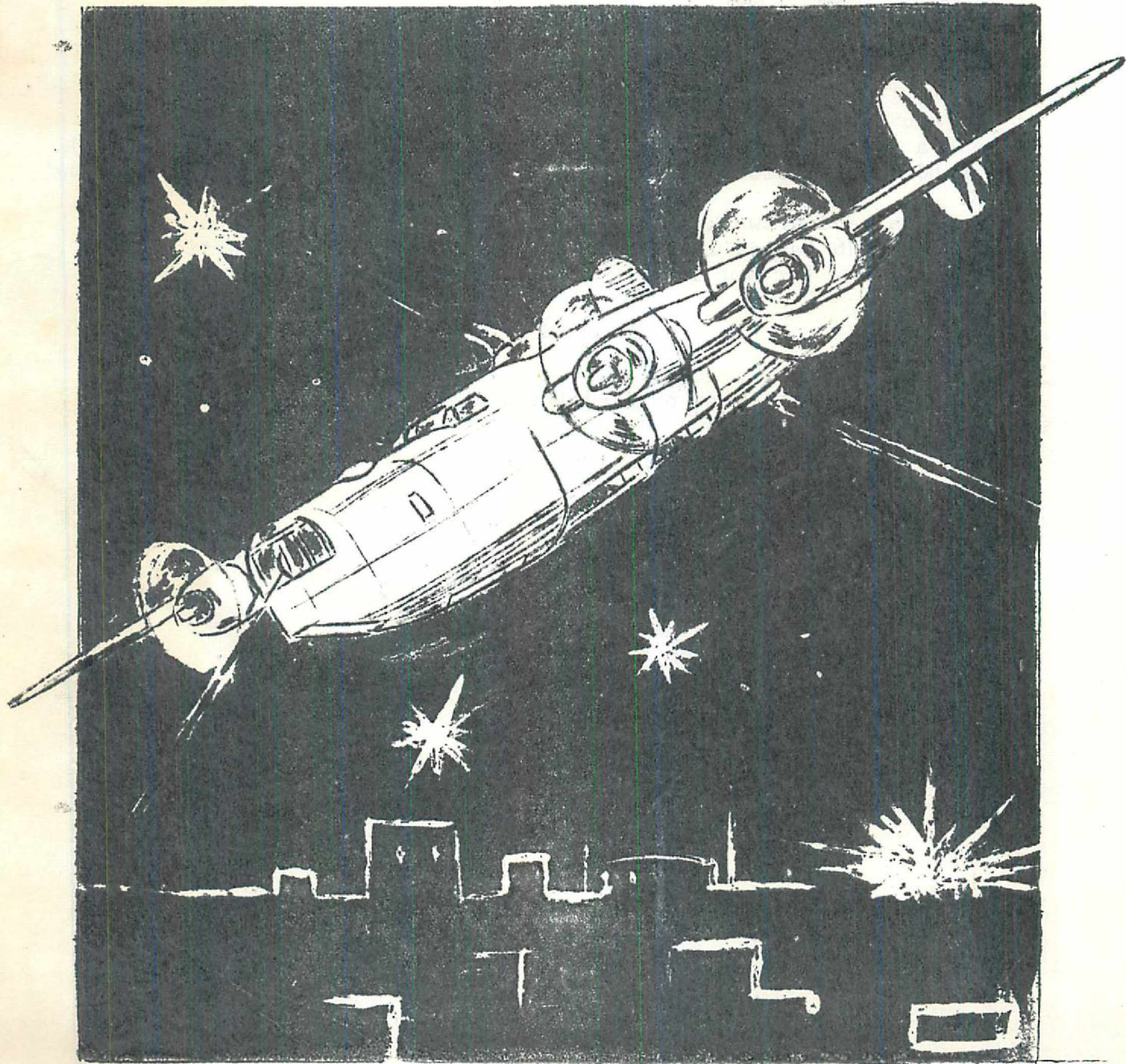
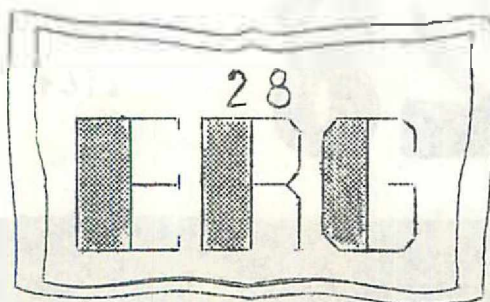


ERC

28

Oct.
1969





This is

ERG 28

October 1969

ERG is perpetrated by Terry Jeeves
from 30 Thompson Rd. Sheffield S11 8RB.

If you are not a member of OMPA, and would like the next issue, send a LOC and a quarto-sized S.A.E. if you live in the U.K. Outside the U.K. send a LOC and a block of any four Commemorative stamps in lieu of the S.A.E.

All material and artwork is by the editor, with the exception of the illo on page 16 (which I think was by Bill Harry) and the article by Alan Burns. The bacover is a posthumous Mc'Intyre

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YOU are getting this issuebecause I sent it to you. If you are interested in getting the next issue, remember that LOC.

EDITORIAL

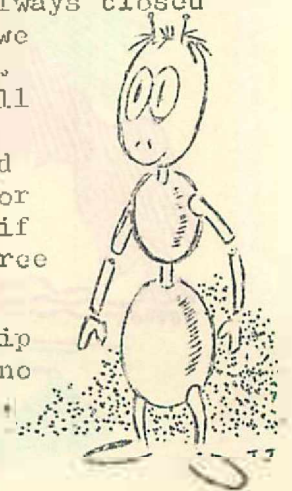
Greetings Gentlebods,

Onpa time is nearly here again, and the little bits and pieces that go to make up this issue of ERG are gradually

falling into place (For the 'less-than-20-pages' boys, I have sixteen pages lined up on stencil before the current mailing has arrived..which leaves me three months before next deadline). Once again there are a few innovations around the place and I'd appreciate comments on them. First, there are a couple or three bits of brush stencil work, including the B-24 on the cover. Then we have ERG's first multicolour illos..which were run off on the school Banda. I'm looking forward to the arrival of a Bandaflex when the Head can afford it...a marvellous gadget, which among other things, can make electro-stencils. My comments on space-travel have stirred Alan Burns into writing (and very kindly duplicating) an article on under-sea activities. At this stage, the issue seemed to be getting out of hand...instead of wondering what I was going to put in, the problem was what could I miss out to keep the issue within bounds. Future issues will probably shrink a shade..for financial reasons..until I can afford a new box of stencils.

Val and I have just had a few days in Paris, and we had to hock the family jewels to pay the tab. Things were highly enjoyable, if a trifle hectic. We left Sheffield at 7am, and drove down to Canterbury where we stayed the night with friends. On Tuesday, we parked the car at an all-night garage listed by the AA, and which had gladly accepted our booking and lolly. We flew to Beauvais and coached to Paris. Once there we did all the usual things such as climbing the Eiffel Tower (by lift); up and down the Seine (on the Bateaux Mouches; and nosed in sundry restaurants, where wonder of wonders, my schoolday French finally proved to be useful after all. Finally, after shooting off oodles of film both still and cine, we flew back to London in a heavy thunderstorm, went round to the garage at midnight to collect the car to drive home, and lo and behold...they had closed for the night. Calls to the AA and Police failed to unearth the manager, so we had to find a hotel and bed down for the night. Early next morning we played hob with the manager, who was sorry to hear we had been locked out, but said they always closed at 11-30. So we asked why hadn't they told us this when we booked the space and told them the time we wanted the car. H'm, he was very sorry...on looking into it, they found all the papers..bar our letter with the times on..very handy indeed. I cannot recommend Mo n's Motors of Horseferry Rd to any intending traveller. We are still negotiating for return of our expenses....but the funny man did say that if we were ever down that way again, we could garage there free the next time. Egad he should be on Comedy Playhouse.

On the other hand, we can say that the Skyways Trip was excellent, and the hotel very good and pleasant, and no snags anywhere along the line. 33 Elizabeth St. Victoria, if you're interested.



This seems to have been a week of bumper, top-level fanzines. Our mail-man is starting to grumble. ODD, TRUMPET, DOUBLE-BILL, BEOBEHEMA and two or three others, all in the 40 page bracket, plus ARGENTINE S-F review and COSMOS. All these zines feature high quality reproduction, and of course TRUMPET must be the ultimate in fanzines. By the way if any of you want subs to Double-Bill I am now the agent. It must be a good zine as they carry the interlineation, 'How about Jeeves for TAFF'...very good men.

Speaking of TAFF, heartiest congratulations to Eddie (good man) Jones on winning the current campaign. May he have a good trip and a happy return.

Having become completely enamoured with my new Quarz cine camera, I have reluctantly decided to part with the old one...still in excellent condition. For anyone interested, it is a Kodak, standard 8mm camera with a three lens turret, (telephoto, normal, and wide-angle) and also has a supplementary close-up lens (19") and carrying case. Anyone interested, drop me a line.

I was mooching around the library the other day, and carefully mis-filed in the Army section (and also numbered for that niche) I found 'Bomber Squadrons of the RAF'. Naturally, I looked up 356 Sqdn and found the following dates...which I had only a hazy estimate of when writing 'Carry On Jeeves'

Squadron motto... 'We bring Freedom and Assistance'...I'm not quite sure how they squared this with the 1000 lb bombs.

Formed at Salbanq...Jan.15.1944, moved to Cocos Islands in July 1945 and disbanded Nov.1945. The Sqdn used Liberator BVI and the 1st op. was Juh.2nd 1944 and the last on Aug.13. 1945. Obviously these are the 'official' for the record, dates, as we started forming in late 1943, and when I left the Cocos in Oct.45, there was no mention of it being on the point of disbandment.

Sheffield Library has a marvellous filing system by the way..the youngest assistant uses a pin. For instance, 'Atlas, the Story of a Missile' is filed under 'Shotguns'. There are two sections about Space Travel...one with Aeroplanes, and the other with Atomic Bombs. This system extends throughout nearly all the topics, so finding the books can be quite a chore.

All the best for now. Terry.





The saloon bar of the 'Wye Tart' was filled with the usual Monday complement of writers, artists, fans and other bums interested in the macabre, the outre, the off-trail and the downright stupid. Smoke curled from a score of cigarettes, while beer glasses clinked a cheerful counter point to the bass hum of background chatter and the asthmatic wheezing of the beer pupns. Wedged firmly in his favourite corner by the bar, Ponsonby took a deep draught of ale, before jumping flat-footedly into a discussion about Bridey Murphy, and the possibility of ancestral memory.

"Did I ever tell you chaps about a funny thing which happened to me when I was in Egypt with the 10th Army?" he asked. "Frequently", grunted Syder from behind a barrage of pipe smoke. "What sort of funny thing?" queried Brummer, a long-haired newcomer to the group, and one who had not yet learned to avoid playing straight man to the club bore.

"It happened shortly after I landed at Alex," began Ponsonby. "I was posted to a unit near Footiq, right in the middle of the desert - hot as hell, twice as dusty, and not a drop of beer within miles." He paused and pointedly eyed the empty glass before him. Brummer co-operated with the inevitable and signalled for Drew, the landlord to refill it. Ponsonby took a quick pull and went on swiftly before anyone else could snatch the conversational ball.

"I had turned in early for a good night's kip," he said, "and as usual, I reached for a final cigarette before dropping off to sleep. To my annoyance, the packet was empty and I didn't have a darned thing to smoke." He paused and looked round expectantly. Young Benterag shrugged resignedly and handed him a Woodbine. Ponsonby lit it, blew out a cloud of smoke and resumed. "I hunted through my pockets and couldn't find a fag, and was just about to get dressed and hike over to the canteen, when I noticed the native bearer's box-of-tricks in a corner. He kept rags, shoe polish and a few odds and ends there. My luck was in, among the rubbish was a packet of native fags - oddly scented, but better than nothing. I pinched one, scrambled back into bed, and lit up. The first puff was heady and strange, the second made me feel giddy, and by the third I was beginning to drift off in a golden haze. Around me, the billet, mosquito net, and even my hand holding the cigarette faded from view. For a while I seemed to float in that golden cloud, but gradually it cleared and I found myself garbed in ancient Egyptian clothes of the kind you see in epic movies. I was

6
sitting on the edge of a bed in a room hung with rich tapestries. Around the walls were statues of gold and silver. Obviously I had gone back in time and become a man of some substance."

"You still are", grunted Butt, eyeing Ponsonby's waistline. (Ponsonby absentmindedly drained Butt's beer and continued. "I hadn't much time to look around, for just then a servant ran in half terrified. It seems he had been walking home past the Great Pyramid, when he had seen the wraith-like figure of a small child flitting round its base and wailing broken-heartedly."

"Probably looking for his mummy", interposed Moorhen, who thought himself something of a wit and was right about half the time.

Ponsonby withered him with a look, and continued. "I couldn't get the servant to come with me to investigate, so I set off on my own. The trip to the Great Pyramid seemed to take much longer than usual, and by the time I got there I had formed a theory. As I skirted the Pyramid's base, a diminutive shape draped in white drifted out, raised its arms and began to wail. Undaunted I continued to advance. A second figure joined the first, then more and more - all clad in white, and all wailing fit to burst - My theory looked like being correct. I stood my ground until several hundred of the ghost-like apparitions confronted me and the wailing was cracking bits off the Pyramid. Then I acted. Somehow, my Service revolver had accompanied my straggling self into the past. I drew it, and fired all six rounds over the heads of the mob. The result was striking. As one man, they turned tail and dashed off across the desert, dropping their dirty white bed sheets as they fled. They had obviously been thieves masquerading as ghosts in order to scare people away while they lifted up the Great Pyramid of Footiq and made off with it. Fearlessly I gave chase, but in the darkness I tripped over a cast-off sheet and fell, striking my head against a rock. When I awoke, I was back in my bed at camp Footiq".

"All very interesting," drawled Windup, "But there's one little flaw in your story,"

"Oh yes", said Ponsonby, "And what may that be?"

"Quite elementary", smiled Windup. "You mentioned the Great Pyramid of Footiq. The Great Pyramid happens to be at Gizeh, not Footiq."

"Oh that", laughed Ponsonby. He got to his feet, drained the last of Brunner's beer and walked to the door, where he turned. "I thought you realised, They had carried the Pyramid as far as Gizeh, before I took them by surprise and made them drop it. That's why it's still there". Ponsonby vanished into the night.

THE END.

DRAGGING in the SEA

by Alan Burns

Let me begin by saying space is not for me, I'm too heavy, wear glasses, and am not a Ph.D with 3000 hours flying experience. I go along with Harry Stine, space travel will have arrived when an elderly grandmother of ninety can visit relatives on Luna Base. The sea is for me.

Now I don't propose to list the many achievements in sea research, I leave that to those with a Jeeves style patience. Nor am I going to natter on about fish-farming, kelp harvesting, or the ingenious Haber's idea of paying off Germany's WW 1 debts by extracting gold from the sea, no, I want to talk of the sea and us.

Contrary to general belief man is a marine animal. Our blood has a hydrogen ion concentration equal to that of the sea, we weep sea-water and when one of our workmen gets an eyeful of nasty we sluice his eyes with synthetic sea-water, boric-saline we call it, but it's salt and boric acid, sea minerals both! So man is a marine animal and drowns easily, where then are we missing out? Well let's think back to the pre-natal. The baby swims in the amniotic fluid and is quite happy until it's thrust out of its comfortable cushioning and yells blue murder, and goes on yelling until it's adult enough to realise that there's no percentage in it, as Runyon says. Some yell blue murder into adulthood, there's a place for politicians and rioting students, back to the sea, preferably with a few pounds of scrap iron tied on to their feet. But all right, part of our early life is in water, and the developing foetus has rudimentary gill slits at one part of its life. Now --Ken Bulmer was it?--wrote a nice story about a spaceman going undersea and getting operated on to have gill-slits enabling him to exist undersea. Jim Blish has his Tritons again with gills. Now whatever he may be man is no fish, and hence operations to produce gills are, for my money, not the solution. We drown because the lungs are filled with water and we can't get oxygen into the bloodstream due to the fact that the absorptive surfaces in the lung aren't equipped to extract the dissolved oxygen in water. But I have a feeling that, providing the blood could be kept charged with oxygen we could live quite happily under water. In short, what we need, is



the developement of a unit to be surgically put into us so that the oxygen in the water in which we could live is made available to the bloodstream. Now I know that this just seems like another form of gill but it isn't, because it would work directly into the blood. I'm neither surgeon no biochemist, and for the life of me I can't figure out how it could be done. I'm only suggesting the approach, no more.

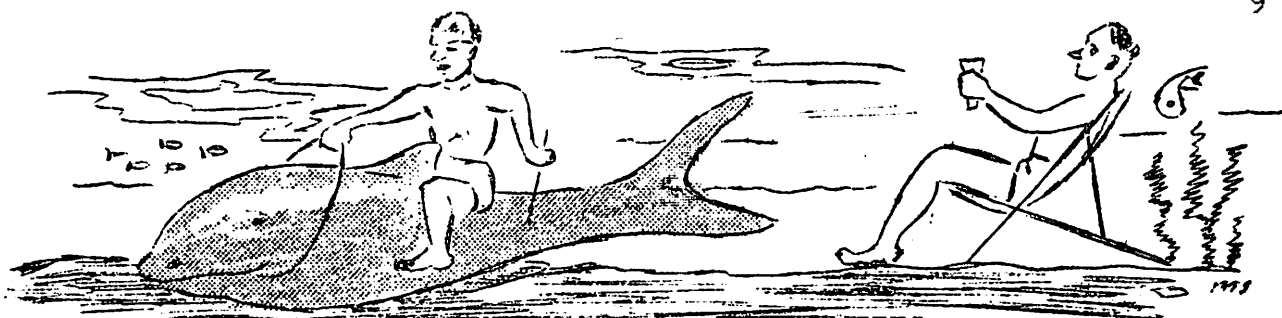
However let us assume that the technique has been worked out, man--and woman--can go undersea for as long as they wish, quite independent of air tanks and the rest. Where does it get us. Well now anyone who lives up north knows that the sea is cold as anything around the English shores, yet fish live in it--where there's no pollution quite happily. This argues for a sea-living human as having avery much reduced body temperature. Now the exponents of body-temperature conversion equations will rise and say that that precludes life, but for me I don't think it would be nearly as bad as they would like to make out. Life under the sea would be a lot slower for people. I don't for one moment imagine that the sea-livers would dart about the way that the members of a sub-aqua clubs do, after all, they're getting a lot of oxygen neatly packaged up for them. No, I believe that it would be a calm, leisurely life undersea. But of course the brain would work at its normal speed, and hence undersea would be for the thinkers, philosophers, mental inventors and others such.

But people have to eat and raw fish is not everyone's delight. But there isn't anything to prevent water being boiled undersea in a container and oxy-acetylene cutting units can burn under water.. Again boiled fish isn't for everyone. Oh well, you could equally well fry in a closed container I suppose, and dispense it somehow, but remember hot food is simply a holdover from the original purpose of cooking food, which was to make it tender and more edible if meat and soften it if it was vegetable. I feel however that humans being very adaptable creatures could very easily get used to having their food cold as long as it was palatable.

Then there is the business of living under the sea. Houses are just as easily built underwater as above it, and the walls would no longer be there to keep bad weather out, they would be merely to ensure privacy. Living would of course be very threedimensional, no stairways to negotiate, wastes, after suitable treatment easily disposed of, and much to junior's horror, there would be the use of suitable soaps to maintain cleanliness.

Medically the sea ought to be a fairly healthy place to be in. The common cold, and other respiratory





diseases would be non-existent--probably to be replaced by some other thing to plague people. In general however I feel that the slower rate of living plus less strain on the heart and lungs could lead to a much longer life.

In consideration of life undersea a lot of authors trot up the idea of transport being by nuclear sub, hopped on in much the same way as we catch a jet to-day. My own opinion is that there is a place undersea for roads and railways. . A road is rather more than a way of getting from one place to another, it is also a connection, a linkage between two points indicating the easiest way. I don't necessarily say that the sea-livers would walk along the road, walking undersea is hard, but the undersea roads would be routes where you could swim along in comparative safety, and vehicles, not necessarily wheeled of course, could take the road to somewhere else knowing that there was no danger of rock-falls, or awkward navigational hazards. I heard a laugh when I mentioned railways, but they have a signal advantage of not being much affected by currents that could sweep a nuclear sub off its course. Also they would relieve people of tricky navigation in confined spaces and the prospect of a nuclear sub towing a hundred carloads of goods seems a lot less possible than a railway doing the same.

There are lots of minor things I could mention in relation to undersea living, but this is only a glance at the possibilities. Pets, for instance. A nice friendly dolphin perhaps, a porpoise, even for the millionaire a well-trained whale could add to the richness of life. Communications would be much as on land with the exception of speech. The exact mechanics of speech lead me to think that our normal speech method would be out and possibly something like the noises made by fish might be substituted. Whether "squeak, whistle chirrup" would be less attractive than "Darling I love you" is a point that bears thinking on however. Finally, just a man began eliminating creatures such as wolves and sabretooth tigers I have no doubt the undersea livers would busily set about eliminating tiresome nuisances such as sharks, and quite possibly packs of trained dolphins would be under the control, not of an M.F.H., but of an M.P.D.--Master of pursuit dolphins--

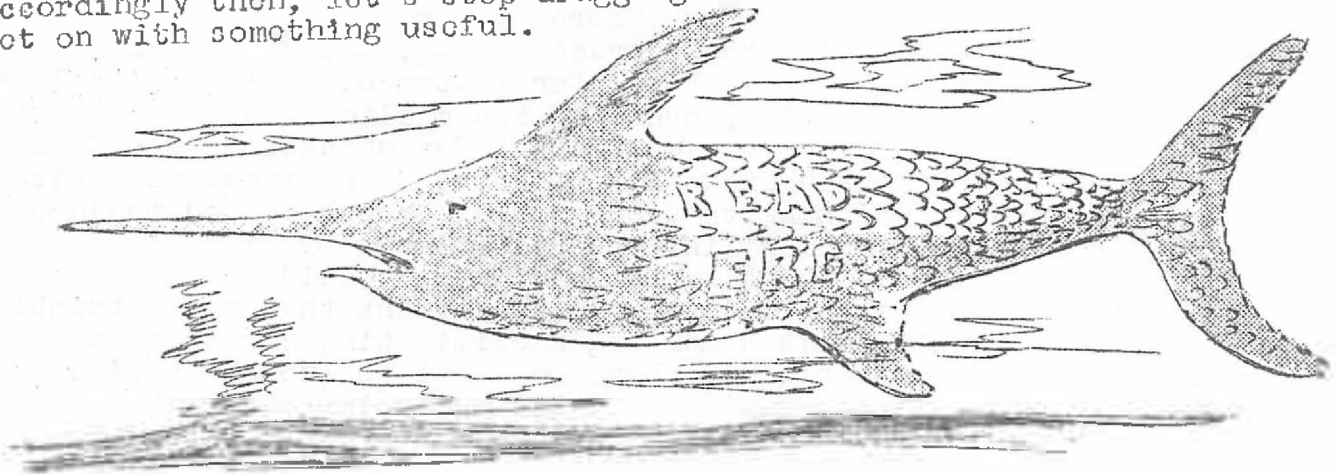
I come now to the point that prompted this whole article. Millions are being spent on building scaled-up scaled up firecrackers. The mere fact that we call them rockets

is sufficient evidence about how our minds run. A quarter of this expenditure of money and effort ploughed into sea research could result in immediate benefits for everyone, even in the most unlikely ways. For instance near where I live a dentist is doing serious research into how molluscs attach themselves to rocks, the idea being that if the chemical they use could be isolated, dentists would no longer have to key in fillings, but could simply drill away carious spots, slap a coat of the chemical in and pop in a filling, with the certainty of its staying put as long as needed. I have heard that people like Sammall Laird of Birkenhead are experimenting with a vehicle that trundles along the seabed on spiked wheels. Of course it's heavily handicapped by the need for providing air-locks and so forth, but again a little money----

Industrially the scene is rather more encouraging. Dow chemicals USA have been making magnesium from the sea for years, no doubt some of the highly expensive alloys in our toy fireworks comes from the sea. There is kelp harvesting--big business this to prepare agar, seaweed makes fertiliser as does decayed fish, and experiments are being done to see what can be prepared in the way of cheap food from plankton.

I like the sea, being lucky enough to live a shilling bus-ride away I can go often. I've seen it all ways. Peaceful savage, kind and cruel and like it whatever its mood. I think that a great many people share my mood, after all, the seaside, be it Whitely Bay or Ibiza is always popular. People go to laze on the sands--which they could do just as well inland--but no, they go by the sea. Frankly I feel that sea-therapy could be used in the treatment of mental disorders in some cases. You never get a mental institution built by the sea, and yet I consider that half the damage in mental institutions comes from the mere feeling of being confined, and a sea-view might conceivably make a difference.

Well there it is. Look to the stars all you wish, and what will you look for first on strange planets? Why seas of course, because without them there can be no life at all. Accordingly then, let's stop dragging with undersea research and get on with something useful.

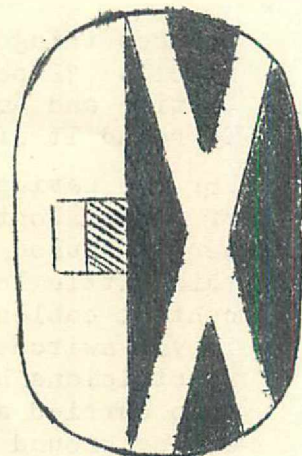


CARRY

ON

Part. 5

Feeves



I'm not sure of the exact date, as like the Pope, my memory is not infallible. However, I think it was towards the end of 1943 when the R.A.F. finally realised my sterling worth and promoted me to the rank of Corporal. This was followed by a posting to 356 Bomber Sqdn. which was forming up somewhere in Bengal. I set off across India to the address on my posting orders...356 Sqdn. R.S.F Piardoba. This was obviously a crafty scheme to fool the Japanese Intelligence as when I reached Piardoba, it was to find that 356 Sqdn. wasn't there at all, but at Salbani...a place I had passed through on the way to Piardoba. I spent the night on an Indian Air Force Station and returned the Salbani the following day.

Salbani was about three miles from the nearest five-hut village and consisted of a two concrete runways, several concrete shelter pens for the aircraft, and a collection of 'bashas' or crude huts. The rest of the aerodrome was tastefully adorned with rock-hard mud, plenty of dust, some scraggly jungle and a large population of snakes, scorpions and spiders. At first we only boasted 4 Liberators, but more continued to arrive until we reached our full strength of 16 aircraft. I was put in charge of radio maintenance and spent my first couple of months crawling in, around and all over the big bombers by day, and swotting handbooks by night until finally I knew enough about the varied radio gear to enable me to make wise noises when it went wrong - which was pretty often.

The B-24 Liberator was a far cry, radio-wise, from most British bombers of that time. They carried the 1154 and 1155 Transmitter and receiver set up, and the 1143 VHF Transceiver. That was about all. The Lib carried a normal crew of 10 and boasted the following Radio Gear.

1 Long Distance Tx. 1 fixed Aerial 1 100ft trailing Ae and motor.
1 Long Distance Rx. 6 tuning units. 1 motor generator

The above took care of long distance communications. Locally, we used :-
3 Command Receivers, 3 local control boxes, 2 transmitters, 1 two-way control box, 1 modulator/power unit, one fixed aerial.

To keep things matey, the intercom. system was a telephone exchange by itself. 12 positions, each with a four-way control box, sockets for both British and American microphones and earphones, and a two valve amplifier. To round it off, there was a main amplifier and power generator.

For the navigator, there was a lovely Radio Compass complete with two sets of remote controls (one for the pilot) and a fixed aerial and a loop aerial housed in a streamlined covering on the top of the bomber. Add to this little lot, several miles of connecting wire, and several remote control cables throw in the monsoon rains and you can play for hours. If you switched it all on at once, the batteries flattened and the poor electricians had kittens. To avoid this happy state of affairs the Libs also carried an internal APU (Auxiliary Power Unit) to boost the batteries during ground testing...problems, always problems.

My first job at Salbani, was to round up some work benches and since we had no spare timber this presented difficulties. However by using my native ingenuity we soon had some crude benches - though a few malcontents did complain about the missing toilet doors. Incidentally, these toilets (lovely term for a deep hole in the ground) taught me never to carry my cigarette case in my hip pocket....I lost the case and a dozen fags with it before that fact sank in.

Also forming up at Salbani, was 355 Sdqn. Naturally there was great rivalry between 356 and 355, so it was with great glee that we watched 355 go on bombing practice ...and drop the bombs without opening the bomb-doors. From then on the other squadron was always greeted with a cry of... "Bombs away...bomb doors away !" By the way, these bomb doors were unique in that they did not swing open in the normal way, but rolled back up the bombers sides rather like the old roll-top desk. This was achieved by hydraulic pressure and a fearsome-sounding booster pump.

Eventually, we reached our full complement of 116 aircraft, and the damage of operational use was added to the normal wear-and-tear and gremlin-type sabotage. Heat was a problem 130° in the shade not unknown, and the metal skin of the B-24's could burn unprotected skin. To do a ten-minute pre-flight inspection was like a session in a Turkish bath. Long time inspection and repair work sheer torture. To get around this, the working hours were highly unusual...6a.m. Reveille. First work session, 6-30 to 7-30 am. Breakfast, then 2nd parade from 8-30 to 12-30. Then an evening session 5pm to 7pm. This left a long gap during the heat of the afternoon so that we could lay on the charpoi and simmer until well done. When ops. were on, this schedule went by the board, and this,



coupled with a seven-day-week made us all pretty woozy. One one occasion I was laying flat on the top of a Lib at two in the morning changing a loop aerial, when I fell asleep...luckily, I awoke again before slipping off and making a dent in the ground some 15 feet below.

The head N.C.O. of the Wireless Section was a grizzled old veteran of 45. Flight Sergeant Boyd had been a boy-apprentice in the pre-war RAF. Like all such 'regulars', we looked up to him for his sheer length of service, and down on him for being such a mug. As was common with such wights, he was firmly grounded in the use of archaic equipment and slightly befuddled by modern gear...we rather suspected him of breeding carrier pigeons for use in case of radio failure. 'Chiefy' was reared on the theory that no nut or bolt should be without a securing layer of shellac, and all contacts should be smeared with its daily ration of mineral jelly. When Bostik came on the scene, he took to it immediately...one drop of that, and his beloved nuts and bolts would never come loose...even when you wanted them to do so.

When the monsoon rains arrived, the damp caused numerous electrical faults. Clothes, kit and bedding had to be regularly aired to prevent mold forming. One rather fancy fault caused by the rain, was a banshee-like wailing in the 'phones when you plugged in to the intercom. We were kept as busy as a well-known brand of coloured-end fly as we ran around before flights, removing 12 boxes from each B-24, drying them out and fitting them back in again. On one particularly bad day, Chiefy was moaning about how to cure the trouble. Feeling uppish, I said without thinking..."Why not coat the things with Bostik?" His eyes lit up, and I realised my error. Within a few days, every box was liberally smeared with the gooey stuff which set rock hard very quickly. Sad to say, the hare-brained idea worked...but when a box had to be changed for repair, it needed an hour's work with a hammer and chisel to get it free. Me and my big mouth. However from then on, Chiefy got the nick-name of 'Bostik'.

For the music lovers in my audience, I append the soul-stirring Ballad of 'Bostik' Boyd.

"Oh my name is 'Bostik' Boyd,
and I really get annoyed,
If you don't shellac the contacts every day.
Mineral Jelly,
Mineral Jelly,
Mineral Jelly is the section's only way.

To do the aria full justice, it must
be sung by a twenty-strong male voice
choir....in different keys.

Mark you, it would never get in the
Top Ten.

To be continued.

DOWN

MEMORY BANK

Part 2.

LANE

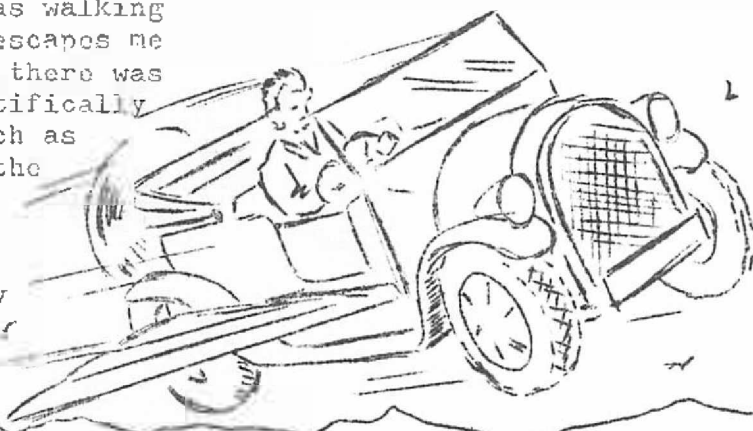
((This series of articles originally appeared in Lynn Hickman's excellent magazine, 'The Pulp Era'; and are reprinted here with his kind permission))

THE first regular science-fiction in my young life, was the weekly periodical, SCOOPS. Having around 30 quarto pages, it cost the magnificent sum of 2d., and was thus well within the financial range of most of the market for which it was aimed. Not that SCOOPS was a juvenile, far from it. The stories and writing were little, if any, inferior to the current trend in Wonder, Amazing and Astounding. Purists may howl at this, but just dig back into the 1932 to 1936 files of any of those magazines and make an honest appraisal.

Lack of adequate advance publicity made me miss the first two issues, but my younger cousin was more fortunate. He got them both...and steadfastly refused to part with them, even under the increasing pressure of offers of trade, cash, and sheer physical violence. I had better luck with our long-suffering newsagent however. I did manage to convince him that this weird and gaudy publication should be supplied every week, though it was many years later before I realised the significant fact that every time I went there to collect my prize, it was withdrawn from a hiding place under the counter, and handed to me face downwards.

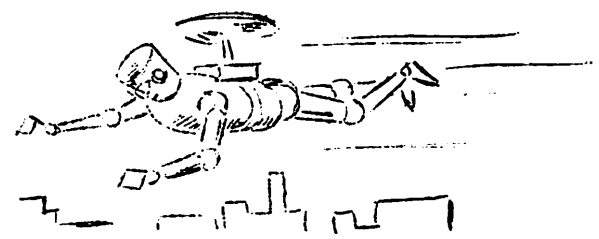
Memories of SCOOPS after thirty years, are pretty thin, but I do remember that it featured such authors as, J.R.Fearn, J.M.Walsh and Maurice G. Hugi, the latter having a yarn about some natives whose flesh was invisible, but whose bones glowed with a weird blue light, so that they appeared as walking skeletons. Why they glowed, escapes me now, but I have no doubt that there was a perfectly logical and scientifically reasonable explanation.....such as regular meals of U-235 under the pseudonym of radontium, or something similar.

Then there was a story called, 'Submarine-Road-Plane Number One.' which concerned a young man who



inherited a ramshackle car from a dead inventor.. He took it out for a spin and in yanking on the steering wheel, discovered several modifications had been made to the car.....it sprouted telescopic wings and a rear airscrew to allow it to fly. After stooging around the sky for a while, the car went into a nosedive over the sea, but as it entered the water, a plastic canopy unrolled over the driver and the car became a miniature submarine. Wondering what would happen next, the hero made a belated search of the vehicle and discovered the full plans and operating instructions in the tool box, so all ended well, and we left him to dreams of financial greatness when the invention went on the market.

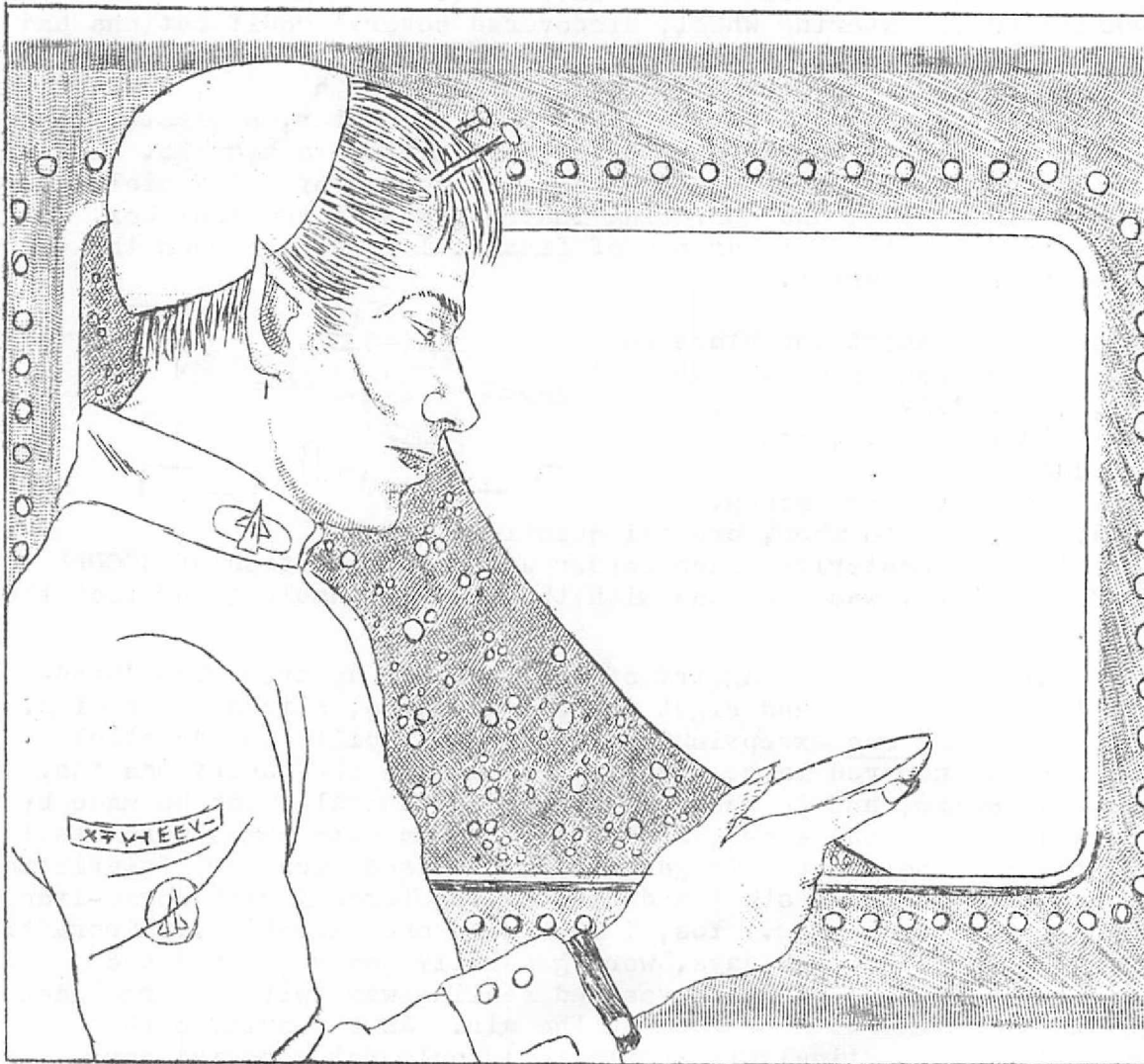
Also flying about the place for some reason which escapes me at the moment, was a 'Flying Robot'. This was a rather massive, and rivet-bestudded monster, sustained in the air by a diminutive screw.



What it did, why, and to whom, are all questions whose answers are lost to posterity since nother used my collection of SCOOPS to light the fire while I was overseas with the RAF and unable to protect the poor things.

One thing about the gadgetry of this period, apparent from 'Road-Banc No.1, 'Flying Robots' and right up to spaceships, sticks in my mind. Everything, with only one exception was apparently built from 1" steel plates and several hundred large rivets. Presumably the theory was that robots and spaceships, and in fact everything mechanical, must be made by mechanics, and as everyone knows, mechanics work in ship yards with steel plates and rivets. So futuristic gadgets can be made even more futuristic by adding an extra quota of steel and rivets...preferably with angle-iron braces and all joints showing. Yes, I mentioned one exception...aircraft. The aircraft of those halcyon days, were generally under-powered and relied heavily on wood, strung, canvas and sealing-wax (with a large dash of good luck thrown in) to keep them in the air. As a result, both authors and artists (particularly the latter) could not conceive any aircraft of the future which did not follow this preactice. Naturally, this meant that boiler-plated rockets and robots rubbed rivets with flying box kites and heroes clad in plus-fours.

SCOOPS also featured the Martian menace - with a twist. Thist started off in a mild way, when throughout the world, radio sets began to develop a faint, high-pitched hum. Over the months, this gradually grew in volume, and spread from radio sets to include every possible electric gadget. Lamps, irons, telephone wires, car ignition systems and pocket torches all added to the ever increasing cacophony. People cracked beneath the mental strain, and accidents, death, mayhem and rioting became regualr events. At the very last (anarchy-wise) moment, the noise stopped. The peaceful Martians had landed (On Salisbury Plain, naturally) and had switched off their space-drive, the unwitting cause of all the trouble, and which had driven the world to the brink of madness. They toured around the place, admired our policemen, and greatly deplored the havoc they had caused, hoping that perhaps it wouldn't be so bad when they set off home. They embarked into their humming-top shaped spacecraft and prepared to depart. Naturally, a terror-stricken public didn't fancy a second helping



of the hum and began to panic. All was well however! The grand old British Government had not been caught napping, By Jove. Salisbury Plain had been secretly ringed with Anti Aircraft guns. No sooner had the Martian contingent got airborne (with an accompanying hum on all the usual electrical gadgetry) than it was smashed to bits by the devilishly accurate gunfire of the British Army,

Faughty as this action was, it did leave Britain free to foster further s-f at a later date, although sad to say, SCOOPS was not destined to participate in the movement. It folded with its twentieth issue...not through lack of quality, but from lack of support....a more adult format might have saved the day.

TO BE CONTINUED.

((Read about Modern Wonder, Mickey Mouse Weekly, Passing Show and Tales of Wonder...all in the next instalment of Memory Bank Lane. Make sure of your copy now, by sending a quarto sized SAE to the editorial address. For full details, see the contents page (if there is one)))

OPINIONS



Comments on the 54th. Pailings.

Most interesting cover....Envoy (Cheslin) I didn't like the drawing, but enjoyed the use of colour. Then again, the cover stock of Lefnui is worth an Honourable mention.

OFF TRAILS... I don't think OMPA will be extinguished by defaulting NE's and longshoremen's strikes... provided that members get their fingers out and start producing something. The size of this mailing was pitiful. I make it out to be the work of eight members. I have one query. I noticed Bobbie Gray as being listed as J70.20 That is owing all 20 pages by the end of this year...yet in OT 53, she is listed as owing 17 pages by Jan 1969 sp although she apparently didn't meet requirement in 68 she has another year to play with...OT52 also lists her as J.9 17, so even assuming an error in the year, how come the pages owing has grown? She had nothing in any of these mailing, so how come?? I haven't got OT 51 handy, but OT49 says D.8 16...so year, month and pages owing all seem to have changed.

ENVOY Somebody slaved over that cover..I must admit to having toyed with the idea of letting my class colour ERG covers, but decided that our new Head would blow his top if he found out...I've already had one disagreement with him over lack of courtesy when wanting the staff to attend evening functions. Agree with you that Anis has a narrow viewpoint in 'NEW MAPS OF HELL'...he only seems to have read Galaxy, and even then merely stuff by Pohl and Kornbluth...he barely mentions anything else. Thanks for the kind words..health still continues O.K., and as you can see from this issue of ERG, I continue to experiment. However unless we get a few better mailings I shall begin to think twice as to is it worth it.

LEFNUI I liked the cover stock; but not the drawing on it. Interior production was beautiful, but pity you didn't have some illos inside. Let us not discuss teeth, I have an appointment next week for a checkup...but since it is nearly a year since I went, he will no doubt find a filling or three to play with. Personally, I thoroughly enjoyed 'When Worlds Collide', the only sour not being that final sloppy scene in Disneycolour where the travellers emerge onto the new planet. Ta for the info on the 'Flying Wing' It's sad about H.P. Piser, but I'm wondering if that 'destruction of records' is to be extended to material he borrowed from fans? He wanted to borrow my Triode file, but I demurred. Instead I supplied him with full details....Seems I nearly lost the file, unless he had stipulated that borrowed material be returned...and had executors who knew what was what.

OZ 11 I liked the cover, Beryl. I have another firm which supplies cheap paper (Macleans of Bletchley) but you must buy 10 ream lots, and right now...and for the last two years..I have been stoney-broke, Ghu knows where my stencils will come from when this box runs out. Enjoyed your Con report...hope we can make the next one, but I was a bit puzzled as to what @872* chose 'IT happened Here' as a Con film. I haven't seen more than stills from it, and I gather it is a minor masterpiece in amateur filming. But hardly Con material. If they must go to Amateur films, I suggest they look up some of Fred O'Neill's plasticine puppet masterpieces. Bob Shaw's 'slow glass' is hardly likely to be investigated seriously anywhere. I did some calculations on this, and assuming that light is only slowed down to around 5 yards a second, this means that slow glass would have a refractive index of 9×10^9 or roughly ten thousand million, (normal glass runs about 1.5) and would have to bend a ray of light through about 90° . Highly unlikely I'd say. Still, they made for a good story. I liked your prozine reviews (damnit, I had intended doing some in ERG) and would be interested in your views on Mack Reynolds...me, I'm bored with his halting the story line to give a socio-political lecture every ten pages.

RED CAKE Re that 2001 scene of the 'bone/spaceship' shot, S'funny, but virtually every review I've read mentions that shot. Worse, they nearly all refer to it as a 'glorious visual pun'. Guess I'm thick as I fail to see where the pun comes in. I'd go out on a limb and say it was simply a clever transition shot to take you from the stone age to the future without a lot of intermediate montage work. Of course we have a right to kill murderers. The right of self-defence, and the protection of the weak. Contrary to all the normal clap-trap, I do not subscribe to the view that human life is sacred (whatever that means) We're just highly developed animals, and if one animal becomes a danger then we should get rid of it...which is what I'd do with BRAINLESS WELSH NATIONALISTS (and others) who plant bombs in postboxes and the like. On another tack, a religion worse than Catholicism is (to my mind) Jehovah's Witnesses, but this is merely a matter of opinion...I don't have much use for any of 'em but I call 'em bad if they dictate or blackmail their members in any way. When I called Protest marcher's slob, I was careless...I should have made it clear I had the mob-violence boys in mind...those who have no interest in the cause, merely in raising a riot. BUT when peaceful (heh heh) marchers deliberately march through areas from which the police have warned them to steer clear because of ambushes...then they ask for all they get. No, I haven't seen a policeman's truncheon thud on to a young girl's face...nor do I know what provocation, if any, she may have given. Policemen are human, and therefore they must have some sadists among them...but the majority are doing a hard job under very hard conditions. Had I been in charge in Ireland when the marcher's deliberately walked ahead into hostile territory (thus asking for a fight) I would have told my police to let both sides fight it out...then arrest those left standing around holding weapons. This way the slobs who wanted a fight would have got one...and my police would have got the guilty parties without getting hurt in the process.



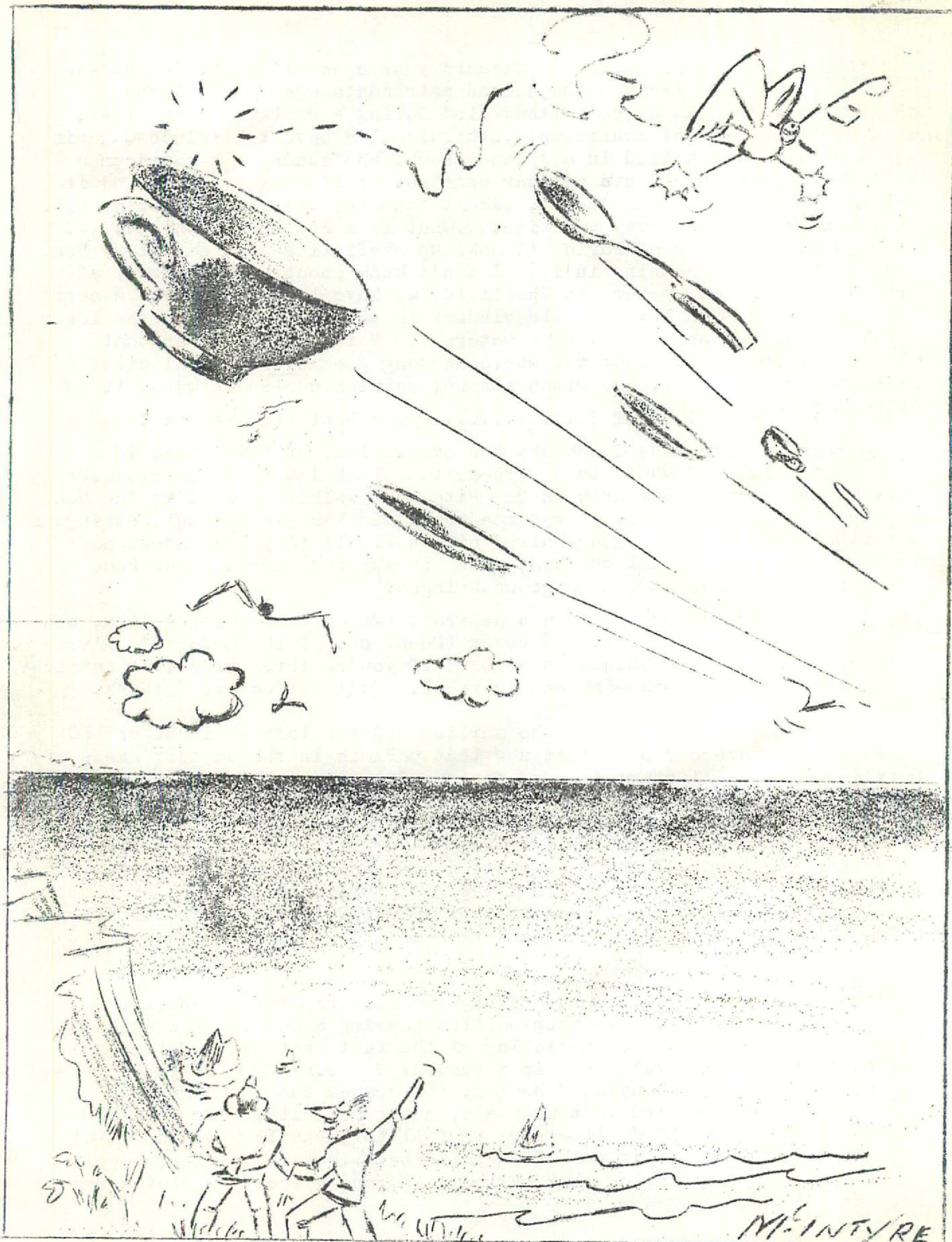
YAC'SONE Sorry I caused you to discard your space listing. The reason I didn't include the 3 dead astronauts was simply because they weren't 'Men IN Space'...they died during a routine ground test, it wasn't even a real countdown...otherwise I'd have to include Gagarin who I believe got killed in a 'plane crash, and sundry other spacemen killed in flying accidents and car crashes. I liked your cover and it was almost my rating for 'Best', except that the drawing was not so hot. If you want another corny question....What is a French Band-Aid ?.....
 ...answer, a plaster of Paris (I make up stuff like that out of my head and think there's nothing in it) I don't know about your motorway at Gravelly Hill, but up here in Sheffield, we have the M.1 go over a sort of viaduct..the top level of the viaduct is the 6 lane M1, and the lower level of the viaduct is a 4 lane motorway. Nothing unusual in that maybe..but when I add that the whole shebang goes over several steel works and minor roads, and winds its way between cooling towers, it is ~~quite a sight~~ IS A FLIPPING TWIST ? a bent tiddleywink !

PABLO Being a twit, may I ask why the single line of lower case in a cover full of Capitals ? Those two blank interior pages...were they for do-it-yourself artwork ? Pity that walking around in the USA is becoming so dangerous...I was reading a similar piece about Washington the other day. Let the long-haired nits howl all they like about old England, but it is STILL the best place in which to live. Come home mate and let's have some home-grown Spinges.

TROAT I've already written you a separate LOC on those copies Lynn, but I still like that Nov.1968 cover (Phone no. of the model ?) I've come up with a new technique in artwork if you're interested...it involves a combination of pen-and-ink and charcoal. Quite effective I think.

Which brings me to the end of the mailing and the largest issue of ERG to-date. I sincerely hope that now that OMPA is in the capable hands of Beryl, members will start to come across with larger mailings and a bit more in the experimental line. At the time of writing I have come across a BAPA (British Amateur Press Association) in the latest Writer's and Artists Year Book (It was in last year as well, but I didn't feel up to contacting them. I have now written off, and am eagerly awaiting further details. I also see that the BSFA is listed in the Year Book, but I have been unable to trace the BRITISH CARTOONISTS CLUB...if anyone knows their address, I'd be pleased to hear it.

To finish off with, a little query niggles me...can any scientific minded bod explain it. Remember Galileo heaving a couple of weights off the top of Pisa and the establishing of the fact that different masses all fall at the same velocity (in a vacuum) ? O.K. Now if you apply the right maths to a couple of bodies, the masses cancel out in the equations so that you're left with a constant velocity. Fair enough.
 NOW this means that if Jupiter were to fall to Earth it would do so at 6.9 miles per sec...if it fell from infinity...but to people on Jupiter, Earth would be dropping on them at their escape velocity whatever that is. How come the paradox ?



"I've been expecting this for years!"