us all to be his guests, and said that taxis would be coming at 3:30 am. But we all declined. Another hour went by, and we trooped downstairs and drove off in our taxi, leaving Jerry and Val waving under the awning of their hotel.

I was dropped off at my hotel, on Fifth Avenue; yeah, that Fifth Avenue, and with bracers still rampant but with a little of my swagger gone I walked across the foyer and got my key and went to my room. The 'DO NOT DISTURB' notice was still on the doorknob, and I left it there.

The room was so cool after the dense heat outside. The clean white sheets were thrown back, and they looked so inviting. I took off my shirt and trousers and got into bed. I remember reaching a hand out to switch off the bedside lamp. I don't think I quite reached it.....

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Once again my sleep was shattered by Dick Ellington on the telephone. I was completely bewildered when he told me it was 6 pm on Saturday. I'd slept right through the day, and that fifteen hours did me a power of good. I hadn't had any food, but sleep was what I wanted, and sleep I got. Ellington told me there was a party being held in my honour

at the Nunnery, and that lots of people had been invited, and that some of them, in fact, had arrived already. I told him to give me half an hour.

I showered, and walked round to the Nunnery. Lots of people were there, as Ellington had told me. Groups of them sat on the flat roof at the rear. Bill Donaho took me to the kitchen and waved a hand. The place was stocked with liquor...everything that the drunkard could wish for. Even bottles of ginger ale and cola for the lighter spirits. I circulated amongst the people, fans and non-fans, and then went to the roof garden. Donaho had set up a sort of grill, with strange cog-wheel shaped lumps of coal underneath. He threw petrol or a similar agent on the coals, and, well out of range, flicked a match at it. A sheet of flame belched out, and Donaho, with a professional air, tended the fire until it was a dull red. Then he spoke. He told everyone that they would find a mass of steaks nearby, and that it was every man for himself. He picked up a lump of steak as big as an armchair seat, and dropped it on the grill. I lifted my nostrils, and they twitched in appreciation. Noreen took me under her wing, and selected another huge steak. It took both hands for me to lift it. She told me how to grill it, and then thought better of it and said she'd grill it for me, whilst I circulated. I forgot about the steak until Noreen called me some fifteen minutes later. What a magnificent sight. I hadn't eaten for many hours, and I had to compress my lips to control my tongue. The steak was cooked perfectly, and it hadn't lost any of its size in the preparation. I grabbed a plate, levered the steak on to it, and attacked it with a knife and fork. I cut out huge chunks, and the juice ran down my lips. I poured myself an ice-cold beer, and then decided that the knife and fork ritual was too slow, as the steak was so vast that its perimeter was getting cold. I grabbed each side of it in my fists and gnawed into it as if I was starved. I was starved, actually. I don't know what the record time is for steak-shifting, but I reckon I came pretty close to breaking it. On top I poured another beer, and I could have faced anything.

I met many nice people. I'll see if I can recall their names....Ian McCauley, a presentable young chap....Ken Beale, whose name I recalled from HYPHEN days, and who proudly flashed a Frankenstein magazine in which he'd made a sale....Dave McDonald, who I thought to be quite a character and who proved it the following day, as you'll read....Alex Kirs, who came into the room in a space-like crash-helmet. At first I thought possibly he thought it was a fancy-dress ball, but it transpired he had come on his motor cycle... Joe Casey, a young ginger-haired New Jersey fan...Larry Ivie, another young New York fan with a serious expression, who didn't speak at all, but just drifted round the walls of the rooms....and of course, all the regulars were there, Ted and Sylvia White, Larry and Noreen Shaw, Dick and Pat Ellington and the baby, Sandy Cutrell, Jerry Marshall and Valand many other people who were non-fans, yet who were all very pleasant.

I was pouring myself a beer in the kitchen, and felt someone looking at me. I looked to my left and saw two young men, heck, young men indeed, they were little more than boys, about fifteen years of age, possibly.

They looked at me with wide innocent eyes.

"He doesn't recognise us," said one to the other.

"Look," I said, being non-committal. "There's hundreds of people here, and I know very few of them. So if you'll....?"

"I'm Les Gerber," said one.

"I'm Andy Reiss," said the other.

We shook hands.

Gerber was short (but then he's only fifteen) with spectacles, innocent eyes (weelll...?) and a sort of sheepdog expression. Reiss looked a little older, and a little less innocent, but then, looks are deceptive.

"I've got my zap," said Gerber.

"I'm sure it's a very nice one, Les," I said, "but there are a lot of non-fans, you know, and, I mean, it's easy to give the wrong impression."

"There's Donaho's cats," suggested Gerber.

I shook my head.

"That could be rough," I said.

I noticed that Reiss had a trench coat on. I don't know the temperature of the

Nunnery at that moment, but I would guess it was near a hundred in the shade. I opened my eyes wide, and saw sweat dripping from the sleeves of Reiss's trench coat. Sweat was pouring down his face, and forming rivulets down both sides of his nose. His tongue was somewhere down by his boots.

"It's very hot in here, Andy," I said. "Take off your coat."

How can mere words describe the look he gave me. It wasn't pity...it wasn't annoyance....it wasn't awe....I guess it was a combination of all three.

"But I'm a GDA agent," he said, surprised at my lack of logic, "and GDA agents wear trench coats."

He looked at me. I knew he wanted to know where mine was.

"It's very hot in here, son," I advised. But I don't remember his taking it off. I don't think he did. This was just the beginning. I was soon to learn how these two young neofans had clutched onto the GDA mythos with a vengeance!

Reiss called me over.

"Here, Goon," he said.

I staggered over, ready for anything.

"I've got my pornography," said Gerber.

"Duhhhhh?" I quavered.

"You know," said Andy. "Like, GDA men collect pornography."

"That's an allusion," I stressed, but Gerber went on to tell me that he had six different versions of "Lady Chatterly's Lover," and that he would bring me one on the morrow.

"I've got my RET file," said Les, and he whipped open a case he had been carrying, and sure enough, there were the copies, nestling comfortably in the leather.

I had mixed feelings about these boys' interest in RET and the GDA. They were so keen about the whole thing, and I sensed that they were taking it much too seriously.

"I've got something else for you," said Gerber happily. I went over, and he opened his case and pulled out a long cardboard box. He pulled a flap out and produced a long plastic pistol. Gerber demonstrated the mechanics of it. The trigger had four spurs, and long rubber bands were stretched over the end of the barrel and on to the spurs. It was therefore possible to fire several shots at one time. Gerber was all for me slipping it into my waistbelt and lurching forth amongst the fans, and challenging them to a duel. I told Leslie exactly what I felt, that it was very nice of him to think of getting the pistol for me, but I didn't want to use it at a party at which I was guest of honour. But I told him that it would be used in GDA stories, and he would get the egoboo for the new GDA armament. This seemed to satisfy him.

I circulated. Someone called my name, and a rather stout lady approached me, with a large parcel in her hand. Pat Ellington, whom I was talking to at the time, introduced me to Belle Dietz. She in turn introduced me to her husband Frank, and to George Nims Raybin. I'd heard so much about this trio during the last couple of years, and was delighted to meet them. Belle told me she had something for me. A crowd gathered round, and she pulled the top off a pink plastic case and revealed a large chocolate cake, with a 'Welcome John' signal on it. This was indeed a nice gesture, especially as Belle had made the cake herself. We ceremoniously bore it to the kitchen, and with due pomp I cut myself a slice, took a big bite, and found it very good, too.

I spread the word round that some scrumptious cake was in the kitchen, and I flattened myself against the wall to avoid being trampled underfoot.

I circulated. I had a long talk with Ted White about fandom and fanzines. It was a considerable help to me in judging the Ted White character, which for so long had baffled people. His written words had somehow conveyed a picture of a fan who was, how can I put it, rather embittered, or ultra cynical. This was obviously not true. The words had lied. Ted White was one of the nicest chaps I had ever met. He was honest and frank, and surely that is not a fault; and he was also considerate and helpful. His wife, a young and charming girl, Sylvia (nee Dees, of FLAFAN fame), looked so innocent and almost out of place. She looked like Alice in Wonderland. For a second I felt a paternal affection for her, and was about to tell her it was late and she should be at home. She told me she hated to look so young, and I told her how silly she was....that youth was a most precious thing. Notwithall, she showed a mature grasp of the fundamental things in life...

Once again, I circulated. I was talking to two non-fans. I don't know their names. They signed their autographs for me, but their writing is illegible. What I do remember about them is that they had won a trip to Bermuda in a raffle, and were shortly due to depart. We discussed their good fortune, when I suddenly espied Gerber running past, with panic in his eyes, looking furtively over his shoulder. There was a second's pause, and in hot pursuit of Gerber was a coloured gentleman about seven feet tall, sporting a white vest which displayed as nifty a set of biceps as I ever had the misfortune to set eyes on. He caught Gerber, there was a muffled struggle, and Gerber's zap was precipitated violently through the window of the Nunnery to the street below. The expression on the executioner's face led me to believe that Gerber can consider himself lucky that he didn't follow it.

Gerber was indignant about this summary jurisdiction. He came over to me and muttered wildly about various ploys he was going to bring into play to get his revenge. I told him he should have been careful who he zapped, and that if he had to zap someone, why a giant seven feet tall and built to match? Gerber complained some more. He expressed the opinion, without actually saying so in as many words, that he was a fully accredited GDA man, and as I was the chief GDA man in the whole organisation the least I could do was to go over to the coloured giant and castigate him severely for the evil deed, and perchance obtain restitution.

I realised that this was a point in my career where I was forced to exert myself in order to maintain my prestige....whatever prestige I had. Gerber had faith in me, therefore I had to do what I could to show this boy that his faith was not misplaced.

With my heart in my mouth, and forcing my feet forward, I went over to the giant. I learned his name was Paul. I took the line that I was the Guest of Honour at the party and I was drifting round talking to people. He bade me sit down opposite him, and introduced me to a friend of his, a girl, with whom, it seemed, he had been discussing the merits of the word 'gassy'. I soon learned that Paul thought the word to be wonderfully descriptive, and that the girl didn't like it one little bit. I was asked my opinion by both of them, and finally, as I knew would eventually happen, I was asked to arbitrate and give a considered opinion. I gave it against Paul. He was a mite annoyed at this, and it showed in his conversation, which was a little expressive. I glanced out of the corner of my eyes at Gerber, and winked at him, and from the smile on his face I knew that Les thought I had given the giant a thorough raking over for his utter audacity in disposing so ruthlessly of the Gerber Zap.

Things had worked out pretty well there, and I went out for more beer. Larry Shaw called me over, and pushed a big file in my hands. He explained that he had these original illustrations by Emsh, etc., from INFINITY and kindred pubs, and he thought that possibly I would like a few as souvenirs. I was thrilled at this generosity. I looked through them very carefully, and there were some superb examples, especially the scratch-board type. I chose half a dozen. One of them, by Schoenherr, depicted a man wearing a cloak running like mad towards a rocket which was illuminated by sheets of forked lightening. This illustration only took up half the board, and I thought what a marvellous idea it would be to get everyone at the Nunnery to autograph it. So armed with Dick Ellington's ballpoint pen I went up to everyone and got them to sign. The card shows that there were over forty people at the party. This illustration with its signatures is one of my treasured possessions. I am going to frame it, and by the time this story is read I hope that it will be hung in a conspicuous position in my room, so that whenever necessary I shall pause and ponder at the kindness of those New York fans and non-fans.....

At midnight, one or two people began to leave. Les Gerber and Andy Reiss left on the stroke of 12; Gerber's father came for them. I waved from the Nunnery window.

The party was enlivened by a character named Bruce Cameron Altshiller, who produced a set of bagpipes and retired to the guest room where he gave a solo performance. The people there appreciated it, I've no doubt. I'm sure that very few fannish parties in America have been thrilled by such unmelodious chords. I like to think he fixed the cock-roaches but good!

Round about three am the numbers had been reduced by half. Donaho came up to me and dropped a bombshell. "Try and see if you can make the people hang on for another hour,"

he babbled, his face wreathed in smiles, and a glass of neat Jack Daniels in his right hand. "The jazz band is coming at 4:30 am."

Could this be? Was it possible that Donaho had imported a complete jazz band? At 4:15 am, the jazz men made an appearance. A character called Vince, who was a frequent visitor to the Nunnery, was a drummer with the band, and after giving a session at a club in Greenwich Village, he'd brought the lot over with him for a one-night stand. They were pretty good. Ted had sent Sylvia home, but he explained that he would probably stay until about 6 am and listen to the jazz. They started to play after being oiled with neat gin, and they gave forth with some pretty solid stuff. Vince hadn't got his drums, but he found a cardboard box somewhere, and sat crouched over that with a look of utter contentment, strumming away with brushes. After a couple of warming-up numbers, the boys began to 'to give with it' (to quote an expression I heard at the time) and the heat was so intense that they stripped off to the waist, and with more gin (which I especially was sent to look for) they really got into the groove.

I would have loved to stay, but I knew I was to start on a long fan tour on Monday morning, and I had to get some sleep in reserve. I sought out mine host to offer him my congratulations at the magnificent fare he had set up. Bill was there, all right, but he was very very happy. He staggered to his feet, and his face bore the same highly delighted expression. He nodded as I thanked him, and his face didn't change. As I left, I looked back and saw him still staggering and still smiling. WHAT a man.

I walked round to the hotel, and got to my room at five-thirty am.

Although I was tired, I didn't go to sleep immediately, but lay back with my hands clasped behind my head, wondering if it was all true. Then I looked at my tongue in a mirror beside the bed, and I nodded to myself, and managed a wink, and knew it was!

I wondered what the afternoon would bring.....?

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I was awakened by the telephone ringing. It was Les Gerber. We chatted for about half an hour. He seemed to be edging.... I got the impression he was being evasive over something. Finally, he said he would come to the Nunnery that afternoon, when a meeting of the Futurians was being held. He said he would see me there. I knew something was on his mind. I wondered what. I went to sleep again immediately, and the telephone woke me again at 3:30 pm. Once again it was Ellington. He said that I should come over to the Nunnery as soon as possible.

I opened the window, and a blast of hot air hit me. So the heatwave was still on. I don't know if the New Yorkers considered it one, but I surely did. I showered, put on a new shirt, flipped my bracers over, and left for the Nunnery.

The same people seemed to be there. One or two/^{new}faces were evident, however.

Les Gerber came up with a wide grin and gave me a newspaper size edition of "Lady Chatterly's Lover." I accepted it in the spirit in which it was given, but I knew I'd have to unload it before returning to Belfast. I don't mind taking a chance, but a newspaper sized version?

Gerber also told me he'd brought four zaps up with him. I tried to restrain a shudder. I tried to tell him that there was a time and place for everything, but a big meeting of the Futurians was hardly the place. At the convention, I hinted, but not here. I knew Les wouldn't take any notice, and it came as no surprise to hear later from his very lips that the four had been forcibly taken from him.

Donaho did a tour of the rooms and told us all to congregate outside. Larry Shaw tapped his pipe on an empty beer bottle and called for order. He said that he proposed that I be voted as a retroactive member of the Futurians, and Bill Donaho seconded the motion. Before anyone had a chance to say 'nay', Larry tapped the bottle again, and announced that I was a Futurian. I staggered to my feet, and prepared to say a few words of thanks, but Donaho interposed and said that I would be making enough speeches at the Detention, and they would therefore spare me until then. I sought the bottle opener.....

We were all chatting on the flat roof a little later. Someone mentioned the famous telephone call I received in Belfast from Terry Carr in May, and I told them all about it: how the call had been circulated to the local police station, and how a car had come screeching for me at 11:30 pm, and how I'd been rushed to the station to await the call,

and five hours later, after losing fifteen shillings at poker, the call still hadn't come, and I went home. They were all laughing at my dramatic story...when a tremendous bang shook us, followed by another. It struck me immediately that a couple of Fanarchists in the basement had blown themselves up. However, some of the more knowing fans stood up and peered at another apartment about twenty yards away which housed Dave McDonald. I looked over there, and saw him and Andy Reiss grinning over at us. Then, to the right, another apartment window opened, and a woman shouted in some anger that someone in her room was about to succumb to shortness of breath, and these explosions weren't helping to postpone the inevitable. We shouted that it wasn't us, but she shook her fist and withdrew. Some moments of indecision passed and then a furious figure stormed on to the flat roof and confronted Donaho. It was the landlord. He had grey hair, a fat stomach and wore shorts. He harangued Donaho up and down the scale. Donaho persisted that we were quite innocent. The landlord would have none of it. He said that we were lying, and that he had in fact actually seen us throw one. This was nonsense; the fireworks had come from McDonald's. Donaho suggested that a firework thrown by 'those over there' had bounced off our roof, and that this was what the landlord had seen. The landlord persisted. A crowd of fans gathered round the landlord and shouted him down. I felt like joining them. Instead, I crept on to the higher roof, sneaked forward and snapped an active service picture of the unbelievable scene. (At the time I'm writing this, the picture hasn't been developed. If, however, it is up to standard I'll try my hardest to incorporate it in the foto sheet.) The landlord shouted something to the effect that "...you told me this sort of thing wouldn't happen again." I could see he was in doubt. He crossed the roof and shouted across to ask McDonald and Reiss if they had thrown it. They both denied the action, which I thought very unsporting of them. Probably McDonald didn't want to be evicted either, which I could understand, but his silence didn't seem to be doing a lot for Donaho's chances. I thought at the time that the least McDonald could have done, if he hadn't the courage to admit the action, was to have stressed that whoever it was, it wasn't us. But he didn't. Eventually, the landlord was swayed. We convinced him that we were quite innocent. He left, and as he passed through the door, Les Gerber shouted something at the top of his voice. I forget what it was. Anyway, it was a stupid thing to do. The landlord had just been pacified. After a lot of trouble we had convinced him that we were a sort of fairly quiet mob who wouldn't entertain such goings-on on the Sabbath. And Gerber almost spoiled it. Hans Stefan Santesson came over to Gerber, and gave him a paternal telling-off. One of the words he used was 'birdbrain.' Les didn't take this too well. Terry, the 9-5 chap, came over, and also gave Gerber a slating. Gerber didn't like this either. I tried to ease the situation. I told Gerber to sneak about on the upper roof with his zap, and I'd take a picture of him, which I did. I was sorry for Gerber that afternoon. I think people were too serious. One had to consider his age. He was by far the youngest one there, and his sensitive fannish soul felt the sting of these verbal attacks. Undoubtedly he deserved them, but from what I saw of Les, I'd say the fannish spirit is there all right, and all it needs is nurturing, and perhaps guidance. If treated properly, in the years to come he could turn out to be quite an asset to New York fandom.

With the landlord safely out of the way, we sat back a little and drank. Jerry Marshall suddenly stood up. He announced to the assembled throng that he was about to prepare a time capsule. Already he had quite a lot of items for it...several tape measures, which, when strung together, constituted Donaho's waist measurement...one of Larry Shaw's pipes...and several other unmentionable items. But, added Marshall, the capsule would not be complete 'without a hair from Berry's moustache.' General applause greeted this statement, and one or two wanted to know why he restricted himself to just one hair. I gauged the distance to the exit, and saw one or two well-built fans stand between it and me. Marshall asked for volunteers, and almost every hand shot up. Voices shouted out loud for knives, scissors, hatchets and clippers. Marshall shouted for silence. He said the most beautiful girl in the place could do it. All the girls looked at each other in confusion, then Jerry went to a middleaged woman, and told her to carry out the deed. She gripped my arm maternally, and assured me that I was quite safe in her hands. Someone handed her a rusty razor, and she wiped it expertly on the palm of her hand. "Head

back" she said, and I complied. The razor looked safe in her hands, but my nose is pretty big, and I didn't want it in rashers. She picked a long hair, and pulled it, until it was taut like a G-string. As she touched it with the razor I swear it hummed a high-C. I closed my eyes, and a round of applause signified that the operation was over. With great ceremony, the hair was dropped into an envelope held in Jerry's hand. In case any more hairs were required, I took the offensive and suggested a hair out of Ted White's beard would be useful, too. As they crowded round a protesting White, I turned round to slip away, and bumped into a young man with fair hair and handsome features, chewing gum. Elizabeth Taylor was with him. I staggered back, amazed, and the young man introduced himself as Dan Adkins. My heart pumped an extra few gallons of the red stuff. I was thrilled to meet this talented artist, and told him so. He introduced his wife as Janette. I told her she looked like Elizabeth Taylor, and I think she was pleased; but it wasn't flattery, it was true. I talked for a time with Adkins. He has personality plus, which is accentuated by the gum-chewing. He was the only person I met in America who chewed gum, and we across the ocean always regard Americans as gum-chewers.

I asked Adkins if he had an original he could give me, and he said he hadn't, but if he'd known.... He pulled out an art folio, and gave it to me to look at. It contained some superb artwork, in colour and black and white. Some talent. I asked him if he would do an original for me there and then, and he said he would be delighted. I got him a page, and he borrowed a ballpoint pen from someone, and drew a skillful picture, depicting an Adkins-type All American boy with a bottle in one hand and a glass in the other. One of my treasures, boys.....

Eney suddenly came through the door on to the flat roof. With him was a young woman with long hair, a cute little girl, and a young man, short, and with broad shoulders.

"Just in," he told me, "and I'm going away again to take Jean Young's daughter to her grandmother's."

I shook hands with Jean Young. The little girl with blond hair looked up at Jean and said, in a honey voice, "Mommy, is that John Berry?" It was then that I felt really famous...even a little girl had heard of me.

The young man was Larry Stark. He was quiet, had a cheerful countenance, and grinned.

Eney said that they would call for me early in the morning, and he went away with Jean and Larry.

I went into the front room, and talked to Val about music. She wanted me to hear a record by pianist and singer Nina Simone. Someone else wanted to play a classical piece, and I'm a classical fan, but this Val, what a beautiful girl.....I would have listened to 'It's a Long Way to Tipperary' sung backwards in Japanese twenty times if she'd wanted me to. As soon as the turntable was vacant, we rammed this record on, and as the chords sprayed out, we chatted about the record. Leslie Gerber came up and stood looking at us, and listening to us, and he looked quite happy. Noreen Shaw came through the door, and grabbed Gerber's arm. "I want to see you," she said. Gerber pulled away. He appeared rather baffled. Noreen held on to his arm. "Come with me," she said, and dragged him away. I wondered what was up. I sensed they might be going to play a hoax on me, or maybe they were going to ceremoniously return his zaps. I was continuing my discussion with Val when Gerber came back. He was white, and said that he'd had his face slapped. I asked him the why and wherefore, but he didn't go into detail. I felt that something was radically wrong, but it didn't concern me, so I didn't pursue the matter further. Poor Gerber. In trouble again. Les went away, I don't know where.

A little later, Adkins and his party left. Dan asked me to go back to his flat, but I apologised and said that I'd arranged to go back to Ted White's rooms. I said goodbye to him, his cute wife, Reiss, and several others, but no Gerber. I looked round for Les, but couldn't see him anywhere.

Round about six o'clock, Noreen, Larry, Ted, Sylvia and I left the Nunnery. We went for coffee in Greenwich Village, and went to Ted and Sylvia's apartment.

"Hello," said Ted. He picked up a letter inside his doorway, and handed it to me. It was from Les Gerber. He wanted me to telephone him that night. Again I had the impression that somehow, somewhere, we weren't quite making contact...there was something...

Sylvia made us a cold drink, and we talked, and Ted showed us some of his paintings.

Some of them were really talented, especially some of the smaller ones. Strangely enough, Noreen and I each picked out identical ones as being the best of the bunch. We had previously decided, quite independently, that our favourite word was 'Vermont'. She said that she'd become so attached to the word that she'd spent a week with Larry there, but I told her sure I liked the word too, but I wasn't prepared to go quite that far. The sum total was that, because of our artistic affinity, we were able to tell Ted White that our choices of his best works must therefore be really good. Ted let us choose a couple of his works, with the proviso that we frame them. I got one of the beautiful small ones, quite excellently done, and a larger one which lacked the finesse of the smaller, but had its points too. They will be duly framed, Ted.

Round about 10 pm, we left, and decided to call on the Ellingtons, who hadn't turned up that afternoon. We watched a film on TV, "The Woman They Almost Lynched." Every time a climax came, the film switched to commercials. I felt like putting my foot through the screen. The gimmick in the film was that instead of two men approaching each other down the main street of the Western town, they had two women doing so. I wiped my eyes and asked Pat if I could use the telephone. I got Gerber's number via Information, and dialled him. I spoke to him for some moments. He seemed apologetic about his behaviour at the Nunnery. I said what behaviour? He said he wanted to see me, and I asked him if he was coming to the convention. He said he couldn't afford it. He asked me to drop him a card from the Detention, and tell him when I would be in New York again. I wanted to know why, but I didn't ask. I told him I would do so.

Pat brought in large mugs of ice-cold beer, which cooled me down. The heat in New York hadn't abated, if anything it was worse, and I sighed with relief at the thought that on the morrow I would be on my way into the country, where I hoped the temperature would drop.

It was well after 1 am when we left Pat and Dick's. I walked a little way with Ted and Sylvia and Larry, then we parted and I walked back to my hotel.

As I walked the streets, I thought about the basic phenomena which was New York. Looking at it objectively, in the early hours of the morning, without anything else to cloud my mind, I tried to dissect New York, to cut it up into component parts, to try to come to some conclusion about it....possibly a few trite phrases which would sum it up. It was no use. The place was so diverse.

I looked in the doorways as I passed by. In many of them, dirty men, with torn shorts, lay there, with piles of newspaper as pillows. Some of them had a strange and nauseating odour....a combination of unwashed flesh and drink-sodden breath. Some were negroes, but it seemed to me that the biggest percentage were white. Occasionally, I would pass a much younger man sitting on a doorstep with his head in his hands. I saw this several times this Monday morning. They didn't look up as I passed by, and when I looked back, they were in the same position.

Three times on that walk, men crossed the road towards me when they saw me, and asked for money. One particular one, who was insistent, said he had just come from Chicago. I told him I'd just come from Belfast. He stepped back a place, and put his hand in his pocket, and for a moment I thought he was going to give me money. He didn't though; he crossed the road again and lay down in the doorway. I recall that I was talking to Ted White about the Nunnery, and he said, "Oh, if you happen to come back to the Nunnery early in the morning, and find a man lying across the doorway, don't worry. Step over him, or, if he's awake, he'll get up and let you pass." It seemed somehow unreal, that walking down a street....just one street...or should I say block....half the doorways had inhabitants. And even worse, sometimes they were there during the day, and people walked by and took no notice, as if they were ashamed of this human flotsam.

To the accompaniment of this, to me, grim feature of New York, was the ever-present sound of sirens, and the screeching of brakes as cars whipped round corners, or met at an intersection. No matter what time I was on the streets at night, these two noises were ever-present, and I began to feel uneasy if I didn't hear them.

Round Washington Square, which was near my hotel, there were always groups of people sitting and talking in the middle of the night. It was quite an experience to stand by the arch at Washington Square, and look down Fifth Avenue, and look up at the many-

storeyed illuminated buildings, and to see the neon signs flashing all around.

New York also had its own smell, I discovered. It may have been presented more forcibly by the humidity, but everywhere I went, Times Square, the Bowery, the Nunnery, my hotel.....it was always the same.....not an unpleasant smell by any means, it reminded me of smouldering rope....

I reached my hotel....

I'm sure the hotel staff discussed amongst themselves what a strange client I was. I came in every morning in the early am's....I had 'DO NOT DISTURB' notices on my door all day, and I didn't eat.

For the last time I asked for my key, went up the elevator, and unlocked my room, 9JJ.

I showered and shvaed before going to bed, because I knew that Eney would be round for me early in the morning. For the last time I looked at my luxurious surroundings. I knew that never again would I be in a \$14 a night hotel room. The last few days had been choice, and I swear if I hadn't had that air-conditioned room I'd have dehydrated.

After my short bout of heat exhaustion, I'd recovered. I felt good, ready for anything.

For the last time I tested the comfort of my luxury bed. Where would I sleep the following night.....?

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CHAPTER 3

ENEY DOES IT

At my hotel on Fifth Avenue, I was always being roused from my sleep by the telephone. I had a 'DO NOT DISTURB' note on my door, and I was safe from annoyance, but I depended upon fans to keep me right. I didn't eat at the hotel at all, just slept, and awaited the fannish signal to gird my loins and go places.

So, at 8:15 am on Monday, 31st of August 1959, the telephone jingled. This time it wasn't Ellington. It was a woman's voice.

"Yeah, this is Berry," I croaked.

"Jean Young," I heard. "I'm in the foyer. Eney cannot park his car, and he's driving round and round the block."

"I'll be down in ten minutes," I hissed.

I leapt out of bed, bundled all my clothes into the suitcase, took a last desperate look round the room, and scurried out.

I checked out downstairs. I asked if I owed anything, and they said 20 cents for a telephone call. I didn't recall making on but I paid up. The desk clerk asked me if everything was OK, and I said thanks for the bowl of fruit.

I went across to Jean Young, sitting in the foyer. She was tall and nice looking, and I liked her hair style....a sort of flamboyant pony tail. We crossed the road and opposite the hotel a green car, Eney's car, shot into view. It screeched to a halt.

"Quick, inside," snapped Eney. I thought he was taking this parking business too seriously, but I heaved my suitcase into the car and didn't let go. I climbed off Larry Star, took the suitcase out of his mouth, and bundled down beside him.

I lay back in the back seat of the car, and looked at Jean Young's head. Such a long pony tail, with a cute little sort of white fastener on top. And as I looked, a little face peered at me over Jean's shoulders.

"This is Butch," smiled Jean. He clambered over the seat into Larry Stark's lap. His big eyes looked at my moustache. Little pudgy fingers tentatively crept up and explored the wings at the end of it. He looked down to my chin, and tried to focus on something which wasn't there.

"Andy has a beard," explained Larry. I flashed the baby what I hoped was a fatherly look, and he turned away in disgust and looked out of the other window.

Dick Eney had been fairly quiet. He concentrated on his driving, and I was with him all the way. If he'd looked round for a split second, thereby taking his eyes off the road, even though he was only doing sixty, I swear I'd have had perniipsii with acute dihedral. We reached the Holland Tunnel, and poor Eney had to pay a toll. I couldn't understand why he had to do so. He explained that it was to pay for the tunnel and its upkeep. I explained that toll wasn't paid in the British Isles, and as America was so much richer, I couldn't, no matter what he said, see the faintest reason why the ordinary man should have to pay for his own communications. Eney agreed with me, of course, but the fact remains he didn't get through that tunnel until the toll was paid.

I must say the tunnel was almost worth the toll. It was clean and neat, and cars raced along it at about fifty miles an hour. I was impressed with it. After a time we reached New Jersey, and after driving a short distance, I'm danged if Eney didn't have to pay another toll. Well, actually, he turned onto the turnpike, and was given a brown card about six inches long, which he carefully stuck on the dashboard, but, he said, he'd have to pay more than a dollar when he left the turnpike. Trouble was, he grouched, we'd probably be on a lot of turnpikes that day, at least three. I began to see Ellington's point of view about things. It seemed to me absolutely monstrous that a journey into America should be such a mercenary business. Eney pointed out the logic of it, though. It wasn't necessary to travel on the turnpike. It was quite easy to get from A to B without riding the turnpike. But it was much easier to travel by turnpike, well worth the toll. The roads were good and wide, and allowed an average speed of seventy miles per hour. When the cost per passenger was worked out, it was very cheap. But I persisted. I knew a road was opened in England recently, a wide multi-lined road, probably as modern as anything in America. I admitted quite frankly that within six weeks of its official opening, the frost caused the surface to crack, but it was the principle which counted. I mentioned the autobahns in Germany, superb, massive highways which served their purpose equally as well as the turnpikes, and there was no tell. Eney shrugged. He said we had a helluva way to go, and we wouldn't be able to maintain a tight schedule unless we travelled the most expedient way. I was to discover fairly soon that the turnpike toll was nothing when compared to the...well, wait until I come to it.

We travelled for some distance, then stopped for a snack at a roadside restaurant, Howard Johnson's. The place was clean and tidy, and the prices reasonable, and Eney explained that Johnson's pretty well had the monopoly on feeding people on the turnpike.

I sent three airmail cards to my family, showing views of New Jersey. I think from then on I sent them airmails every day, showing almost every place we stopped at.

We drove on and on through Pennsylvania. I spent all my time looking out the window at the passing countryside. It was all wonderful. I absorbed every facet of the scenery ...the houses, barns, roads, cars, people, fields, hedges, everything. Time passed so quickly.

Some time in the early afternoon we left the turnpike, and continued along Route 11, towards Hagerstown. I noticed suddenly that every time Eney braked, the car developed a kangaroo propensity. And, worse, each succeeding time, the leaping motions became more intensified. Eney mentioned something about an air bubble in the hydraulic system, or something equally potent. Every time we had to slow down and stop I felt the palms of my hands become sweaty. Each time Eney had a more difficult task. The time arrived when I knew that if a road junction suddenly appeared, no matter what confronted us, we would not be able to stop. In one village, outside Hagerstown, we were stopped by a red light, and even though Eney was only travelling at about fifteen miles per hour, I knew the only way it could be stopped from going through the red light was by taking off and flying over it. Eney tried everything he could, short of abandoning ship. He

brought down the gears, he pumped the brake for all he was worth, he pulled back the handbrake as far as it could go. If he'd pulled any harder he would've pulled it out of the floorboards. With all these means, plus willpower and the subtle displacement of his vast bulk, he made the car stop with a horrible scraping noise about a car's length past the red light, which, at that moment, turned green.

Larry Stark whispered to me that Eney was going to get / ^{the} brake fixed at an AAA garage, to save money, and he hoped there was one in Hagerstown. I joined in fervent prayers for the rapid appearance of an AAA garage.

We went our tortuous way to Hagerstown. I sloshed about in a pool of sweat as we followed Eney's memorised route to 423 Summit Avenue, the home of hermit fan Harry Warner, Jr. Harry was not in. Eney decided to get the car garaged and then look for Harry. We drove to several garages before we could find one that stocked the necessary parts to repair the brakes.

Whilst Dick Eney carried out negotiations with the proprietor, Jean, Larry Stark and myself crowded round a coffee machine. I was absolutely flabbergasted when Jean told me that not only did the machine serve four distinct types of coffee, i.e., neat, with cream, with sugar, with cream and sugar, but it also gave the correct change from a quarter. This I had to see, being a provincial; so I inserted a quarter, turned the level on the top to coffee with cream and sugar, and pressed the lever. It was almost uncanny to watch the performance. I looked down at a recess, and there was a sort of 'plop' and a paper cup dropped from the innards of the machine. A few seconds pause, and by some mysterious means a tap was turned on and the coffee dribbled out directly into the centre of the cup. Another pause, a soft hum of machinery, and my change dropped into another recess. Wonderful.

I must confess that the coffee didn't taste very nice, but I had no gripe. The performance was well worth the fee.

Eney came back and said the car would be repaired in a couple of hours, so we all crossed the road to a cafe, where I had my first blueberry pie. It was good.

Fed and watered, Eney organised the Hunt Warner Campaign. We telephoned to his house. No Warner. Eney suggested a walk to the newspaper office where Warner worked. It was a very neat building, which oozed efficiency. Eney disappeared inside. No Warner. Was there a Warner, I wondered? After the Joan Carr and Carl Brand hoaxes, anything was possible. Eney was particularly puzzled because he had written to Warner and said that we would be passing through on that day. More enquiries at the office revealed that Harry was out of town interviewing someone for the newspaper. So that was that.

We walked back to the garage. On the way, Jean suddenly gave a scream and rushed to a heap of rocks which constituted one end of a vacant lot. For a second, I thought the strain of no brakes and no Warner had been too much, and she was about to perform a spectacular hari kari by doing a double flip from the summit of the rocks. Not so. She got down on her hands and knees and started to scrabble at the rock with her fingernails!

Was this a strange American rite, I pondered, which was performed at certain times of the day, whereby young wives, separated from their husbands (Andy, Jean's husband, was at an Astronomers' Conference in Canada) could, through the media of direct contact with Earth and a hunk of ESP, obtain a temporary telepathic reunion?

It was not so. Jean had spent five years studying geology, and at the sight of a naked strata she could not resist the search for fossils. We dragged her away.

Back at the garage the car had been repaired. It was a different Eney who drove away. The extreme nervous tension of driving a brakeless car had gone, and was replaced by an exuberant, carefree nonchalance.

We drove southwards, toward Washington D.C. The distance was 80 miles or so, and as we left Hagerstown, and got further into Maryland, the ground became more hilly and the scenery more entertaining. My head buzzed round like a radar scanner as I attempted to take in all the various aspects of the countryside at once.

Near the outskirts of Washington, we drove through Chevy Chase. I mentioned to Eney that I once corresponded with a fan from there, one George Spencer. Eney said he remem-

bered, but he hadn't heard much of Spencer for a long time.

As we entered Washington, I was very much impressed with the way it was set out and the neatness and cleanliness of the buildings. It seemed that the local population took a pride in their habitat. Soon, we were in the centre of the capitol, and Eney drove the car at slow speed round all the major sights. It was beginning to get dark, the sun had set, and illuminations began to show the places to even greater advantage.

The Lincoln Memorial was magnificent. As we circled it, I saw the vast statue of Abraham Lincoln sitting in a pensive pose, gazing out over Washington. It was, alas, too dark to take pictures, dearly as I would have wished, but the next morning I was able to obtain postcards of this and the other places.....the Jefferson Memorial, the Capitol Building, the White House....and send them to my family, for me to collect when I got home again!

Eney drove through Washington. I was under the impression that he was driving to his home in Alexandria, but we drew up outside a house half an hour later, and I saw other cars parked outside, and Eney muttered something to the effect that the others were there already.

I followed Eney, Jean (carrying Butch) and Larry up a lot of steps and into a house. I peered over Eney's shoulder, and saw a long room, with bookshelves round it, and people sitting there expectantly.

We were at West Beech Drive, the residence of Miss Cullen, where the Washington fans gathered for their meetings.

I was ushered inside, and introduced to everyone, and told that I was Guest of Honour for the evening. I was taken by surprise, and it was some moments before I settled down. I recognised Bob Pavlat from his photograph, and, looking at him from a side view, it struck me immediately that he bore a very close resemblance to the TV and movie comedian Bob Hope. I told Bob so, and he appeared to be shocked at the comparison. I went round and spoke to everyone. I was very pleased to see George Spencer, and I was able to tell him that I'd been speaking of him earlier, and he seemed pleased that he'd been remembered. He gave me copies of his OMPazine GRIFFIN, and one of the copies had a reasonably vacant front cover, so, as a souvenir of the meeting (and also, indirectly, as a means of remembering everyone who was there without being rude and writing the names down) I asked them all to autograph it. The names read as follows: George Spencer, Bob Pavlat, Larry Stark, Bill Evans, Phil Bridges, Dick Eney, Robert Christenberry, Bill Berg, Elizabeth Cullen, Phyllis Berg, Don Studebaker, Juanita Derry, Chick Derry and Jean Young.

The Derrys arrived half an hour after my arrival, and I recognised Chick Derry without hesitation from the ATOM illo in an old RETRIBUTION. Some fans had told me at various times that the ATOM Chick Derry was not accurate, but take it from me that it is a striking likeness, which is even more surprising when I tell you that ATOM drew the cartoon with two facts available...that Derry had a big nose and a thin moustache. I must write an article later on the divine prowess of ATOM, or the chance in a million coincidence!

Robert Christenberry is, as most of you know, deaf, and for some time I sat beside him, and we scribbled messages to each other. Then I noticed a young man floating about in the background. He came up and challenged me to a 'noxious fluid drinking contest'. I had had several cans of beer, and felt game for anything, so with an entranced audience, this young man, Don Studebaker, prepared the brew. As the contents of the drink became more varied and amazing, I was forced to enroll the assistance of an official sniffer, whose duty was to examine each ingredient and ensure that it came within certain defined categories of good housekeeping! My sniffer was Larry Stark. At first, his duties caused him some amusement, but as the ingredients grew, and the fiendish Studebaker mind became more and more embroiled with the horrible thing he was preparing for me, Larry took his duties more and more seriously. It became the accepted thing for me to call 'Sniffer' at the top of my voice, and Larry would come running, and I would point a warning finger at a bottle of Worcestershire sauce, or an almond, or a bottle of Sauterne, which Don was flourishing, preparatory to mixing it up with the other stuff (and I use the word 'stuff' advisedly) in the two identical receptacles. The crowd became quite enthusiastic at this unusual contest. I felt highly confident, because for some years I had lined my intestines with Guinness, which is a highly prized brew in Belfast. Moreover,

this Don Studebaker was a young chap, he couldn't have been more than seventeen, and compared to him I felt like an old campaigner. I had been taking crafty nips of beer before he had been weaned. So I stuck my chest out and I told everyone that, right enough, the concoction did appear stronger than that which I was used to, but my superior experience would tell when the actual drinking began, and I warned them to prepare a bed for Studebaker! Before Studebaker commenced the contest, I prevailed upon him to jot down the ingredients, because I figured that he'd soon be incapable, and I needed the information for my memoirs. This is what he jotted down:-

A Berry Special

One cap Peach liqueur

Half shot rum

One cap Vodka

One shot Liebsaumilch Special

One shot Lake Elvira canandaigia

One shot sauterne

Two shots orange juice

One sweet gherkin

One maraschino cherry

Two unsalted almonds

Two ounces ginger ale

Half slice pineapple

One onion

One olive

Stir, ice, place peg on nose and drink.

(his writing became a little blurred here, because of the effect of the fumes, but I've deciphered to the best of my ability.)

I must say that Studebaker is more than modest. My sniffer tells me that he definitely supervised the submersion of ten drops of Worcestershire sauce in each receptacle. This I believe. The three shots of Jack Daniels Studebaker slipped in on the sly did not go unnoticed by my sniffer, but as I was a guest I thought it courteous not to complain. Besides, I like Jack Daniels. I myself observed Studebaker sneaking about surreptitiously with a half bottle of gin, and I have it on good authority that he was seen in the close proximity of the receptacles with the bottle held at an angle of 45 degrees. This I also believe.

Satisfied that he had done his devilish best, Studebaker called everyone to him and announced that the contest was about to take place. My sniffer came up and announced that he had supervised the preparation of the concoction, and that while he wasn't exactly certain what had gone into the two receptacles, he could say without any doubt whatsoever that what had gone into one had gone into the other.

The Washingtonites stood silent as Studebaker and myself raised the tall metal holders upwards, and, with a flourish, put the rims to our lips. I looked out of the corner of my eyes at Studebaker. He looked out of the corner of his eyes at me. I raised my tin a fraction and sipped. I kept my mouth closed lest my teeth fall out...and I don't wear false ones. Studebaker seemed to close his eyes, and he tipped his container way up. His face underwent a series of contortions, ranging from bliss to sublime terror. He put his holder down, and his eyes spun round and round like a pair of synchronised roulette wheels. I gradually tiptoed backwards until I felt the wall behind me, and I allowed myself the doubtful luxury of another sip. This battle went on for an hour or more. People came and went, but someone was always near the sink, so that we couldn't sneakily get rid of some of it, or, as I wanted to do, the rest of it.

Phyllis Berg, who was on sentry duty, approached me when Studebaker was trying to stop his teeth from chattering, and suggested I should tip the contents into the sink, and she would fix me up with a good neat rum. I gave her a look of pure annoyance. Did she think I was so unsporting as to do that, I asked? I puffed myself up in indignation. This was just not cricket, I said. The very idea of it.

I must be frank here, though, and say I thought it was a brilliant suggestion. And, to be even more brutally frank, I would've done it, too, except for the fact that I couldn't move. The brew had somehow paralysed my knee muscles. I could wiggle my toes, and sway my hips, but my knee caps had become rigid. Studebaker opened his eyes again,

and sipped some more, and then began to sway from side to side like a pendulum, with a bewildered expression on his face. I took another sip, and one of my knees collapsed, and I swallowed more than I had intended. The grim tourney continued unabated. I wanted to water the remains of my drink down with neat rum, but I knew that Studebaker would claim a victory, as I'd weakened the mixture. However, he did condescend to allow me to drink neat rum in another receptacle, which I thought very sporting of him.

I can never express, with mere words, what a delight it was to come to the fruit salad. Admittedly the brown skin had peeled off the almonds, and the olive had shriveled to the size of a pea, but to actually see something solid was a tremendous relief. I don't like gherkins, and Studebaker allowed me to spit mine out. The pineapple tasted as if it had been pickled in disinfectant, and my teeth couldn't make any impression on the cherry.

Eney appeared at this juncture, and said it was time we were going. I grinned my thanks, and then found I couldn't straighten my lips again. So I went round and shook hands with everyone, and hoped they didn't notice the rather fixed expression my face bore.

Pavlat gave me a postcard, which had a coloured picture of a girl in a bathing costume. I turned the card over and saw it was from Bob Madle. He was at Cape Canaveral, but expressed the wish that I'd have a good time in the States. I thought this was a nice thing to do, especially as I had said one or two things about Madle winning TAFF in 1957. In fact, as you'll read later, my discovery of the real Madle was one of the highlights of my American tour.

Someone helped me into Eney's car, and opened the windscreen right down, and he drove off to his home in Alexandria, in Virginia. The fresh air did its best to remove the effects of Studebaker's Folly, and by the time we got to 417, Ft. Hunt Road, I felt pretty good.

We tiptoed into the house, so that we wouldn't waken his mother, and Eney guided Larry and myself to the basement, where his den was. And what a den. I wasn't really in form to notice the finer points of it, but it looked vast. Eney knocked together two beds, and Larry and I collapsed on them. I must have been in an inebriated fog, because Larry asked me what time it was, and I looked at a thing which I could have sworn was a barometer. Next morning, though, it was a clock, unless Eney had changed it. I don't think he did.

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Tuesday morning, I awoke when I heard Larry in the bathroom. I felt in superb condition. With some care, I lifted my head, but no hangover. Maybe I'd dreamed about the Studebaker session. But I was brought back to reality when I ran my tongue over my lips. I might as well have used a nail file. I looked in the mirror in the bathroom, and my tongue was pale blue, but I felt good, and that was the main thing.

Upstairs, in Mrs. Eney's dining room, I thought for a moment I was back in my hotel in Fifth Avenue. The house was spotless, and the breakfast table set so fastidiously that I almost said Grace before starting on my bacon and egg!

At about ten am we started north, and traversed our route of the previous day back to Hagerstown. Eney was determined that Warner should not escape our clutches.

It took us less than two hours to do the journey, and once more Eney parked the car at 423 Summit Avenue. Eney was quietly elated. He felt that the hermit-like propensities of Warner would not allow him to expect a counter attack quite so soon. The rest of us sat in the car, tense with excitement as Eney, with his military training behind him, warily approached the front door. I thought he might have put Larry or me at a vantage position at the back door. But Warner must have realised he was cornered, and in a minute or so Eney triumphantly came out again with Harry Warner at his heels.

Harry was thin and bespectacled, with an intellectual forehead. He bade us enter his house, and we did so. The house had a sort of old fashioned air about it. Harry showed us his collection of classical records, he had hundreds of them. For a short time we spoke fannish matters. He apologised for his inability to provide us with fodder, but said if we followed his car, he would take us to a suitable place for refreshment.

He took us through Hagerstown to a restaurant. We ordered food; I had soup and coffee,

and when we'd finished, Harry collected the checks and paid.

Outside, where the cars were parked, I saw Larry get his suitcase out of Eney's car, and he came and said goodbye. It seemed, from what he told me, that he was a book salesman in Cambridge, Mass. (where Jean lived) and as high school was starting soon, it was the busiest time of the year, and he'd have to get back.

I was sorry to see Larry go, although I'd only known him a day. Warner said he would take him to the bus station, so after suitable goodbyes, Eney swung north.

I thought about the Harry Warner phenomena. He never goes to conventions, and yet is by all definitions a trufan. He is a prolific writer and publisher, and a vile pro to boot. Whilst we were treated with consideration and kindness, I must place on record the fact that I feel Harry is not really too keen to have fans buzzing around 423 Summit Avenue. I got the impression that whilst his natural inclination was to be an effusive host, this was tempered by the realisation that to be so would invite too many fans, and, being a hermit, this was not desirable. My impression could be quite wrong, but my memoirs would be incomplete if I did not print it.

We drove a considerable distance before reaching yet another turnpike. One thing happened before we actually hit the turnpike. Eney stopped for petrol on the roadside, and I saw a shack a little way down the road, with baskets of peaches for sale. I asked Jean if she'd like a peach, and she nodded, and whilst Eney was paying the attendant, I walked down to the stall. No one was about. I went to the shack nearby and rapped my fingers on the warped door. The force of my knock made the door swing inwards, and I saw a girl, about seventeen, maybe a little more, draped over a couch. When she saw me, she said "Uh--huh?"

"Peaches," I said.

She sighed languidly. She stretched with feline grace. She got up and swayed towards the door with a torrid smile. It reminded me of a shot from "Baby Doll."

She went past me to the stall, and I wet my lips and followed her. I stumbled over a couple of baskets of fruit, but that didn't matter.

"How many?" she sighed, trying to stifle a yawn. I forced my eyeballs towards the baskets of peaches. I saw a notice above some of the baskets which said merely '79 cents'. Now here was my problem. In Belfast, peaches are are very expensive. Of course, the price fluctuates according to the season, but I'm not exaggerating when I say that individual peaches cost about half a crown, i.e., almost 40 cents. Now what did this notice '79 cents' mean? Was it per pound, or for half a dozen? One thing I was sure of, it couldn't be the whole basket. That would be impossible.

"How many?" she said again. Her eyes were almost closed, and her eyelashes fluttered as she spoke.

"Um, there's three of us," I stammered, trying to keep my eyes on the peaches.....I mean the fruit.

She slowly opened a big bag and poured half the contents in.

"Fifty," she said.

This I could not believe. The peaches were big and in ripe condition, and in Belfast a five pound note wouldn't have catered for much change. I thought possibly she was asleep on her feet and said the first thing that came to her mind.

I slapped four bits on the counter (notice how cleverly I'm bringing in the local jargon?) and, with a backward glance that didn't last more than two minutes, I went back to the car.

Eney maintained a steady seventy miles per hour on the turnpike. The scenery was entertaining. Forests seemed to surround us, and the terrain was hilly, and I recall we went through four really long tunnels in the hillsides. Several times we stopped at Howard Johnsons on the turnpike and had small repasts....usually coffee and pie; I really flipped over the choice selection of contents in the pies....cherry...blueberry....apple, etc.

The turnpike was long and straight, and occasionally cut through small hills, showing the various strata. This was too much for Jean. She pleaded with Eney to stop and let her examine the rocks, to see if she could discover any fossils. During the journey, she

had given me some information about geology, and how good it felt to potter about and actually discover a fossil. Jean told me that during her study of geology she had actually discovered a fossil of a shell which did not come into any specific category, and was probably something completely new and unknown. She explained that the colleague with whom she was working wanted to get all the credit for the discovery himself, and by a series of subterfuges, managed to squeeze her out of her rightful egoboo. This seemed to touch a soft spot in Eney's heart, and although he wanted to maintain a tight schedule, the sight of Jean's pleading eyes and pouting lips brought out the best in him, and he eventually drew up beside a particularly fruitful-looking rock face.

Eney sat back in the driver's seat, with a long-suffering expression on his face, and Jean and I, like two oldtimers looking for gold in Montana in the '90's, ran at top speed from the car to the face, and started throwing lumps of rock over our shoulders as we each strove for the honour of being the first to discover a fossil on the Berry Tour.

About thirty feet up the sheer side, and hanging on by a finger nail I'd forgotten to chew off when the brakes failed, I saw the shape of a shell in a rock. I let out a whoop of utter bliss, and even Eney was infected by my enthusiasm, and he got out of the car and came underneath me.

"I've found one," I yelled, and he thumped down the turnpike a short distance, and told Jean. She panted back, and shinned up the rock face to join me. She was oblivious to flying skirts and the miniature landslipde which threatened to engulf Eney. In the meantime, I'd attempted to wrestle even further egoboo by removing the fossilized shell from its surroundings. I know now that such an activity requires time and sensitivity. I pushed hard against it with a sharp rock, and it broke into many pieces. I grabbed one small chunk as it bounced away, and tendered it to Jean as if it were a ruby. She examined it, and said that, correct, it was a fossil, and even though only a little of the rim of the shell was left, she classified it, and gave me the group, which sounded complicated, and which I forgot in about ten seconds.

We returned to the roadway. I came down the sheer rock face with the dexterity of a crab with arthritis, and Jean, showing a wealth of experience, turned on her back and slid down on her unmentionables!

Eney rammed the car into gear, and shot away with the speed of a man who knows he's just had his brakes fixed.

Butch was asleep, and it gradually grew dark. It started to rain, not very much, but persistently. Jean muttered some obscure pun which had something to do with 'driving rain', and the rain came down a little heavier. I thought, quite correctly, that my prestige depended on my making a really brilliant pun. I had the pun in my mind, but to present it as spontaneous required some considerable maneuvering. Put yourself in my place: In order to rap out this pun as though it had just hit me, I had to bring the conversation round so that someone would bring up the subject of a woman who'd had lots of children but wasn't aware of the cause of their conception. You must realise that, with a delicately-reared girl like Jean, this took a lot of doing. It took all of my tact and powers of suggestion, and, with the wind in the right direction, believe it or not, she eventually, after much fumbling for words and a little giggling, gave me the feed line.

It was dark, and I was glad they couldn't see the grin of sheer triumph which creased my face. I felt MAGNIFICENT. In a flash of seconds I rehearsed the pun to myself, so that I would say it just right, to give it the most impact. "What was that again?" I said. I could hardly breathe. Willis, with his superb intellect, had the ability to control conversations, so that his well-thought-out spontaneous puns could be slipped in with telling effect. Was this going to be the climax of my career?

"Yeah," said Jean, in her innocence. "And this woman had lots and lots of children, and do you know, she didn't even know how they were conceived."

This was IT.

"Ah ha," I said. "It was obvious that she was LABOURING UNDER A MISAPPREHENSION."

I'll never forget that vivid sheet of lightning, and the resultant ear-splitting crash of thunder. The rain came down so heavily that Eney was forced to screech to a halt.

"Look what you've done now," he gritted.

"You shouldn't have done that, John." said Jean, not a little unkindly. "We shall probably be stranded here for the night now."

The rain became, if anything, worse, and I swear some of the shafts of lightning were within feet of us.

Eney swore and started the car. He drove along at little more than ten miles per hour, if that. Very few cars passed us. With the windscreen wiper going at its finest pitch, he found difficulty in seeing even the front of the bonnet. Eney blamed me. He told me that with that pun, I'd probably flooded the entire state of Ohio. For more than an hour the rain was unabated, and we maintained the slow but steady pace. Eney knew we were approaching the spot where we should leave the turnpike, and we strained our eyes even harder, if that were possible, to try to see the indicating sign.

Eney drove even slower, and then saw the sign. We branched off, Eney paid the inevitable toll, and we drove north for a short time. Then we came to a stop. The traffic in both directions had stopped. And didn't move. Eney told me bluntly that it was all my fault. I began to believe him, and for a moment began to think that the incessant rain in Northern Ireland could conceivably be laid at the door of Irish Fandom, because IF puns were really something. I forced the thought out of my mind, though. It was too overpowering.....I mean, Eney was just joking. Wasn't he?

Possibly it was half an hour before we edged slightly forward. From then on for another half an hour we moved a few feet at a time. After an impatient wait we came to the source of the trouble. The road was flooded. Eney gave me a withering look, and we found it was our turn to negotiate the water. It came well over the hub caps of the car.

Towards nine pm we came to the outskirts of Cleveland. We continued north, and Eney told me to keep a watchout for a sign indicating Rockside Road, which he hoped was on the left. I spotted it, we swung left, and I navigated Eney to the centre of Parma, where Nick Falasca lived. Eney told me that he had arranged that Steve and Virginia Schultheis should also be at Nick's house. Trouble was, the thunderstorm had delayed us almost two hours. There was one other complication which I felt guilty about. Nick had written to Ellington with certain instructions for Eney. The situation was that Nick was leaving his house in Warwick Drive, and in case he had moved when we reached Parma, he had written an alternative telephone number for Eney to ring, so that if he had left Warwick Drive we could contact him. Ellington had given me these instructions on paper at the Nunnery on Saturday night, and I'd lost the paper. I.e.....if Nick had moved, we didn't know where to contact him.

Eney, most patient with me, stopped the car at a garage and telephoned Nick's old number. He came back with a glum face. No reply. We decided the only thing to do was to go to Warwick Drive, and if he had left, try to get an address from a neighbour. Eney got directions from the garage to find Warwick Drive, and in ten minutes of careful navigating, we arrived at Warwick Road. We circled the area, but no Warwick Drive...just Road. This was fantastic. Where the hell was Warwick Drive? Eney said that the number was 5612. He suggested that we ignore the Drive and Road bit, and look for the number.

I got out of the car, and flitted from house to house. I walked past the 4,000's and began on the 5,000's. Now, you won't believe this, but it's TRUE. I came to one house, and illuminated on the wall in red light was the number 5610. I moved to the next house in triumph, but to my horror it was 5614. Problem. There was no Warwick Drive in Parma, only Warwick Road. Second problem....presuming by some chance that Drive and road were the same, where was number 5612? What was this....a timewarp?

I walked back to the other house. 5610.

I came back to the next. 5614.

I ran back again. 5610.

And returned. 5614.

I stood between the two houses.

I looked up and down.

I looked behind me.

Eney was looking at me from the driving seat. His fingers were beating a rapid tattoo on the door. It was dark, but he was near a street light. I could hear it, too.

"There's a house missing," I shouted.

"Look again," he shouted back.

I went back to 5614....I looked close. Below it, unlighted, was the mystic 5612.

Evidently my gyrations between the two houses had been observed by one of the occupants. It was a great shock to me when a woman asked if I were Berry.

I said I was, and she introduced herself as Nick's mother, and said that he and the Schultheises had waited for some time but had gone to supper when we didn't arrive.

Jean, carrying the baby, and Eney and I went into the Falasca house. Mrs. Falasca said that they were probably leaving the house on the morrow. We were all tired, and lay back on the long settee which conformed to the wall. A few moments later Nick, Steve and Virginia returned. I'd met Steve before; he was at my house back in '57, and he looked just the same, as sartorially elegant as of yore. Virginia was tall and slender and I saw straight away that without her spectacles she would look exactly like Debbie Reynolds. I told her so, too, but she seemed unconvinced. She seemed to me to be a perfect match for Steve, cultured and refined and graceful. Nick Falasca I recognised from pictures I'd seen of him. He was not too tall, and dark and broad and also wore spectacles. I looked at him in awe, this man, who, with Noreen Shaw, had done all the administrative work (and much more besides) for the Berry Fund. He was also extremely well-dressed; I hoped it was the influence of GDA man Schultheis, but I guessed it could be, because Steve hadn't had that effect on me!

Mrs. Falasca suggested she should brew up, but Steve and Nick said they'd take us to a restaurant, so we all piled into Nick's car and drove a mile or so. At the car park another American Phenomenon (as I'm calling them from now on) was revealed to me. Steve, without getting out of the car, opened the window, picked a microphone off a stand, and started to talk to someone inside the restaurant. Nick told him, no, we'd go in for something. My provincial inexperience was obvious for all to see, and Steve explained that one could simply tell the people inside what was required, and they brought it out to the car. I had mixed feelings about the idea. I'd seen that so much in America had been done to save doing anything physical that eventually the country would reach a stage where everyone wanted a button to press the button that pressed the button. What could be nicer and more natural than getting out of a car, stretching one's legs, and going inside for a good meal, instead of being hunched up maybe six in a car, trying one's hardest to imagine that the petrol fumes in the ice cream were only imaginary?

On returning to Falasca's house, we talked about Eney's FANCYCLOPEDIA II, after Eney had presented Nick with his copy. Schultheis said if it mentioned the Goon or the GDA it was good, and he flipped through the pages whilst Eney sat back quietly confident.

There was fun whilst we arranged where we were going to sleep. The eventual plan was that Steve and Virginia took possession of the wall settees, which met each other where the walls met. Nick, Eney and I went down to the basement. I chose to sleep on a couch, and Nick and Eney struggled into two strange contraptions which I'd never seen before, and hope never to have inflicted on my peepers again. Broadly speaking, these outfits had a metal tubular framework on which was woven thick strands of fabric. They weren't really big enough for the two boys, and strangest of all was the stance the boys adopted when mounted (if that is the correct technical expression.) Their bodies from the waist upwards were at an angle of 45 degrees, and their legs assumed the same angle in the opposite direction. Their arms hung listlessly over the sides of the affair, because there was nowhere else to put them. Both faces bore bewildered expressions, and, before I closed my eyes and the light went out, I saw them both looking enviously towards me....

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When I awoke on Wednesday morning, the 2nd of September, Nick's pseudo bed was empty. Nick, I recalled, had told us the previous night that he had to get to his place of employment early in the morning, but that he'd see us at the Convention. Eney had also evacuated his 'bed', so I got up, yawned, tried to straighten my back, and investigated.

Upstairs, Eney was in Virginia's bed, snoring like a buzz saw, although I must hasten to add that Virginia and Steve had presumably left with Nick. Mrs. Falasca had told us that if we were leaving early we could make breakfast. I didn't like to wake Eney up, because he was driving, and there was no sound of movement from Jean's room, so I toddled off into the kitchen and explored. I was fascinated to find that when the stove was

switched on flames appeared without any means of ignition being required. I opened the refrigerator and pulled out a package of bacon, sorted out some slices and put them on the frying pan. I put the pan on the stove and left the bacon to sizzle. After a deal of experimentation I got the coffee percolator going, and the toaster wasn't too much of a problem. By the time Jean and Eney came in, I had things organised. Right enough, the toast was cold and the bacon had somehow shrunk so that the individual slices had curled up like short lengths of spaghetti, but with lots of bread and butter this seemed trivial. The coffee was admittedly pretty strong, but I thought Eney displayed rather bad taste by trying to eat his with a knife and fork.

Eney told us to get our kit together, and we tiptoed out to the car so that we wouldn't wake up Mrs. Falasca. Eney looked at his map, and then turned the car southwards in the direction of yet another turnpike. With a glance at me he told Jean to look out for a place where we could get breakfast!

Once on the turnpike, we drove steadily for about 250 miles. The countryside in Ohio and Indiana was perfectly flat. I sat in the back seat of the car and appointed myself to the chore of tending Butch. I knew he liked me. Actually, under my careful tuition, he had walked his first few steps with me at Mrs. Eney's house, although no one else had seen, so although I boasted about it, it was only a moral victory. I soon cottoned on to his baby ways. He sucked his thumb when he was tired, and if I put my hand lightly over his face, covering his eyes, he invariably went to sleep. When he was awake, he naturally wasn't too pleased at being confined to a lap in the back of a car. His inclination was to explore, and this wasn't possible. Sometimes I sat him on the floor with a newspaper and allowed him to tear it up, but when he started on one of Eney's maps I had to look for another diversion. I let him grip both ends of my moustache, and he blew raspberries and I like to think he thought he was riding a motor cycle with my moustache as the handlebars. Unfortunately, he turned the accelerator too hard on the right hand side, and I didn't fancy appearing at the Convention with an asymmetrical moustache. I must say that considering the way he was confined, and the long distances we had to travel, and the strange times he had his meals, he was remarkable well-behaved.

When we reached Gary, a large city on the southeast of Chicago, Eney cut off the turnpike (more \$) and with the aid of a most excellent AAA map, he circuited round streets and across highways and ^{to} eventually reach a turnpike which circled up the west side of Chicago and so cut out all the trouble of having to navigate through the big city, and so save valuable time on our long haul to Fond du Lac, in Wisconsin, the home of the celebrated BNF and zap expert, Dean A. Grennell.

Now earlier on in this chapter I've given my opinions of paying tolls on the turnpike. I suppose I've got to content myself with realising that it is a necessary evil. I think the country should be responsible for roads, and not the individual, but if alternative roads are available which although slower get there just the same, I suppose that, basically, the driver has the choice. If he is an anti-subber, he can go the slow road. But I got really worked up passing on that stretch of turnpike that by-passed Chicago. It was utter blackmail. It was obvious that if a driver wanted to get to the north of Chicago (or, in the opposite direction, if he wanted to get the south) if there were an easy way of avoiding the congestion of the city, he'd take it. He'd have to take it. So what happens? Toll gates are stretched across the road every few miles. It began to get monotonous. Eney would whizz along, and then a notice would warn us of the toll gates. These were automatic. Eney dropped 30 cents into a circular receptacle, there was a pause, and a green light flickered. This meant he could continue. He just reached top speed, when another notice warned of the impending approach of another toll. Another 30 cents. Another green light. Another acceleration. Another notice...another 30 cents....and so it went on. I began to squirm in my seat. I was financially restricted on the first part of my tour at least....I couldn't spend more than four dollars a day at the most, and this went in food and postcards and airmail stamps, etc. Each time Eney had to dip into his pocket for 30 cents, I got redder and redder and more and more annoyed at the system whereby a motorist was forced to pay an extortionate amount to travel in his own country. I began to see that, by comparison, the ordinary turnpikes were not too bad. \$1.85 for a couple of hundred miles began to look reasonable.

North of Chicago we entered the state of Wisconsin, and I grew more and more excited at the prospect of meeting DAG. Just south of Milwaukee, on Route 41, we came upon another American Phenomenon. Even Eney and Jean joined in the general excitement. It was a restaurant built over the turnpike. Jean especially was in rapture, and we knew our journey wouldn't be complete without a meal therein. So Eney swung the car round and parked outside and we went in. We obtained a table which gave us a good view of the traffic racing along the carriageways beneath. The restaurant was superior in every way to Howard Johnson's outfits. The prices were correspondingly higher. I had two lots of blueberry pie and coffee. We also walked round the sales departments, which had on display a higher grade of material than the normal stopping places.

But we had to continue. The day's run had to take in almost 500 miles, which, when compared with a 100 mile run at home, we would be considered some journey, was to me almost unbelievable. We by-passed Milwaukee, and continuing along Route 41 for another 60 or 70 miles, we reached than shrine of fanaticism, Fond du Lac. It was almost ten pm. And it was cold. Jean had been to DAG's house before, but couldn't recall the way.

Fond du Lac was just as I had imagined it. It seemed typical of many American towns. The road being travelled eventually led into one broad main street. Here, it was at night, and the place was a mass of neon lights of all colours forming a shimmering tapestry. Eney got out of the car and telephoned DAG. I began to feel even more excited, and my heart began to thump. I'd written to DAG a great deal in late '54, and during '55 and '56 when GRUE was coming out so regularly, and I'd written my series 'BELFASTERS' for Dean. He had not of course been so active over '57, '58 and '59, but his name was a living legend, a name I had been fannishly weaned on, so it seemed fitting that before getting to the Detention on the coming Friday I should have an indoctrination of BNFdom beforehand. Eney rushed out of the garage where he'd telephoned, cackling with triumph, and once in the car he muttered to himself as he followed the route he'd been told. Eney swung to the left, and I saw a street sign 'Maple Ave.' I gulped. I whipped out my comb and straightened some of the tufts of hair and gave my moustache a refresher and did up my shirt buttons as we arrived at number 402.

DAG came out to meet us. Once again his photographs had not lied. It was as though I'd met him last week, and had just popped over to borrow some sugar.

He took us into his house, and we were swamped with children of all shapes and sizes. DAG introduced us to his charming wife Jean, and then sent the children to bed.

We stopped up and talked until well after midnight. We were tired, but DAG was in good form. He showed us some gems from various photograph albums, and gave us many a quip and anecdote. But 500 miles in one day is some pushing, and in fact Eney had been on the road for a week, driving 12 hours a day. Before picking me up on Monday morning, he had shunted about the country since the previous Thursday, when he had met me at Idlewild. He'd been transporting Jean's children from one place to another. So Eney was the most tired, and not only did he want his rest, he'd earned it.

We went up to bed a little later. I was sharing a room with Eney. Presumably the beds belonged to some of the junior DAGites. I wondered where he'd put them?

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Up at 9:30 am.

I peered over the sheets and saw a boy looking at me. He bobbed away when he espied what was inhabiting his bed.

I yawned, went to the washroom and shaved. I looked out of the window and saw that the back garden was full of children. (That reminds me, here's another thing I have to put right. In the British Isles, the word 'garden' is used in the loosest possible sense. It covers vegetables, flowers, lawns, trees, the goldfish pond, in fact, anything which comes within the precincts of the fense which divides one house from the next. In America, 'garden' is used only to described a patch of soil where the flowers are. So when I mentioned above that the mess of kids were in the back garden, I didn't mean they were trampling over DAG's prize geraniums. I just meant they were playing on the lawn.)

I went down for breakfast, and had a plate full of grapenuts, which I'd never had before. Some deal. After breakfast, I slipped away onto the lawn at the back of the house to talk to the children. I hadn't talked to any American children of school age,

and I wanted to compare them with my own two children. DAG's kids introduced themselves. Chuck and Andy were two boys. I never found out which one was which, although one of them was mighty fast when it came to manipulating a Bat Masterson cane! The girls were named Janet, Bobbie and Phyllis. Phyllis was only two, and was mostly to be seen in the immediate area of her mother's skirt. She wasn't too keen on Butch. Bobbie was, I guess, about four or five, and she reminded me of my own daughter. She was quite friendly, and allowed me to seat her on an upturned boat which just happened to be in DAG's garden, and I photographed her. The photo came out good, too, which proves it's worthwhile choosing good subjects. Janet was about seven or eight, and seemed the most serious. DAG had an older daughter, Patty, about thirteen years old, but she didn't turn up until the afternoon.

Also in the garden were the Grennells' kids' friends...children about the same age. One little plump girl called, I think, Kathleen, about eight years old, asked me if I wanted to hear a story. I said I did, and she gave a garbled account of some girl who wanted to tattoo her boy friend's name on her arm. The mother wouldn't allow her this esthetic luxury, so, explained the little girl, the boy friend cut his initials on his girl's arm with his knife. "What do you think of that?" the girl asked me. I tried to get some colour in my cheeks again, and felt in my pocket for an aspirin. After some thought, during which time they all looked at me with big eyes, I vouchsafed the opinion that the story itself was interesting, and had a certain element of originality, but that I doubted the veracity thereof. (I didn't use those exact words.) This non-committal reply didn't satisfy their urge for the truth. "But what do you think of it?" they chorused. I leaned against the side of the house and willed DAG to come out. When pressed, I further told them that in my experience I had seen boys cut their initials on various subjects, ranging from school desks to lumps of cheese, but I thought to make such a permanent autograph in such an indiscreet manner didn't say much for the boy's artistic sense. "Yes," they chorused in high C, "we know all that, but what do you think of the story?" I gave a despairing call for DAG behind the sanctity of my pocket handkerchief, and tried to appease their desire for a comment on the girl's prowess as a raconteur. "Quite frankly," I said, with as much dignity as I could muster, "I think you made it up out of your head." They looked at each other and took deep breaths. "You didn't think it was true, did you?" asked the plump girl. "I know it's not true. I made it up myself. BUT WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE STORY?" I took a deep breath myself. I tried to think what damon knight would have said. In fact, I was just about to refer them to damon knight when DAG came out. I told him I thought the kids had a pretty good sense of humour, but the plump girl adroitly dodged out of the way as I tried to tramp on her toes as I went away with DAG.

"I think it would be a good idea to run you down to the Fond du Lac post office," suggested DAG. "You recall that Willis stopped there during his 1952 Fan Tour. I'd like to get a picture of you standing in the same spot."

I said it would be magnifique, so he, Eney, either Chuck or Andy and I got into DAG's car. And what a car. It was big and red. It looked like a bus looking for a driver. We drove the short distance into Fond du Lac, and parked the car at a parking meter. For a second, as we stood outside this building that Willis Had Entered, I wonder at the course of fate. DAG asked if someone stayed in Fond du Lac post office long enough, would they eventually come into contact with all of the members of Irish Fandom? I told him it was a possibility which couldn't be discounted. I'd heard that James White was saving hard, and George Charters was talking about emigrating!

We trooped inside, and I put some airmail stamps on postcards for my family and friends back home. I also put an airmail stamp on a postcard of Fond du Lac post office.

"O.K...pose," ordered DAG, and Eney whipped out a tape measure, and put it on a tile on the ground near the counter, and pulled out eighteen inches of tape. I knelt down beside him trying to look as if the whole thing had some mundane purpose. The place was full of people, and although my fondness for fannish tradition precluded any chance of my being embarrassed at the strange ritual, I thought it best to show as much normality as possible. DAG snapped a flashlight and there was a hush in the place and people stood rooted to the spot.

"That wasn't quite right. Pose again," said DAG.

We got down again. Men behind the counters who were supposed to be serving the customers whipped off their glasses and leaned as far out of their little windows as they could to catch the act.

"Smile," grinned DAG.

Eney and I lifted our heads and tried to keep a fixed grin on our faces, which began to sweat with the strain. Some of the braver onlookers began to creep forward and look at the object of our seeming calculations. It seemed so idiotic to look up and tell them that Willis stood there in '52.

Another blinding flash as DAG manipulated his camera.

Before DAG could assess the potentialities of the second picture, Eney and I stood up and walked away round the corner to another part of the post office. DAG joined us. I addressed the post card of the post office to Willis, and we all signed it and wrote little incredibly witty remarks. After ten minutes or so we judged we would probably be forgotten in the main office, and so we were, but a group of people were still standing round the spot, looking for something. DAG said the same thing happened after Willis was there in '52, and it took some months for the excitement to die down.

DAG said I'd look nice in an American shirt, and we went along the main street in Fond du Lac and purchased one which DAG chose because of its similarity to one he'd got some time before, and which 'wore well'. Sad to say, the shirt had an unhappy history. Within twenty-four hours, Butch, whilst climbing over me, put his foot into one of the breast pockets. It looked well, though, I thought. DAG said it looked very American. On me it looked about as American as an Englishman in Scunthorpe ordering a bag of faggots and peas.

We drove home, and I nipped upstairs and put the shirt on. I attempted a swagger, which didn't last very long. Jean Grennell announced lunch, so we went in. I was hungry, and before sitting down told myself that I was a guest and it was unguestlike to stuff food down one's mouth in prodigious quantities. But when I saw the meal, I loosened my braces and eased open the top two buttons of my trousers. Before starting to stuff myself, I mentioned to the Grennells that I was a provincial.....

After lunch, DAG showed us the glories of his den. One of my main interests was the Fabulous and Famous DAG Gun Collection. He had a truly spiffing armory. I examined each and every one of his rifles and revolvers, which he first of all carefully broke to ensure that I didn't go back to Belfast with a permanent souvenir of my visit. I was completely dumbfounded to find that DAG actually manufactured his own ammunition and sold it commercially. It was a fascinating process. He gave me a demonstration. He picked up an old used cartridge case, and cleaned it. He put it in a machine which withdrew the old dented base, where the striker had hit home. He picked up a new primer, and put it and the case in another machine, to re-prime the round. He moved to a measure, put the case under it, pulled a lever and just the right amount of explosive dropped into the case. He moved to a tray of lead bullets, which he'd also cast himself, and pushed one into the cartridge case. The final machine forced the bullet into the case the required distance.

DAG gave me the round for a souvenir of my visit, but I explained that although it was a most touching gesture, and I would have loved to take it home with me, I lived in Northern Ireland, and we'd had a bit of trouble with the I.R.A., and although I was a member of the constabulary, it could conceivably be construed as arms smuggling, and fifteen years in jail wouldn't do my fanac much good.

DAG said he'd like to push out a oneshot. He ushered me to the typer, slipped a stencil in and left me to my own devices. I was in the unusual position of having so many ideas running around inside my mind that I didn't know what subject to use. Finally, after much deliberation, I wrote a page and a half about the advantages to be obtained by non-thinking. I don't know whether DAG will use it in FAPA or not. My chief reason for wanting to see it is because DAG said he wanted Eney to write something afterwards, and I left Eney in a helluva spot to take over. I'd like to know what he did about it, if anything.

I'd thought that DAG's abilities were limited to fandom and guns and allied subjects. I was wrong. Photography plays a prominent part in his life. He has the full range of

equipment not only for taking photographs but for actually developing his films and then processing them. He proudly pulled out some thousands of photographs of Phyllis Economou. He can choose his subjects, too. At a subtle hint from me he offered to develop a 35 mm film I'd taken. He gave me a blow by blow account of the proceedings, and I am bound to admit that he did a good job.

Jean Grennell (with whom I'd come on remarkably good terms by washing up the dishes) said DAG should take us all for a drive round Fond du Lac, and she telephoned through to her young daughter Patty to come and look after the rest of the tribe. Patty eventually arrived, a young girl with spectacles, and we all crowded into the car, the two Jeans, Eney, DAG and myself.

Fond du Lac isn't very big, and it didn't take us long to drive round. We stopped at an eatery called the FROZEN CUSTARD, and DAG said I should try a malted milk. It was good, too. We hurried home because he recommended we should see a good programme on TV, all about a gambler and an Indian who only communicated with people by sign language and a woodsman who spit all the time. This appealed to my sense of the dramatic, and save for the commercials, I thought it was an excellent and unusual programme. It'll probably get to the BBC....and then I shall never get DAG off my mind.

Jean Grennell packed the children off the bed, and we had dinner. Lots of ham and stuff and a special DAG cocktail, a sort of Martini which dissolved the olive stick. We talked for a long time, subjects covering a great variety of subjects, from DAG's experiences with the German speaking population of an obscure Wisconsin township to my finding fingerprints on the left leg of a porcelain gnome.

Somehow, the talk came to oil painting. Jean Young said that DAG was good, and I sighed as yet another facet of this remarkable man was revealed. I suggested that I'd like to see his work, and the cyclone came and went and in ten seconds he stood there with a mass of canvas in his hands.

"Just a few things I splashed together a few years ago," he said modestly.

You all know that DAG is a really BIG fan. You all know that he is an acknowledged authority on guns, and has a regular column in a prozine regarding all aspects of firearms. Well, seriously, I'll state here and now that if DAG had taken his painting seriously, it would have far outstripped those other vocations. He showed us perhaps ten or a dozen, and few of them were finished. This was a great shame. One of Jean Grennell, probably started some seven or eight years ago, had a striking likeness to her....and it was executed with a masterful technique. One painting which really wasn't a painting but a basic idea sketched in and painted in patches showed the lengths this paragon was prepared to go to give a pun an extra dimension. DAG asked me what the painting represented. I admitted defeat. I'll tell you about it, and maybe, if your mind is terrifically sharp, you'll get the connection.

In the foreground was a froglike creature with a long green tail, wearing boxing gloves. Behind this creature was depicted the bars of a cage, with a bear in the background looking at the frog....if it was a frog.

"So I don't know, Dean," I said. "What does it represent?"

He grinned, then laughed out loud.

"You've heard of the picture 'Nude Descending Stair'?"

Well, quite honestly I hadn't, but I was prepared to go along with the gag, so I said I had.

"This is 'Newt Defending Bear'."

Jean Grennell fetched me a chair and put a lump of ice in the iced water, and in ten minutes I was as good as I'll ever be.

I arranged a one-man exhibition for DAG. I took each of his paintings one at a time, and propped them on a table some yards away, and we each gave our comments. If only DAG would finish them. For years I've been subjected to people showing me their oil paintings and looking for egoboo, and I've always had to avoid hurting their feelings and at the same time be critical. But hurting DAG's feelings doesn't come into it at all. His natural talent is abundant. If DAG reads this, I hope he'll gird himself up and lock his guns away and finish some of his little works of art. He should.

Eney went to bed well before midnight. The next day, Friday, he had to drive another

long haul from Fond du Lac to Detroit via Chicago, well over 400 miles, and it was understandable that he needed rest. The two Jeans, DAG and I stayed up until 2 am. There seemed so much to say and I had to store up enough memories of DAG, because he was one of my earliest inspirations when I first staggered onto the fannish scene. At 2 am we retired. Instead of saying 'goodbye' I said 'goodnight.' I thought that we should see the Grennells and their children on the morrow before we started off to the climax of my American Tour.....the Detention in Detroit. So I went to bed quite happy.

Whilst it was still dark, Eney woke me. He said it was 5 am. I thought he was walking in his sleep, and went to sleep myself. I woke up again and saw it was a few minutes past 5, and Eney was washing and shaving. I heard Butch crying and Jean Young whispering reassurance. Eney said he wanted to get to Detroit by six pm, and it was a twelve hour run if all went well.

We had breakfast downstairs at about 6 am. I so wanted to thank the Grennells for their hospitality, and to say indeed what a pleasure it was to meet them; but the only way to do so would be to enter their boudoir, and I saw how DAG could handle a .375 Magnum. Eney, Jean Young and myself composed a note of thanks. I was unhappy about it all, but what else could I do?

As Eney drove away I looked out of the back of the car at number 402. It was easy to understand why that fabulous fan was so well-liked. Rarely had I met a chap with such a sincere and yet humorous outlook on people and life in general...and I get around. He said he hoped to put out more GRUEs, and it would be the most wonderful thing in the world if he did, but I have my doubts. He is happy in FAPA, and has visits from Bob Bloch and Boyd Raeburn and Phyllis Economou, and if that isn't just about the essence of fandom, what is?

A happy day, Thursday the 3rd of September 1959.

A happy day, and a nostalgic one.

A day I wouldn't have missed for the world!

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Eney drove us south on Route 41....south past Milwaukee. When we came to the outskirts of Chicago, though, he carefully avoided the extortionate turnpike. He kept to the freeways. It was complicated, but he did some good map reading, and if it did add a few miles to the journey, at least he was consoled by the thought that a few dollars had been kept from the clutching mercenary hands of the Chicago turnpike operators. It pleased me, anyway.

The weather was fine, Butch was quiet, after we bypassed Chicago the scenery was new and interesting, and Eney kept up a steady rate of speed. The distance from Chicago to Detroit is about 200 miles, and as each mile was ticked off, I began to think more and more about the convention. Jean asked me what I was thinking about, and I confided to her that I had never been to a convention in my life, and that I had built up a bit of a reputation as a humourist, and would fans expect too much of me, and gosh and things like that. She gave me the sort of look that an experienced con-goer would give an uninitiated one, and she told me that everything would be all right and that I would have great fun and the time would go much too quickly.

I had been so busy during my tour and my stay in New York that I didn't have any time to think about the convention, but it came in my mind again that I would have to give two speeches, one of them a most important one at the Banquet, and that I was also on the Fan-Editors Panel. I had but rarely had to speak in public in mundane life, certainly not to four or five hundred people. As I'd pointed out to Jean, it was not just a matter of standing up and just talking. That was easy. The difficult thing was that I'd written about three hundred stories, most of them having a humour content, and I knew for a fact that a lot of fans fully expected me to stand up in a dirty trilby hat and an old trenchcoat and start shooting plonkrr guns at the toastmaster. On top of this, there was the fact that I knew so few fans personally, although I'd corresponded with most of the fanzine fans. I was frightened of meeting convention fans. I'd been nurtured to believe that fanzine fans were in the minority at conventions, and after all, I was purely a fanzine fan. My main fear, however, was that the many many American fans who had rallied around to pay my fare to America (\$441, a vast amount, fannishly speaking) would perchance

be disappointed in me. I wondered what I could do to make my mark. On those last few miles to Detroit all sorts of weird ideas wormed their way through my tortured mind. Stupid ideas, I can see that now, but it showed what state of mind I was in. I tried to console myself by saying that I had written the stories and published the fanzines and it was I the fans wanted to see, not a false mock-up. I decided that as far as the speeches were concerned, that was in the hands of Roscoe. For the rest, I'd just be myself. I'd circulate round as much as I could so that I could meet as many of the fans as I could who'd helped to make the trip....and what a trip....a reality. That eased my mind somewhat....well, only a little, actually. For I had travelled thousands of miles for my first convention, and everyone would be looking at me, and would possibly identify me with fans over the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. Every mistake I made (and I always made mistakes) would be critically examined and frowned upon. That's what I thought at the time, and as I checked each place off on the map as we neared Detroit, I became more and more nervous.

"This is Clinton, Dick," I told Eney. Near Detroit.

Then I thought about all the vile pros, and particularly about my hero Bob Bloch. He had always given me good write-ups in his fanzine column in IMAGINATION. He had once publicly written that three great things came from the British Isles: Shakespeare, Diana Dors and me. I doubted that he'd have the same opinion after he'd met me. Oh, Shakespeare and Diana Dors were safe enough. But Bloch was acknowledged to be a superb and witty speaker, and I knew I'd just open my mouth and give a fixed grin when I met him. I knew it.

I looked at the map.

Suffering Catfish.

"That was Saline we passed through," I told Eney.

Heck. We were so near Detroit now, and what was I going to say at the Banquet? It would be fairly easy to bluff at the opening of the Detention programme, when I would be introduced. I could give a mundane speech: 'Chee, it's brilliant and wonderful being here and as it's my first detention I'm as thrilled as altogether.' It would be true and sincere, but it was really mundane when it came down to essentials. Howard Devore had written that the speech on the opening day would just be a 'Hello and Thank You' effort. That I could manage reasonably well....I thought. But at the Banquet?

Traffic became much thicker, and I checked our position on the map.

"Some place called Ypsilanti, Dick." I looked at the map, and saw that a few miles farther on was Wayne, then Inkster, and then....and then we were in Dearborn, a suburb of Detroit.

I wondered if all fans went through the same nervous tension before going to a convention. Was I going through a normal phase of apprehension which disappeared as soon as the first beanie came into sight? I wanted so much to be a success, but I didn't even have the experience of a minor convention to guide me. Were there certain points of fannish protocol with which I was unfamiliar? Certainly I'd read all the con reports, but I didn't think I'd get that drunk. Suppose I inadvertently offended someone...or got in an elevator and asked the man for the fifteenth floor and discovered I was talking to Willy Ley? Something like that was sure to happen. If I were a neofan, it wouldn't matter; but I was well-established in fandom, and although I personally wouldn't worry overly about doing something idiotic, I felt that if I did anything daft it would reflect on the prestige of the people who had been mainly concerned in organising the Fund which brought me over. "Oh, for Chrissake, Falasca, you made us bring that over?"

"We're in Detroit now, John," said Dick, and the car stopped. Eney pulled at chokes and hammered accelerators and then looked at the gauge. No petrol. That wasn't so bad. No money either.

I got out of the car and walked a couple of hundred yards back to a garage and hired a can and filled it with petrol. I staggered back, and Eney filled the tank, and I returned the can. When I got back to the car again, it wouldn't go. Eney sweated to flog it into action. He said he knew it would take a bit of time to allow the petrol to circulate, but it should have.....

And it did.

We didn't have too much petrol, and only had a few more miles to go, so we piled in and the last lap....the very last lap started.

I sat next to Dick, and as if by mutual consent I took over the map reading. The street map looked complicated, but I worked out where the Con hotel was, Fort Shelby. I knew that if I could navigate us safely to the hotel, without a mistake, it would be a bit of a boost when I needed it most.

Soon, almost at six pm, Eney's deadline, I knew we were within a few hundred yards of my fate.

"Turn right here, Dick," I said. Eney swung the car round. He seemed to have implicit faith in my directions. Of course, anyone can read a map, but it suddenly became desperately important to me that I should pin-point the hotel first time.

"It should be on the corner of the third block to the right," I told Eney. He turned the car, and I closed my eyes. The car stopped, and I looked up. Eney was grinning. I looked up, and way up I saw HOTEL FORT SHELBY painted on the side of the building.

I looked at Eney and Jean and Butch, and I knew that the most important event in my fannish career was about to happen.

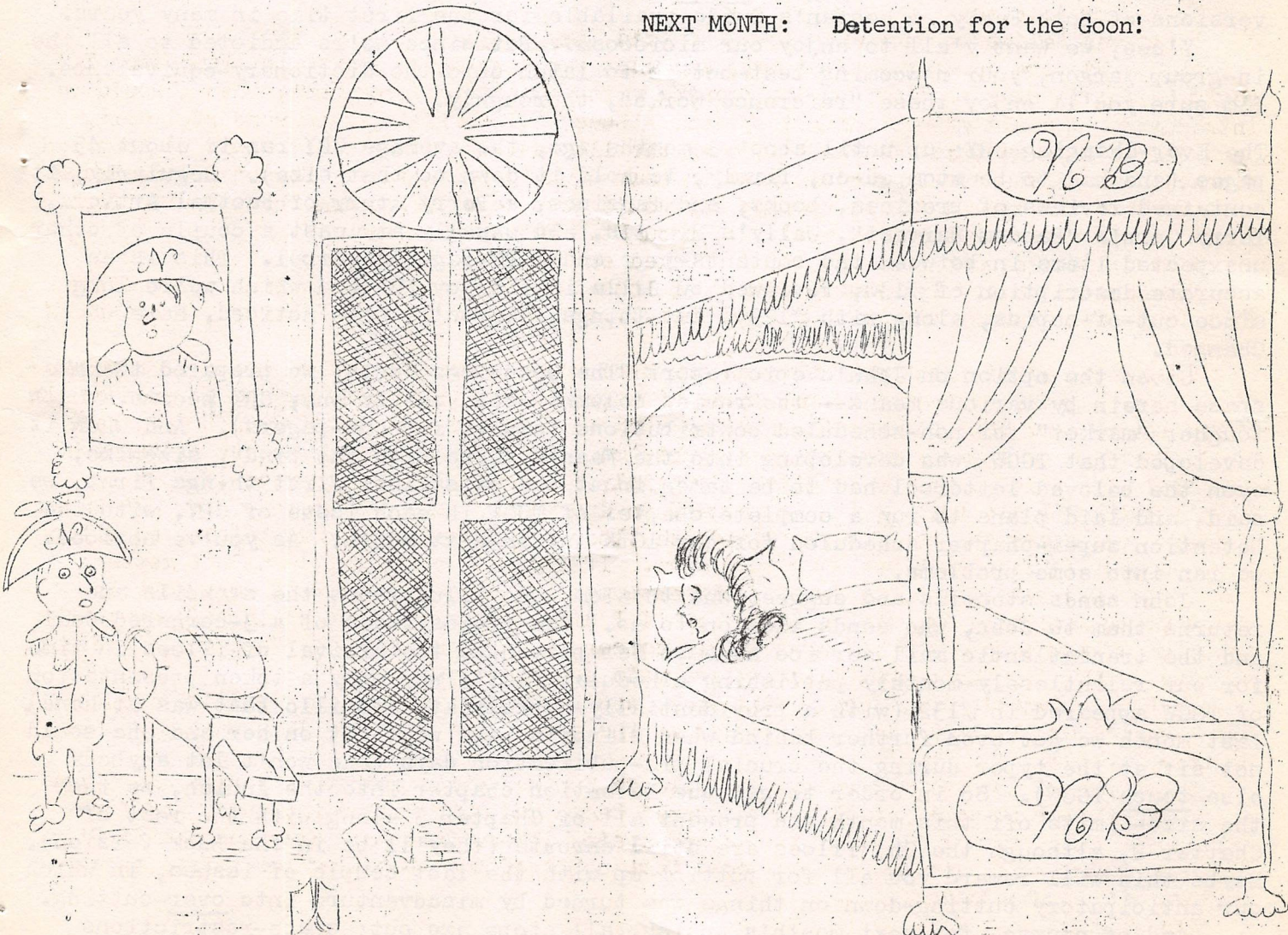
I had travelled well over 4,000 miles, and I was at the Detroit convention.

I was at the Detention, and from hereon I was on my own.

I picked up my suitcase and threw my jacket over my shoulder. I ran my fingers through my hair.

"This is the way we go," said Eney, and I followed him and Jean. We crossed the road and went through the swinging doors.....

NEXT MONTH: Detention for the Goon!



"Not tonight, Josephine, not tonight."

With Keen Blue Eyes and a Bicycle . . .

by F M Busby

We keep on picking up new subscribers, bless them. Right now it might be well to address a stencil or so to this fine group of citizens who are peering dubiously at all this esoteric in-group jargon and wondering if maybe they've shot a buck down the drain for no good cause. The fanzine-subber who enters the microcosm just now on the strength of Belle's reviews in FU-- well, he's apt to find the going rough: here we sound off about gafia & N3f & WO3Ws & SAPS & FAPA & OMPA & the Cult & 770 & TAFT & neos & BNFs & the BDSA & "-" & the Goon & FIAWOL & FIJAGH & LASFS & Derelicti Derogations & ASI (speaking of FTL) & Walter J Nameless & youbastardsaidAlAshley-- it is not the easiest thing in the world, ordinarily, to get orientated into this cotton-pickin' fun game we're having. Just now, though, things are good for the newcomer.

For one thing, the 2nd Edition of the FanCyclopedia is fresh off the presses and available from Richard H Eney, 417 Ft Hunt Rd, Alexandria, Virginia. This is an expanded and revised version of a monumental work compiled by Jack Speer in the late-'40's, and this is the first time in over 12 years that copies have been available. The tag is \$1.25 at the moment, and that's a bargain price, I assure you (for over 180 pages of fannish lore, dating back to when Uncle Hugu was a pup).

This is a really fine time to be entering Fandom, to be sure. The word is that Bob Tucker is publishing a new version of his famous "Neofans' Guide". Send no money; just send a postcard to "Bob Tucker, Box 702, Bloomington, Illinois" specifying that you're faunching (eager) for a copy of the Guide; Bob'll let you know the tariff.

Could be this is the absolutely-best time to be entering fandom, what with updated versions of both FanCy & Neofan's Guide available for the first time in many years.

Y'see, we want y'all to enjoy our microcosm. But since we're addicted to all the in-group jargon, your newcoming best-bet is to latch onto the dictionary-equivalents. I'm sure you'll enjoy these "reference works", thoroughly.

The Ever-Changing CRY: up until about 3 months ago, the average CRY ran to about 45 pages (and had to be stomped-on, firmly, to hold it down to that size). Regularly, it contained reviews of prozines, books, and fanzines, a Berry story or Factual Article, Terry Carr's "Fandom Harvest", Wally's Minutes, and usually at least a couple of other unexpected items in between the contents-page and a 20-page lettercol. This is an accurate description of #130, reviewed by Belle in the Nov FU (and which we're long since out-of-copies, along with #129), but Things, as you'll have noticed, Have Changed.

Given the option on John's epic report "The Goon Goes West", we prepared to make space herein by various means-- the review columns went, one by one; CRY became a much tougher "market" for non-scheduled contributions (except for one-pagers). And when it developed that TGGW was developing into the Faan's "Gone With the Wind", sizewise, even the beloved lettercol had to be taken in at the waistline; first things first, we said, and laid plans to run a complete chapter of TGGW in each issue of CRY, with the Detention super-chapter scheduled for our 10th Annish next month. As you've noticed, we ran into some problems.

John sends stencils and suggestions to ATom, who illustrates the stencils and returns them to John, who sends them on to us. The vicissitudes of a 3-cornered deal and the transAtlantic mail service have so far prevented the arrival of illoes in time for our relentlessly-monthly publishing schedule; that's why only a token presentation of TGGW appeared in #132 (with a providentially-appropriate ATomillo that was at hand). Last month we got even further behind when Elinor's back went out on her and she could not sit at the typer during the crucial pre-publication days (she won't let anybody else touch TGGW). So in order to get the Detention chapter into the Annish, we took the size-limits off this month and present all of Chapter 3 along with the rest of Chapter 2, although the Ch3 illoes are still enroute (they'll be in the Book Version). Maybe this will reward you all for putting up with the last couple of issues, in which our anticipatory cutting-down on things was turned by misadventure into over-cutting.

And of course, for next month's Annish, all stops are out; space-restrictions will not be a factor in determining the contents of #135. Happier now, out there??

There seems to be enough for another page, so:

Friday is TV night around here; we adjourn to the utility room and watch Alex & Margie King ("Alex in Wonderland"), and, as often as not, Henry Morgan (who sounds uncannily like Burbee, at times). We recommend Alex (and the delectable Margie) to one and all.

WesterCon News: Letter today from Guy Terwilleger, says: "We're calling it the BOYCON because it fits the city and 4e's remark about he'd go to the Boycon but wondered about the GirlCon...". Further, Guy announces that "the hotel has been secured... rates are comparable to those in Seattle. Banquet is also arranged-- meal prices, again, about the same. The hotel has a swimming pool... Rog Phillips has agreed to be guest of honor. Other parts still in the making." Sounds pretty good so far, and it's a cinch that Guy and Diane are moving right along with their plans. Contact Guy Terwilleger, 1412 Albright St, Boise, Idaho, to Boing! at Boise.

Local News: At the SSFC (local corporation for purpose of bidding for '61 WorldCon) meeting last Sunday prior to the Nameless Ones meeting, a few kinks were shaken out of the By-Laws. Besides shaking the number of officers down to 5 and defining a quorum, to which various vote-requirements are pegged, it was settled that officers for 1960 will be nominated starting with the Dec 20 meeting and elected Jan 3rd, to take office immediately upon election. That would seem to be a good time to get a hotel lined up for the Con-site, have a Con-Committee named, and in general make a little sand fly. We'll keep you posted... Fanac #47 kindly carried my announcement that Seattle will not be saddled with a World's Fair until 1962, so our '61 WorldCon Bid is unshadowed with any competition with the Tourist Trade for hotel rooms or etc.

Back in CRY #115, the Plow turned up Alan E Nourse's "Sign of the Tiger" (in the May '58 Amazing), a drastically-cut version of a story I'd been privileged to read in manuscript form as "Project Tiger". While the condensed edition carried the plot surprisingly intact in all major aspects, necessarily it was the characterization and motivation that suffered. Now, under the title "The Invaders Are Coming" (I see you, L. O. Botomy, you tittle-goofer you), ACE Books presents the full text of the original "...Tiger" story (D-366, 220pp, 35¢). Inherently, this tale packs a lot of whammy-- the major protagonist, Julian Bahr, is a Driven Man of the Sam Reed / Ben Reich / Gully Foyle persuasion, and the background is as stark and challenging as, say, that of "Gladiator-at-Law". Don't quite see why this missed hardcovers, except possibly for tangling with a publishing taboo or two; I recommend it. (Oops, forgot to credit Dr Nourse's collaborator on the book: it's by Alan Nourse and J A Meyer.)

Hmm, with the lid off next month's Annish, maybe we can get the old Plow out for a turn around the Field, once, at that.

More Good News from Fanac: Taurasi, at the (regional) Phillycon a couple of weeks ago, ran head-on into a demonstration of how Faanish Opinion opposes his idea of fouling up the Rotation Plan to put a WorldCon into New York along with a World's Fair in '64. However, there's no indication that he's given this up completely-- he's quoted as being willing to settle for a regional con if New York can't put through an out-of-turn grab. It behooves all of us to work at reducing the possibility of a New York Grab succeeding, by all helping to reduce the Uninformed Vote. Larry Shaw and Earl Kemp have circulated Open Letters, and the situation is good in SAPS and FAPA, but all of us know some fringe-type fans who aren't apt to be reached without individual attention (hmm-- wonder if anything has been circulated in the N3F as yet). Remember:

1. The past performance of New York, feudwise, has been a Very Bad Thing for fandom.
2. A WorldCon in the same town with a World's Fair would be up against overcrowding and overcharging, right along with the ~~suckers~~ Tourist Trade.
3. The Rotation Plan (instituted in San Francisco in 1954) has proved to be a fair & workable method of allocating Convention-years by regions; let's stick to it.

To get my WorldCon vote, New York would first have to display some ability to work together for a couple-three years without breaking out with feuds & lawsuits, bid in accordance with the Rotation Plan, and forget this Big-Dealing World's Fair jazz. Why not look us up around 1966, Mr Taurasi, Sr, sir? (It's D.C. in '63, you know.)

And that should just about do it for this month, I should think. --Buz

M I N U T E S

BY Wally Weber

MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 8, 1959 MEETING OF THE NAMELESS ONES

The weary members of the Nameless Ones, having just finished an exhausting meeting of the Seattle Science Fiction Club, collected the courage and strength required for the Nov. 8, 1959 meeting. Strange as it may seem, President Busby opened and presided over the meeting.

It was unfortunate that the President was so new to his job that he didn't know better than to request that the minutes be read by the SEC-Treas. The SEC-Treas was scarcely half way through the minutes when he was rudely interrupted by a request that he read them aloud. This sort of thing happens quite often at Nameless meetings when there are new members present who don't know when they are well off. (To tell the truth, there really weren't any new members at all, but having lost both notes and memories of the meeting I must resort to a certain amount of stalling, like say 100% stalling, in order to fill out this page. You'll note the double spacing between paragraphs -- they're quite interesting if you're the type who can read between the lines. Oh-oh, Toskey is sharpening his fierce butcher knife so it's time to get back to business.)

The reading (aloud) of the minutes brought about the usual unkind remarks from the uncivilized rabble attending the meeting, but since they had been informed that the minutes had already been published in the CRY there was nothing that could be done about changing them.

Still in a state of confusion, President asked that the Sec-TREAS read the treasurer's report. Since no such report had been prepared, let alone published in the CRY, the Sec-TREAS had to check the price tags on his new suit and shoes before confidently announcing that there was "lots" of money left in the treasury.

There's no doubt followed some frightfully important business, but if anyone remembers what it was they will have to have it done all over again if they expect to have it gloriously reported in this publication.

This would have done for the meeting, then, if Varda Pelter hadn't shown up with the talk she had been scheduled to give at the previous meeting. The subject of her talk was the John Campbell editorial where John makes an issue out of how difficult it could be to arrive at a workable legal definition for a human being if we should ever start running into alien creatures from other worlds. Naturally one of us would kill one of them and it would be a problem to know who should investigate this violation of the law. Would it be the homicide department or the game warden? And would training a Martian to pull a plow without training it to get paid for the work amount to legally taming an animal or illegally enslaving a human being? What do we do about our own missing link if we ever find one?

Well, as you can easily see, Varda didn't give much of a talk. All she did was ask a lot of fool questions. It was actually the audience that did all of the talking, as we answered her questions and straightened her out on several things she didn't ask about as well.

Despite all this information being passed back and forth, nothing actually was decided about how a jury should go about determining who is a human being. Such decisions will evidently be left to a special organization to known as the United Creations. The important thing that was finally decided was that everyone was anxious to get at the coffee in the kitchen downstairs. For this reason the meeting was adjourned.

SEC-treas Wally Weber

MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 22, 1959 MEETING OF THE NAMELESS ONES

The November 22, 1959 meeting of the Nameless Ones was opened by President F. M. Busby at 9:45 p.m. This was a great moment for the President since it meant that he had now presided over meetings for 50% of the meetings held during his present reign. The Sec-treas was about to congratulate him, but was cut short by a request to read the minutes of the previous meeting. This was very upsetting since no such minutes had been prepared. The SEC-treas's plaintive cry of, "But if I read them before they are published in the CRY you always make me take the lies out," was ignored by Jim Webbert who made a motion that the Sec-treas be censored, not so much for what had been done, but for what had not been done. The SEC-treas's plaintive cry was also ignored by Jerry Frahm, who seconded the motion. The plaintive cry was, finally, ignored by Ed Wyman, Rose Stark, Wally Gonser, Wally Weber, Elinor Busby, and almost John Strand (who had missed out by having to leave before the meeting started) who enthusiastically approved the motion of disapproval. The bitterest blow was when the plaintive cry was ignored by President F. M. Busby, himself, who was unnecessarily gleeful as he announced the motion had passed.

Anyway, now I can go around telling everybody that: THE NAMELESS ONES AREN'T GOOD FANS AT ALL. THEY IGNORE THE CRY!!!

Elinor Busby constructed the expensive motion that the Nameless Ones squeeze \$8 in club funds out of the Sec-TREAS and use it for a full page ad in the Pittsburgh Progress Report. Ed Wyman seconded this insane, spendthrift plan. Some discussion was turned to the question of whether taking out such an ad wasn't the duty of the Seattle Science Fiction Club, since it was the outfit that intended to put on the convention. The conclusion was reached that the Nameless would not do this as a duty, but would do it for fun. The motion was then passed with no significant opposition, since nobody listens to the Sec-TREAS anyway.

Somebody thought to wonder about who would do the text and illustration for the ad. Wally Gonser, our Vice-President who always manages to be absent at the same time as the President and therefore never has anything better to do than to point fingers at people, decided that F. M. should do the text, and "it" (referring to handsome Wally Weber) should be irresponsible for the illustration.

In retaliation, and in hopes that the Nameless treasury could go broke, Wally Weber moved that the Nameless renew Geneva Wyman's Thalia membership for another year. Elinor Busby seconded this, and everyone voted in favor. Ed Wyman was particularly in favor, since his wife has been pestering him for several weeks now to renew the membership. Ed made a special speech, thanking the club on behalf of his better half and his pocketbook. It must have been a touching speech, for tears were noticed in the Sec-TREAS's four eyes as Ed made the speech.

By this time the meeting had lasted a full ten minutes and Elinor Busby, who had so thoroughly enjoyed the meeting of the Seattle Science Fiction Club that had been held just previous to the Nameless meeting, was getting bored with the comparatively dull motions that were being made and wanted to leave. The power of a President's wife is not to be underestimated, for the meeting was adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

The Nameless Ones went down to the kitchen, then, where an interesting discussion took place concerning how to commit murders by unusual methods. Although not directly connected with science fiction, the conversation was so hair-raising that Wally Gonser had to give Wally Weber a haircut later on in the evening.

honorable but censored Sec-Treas
Wally Weber

CRY of the READERS



/Gee, I'm so drunk with power I won't even let Elinor stencil an Atomillo for the column heading; I used my own illo instead. WCW! I mean, WWW!/
 Elinor

SOFT-SOAPED SERGEANT GIVES BUBBLY COMMAND 6137 S Croft Ave.
 Los Angeles 56, Calif.

Prenez gards avant d'entrer, s'il vous plait --

The latest CRY has arrived and I am going to comment on it. This time I am not going to make comments on how long this letter will turn out to be, for then our erstwhile letter editor will start stencilling it in all innocence without noticing what he is letting himself in for. This way I may yet take over the CRY (and whatever happened to that joke?).

"The Goon Goes West" is moving right along. I note with great surprise that John arrived in New York on the very day I turned 17 years of age. Coincidence? ... Put me down for a copy of the completed book, by all means.

Agree with you 100% on this screwy business of a New York WorldCon in 1964. Besides which, it's Gay Paree in '63, then it goes back to the Coast here for Mordor in '64!

Best,

Bob Lichtman

/But if it's Gay Paree in '63, then it goes back to the Coast there instead of here.--WWW/

YON TRIM BLOND MUSTACHE

5201 E Carson
 Long Beach 8, Calif.

CRYkats:

CRY 133 is to hand here, and I'm violently biased toward ATom covers. This one, anyway, is a jewel. Hoohah, says I, each time I gaze at the darned thing.

Nice little behind-the-scenes snoop on page three, Buz. But I'm darned if Don Franson has me right. Don, I did NOT say that CRY is going all-out fannish, or that stfanzines were folding up, and such like. Why, how can you misquote me like that? I merely said... Er, ah, I stated.... Hmmm, I guess if you boiled it all down, that could be taken as the essential root of what I was getting at. But, after all, who wants to go to all that work? Just read QVintheFMZ, and let what I say go in one head and out the other. I couldn't be serious about all that stuff, now could I?

Two items, for my tastes, could have been left out of this CRY. I refer to Fandom Harvest, which wasn't even humorous, let alone not saying anything, and to Andy Young Meets Canada Dry. The latter is just a wee bit too slap-stick for me, I'm afraid.

But maybe I'm just spoiled for having read "The Goon Goes West" first-off. If this doesn't top everything else Berry's done, and wind up sitting half a rung below "The Harp Stateside", it'll be because some world catastrophe prevents the publishing of further chapters.

/TERRY CARR!/
 Terry Carr

Cringingly,

for TAFF * Seattle in '61

John Trimble

MORDOR in 1964! (T'Hell with NY)

/Waddya mean, "half a rung below 'The Harp Stateside'"? There's still room on the Harp's rung, you know. --WWW/

ACH HIMMEL, PARDON DER WORDS

6033 Garth Ave.
Los Angeles 56, California

Dear WWW and the rest o' you CRYers,

The cover was among the best of late. Glad to see ATom here again. The Multigraphy was ever so small this time, tho I can presume it accomplished it's purpose in that I noticed it.

Now the Berry trip comes into view, gak, this was a great trip for John. He is so elated thru the play by play that he transmits it somewhat to the reader, at least in my case. In reading I recall the sights and happening when I hit New York this summer. No fanac at all but I was impressed much as John was with the sights, etc. What I missed by being unable to make contact with any fans, jeez. I am looking forward with great anticipation to the "next exciting episode of... THE GOON GOES WEST".

TCarr's Fandom Harvest evoked interest here, tho it did seem a bit weak. There are indeed many captions that could be tagged on these cartoons. Note the illos on page 22, top- "Look mom, no cavities!", "Goshwowboyohboy, welcomed into fandom by the N3F!" for the middle, - top page 23 - "Good Ghu, I couldn't caption cartoons by ATom either!". That bem on the right be a perfect likeness o' me at this moment, so I will bow out as gracefully as I can after the above.

Nirenberg was as interesting as ever. He is indeed one of the hottest new fanfiction and now I see fanfactual writers today.

The letter column concludes thissue of CRY, and a very enjoyable conclusion it is. I fear I don't like its reduced size, but I suppose it will have to be.

Quixotically,

Don Durward, AAAHF

(Almost Always Also Hear From)

/If you're so good at captions, how would you like to take over the lettercol? ---WWW/

JEFF, ONE SHALL BE ENOUGH POSTCARDS FROM... 6 Veverly Pl.

Larchmont, N.Y.

Dear CRYgang,

Sorry not time for letter. Hope this will reach you in advance of 133 anyway. Following are short comments. Cover fair, Pemby goom'bye, Terry too much like Fandom Denied for my liking, even though switch ending real cute, Berry of course fascinating, looking forward to next installments, Detention report fabulous, slick, Cottage amusing but silly, Carr excellent but lacking that final OOMPHH(Oog?), Evil Buz nothing special, Minutes good, CRY of the WE-ALSOHEARDFROM'S outrageous, better be bigger next time, and yes, people and Toskey, I am 12 years old. But ya shouldn't have printed that, for how many guys who are ages are gonna write to a 12 year old kid. I should scream at you GMCishly for calling me a fuzzlehead, but was probably in fun. Yours, Good ol' never run on a sentence Jeff Wanshel (The poor fan's Rick Sneary) SICSICSICToskforTaff say, ya get a lot of extra room out of this, doncha? And here I am wasting it! %\$#! Er-goodbye already.

/No comment. I don't write to any postcard-sending 12 year old fuzzlehead. --WWW/

OUR CHIEF MARCHER CONTINUES ONWARD DOWN.....434/4, Newark Road,

North Hykeham, LINCOLN, England

Dear CRY.

I have the hundred-and-thirty-second CRY. It arrove in good fannish company, comprising two twin OOPSLAS, one SHAGGY, REVOLUTION, APE, and a couple of small filler items for makeweight. Perhaps you can tontemplate reading THAT little lot in an evening.

Anyway, here's this 'ere CRY. It has a cover. I don't care for the cover. Seems Bjo in her seriously artistic mood isn't nearly so much to my taste as in her frivolous fannishly artistic mood.

In its final flings, Renfrew's column remains as indispensable as ever. I'm glad it waited long enough for me to compare my impressions of STARSHIP SOLDIER with it, for example. This is still a column I'm truly sorry to see on the rocks.

"Another Pygmalion" reads rather as if Terry's out to chide John for his cruel but otherwise similar story a few issues back. Which is rather reversing what one's been led

==44==

to expect from these two. Anyway, I unhesitatingly award Terry the laurels for this particular exchange.

Just one odd query - how does Les Nirenberg (in whom I believe - as distinct from Ted Pauls) pronounce the "ir" noise in his name - as in Miriam or as in Iris?

Merc as ever

Archie Mercer

PS. For the record, I'm also mighty sorry to see Elinor leaving the lettercol. Makes me wish I'd CRYhacked more while she was around.

/The consensus of opinions around here is that it's "ir" as in "Iris." If we have remembered the tape recordings incorrectly, the least Les can do is change the pronunciation to agree with us -- if he wants any egoboo in the CRY anymore, that is. --WWW/

EH? SAD AM STUDENT FROM..... 366 Yale Station
New Haven, Conn.

good ol' wally weber;

Wally Weber is a Ghood Man.

Back for a couple of things in 132 (which was in the sad days when Superb Wally Weber had only one section of Cry): Goon Goes West started off in a most cool fashion. No Harp Stateside yet, but very much good.

The modest Wally Weber (the same man who now most fairmindedly edits the lettercol) was of course excellent with this conreport and minutes.

Now I would komment on 133 but I can't find it, Great Wally Weber. Through some wondrous stroke of good luck some idiot has stolen this month's CRY and thus I won't be able to komment on it. Must say from the fading memories that Berry was very good, but a bit too documented in spots for my taste. Franson I didn't like too well. Keen Blue Eyes wasn't bad, as I recall, but of course Courageous Forthright Wally Weber was best.

best.

Es Adams

/Your letter appears here because it displays excellent judgement and taste. You must be attending an unusually good school. -- Remarkable WWW/

FALLING BRICKS NARROWLY MISSED ME

2962 Santa Ana St.
South Gate, Calif.

Dear Weber-one,

Recieved Cry the other day and it is very good for a first issue.. I notice that you copied the style of CRY, which is all to the good as it was a very fine fanzine.. Your repro and art isn't quite the same, but I'm sure you will enprove with time...as you master the art of layout and such things..

The chief item of interest is of course the Goon Travels and Travails. The trouble is they don't leave much for one to comment on. And compairson is a road to folly.. Hope future parts will have more Atom illos... Don't tell me you had John up there with you, and made him write.... It was bad enough last year when Ron had to work through the final hours to get out his report for Carnell---but that was for pro-mag deadline..

The keen eyed bicycle has voiced the opinion one is hearing much of late.. That is to say that Taurasi is off his rocker and that better the real Mordor in 1964 than New York.. It is heartening to see the so-far solid stand that has been taken. One wonders if even the great fath that SFTimes has in it's being the true voice of fandom will not be shaken by this..

Will someone get Nirenberg to explain what the candy-shop is like.. After years of fantasy and imaginative reading I'm still unable to imagine what a beatnic candysshop would look like.

It's strange, but it is easy to tell that some one elses hand was on the scissors.. It will no doubt take readers a few months to get use to the new boss, and learn what to say to make him think you have said something worth printing..

Good Luck

Rick Sneary

/Letterhacks should pattern their letters after the one by Es Adams above. --WWW/

JELLY ON RECORDINGS WILL JAM GROOVES

29 Lathom Road, East Ham
London E6, ENGLAND

Dear Nameless Ones

Many thanks for Cry 132. Like George Locke I have also been borrowing Ella Parker's Crys. You should make her British Publicity Agent or something.

Now to my comments.

Cover: Quite good but I prefer Bjo when she does either out and out cartoons or those whimsical impressionistic illos.

"The SF Field Plowed Under": More! more! The only quarrel I have with this column is those cryptic comments; they keep me on edge because I may not see the story concerned for 2 or 3 months due to the mags getting to me in an irregular fashion. But then I suppose I'd be dead needled if he gave the story away completely anyway.

"Another Pygmalion": I seem to have come across something like this before somewhere; this one's got a happy ending thank Ghod!

"The Goon Goes West": This believe it or not is the item which prompted me to sub to Cry. I don't want to miss any of John's stuff so I had to sub. I see you're going to eventually do this in book form. Goodie! Put me down for a copy straightaway.

"The Yo-Yo of Fortune": Wishful Thinking?

"Fandom Harvest": This notion of a cereal fandom is good, but what would be their staple drink? Mhilk?

Many thanks again for Cry and keep 'em coming.

Yours sincerely

Jim Groves

/Mhilk? Wow! Where do I join this cereal fandom anyway? --WWW/

BETTER COOL YA .. uh, er BET YAKhmm,that is, BAT TIKE OOoog,mfgBUT TEAK WOODblgnsh, BY TIC O' YA Vubble-ubb1e-ubb1e-urggggCHAAAAA!!!!!!

A LETTER FROM BETTY KUJAWA!!

2819 Caroline
South Bend 14, Indiana

Dear Wally;

As a matter of fact I've been thinking of you lately!! How could I help it what with Headlines like the ones enclosed leaping out at me from the Morning Chicago papers??WEBER ON TRIAL FOR MURDER....WEBER FOUND NOT GUILTY...WEBER TO BE RETRIED...oh well.

Say now.....am intrigued with those 'name puns' you have as letter headings---and for the first time I hope I'll see mine in there just to see what-in-the-heck you can do with MY name!!! Hoooobhoy this is the greatest challenge of your career!! To add to the confusion our fine olde Polish name should be pronounced thusly.....koo-yah-vah..... but my sterling husband does NOT pronounce it that way. Instead we pronounce it kee-ah-wah. Why?? Cause he found the average Anglo-American is lost when faced with a word beginning with the letters 'ku' -- Look in your dictionary--there ain't many..if any. At least we're unique! In case you doubt the existence of such a person as a Kujawa, ask Wrai Ballard--HE knows! I'd also say to ask Alan Dodd...but.

Enjoy CRY..specially liked the art work in 133, by the by. Deeeelighted with the Berry Report--hope it goes on and on and on and on. Can just see him with his first American hamburger.

Hope Franison will go on with the 'little digs'--was sorry I got in on the tail end of 'plowed under'--but either one fills a need in my fannish life--nice to have some idea of what goeth on in the sf mags I don't get.

Dodd MUST exist--at least I get letters, photos..and tapes--thusly he has hands, face, and voice...and tons of old PLAYBOY's I have sent him--hence--he am.

Betty Kujawa

/No jury will ever convict me! --WWW/

((Change of typer denotes Buz in, substituting for Wally. Explanations next page.))

((Wally completed the previous 4 pages of lettercol and 2 pages of Minutes, and took off for his old home-town of Ritzville for the Thanksgiving weekend. So here we are, you and I, to cope with the rest of the letters, for the first time since the Aug '56 CRY, #96, in which I stencilled a 3-page lettercol and instituted the practice of cutting letters, in order not to slop over on the 4th page. Everyone was outraged, with the exception of Buck Coulson, who had written the letter that got chopped.

((Don't know whether I can stay with Wally's "name-pun" system or not-- we'll see. But first, a few quickie answers to some letters on the preceding pages)):

JEFF WANSHEL: "Fuzzlehead" comes from one of your own CRYletters, if memory serves.

We aren't calling you a fuzzlehead, except in a just-among-friends sort of way. OK?

RICK SNEARY: "make John write"? (when he was here.) Like to see anybody try to stop that bhoy, when he had a clear shot at a typer and was eager to produce...

BET He COULD JAW A LEG OFF'N YOU: OK, that's not how you pronounce it, but it's how I've been pronouncing it. By your rules, then: BET HE KIOWA (HE NOT SIOUX, AT ALL)

((OK, On With It--))

BOY DRAPER NOW ((I even wince for you-- that's service))

89 Maxome Ave

Willowdale, Ontario

Enjoyed second episode of the Goon Goes West, and I'm glad you're going to run laeger installments in future issues. I hope, Buz, that you'll keep on with the Keen Blue Eyes and a Bicycle column for general chattering about anything that occurs to you, even though you may not review zines in it. Wally's Minutes were once again on a high plane, but TCarr's column disappointed this time, not that I didn't enjoy it-- it just didn't seem as good as previous Fandom Harvests.

Nirenberg's Andy Young comes to Canada was new to me, for I didn't see this one before he sent it. In the actual episode, Les pulled off the "Andy Young the engineer" and "horoscope" bits perfectly-- completely innocent and deadpan. Andy was really frothing in a mock-manner. Previously I had been introducing him to various people as "Andy Young. He's an engineer." and les's innocent bit was a sort of last straw. Les's "f Les Piper" bit was just too much. The punchline broke me up completely when I saw the original, and it still looks good in CRY, even though the black areas didn't come out too well. ((They seldom do. Talk to Les and tell him that Floating Black Specks are not good for CRY.)) The letter column was a great disappointment, ((..Boyd goes on to deplore the excessive cutting in the last issue, which was partly my fault for overemphasizing the need for cutting, to Wally. As I'll have probably mentioned in "Bicycle" or on page 3, the curtailed lettercol is, we hope, a Temporary Measure-- if Wally doesn't get stuck with the habit of over-cutting...)) I guess this sounds strange coming from Raeburn who used to sneer at the CRY lettercol, but since that time it has become a fine letter column in a fine zine, and I'm sorry that from all indications the column as we knew it is going to be no more. ((Don't give up just yet, Boyd.))

DUN ALL DIFFERENT SONS

6543 Babcock Ave

N Hollywood, Calif

Dear Mr Weber and associates,

Your magazine, CRUD OF THE MINDLESS, is going places! If this keeps up, I guarantee CRUD will soon be on top of the heap. Wherever you see a heap, there will be CRUD, on top of it.

Cover was nice, though it doesn't stick very close to the story. John Berry is enjoyable, and may "The Goon" go on forever. But...((several lines of Fine Faanish Fulmination omitted here))... don't squeeze out the lettercol! ...For CRY's sake!

Glad to see Belle Dietz's column drawing some new subscribers. Now is as good a time as any to remind faneds to give the neofans a break. If your zine is suspended, or you're out of copies, send a postcard in answer to sincere inquiries. After all, if you've sent a fanzine in for review, you've placed an advertisement and it should be honored, or some reason given why it can't be.

For the benefit of prospective members of the "I Don't Believe in Leslie Nirenberg" club, here are the IDBILN rules:

1.Member will not believe in Leslie Nirenberg.

2.Member will not reveal who Nirenberg really is, if he knows.

((we continue with Don Franson atheistically disbelieving in Les Nirenberg))

3. Member will not seek to find out who Nirenberg really is, if he doesn't know, but will base his disbelief on faith.

4. IDBILN members may join IBILN ("I believe in Leslie Nirenberg": Les's own captive organization) without prejudice to their disbelief.

Have Fun With FANAC Dep't (from report of wedding):

"Ted Cogswell gave the bridge away..." Couldn't he sell it?

I suspect there are hidden names in the letter-titles, but can't figure any of them out. So say we all as we burn the CRY.

((Hmm-- maybe you should take over the lettercol)) Yours, Donald Franson

THE SHELL TIES US

477 Woodlawn, Apt C
Springfield, Ohio

Steve is suffering from a slight touch of gafia, so.. after all, I have to make my debut in fanzine fanac sometime, don't I? ((Yes, and Now is the best time, too.))

I always enjoy every issue, and right now I'm avidly waiting for the next episode of "The Goon Goes West." Wally the letter col is one of my main pleasures in life, but I hate excreble puns, so go easy please?

Re "Starship Soldier": what amazes me most about Heinlein is his ability to make me feel that all this is going on in the universe right now. I thought the continuity of this last story better than "Have Spacesuit.." or "Citizen of the Galaxy" (which is fresh in my mind from just having been read) where the book seems to obviously cut up for serialization.

--Virginia

Though 'tis not after sundown, 'tis overcast enough so that I can sit up in my coffin and tap out a word or two.

The new regime (same members, mostly; new posts) isn't up to the old in repro, but you'll no doubt be back to your old impecconderable standards in no time. Congrats, Wally, on the letter col headings. It so happens that I like ~~excreble~~ lousy puns, and was delighted with them-- after Virginia rather reluctantly explained them to me, that is.

--Steve

((Our execrable repro last time was not the result of a change in assignments.))

SMILIN' 'EM OFF IT

10202 Belcher
Downey, Calif

...the idea of having the '64 WorldCon at New York-- and at the World's Fair grounds yet!-- is pretty idiotic, for all the reasons voiced by Buz, Larry Shaw and the other sane New Yorkers, Earl Kemp, etc. Anyway, it's gonna be Mordor in '64, which means somewhere in the LA area.

So put me on the list of those who are AGAINST a WorldCon in NY in '64. As I keep saying-- it's PuCon in '61, Chi in '62, Washington DC in '63, and Mordor in '64. Right? Right! ((Right, indeed; we need another NYCon like we need a hole in the head and we have enough of those already.))

((Saving your article for the Annish, Len)) --Keep Smiling! Len Moffatt

LAST EVE'S TILES (1809 Second Ave, NY 28, NY)

Glad to see CRY this month: always good anti-depressant, especisly after a school week and before mid-terms.

"The Goon Goes West" went over big with me... of course at certain pints I admit groaning, only because of my absence from gay NY at John's arrival.

"Minutes" by that mastermind gay-blade Wally Weber ((you can ease off, Steve; he is out of town just now)) was (were? am? is?) interesting. ((Been.))

What happened Les Gerber this issue? Surely that ol' tired feeling isn't creeping into his typical teenage veins? ((With the Top 40 in mind, I'll pass this one.))

One night I dreamed there was a fanzine in my mailbox; it was the CRY. I knew I had been struck with Campbell-brand precognition; therefore I'd be getting the CRY that day. That was two weeks ago....

--Steve Stiles

((So sue Campbell; we're broke))

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...NOR MET CAFE HABITUES...

P O Box 35

Lowry AFB, Colorado

Dear Wally, The guys around here who dig the crazy sf stuff really went way out for the Nov cover.

"The Goon Goes West" finds Berry in even finer form. He makes you feel what 'tis like to leave the auld sod (of Antrim, yet) and journey to the barbarous shores of the New World where those wild and savage fen abound.

The Nov Fantastic "novella" is about 1,000 words shorter than the "novelet". At any rate they are both of short story length (using some other standard than Galaxy's or some such modern foolishness). ((I'll bet you counted those words, Norm.))

According to Don Day's Index, "The Core" is by Kornbluth alone.

Hooray for editorializing against the FairCon. Out of the ashes of New Fandom rises New Fandom to dictate to the new fandom. Bah. ((Yes, and also Humbug.))

Ye Minutes were as ever thoroughly laughable. ((You should see the Meetings.))

Terry Carr does himself fine again with "Fandom Harvest". Page 21 (upper), how about "He's suffering from an overdose of egoboo after being attacked by Vorzimer in Abstract, so he's off zines for awhile"? ((Not topical enough; make it GMCarr maybe))

Nirenberg claiming to meet Andy Young is humbug; everyone knows Young isn't allowed out of the Bay State. The Providence Plantation game laws of 1653 provide for shooting all hirsute specimens from the northeast. The Iriquois Confederation stops travel toward the west and NW. So who's trying to kid whom? ((It was closed-season))

The pseudo-Feiffer is as good or better than the originals.

If we can't have the Plow burying sf, Franson makes a fine substitute.

Art Rapp:Heinlein isn't advocating a militaristic state, when the franchise is only for veterans? True, no one is forced to serve, but he must if he wants the vote. Do you rule against a man for lacking the physical/psychological makeup to undergo military training? The successful trainee is not necessarily the type of person who is fitted to make decisions for any large group. ((Deleted are 15 lines of good solid denunciation of the incompetent buck-passing "book soldier" who, as we all know, has always been one of the toughest problems the Armed Forces have to contend with.)) Sure, I obey orders, but like most enlisted men, hate them ((the above-mentioned types)). Sour grapes might sum up my reaction to "Starship Soldier". Another point of irritation is that it will be published as a juvenile. Hitler got part of his power by emphasizing the desirability of militarism to the youth of Germany; perhaps it could happen here. ((Further, Norm hits the "men-vs-machines" argument by citing that a million men are no use until transported to the scene of action, and is bugged by (1)all his gear being the surplus from the past 3 wars, and (2)the horrible things done to good food by experienced AF cooks. These things we have always with us, Norm))

((I tried to cut without goofing your points, Norm, but everybody take note: the above arguments have been heavily-edited, so maybe it'll be my goof you dig into, not Norm's.. But while we're here (and I'm referring to the full letter, for these comments): Heinlein specified that his Army had places for handicappedes who are 4F by today's standards; his protagonist went through the Absolutely Roughest Routine of all. And it was veterans, not soldiers, who had the vote. Heinlein's premise was "You put in some service for the society before you have a say in running it", and it's an intriguing gimmick, though over-simplified. I doubt that your "herd-instinct" boys would make it in RAH's Army, because he set up, a priori, the Ideal Army as he sees it. Well, certainly, the piece is intended more as a Sermon-to-Our-Youth than as a story, but I doubt that Heinlein either intends or expects to produce a militaristic trend as such; he's more out to counteract the "world owes me a living" attitude by whipping up a little Dedication here and there. But he could have included a PLOT.))

YAWN MY COLLIE

Ballycorus Grange

Dear Wally,

Kilternan, Co. Dublin, Eire

At least, I suppose it is still Wally dealing with the letters ((no)); changes are taking place so fast in the CRY staff lately ((yes)). Seems a bit like the Mad Hatter's Tea Party, where you all just move one place around the table ((it's similar in more ways than that, I assure you)). If you continue making changes,

please get Toskey onto the writing staff for a few articles. I recently borrowed a copy of his SAPSzine and can't understand why you haven't ganged up on him to write more for the CRY ((we've hit Tosk up to do a couple-page item each month, but so far no luck with this approach. Keep hammering on him, huh, Ian?))

#132 as good as ever. Practically feels like the end of an era or epoch or something, though, to see the last of TSSFP; I shall miss it. Terry's 2 pieces nice and light, my preference being "Another Pygmalion". I was glad to see he acknowledged his debt to John Berry's "Fandom Denied"; after reading A.P. I spent a half hour madly scanning back issues to find F.D. to check the similarities. This was before reading Terry's column, so I was wondering if John had telepathically influenced Terry (who had a rather different ending, however; perhaps he wrote it before John wrote his-- sort of a foreGoon conclusion). Looks as if the "Goon Goes West" is going to be a real epic. Having heard a little about them from John, I'm looking forward to seeing the Stateside episodes. Meanwhile, Wally Weber's Conreport filled the need quite pleasantly. "The Yo-Yo of Fortune"-- maybe I just couldn't suspend my disbelief far enough for this one.

Best, Ian MacAulay

HIGH REWARD NEAR

423 Summit Ave
Hagerstown, Md

"Another Pygmalion" impressed me as one of Terry's best efforts. I could raise objections from the technical standpoint, because the pro-aspirations of Vaughan were not planted frequently enough earlier in the story to make the ending completely effective, and there might also have been more emphasis on Norworth's apparent dislike for professionals, to emphasize the irony. But those are minor objections... And why is it that some can easily think up fanzine names for fan fiction, when others wrestle to find something original as a title for their own publications?

"The Goon Goes West" starts wholly up to my expectations. I detect a slight change in John's style since his visit here: less exaggeration and hyperbole than in most of his writing about fannish incidents. I suppose the moral is that fans here are so crazy that you don't dare use your imagination in telling of experiences with them. The careful documentation lavished on the early stages of John's report is impressive.

Wally's Detention Report is the first extensive one I've read, so it is fresh and original in describing events I shall probably be deathly sick of hearing about, 35 Conreports in the future. I wish sometime we'd learn what the purchasers of the pros did with their hours. I imagine that mostly it peters out in conversation, but there certainly must be someone who comes up with a brilliant and fiendish request every convention. ((At SouthGate, I suggested that some monumental egotist could be "bought" and then left locked in a closet while the purchaser went about his own business for the hour. You've got to admit that it would be quite a Squelch.))

"The Yo*yo of Fortune" sounds like John Berry to me ((no)). If it isn't by John, it's by someone who's read a lot of John Berry fanzine material ((yes, but "Yo-Yo" is in the tradition of an entire faanish school of thought, rather than being copy-work))

Strange to see those good words from Doc Lowndes: Palmer at the height of his prosperity was bleating that publishers pay no attention to fans because they're so tiny a minority and their opinions are so different from the non-letter-writing majority. And Grennell in the letter section: I've been reading Woolcott lately, and I notice how closely akin are the styles of the two great men: Dean doesn't go in for the purple passage and theatrically-staged climax at the very end, but otherwise the tone of voice is almost identical. ((Above was on the Oct issue; now to Nov, #133))

I've not read the Heinlein story, but it sounds as the man who has been pleading for us to save democracy from the communists is urging that we do so by restricting citizenship to a certain class of persons, which has happened in other times and places in the past. I can't see the logic of this particular approach. If the citizenship is to be a reward for saving the country from defeat, it would become available only a few times in a century. If it were to be a reward for service to the nation, I can think of other groups who undergo as much discipline and training as soldiers: physicians, for instance. The whole notion is simply another outgrowth of might-makes-right; which holds better in the jungle than in civilization. And the

most difficult thing about the situation is that the really capable and intelligent people come out of the service even more so, in many instances, so that they can take their personal experiences as yardsticks of the value of military training. But it's the great majority of men who are lacking physically or mentally in some respect who come out of the service much worse than they went in: spiritually warped or broken, incorrigible goldbricks, unable to live up to the standards of a monogamous society, with a damaged heart, on the road to alcoholism, or possessing some other difficulty which certainly won't better-equip them to run the country. --Harry Warner

((You make a very good point, that capable types who profit from military training are apt to feel that it's good for everyone-- which is not the case. But I don't agree that "a majority" come out of the service ill-fitted to handle their own affairs (let alone the national scene). Mostly, if you're OK when you go in, you're OK when you come out, short of battle damage & etc-- and conversely, if you go in goofed, you usually come out the same way only more so. The Armed Services probably break as many men as they make, but for the most part, they work with the pre-existing product of our homes, schools, and general culture, and don't make much of a dent, basically. For the average guy, the Army is just one more course in the School of Hard Knocks, & he copes with it just about as well as he copes with other things, and with about the same long-term effects as his other failures and successes, I suppose.

Anyhow, it was almost exactly ten years ago that Heinlein first announced in "Gulf" that he was fed-up to the eyeballs with "the deciding of important events by counting Common Man's runny noses"; he lagged Hubbard on this conclusion by about nine years ("Final Blackout"). Considering the Hooper Ratings, I'm hard put to disagree.))

ANDWEALSOHEARDFROM: (Don't panic, now-- we're simply clearing a few notes, rather than holding them for the last minute-- the AWAHF doesn't have to be all at the end, does it now?) ANDY MAIN sends a buck for "the next five issues", asks about back issues (Attention, Toskey!), and seems to think that San Diego is bidding against Seattle for the WorldCon in '61, instead of them backing us for the WorldCon and our backing them for the WesterCon in that same year of 1961. Well, sure, it's confusing, Andy.

LLOYD D BROYLES also sends a buck and cites JD/ARGASSY, FU, & FANAC as references for us, to him. SHIRLEY CHAPMAN sent two-bits and no references; hi, honey. MIKE DECKINGER (who sent four-bits) says "Tell Franson that Dodd is as real as I am". So what else is new, Mike? Says "Also, I wish you'd announce that I'm formally the chairman of the "Brother Frank Jares for World President" Movement; if the response is big enough, Brother Frank will be willing to run for TAFF and beat all the other candidates too; I'm serious about this. Plizz." OK, I can be just as serious as the next kook, so just who is Brother Frank Jares, perchance? I've got to admit that running for TAFF and the World Presidency at the same time, is a Fresh Approach. And whatever happened to that issue of Hocus that everyone said wouldn't make it through the P.O., Mike-- could it be that everyone was right? Or are we off your list these days? BILL MALLARDI types all in Caps, says "I'M JUST TOO DAMN LAZY TO KEEP CHANGING THE LETTERS BACK AND FORTH". I certainly sympathize, Bill; I'm too lazy to copy off any more of that hard-to-read all-Caps typing. We live and learn, don't we though? Hey Bill-- check the MAD "Night Before Christmas"? Yes, if you must be scooped, be scooped by MAD (Bill had an 8-line start on the same deal).

And then we got us a hotrod with a Pt. Huron, Mich, postmark-- signs "Melvin Snurdly" under half a paper-towel (literally) of imitation Mervil Culvercast -- it's not bad, in spots, but the misspelling isn't consistent enough. Best gimmick is the repetition (6 times) of "Yew know what I meen". Hi there, Peter F Skeberdis!

((And a last-minute check of Box 92 drew a blank; that's all ye wrote! --Buz))

BJO WELLS (980 $\frac{1}{2}$ White Knoll Dr, L A 12) sends Bulletin #1 on her projected Fan Art Show to be held at PittCon. Although under N3F sponsorship, the Show is N*O*T limited to N3F FanArtists. Bjo also states "this particular N3F project has several of us involved who are known for finishing what we start"; even the most Neffphobic must admit that Bjo herself has a pretty good record along that line. I note Seth Johnson with a full page of organizing (as opposed to working) suggestions, but I'm betting on Bjo..

A FEW LITTLE DIGS
by Donald Franson

H.L. Gold, Friend of the Fan, has come out with the second edition of his much advertised and anticipated "letter column" (Dec. Galaxy).

Does it contain comments on the stories and the ideas behind the stories? Does it have friendly or unfriendly advice on how to improve, ruin, or otherwise change the magazine? Does it consist of arguments, kudos, brickbats, exhortations, challenges, witticisms, raves, fueds, inanities? Does it contain stimulating discussions on science, or even pseudo-science? Does it contain anything that any lettercol ever contained? No. What does it contain, then?

Bizarre news items.

The sort of thing one finds in the weekly newspapers, stuck down at the ends of columns that don't quite fill the space allotted to them. Stuff sounding like the fillers in "Wonder Book of Knowledge." All clippings. All subjects for jokes of "the aliens are among us" type. I suppose Gold thinks these are uproariously funny. I think they are sad.

Saddest of all is the treatment given to letters written in good faith, no doubt highly interesting of somebody, if not H.L., that were never printed or even excerpted, to make space for Gold's own brand of humor. He might as well have written it himself.

* * * * *

You are not a fan if you don't get the new If (January), in which Abominable Pro Bob Shaw and Utterly Unspeakable Pro Walt Willis get together on a short story, "Dissolute Diplomat." So help me Renfrew Pemberton, this alone is worth 35¢. Then you get the rest of the mag free, and it is worth lokking into. Jerry Sohl, in "The Little Red Bag," gives a lesson on how to write tension, which other writers might study, though only a minimum of science or fantasy is used. This is the Wells technique, and it's effective. "The Last Leap" by Daniel F. Galouye, however, failed to grip me. I do not criticize this story for having the same punchline as another one printed 21 years ago; after all there are innocent repetitions of ideas every month; but the new suffers by comparison with the old. "The Dangerous Dimension" (ASF, July 1938) L. Ron Hubbard's first science-fiction story, was far more entertaining, and without a downbeat ending.

"To Each His Own" by Jack Sharkey, has an unexpected explanation, doesn't telegraph it, and is interesting meanwhile. Margaret St. Clair's "The Autumn After Next" is short but enjoyable. "The Good Seed" by Mark Mallory (sounds like a pen name, somehow) starts out slowly and unconvincingly, then gathers interest and effect. Frederik Pohl's long, chatty book reviews are the Kind Fen Like, though not in dk's class of fireworks. "The Divers" by James Stammers (another pseudonym?) was rather hard to read. Inconsistent in characterization: moron suddenly given great powers should still think like a moron. Should say, when confronted with the Infinite, "Duh... all them stars are nice, but what are they doing out in the daytime?" Or something. Both "The Divers" and "The Last Leap" are about wild-talented people whom the Military needs. But it's not fair to blame authors, or even the editor, for similar themes repeated within one issue of a magazine -- balance is almost impossible to attain in every respect. Parenthetically, I have no objection to psi stories, per se, or to flying saucer stories, or dero stories for that matter -- it's psi, saucer, and dero editorials and fact articles that bug me.

One more story and I'm through -- "Cultural Exchange" by J.F. Bone, while competently written, is about tree houses, and simple savages who turn out to be advanced eggheads. Ho. Hum. Ending is different, but confusing and unsatisfactory. The shorts were superior to the longs in this issue, so if you are strapped for time, get the mag and read only them. Now if If had a letter column again, it would be a very good magazine. The editor is H. L. Gold, and let's stop criticizing him so much, eh fans?

FANDOM HARVEST

TERRY CARR

In the last CRY, Rick Sneary wondered why I don't write more serious stuff in my columns. "Terry, in both CRY and SHAGGY, is all wit and personalized chatter," he claimed. And he said he thought I should "pass on news, comment, and mold opinion," which are, he says, the purposes of a columnist. Now, I don't especially agree with Rick on that last part, but in my typical wishywashy manner I'll refrain from arguing. But I would like to clear up a misconception of his.

It isn't especially true that I've had nothing serious in this CRY column. Why, I started out with a review of the Year of the Jackpot, and have since considered such matters as the renaissance at Ziff-Davis, the possibilities of serious fannish fiction, and some aspects of TAFF of which I took a Dim View. (Taking a Dim View is one of the purposes of a columnist, surely! In fact, you might even say that I Viewed With Alarm a bit, and that's even better.)

But about that SHAGGY column Rick was right--sort of. I mean, nothing has appeared in that column ("The Squirrel Cage Annex") which wasn't personalized chatter. But that's deceptive, because twice I wrote long sections of the column on fairly serious subjects. And twice, for one reason or another, they didn't get printed.

Now, I don't want to be cast in the role of a dilettante. I am a serious young man with serious young ideas, in search of a serious young fanzine in which to express myself. I don't really want to spend my life telling Burbee anecdotes and Squirrel jokes--I want to talk about more important things. I want to consider the world-wide implications of sputniks, the literary and political shortcomings of Heinlein, the effects of Seventh Fandom on the Cultural Revolution in the West.

I want my writings to have scope. I want them to Mold Public Opinion and create a shining future for us all. I want to write penetrating critiques with such titles as Neo-Romanticism In The Writings Of Les Nirenberg, Pseudo-Campbellism In Astounding, and Whither Burnett R. Toskey, PhD?

I visualize myself as a young man with heavy, dark eyebrows and an outthrust chin and a smouldering gaze--sort of a combination of J. Edgar Hoover and Wally Weber. I think of myself as the White Hope Of Fandom, surveying the fan scene calmly, ready at the drop of a fuggheaded remark to burst into print with terse, clipped prose exposing Evils in our microcosm and suggesting farsighted, dynamic courses of action to overcome them.

I'd really like to write more serious stuff, like Rick suggests. I'd like to pass on news, comment, and mold opinion. But I really can't afford to. Fandom thinks of me as a light-hearted writer of fan-froth, and I must live up to that image.

Why hell, if I wrote something like Marc Antony's speech over the body of Caesar, the fans would just chuckle at the clever way I mixed my metaphors. And if I wrote the Gettysburg Address they'd say my punchline wasn't very funny.

At times I've tried to inject a note of solemnity into my writings. In February I wrote an anecdote about talking to Rick at Forry Ackerman's birthday party last year. Rick was saying that he'd just realized that he'd become a member of the Old Guard of Fandom, and at that point I realized that I'd been in fandom ten years myself. This anecdote was heavily laden with Sense of Wonder and Pathos. Two creaking oldsters, 31 and 22 years old, were depicted standing there in Forry's hall, amid prozines extending all the way back to the beginning, ruminating on past follies and approaching senility. My ghod but it was touching. I wept just a little while writing it.

But nobody noticed; they thought it was just chitterchatter.

In fact, I'll bet most people think this column is light chitterchatter too.

.....
Last issue Buz jumped into the NYCon-in-'64 fray and told you several good reasons why Taurasi's campaign should be opposed. I suppose this is a serious subject, so I think I'll write about it for awhile here.

It seems that there's really damn little danger of Taurasi managing to capture the '64 worldcon for New York; the fans in that city are too split to afford him a convincing display of unity, which he himself admits he must have to make a successful con-bid. Taurasi is already speaking of putting on a regional con in New York in '64 instead.

The fact is that certain portions of NYfandom are so deadset against Taurasi's plan that they are quite willing to completely demolish it should Taurasi actually make a bid in '63. This could be done quite simply: the opposing faction would simply put in a rival bid for New York.

Can't you just see it? Taurasi stands up and talks about the twenty-fifth anniversary of the first worldcon, plugs the World's Fair, and says, "New York Fandom invites you!" Then some other prominent New York fan stands up and says, "Don't listen to him--he doesn't represent New York fandom. We do! And we want to bid for the '64 con too!" And then someone else from New York stands and puts in a third New York bid, maybe even throwing in a couple of promises for programming, like, "We are even going to recreate the Exclusion Act--only one out of every three fans who register will be allowed into the con-hall! But come to the con anyhow--you might be lucky. And even if we don't let you in, there'll be room on the balcony. Dave Kyle is already busily arranging it."

Can you imagine anyone voting for New York after all that?

.....

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.....

Since this is the Serious Installment of "Fandom Harvest" (The Column That Separates The Wheat From The Chaff), I'd now like to turn to a matter of the utmost gravity. To say that I view it with alarm would be an understatement. Frankly, it scares the mental horizons out of me.

You probably know that for some time now we around San Francisco have been kidding around about building a Tower To The Moon Of Bheercans. We've built this up into quite a mythos in the past few years. And, like John Berry and the Goon Mythos, it's beginning to backfire on us.

We should have seen it coming, I suppose. As long ago as a year ago, one time when we visited Poul and Karen Anderson, they said apologetically, "Gee, we had a big party here last night, and there were lots of bheercans sitting around empty this morning. But we sent them out in the garbage--sorry." Ron and I just chuckled then, not thinking anything about it.

But a recent occurrence has brought home the enormity of this innocent mythos we've built. It is more than a mythos to the minds of fandom--they believe in the Tower To The Moon Of Bheercans.

I remember when I told somebody at the Solacon that Carl Brandon didn't exist, and he stared at me thunderstruck and said, "Next thing you'll be saying you don't even have a ten-mile-high tower of bheercans!"

I chuckled then, too. But I'm not chuckling now. Oh no.

A little while ago we received a notice from the post office that a package was waiting for us. I went down to get it--it was from Arthur Thomson. I opened it. It was an empty bheercan.

All the way from England, an empty bheercan.

Now I suppose you might not yet see what's upsetting me so much about this. After all, it was pretty innocuous--just a small red-and-gold can of Charrington's London Brown Ale. Why, Atom could have been just joking!

That's what I thought at first. But then I noticed that on the top of this can there were arrows pointing to the spots where the can was to be opened--"Open Here and Here". A pretty silly thing--you can open a bheercan anywhere, and having arrows pointing to two suggested points really seemed pointless.

But Atom had opened the can neatly at the suggested points.

Now what does this prove, you ask? Well, obviously, that Atom is a Follower of the Herd, a man who has abdicated his rightful heritage of original thought to the Opinion Molders. And would such a man send me an empty bheercan for a joke?

Hardly, I think. Atom must have been serious; he must have thought that we really do have a Tower to the Moon under construction here. I'll bet he believes all that stuff about weighting the cans that form the base with bottletops from bottled bheer, and the bit about the difficulties we supposedly had ferrying the ten-mile-high Tower across to Berkeley when we moved there for awhile. I'll bet he believes the whole mythos, including Carl's bicycle.

==54 (& end)==

And if Atom believes it, how many others do? Remember, Atom is a hyperactive fan, a sensible man, a man with solid background in fannish jokes and gags. If even he believes in the actual existence of the Tower, how many others do?

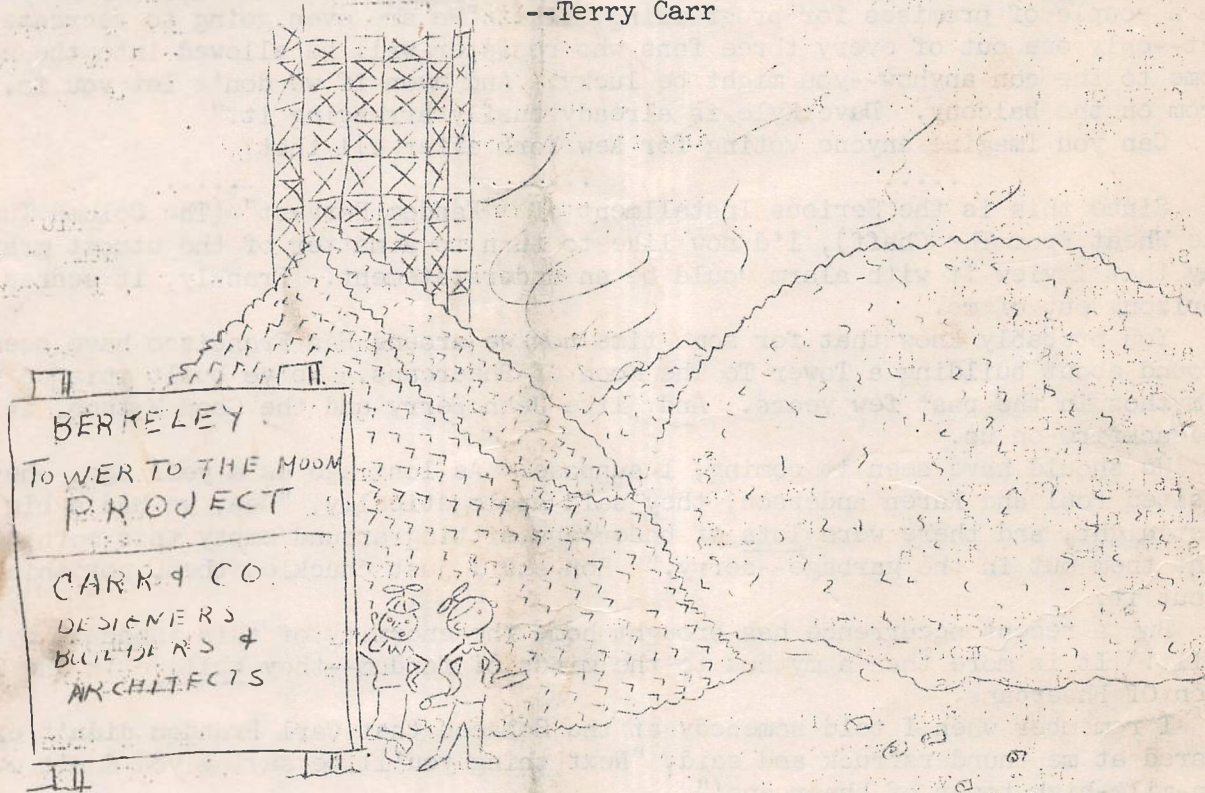
And if he sent us an empty bheercan, how many others will?

The thought is horrifying. I think of myself getting notices every day from the P.O., and trudging down to pick up two, three, or a dozen empty bheercans. I can see the expressions on the faces of postal employees--quizzical at first, vaguely amused soon, and eventually pitying and even sneering. I can picture in my mind the unghodly mess that those bheercans will make in our home.

I don't want all that, and I'd like to put a stop to it right now. So, hear me: we have no Tower To The Moon around here. It's a gag. No, Virginia, there is no Tower. We shipped it up to Sacramento to visit its grandmother.

Don't send bheercans, please. And if you do--send full ones, will you?

--Terry Carr



"Well, back to the old drawing board."

CRY

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(Printed Matter Only)

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