

GANNETSCRAPBOOK 1

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Intro. by Eddie & Tory Al

Is it a bird? Is it a plane? Is it a combozine? Is it a PADS-zine? Is it (Ghod help us) an apa? No - it's.... Well, I'm not exactly sure which of those ~~was~~ it is; its what happens when a lot of people, all Gannets, type ~~verbal diar~~ something or other onto stencils. Apart from the fact that all contributors must be Gannets, there is no editorial influence whatsoever. ~~Worse yet~~ Anything that any of us wanted to produce (or, in Henry's case, were pushed into producing) has gone in here and is present in all its illegible glory.

There will be something of quality next issue, though. We will be printing locs.

Page numbers? This is page 0 and all I know is that they go from there. You may find it impossible to find your way about the zine, because Mauler would dash ahead and duper the stencils before they were all in and we could work out the page order, let alone type page nos. on. Pity poor Ian, though. The strain is telling. He hasn't produced a personalzine for three whole weeks and he thinks he's gafiated. I asked him one weekend what he'd been doing and he said: "Oh, nothing... Dupered a war-games zine and sent it out, wrote five locs, fanac blah fanac blah..." You call that nothing, m'boy?

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Available for trades, which we ~~share~~
share out among us, and locs; no money
or contribs, please.

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"What on earth d'you want a capital 8 for?" Henry, being shown how to use a typewriter.

THE ELEPHANT'S WEARING AN OVERCOAT

A four part 'thing' by Henry P. Pijohn, or something.

Part 1, The Beginning

But not quite

The storyteller began his tale:

The wind from the east blew cold, and a fierce storm raged around the Great Castle - the setting of my story.

"Aw haw haw haw," came a laugh from the audience. "Hey, is there a fairy in this crap? Or do we have to settle for a pumpkin? Or maybe you're the fairy and the pumpkin. Ha, what a load of shit."

The storyteller stopped at this last comment and turned towards his critic in the audience. This, thought the storyteller, is too much. It was quite normal to hear such criticism in his profession; but, in this case, the story he had begun to unfold was of a special nature and no interruption, even this half-expected one, could possibly be excused. The storyteller looked sharply at his adversary, who prepared to issue more of his trained insults, and the creature's jaw immediately shone red and burst with a muffled explosion. No longer able to perform its function, the creature ceased all movement as its brain closed down.

A smell of scorched metal and burnt plastic filled the atmosphere surrounding the incident, but was lost upon the storyteller's audience who, being unable to either smell or react to such an occurrence, sat unperturbed and continued to gaze attentively at the storyteller. The storyteller continued his tale:

AND HERE IT GOES

The castle was called the Gannet, and completely dominated the surrounding lands for hundreds of square miles. Such was its presence that it appeared to be the centre of a vast wilderness - the Gannet was feared by all and none dared approach, neither by night nor day.

The storm reached its zenith as it closed on the castle: thunder roared at its loudest, and lightning struck savagely at all save the dreaded Gannet. It was a typical evening in this strange region and, in the midst of the storm, the incident which separated this fearsome night from all the many others passed almost imperceptibly to the majority of the region's terrified inhabitants. A brave, perhaps insane, being daring to approach the dreaded place on that particular evening would have been greeted with the soul-wrenching wailings of a creature in torment (not uncommon at the Gannet). This alone would have been sufficient to send such a

witless creature fleeing for his life.

"I exist, I know I do, I know I exist, I must exist; don't I?" came the tormented cries from the castle dungeons.

The door to the dungeons gave a lurch and swung open.

"Alright, hurry up and get through you daft pillock," said a voice. The entity known as Ian Maule entered, looking rather pleased with himself, closely followed by a Harry R. Bell. Bell spoke again: "Where are you Temple? Come over and grovel at the feet of your master."

A sound was heard to the left and bulky Brian appeared. Maule now saw his chance to humble the creature whose strength he envied.

"And where have you been you loathsome little hunchback?" he demanded. Brian P. Temple was, in fact, only slightly less tall than Ian himself; but years of subservience had left their mark on him and he stood deformed, bent almost double. "So you've been drinking again," he said on the smell of Brian's breath reaching his nose, and struck the poor, half-witted creature full in the face with a vicious swipe of his right hand. Brian Temple remained standing as he was, unsmiling and unimpressed by Maule's demonstration of command and cruelty, and Ian, annoyed by this, prepared to strike again. Suddenly a mighty elbow swung at them from out of nowhere, sending both sprawling across the floor.

"Enough of this," exclaimed Bell, the possessor of the elbow, who had enjoyed the chance to satisfy his sadistic urges. "Lead us to 'The Dungeon', Temple." Brian slowly got up, and grasping his large bunch of keys firmly in his left hand, led the two evil ones to the main dungeon known as the "Post Office", wherein lay the once mighty Henry F. Pijohn.

All three entered the Post Office on the opening of its door, and beheld the awesome magnificence of the being named Henry F. Pijohn, who stood some fourteen feet high and was bound by massive chains to the largest wall of that most terrible of dungeons. Then Pijohn spoke, as only a big, strong, brave, blue-eyed hero can:

"Ah fuck! Whenna yuh gonna lemme outta here?"

"Out?!" said Bell, in amazement at the question. "Out?" he repeated. "We are not going to let you out, moi boi. You'll never be allowed to leave the Post Office," he reiterated with a chuckle. Bell then twisted his rubber-like face until it symbolised his totally evil nature - it was a most horrible sight.

"Do you have to subject me to that," pleaded Henry, "as well as keeping me chained up like this? What evil purpose can you possibly have in store for me?"

"Questions, questions," croaked Bell, "you ask too many questions. Maule, he is asking questions again. You know what to do."

"Like, uh, what?" said Ian with a bored expression on his face.

"Fool! It is time for the 'treatment'. Give him the treatment,

Maule."

Ian Maule's face brightened and he quickly moved forward and prepared to caress Henry's right leg.

"No, not that treatment. I don't mean the tricks you learned from Williams, you pillock. I mean the proper treatment," corrected Bell.

Maule, with a disappointed look on his face, obediently moved over to the wall opposite the great Henry F. P. and prepared to operate the dreadful equipment. On the wall before him hung five large pictures, faces to the wall, containing scenes of sheer mindshattering terror. Below each was a duplicator-style handle used to activate the horror portraits, as they were called.

"Activate no. 3," said Bell with unconcealed pleasure in his voice.

Ian moved to the handle designated no. 3 and commenced to turn it. Slowly, the picture above turned, to reveal its full measure of torment to the eyes of Henry F. Pijohn. It was a large photograph of a Jim Marshall smile.

"Aaaaaahhh!!!" screamed Pijohn.

THE INTERLUDE

At that moment, while our hero was in torment, Mighty Mouse flew into the area of the Gannet searching for his archenemy: Oil-can-Harry, who was on the loose again. Then, unfortunately for the famous mouse, he flew too close to the great castle and was spotted by a huge gannet-bird of grotesque proportions, sitting idly like some monstrous gargoyle on the top of the castle wall. Instantly it leapt into the air and grabbed the hapless mouse, thus putting an end to a famous career. The bird then turned and flew back to its roost on the castle wall, now almost hidden in the encroaching darkness.

The only light which dared to penetrate this hate-filled land was that of Ogbi, the mysterious land whose cool blue radiance seemed to shine throughout the whole plane of existence. Ogbi - the only centre of power that might have been a threat to the demoniacal Gannet. It was too far away, however, and it seemed unlikely that there would ever be a contest of strength between the two; although you will see shortly that two men of Ogbi would have a confrontation with the destructive forces of the Gannet.

The two people in question were named Bawming and the Ginger Kid, and even now approached threshold of Gannetland as they marched on their way to meet their friend Alberto Ziffericci, who was about to begin a campaign in the lands to the south of Gannetland.

(Continued on the second page of Mary Legg's stencil)

THE DOOM EXPRESS

Thom Penman's bit.

("--While yet we live, scarce one short hour perhaps,
Between us two let there be peace; both joining,
As joined in injuries, one enmity
Against a foe by doom express assigned us.." :for the more
pretentious among us, and for you to hold onto, in the face
of the disgruntled noises following. (Book Ten, Andrew as I
am sure you instantly recognised, you clever person you-->)

Well, what's it all about, eh? This phanzinedumb,
phandumb per se is just a bunch of friends. What's this all
amount to? What's MAYA to Thom, or he to MAYA, that he should
write conreps for her? Counsellors, profits, seers and sages
like right-hand-henchphan Ritchie, or honest-friend Gobia,
or Presford or even, strange, Holdstock, say: "Wot's all this
cock, phanzines? Stupid beggar." And how shall I answer them?
Another complacent shrug, and go back to reading Stableford
novels or ridiculously successful Larry Niven award-winners.
I'll get that conrep published by some M/cr consortium, and
get SPINDRIFT QUARTERLY/ out if possible and then that's it.
But then, isn't everyone dropping out? Why don't we all f-f-
f-fade away..? What's it all about? You tell me 40, you're
the only one that can. Goodnight, sweet ladies..

But now, AN ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE:

Elsa Nora Castle's NEIGHBOURLY PAGE

---Don't worry about Johnnie, he's had the "Hallo, Sunshine"
serial, full of corn and crapsnapple & bop. Especially rec-
ommended for pruritis and constipation sufferers it gives
you that extra rough-edge you need. Or try our new "Raze-a-
Phan" made extra fruity with added Australian nuts. Hear what
some of our users have to say: "I've been shitting meself silly
every day since.." Mr S.C.C.(Sutton); "Everything worked! Many
thanks!"--Mr R.I.G.(Deemouth). Sent in a plain wrapper. Dis-
posable: flushes clean away without bother.

Blakoe's Magna-Bryn fortified the over forties.

And not only the over-forties:

"I was very satisfied.." writes Mrs F.(under 40)

Eases tension: soothes apprehension: relieves dessention.

"J'ACCUSE!"

A conrep of the first Newcasselcon, held by Gannetphandumb in the Swallow Hotel, Newcastle, this past September. By raving reporter, Thom. 'no whitewash here, Brian' Penman.

Okay, so buzz-buzz, a bit belated, but by God and His pet hamster, Fang, everybody else has explained the phenomenon all away. I think I deserve a share in the fun as well. Basically, while BriTe's discourse in WORM 3 had a great deal to commend it, in the way of apathy-bashing, it was slightly inaccurate. This rankles me, but there are two clinics at the end of GoblinAs (sods--no corflu of course) street. Anyway, there's always time for last minute mutual, incriminations.

Put-----rev-----v v wwwrooommm-----Z 0 0 M
Put-----revvvv-----
(etc..)

Let me tell you a story. Alright, so you won't let me tell you a story. I didn't really think you were that kind of girl anyway, Johnnie. It concerns con concerns.

☞ (damn crustaceans..) Enter, Crassius Goblin, stage left (about half an hour ago, partner) Listen, ev'ryb'dy, he lisps. We listen to him. A small provincial con, which is almost the same as a provincial con, held here, in Newcassel. A small gathering, a picked cadre of idjits an third-time losers, probably no more than fifty at most. Here, in Newcassel, he sez, for some reason speaking in Penmanoid phraseology.

But we're in Sunderland, Goblin..

There, in Newcassel..

Hmmm, well.. Yeah--uh--great idea Goblin, great idea.... Mutter-mutter....

Harry Bell tells us this amusing anecdote about this rich Sultan who used to get cocks (the fowl type)(sit down Holdstock)(fool) and enter them from the rear (note indirect allusion to FOULER and the Fisher-King--S.Miesel) to the amusement of his feasting friends. Then he used to cut their (the cocks') heads off (see, Holdstock??) in order to get the anal contractions. (Follow that, Smallmount!)(Rasp-jeer...)

"There goes Goblin, disappearing into the ladies' bog s again," sez Thoth Penman, as the small portly figure waddles

off.

"First he takes down his zip--" motions Ian Penman, then he takes down his fanzine.."

(Goblin later makes Thoughtful Statement: "I'm not as ridiculous as I used to be..")(He's right you know.)

(Note, I hope, all this clever ace-reporting stuff--genuine routine Gannet conversation et al.)

Hey, uh, what about that Newcasselcon..?

The what--? The--oh, that Newcasselcon...??

Mutter-mutter..

Looke here now, the Swallow--Newcassel's third or fourth best hotel, centrally located, three star like the Blossoms altho about half a dozen or so bedrooms larger, much newer as well of course, completely dominating one of Newcassel's major arteri--

Oh man, alright alright. Really at times you do go on, and on,.

(Disgruntled sound)--

And special prices on week-ends of £1.75 instead of the normal five or six £££..

Whaaat??

Least, that what the advert in the Evening Chronicle said. We'd best check with the management tho, just to make sure.

Sure thing Harry, phone up the office.

No Thom, I'll send a letter. Get through to someone useful that way and also of course we get a written reply.

Well, sure, good thinking. Then we can give people like MAD an Holdcock etc actual figures instead of just attention-getter hand-outs n ads.

I'll give Harry a hand.

What the phuck phor? Oh well, suit yerself. I suppose it's phannish after all. (The boy's a phool..mumble-mumble..) "

And now, a chronological break. Amuse yourselves or look at this Noteworthy Reprint:

(Alan Coker, ZIMRI 3)

Everywhere I see you placing the but end of between your sadlips smiles

And now back to the story, or perhaps you'd best skip this page or so cos it looks like a drag so far, go and see what the other idiots've been doing.

Oh, it's that bad is it? Jesus.. Well, I did suspect as much.. (Damn-fool idea.. Bah! Humbug..humbug! Disgruntlang..)

Uh, hi there.. Say, what answer did you get from that letter? Letter..? What letter...??

Alternatively, (both endings are in fact true, and are not mutually exclusive, but I figure some of you might prefer a bit of readership participation. God knows, we could do with someone participating in something around here. Unless it's OMPA of course. That merely clones by itself. Fiendish.) phen:

(blast..next page.. There you go..)

He wasn't in of course. They'd pissed off to a pub next to where I got the single-decker magical mystery tour, to have a few bevies. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ Another typo bites the dust. Admittedly I'd been slightly delayed by the untimely visitation of Ritchie Smith, mumbling stuff about when he gets his new guitar and brushes up his chord-work and when I can get something good out of that thing..and then wiped his mouth with toilet paper (Jeyes of course) and asked if he could wash his hands, before I could show him the door, but then, Sunderland is difficult (difficult) to get to carrying a sitar. I wait at bus-stop, get on same single-decker that brought me out and have a fall-about conversation with driver/conductor about the improbability of any fool trying to get on a single-decker and pay as you enter whilst holding a sitar. He thought it funny at least. At the pub, I had to walk into the crowded lounge and along it to a little alcove at the far end, much to the surprise of the large bipedal beetle holding a large n shiny sitar, and to the massed amazed stare of everyone else. Embarrass, embarrass, sinking down to small egocentric patch on the flooring..) I carried it off as nonchalantly as possible of course, whistling quietly, and scratch-ing me head and kicking empty cigarette packets on the carpet, but even so..damn Goblin. Actually he said he knew when I'd arrived because everyone suddenly stopped silent and looked at something hidden from view at the far end, and muttered audible "Jesus Krist.." an "rhubarb rhubarb sitar rhubarb mumble" Quite incredible really. Never again you cunts. As it was, Jimarshall had turned up at Goblin's tent with knives, bayonets, and daggers strapped all over him, on belts, bandoliers, the lot. He's funny that way, you know.

Let's see, how many stencils is that. Four? Five? Those guys wanted six didn't they.. (You see I can spin out this sort of apeshit for pages and pages. Anyone who's the recipient of letters from me knows what I mean.)

So, I'm in this alcove, holding the thing in position with a downward pressure from the right elbow, like you're supposed to do, trying to ignore peculiar stares from people in the room who keep turning round to look every so often, and explaining that an ambiguous string is really a sympathetic string. Harry & Irene arrive. Then Mole. Then Penman with, ~~xx~~ what a surprise, two lasses. Each arrival heralds a new surprise-scene followed by explanation-scene.

Suddenly, remembering to indent a new paragraph, this seven foot barman emerges from the Black Lagoon, and sez, reasonably enough, "I'm sorry sir, you can't play a sitar in ere.." To which the reply: "That's right, I can't play a sitar in here." Yes, I know, it isn't even faintly funny. Gannetphandumb always seem to find it so when the hoary legend is trotted out by cunts like Goblin.

(A hundred lines Penman-- "I must not fill the pages of lisa conesa's rags, who doesn't know any better in any case and no doubt thinks It's All Meaningful On A Heavy Level, Somewhere, with pages n pages of idiotic vapourisi-- What??M This, is a less

stretched version, has been rejected by ZIMRI 3?? Jesus Christ. That leaves only FREE ORBIT or one of Presford's frankensteins, unless..)

And after all that, the said young lady (well...) (who, just to fill a few more lines, tells me incidently that Zelazny means "man of steel" in Polack) brings out said ZIMRI, with a little help from her phriends. "Prof" Ian Williams? Important announce-ment? Tickeling stick??!?! --Goldilox had better watch it as well ecomes disgruntled mutter. "Who's been sleeping in my bed?" asks Little Teddy Bear, reading Novaconreps. "And who's been pissing in my lumpy porridge?" growls Big HRBear, blinking his eye-lids. "And who's been filing away at my chain?" says the Abominable Craggily Ambler, snapping it, over-turning the barrel-organ and ambling off as fast as his hind paws will carry him, running around inside a darkened, noise-filled, Sunderland Locarno with his jacket over his head, saying loudly, "I'm a mushroom, I'm a mushroom..!" Which if it sounds crazy now, you want to try it when we're all on acid. They had to shoot him at the finish tho, cos just about then Lindisfarne came onto the floor to do their gig, tho never as good as Newcassel City Hall, I'm afraid.

Jesus. Have some vomit...(bleurckkk---!!)

A W A R D S - - - Why not? Why why not? There are Oscars, an Emmies and good ol Hugoes (Hugo, cos I've looked it up in one of those 'What Your Name Means' books, means "intelligence". Now wasn't that clever?). Don't give me BPI stuff, extinct now anyway what would be a totally irrelevant idea is a standardised award system that could be used by any phanzine crappy enuff. Like this for instance. To retain parody-effect it would have to be a Xristianame. While some might think a Johnnie might be a good name (the actual award to be represented by a stuffed & mounted mince pie) others, indeed, might think Little Tommy likewise. A name has already been suggested however, and no sensible person could object to it: the Gilbert.

I take it upon myself to place two Gilberts right now. The first goes, perhaps appropriately, to Gregorious Pickingstill, the Fidei Defensor Gilbert, for refusing to believe Johnnie back-stabs, rather blaming, one suspects, that sweet, innocent, little soul, Peterkins Presford, for shame. The other goes to moronic black-hearted seline (blast!) senile cunt, Presford, for the most blatant & well documented piece of mixing I've ever seen: the Wooden Spoon Gilbert. I thought it a bit funny whenn he said the "Stonefist" was my idea. Some peculiar things have been happening between South Shields and M/cr which I still don't entire understand, so I made a special point of calling PEP an idiot in my loc on MALFUNCTION 1, since I could have swore he had been informed STONEFIST, just a self-explanatory title for a regular complaints-column really, was Smiff's. The loc was very peculiarly edited and set up against a disgruntled muttering loc from Biffo with a view to Stir Things Up. Luckily I kept a carbon this time and Presford has since confessed. The point is so small to be ridiculous and it is only a phanzine, but..the principle.. .

sea change

An Allegory and True Story

Somewhere, at one of the four corners of the world, the sun rose pregnant into the dawn, giving birth to the day. Thunder~~v~~ walked closer, crossing the midnight-blue canopy still a-drip with stars, until the sky-voice seemed to shout above him..

The starship the Lisa Holdstock swept overhead with a giant sound of phasing, the rain-bow cloak of her shields flailing, dripping gouts of overwritten electrostatic fire, shooting colours all around. Her sister-ship, the Wild Bill Hyksos, chased her in close formation, passing low overhead. And it made a noise like God playing a mouth-organ (Toccata & Fugue in D Minor, of course). The fern forest threshed violently and bowed down in the wake of their passing.

Frody watched distantly from his isolated sheltered position as a projectile shed by the Wild Bill Hyksos fell tumbling, exploding into a cascade of leaflets that the winds roughly snatched at, a few falling within sight. After waiting a safe interval he decided to risk it and dodged from cover to cover until he could grab one of the sheets of black papyrex. He kept moving until he felt reasonably secure and took cover again, resting with his back to a thick, almost decapitated bole, whose soft barbs had been blown away by something or someone. The quite sizeable fern oozed a thin brown liquid from its damaged top. Frody laid down his noise-rifle with care, one-handed: the sonic weapon's safety was, as ever, off and the hair-trigger was prone to shoot at the smallest jerk. He was worried about not being able to use his right arm anymore. He guessed he'd have to requisition a new one from the medical stores if he ever made it back. More importantly, the tear in his battle-suiting was probably large enough to allow a heat loss noticeable to the enemy's infrared battle-surveillance. His suiting's Chamouflage had froze in mid-pattern as well, meaning he could -n't move out of the shades and tones of the fern forest without being noticeably out of place and easily to spot. In fact the entire outer skin of his b.suit was peeling away: he wondered if he had been under attack by ~~xxx~~ unusually potent biological weaponry. He didn't know, the way things were, how he was going to make it; but he'd find a method, as always. If one of the enemy's ships broke thru and made a straffing run over this continent that would be that however..

He gazed at the pamphlet with myoptic fascination until it occurred to him to actually get his pen out and read it. The sheet was torn at one corner, he noticed. The matrix-layers that were visible to the ~~xxx~~ naked eye showed paper-thin in the torn edge. Frody activated his pen and touched the electronib to a

corner edge. Nothing happened. He moved it along the edge until he must have passed over a memory-spot and something began to appear on the sheet. Either the tear had, God knows how, upset the matrix or scatter from the unheard, usually unseen, weapons-play being wielded in the apparently peaceful forest of ferns had caused it permanent damage. Or perhaps it had simply been shoddily or hurriedly produced. Whatever the reason, it was impossible without an undue amount of effort to make any sense of the almost completely blanked out blotchy figures. Frody tried to find other recordings. Many were like the first, difficult to read or make sense out of, several being printed in strange or foreign languages, one of which seemed to be the enemy's. It took Frody some while before he hit a message that was intelligible.

The clear light of day was still pretty dim and couldn't penetrate far into the murky darkness of the thick fern forest, even the few ferns were still standing completely intact or unmarked by the constant cross-fire. The white lettering shed its own faint luminescence, it read: "THE ANSWER IS EGREGIOUS"

Now what the hell was all that about, thought Frody. The only Gregious he knew was clinically insane and his knees rubbed together when he walked.

* * *

A regurgitation of two favourite Omens:Z

A groupie once came up to Join Lenin and said she's seen a vision of God rising outta the sea, telling her she'd marry Join Lenin. George Harrison, coming to his aid, suggested: "Maybe it was only someone disguised as God.."

Stupid Amerikan woman gossip-columnist, at a Beatles press-conference: "--And what do you call your hair-style?"
George Harrison: "I call it Arthur."

The GannetsCrapbook Personal Column & Classified Ads.:

POLISH MASSEUR: for home sessions call 061 000 000H AHHHH OHHHH
IVORY PEG LEG, rococo carving, initials "C.A.", lost vicinity of the Pequod. Sentimental value. Apply Box No. 7Cs.

WANTED FOR CASH: discarded rags and scrap of any description. Except Pete Presford zines, no idiot wants them. Best prices promised. Offtrails Enterprises & Son, Scrapmerchants Unlimited.

LOST: a phanzine of great humour and originality and honesty and lack of audience interest. Answers to the name of PARANOID Do not apply to I.Maule, he's passed on to Higher Things, such as MAULE'S WELL. A pity, John Hall, Goblin, Smallmount, PEP etc.

GREG PICKERSGILL FOR TAFF. What better person is there to be sent over the Atlantic to represent British phandumb to the Americans? What other person could possibly have such a permanent effect on relations between British and American phandumbs?
£ Paid advert inserted by South Shields Writers' Workshop.
PICKERSGILLFORTAFFPICKERSGILLFORTAFFPICKERSGILLFORTAFFPICKERSGILL

Ian Williams Front Room at 10.30 pm on a wet and windy Saturday night.

Goblin is sitting opposite me looking as masculine as ever. Rob is next door talking to Ian's Grandmother. Henry is lying stretched across the floor listening to Santana on the earphones, and I'm typing this short introduction. This page is the last of a long line of stencils that have been typed for the first issue of the Gannetscrapbook. Due to unforeseen circumstances we had one page left and rather than just leave it we decided to come across to Sunderland and type this. To be honest I'm not at all sure what's going to happen; as far as I know Henry will write a short piece of pornography detailing his experiences in a Swedish radist camp. Ian will try and convince us that he really is a fannish type even though he writes for Speculation, and Rob will crack a funny joke. Anyway, now that I've written a whole load of crap Ian Williams will astound you with the sheer majesty of his writing. Jesus, I'd better leave off now, here he comes and if he finds me writing such an awful piece he's sure to say nasty things about me. Ghod, too late he's read it, luckely the hospital is at the end of the street.

This is short fat Ian Williams talking to you now and in answer to t the previous paragraph --who the hell wants to critise Mauler. As Stravinsky once said when he saw 'Fantasia', "How do you critise idiocy?".

I've been pressured by the sod into typing some inanities whilst preferring to talk to the others and as I've said to several Gannets recently I'm going to refuse to write for a deadline as anything produced that way is bound to be inferior to something thought over and considered. In any case, the distraction caused by Rbo (?) Jackson and Henry arguing over religion is almost too much as I keep wanting to interrupt and put some sense into what they're saying. And I've got a couple of pints of beer to drink and the Grateful Dead to listen to over my headphones on my new stereo equipieme (pardon) equipment, so to hell with this. Who's the next sucker?

Why was what we were talking about such crap, Ian? And why don't you believe in Corflu? You can think over and consider stencil typing, too. I'm (ouch) sorry Ian, I shouldn't be (oow!) nasty and critise (sic) people. Henry and I were wondering whether the Chu ch has actually done any good as, for example, a moral guide (we're agreed on atheism); I said yes and Henry said no, but before we could get on to that we somehow got on to Desmond Morris the Monkey Man, who has had dealings of some vagu sort with someone in Henry's office. Henry has got trapped talking to Ian's Gran again. You have to go through the sitting room to get to the bog and you can consider yourself lucky if you get out in less than five minutes. Ian has just rescued Henry. I wonder what they talked about - I got decorating and flu. Henry's turn now; there's not much room left, I'm afraid.

Well folks, this is the first time I've been let loose on a typewriter and you can tell . Can't you? The above is a load of crap, produced during (short interlude: This Ian Maule speaking; Henry has spent the past three hours trying to get down onto paper his rather chaotic thoughts. Unfortunately Henry's thoughts come at rather infrequent intervals so I suppose we'll be here all night. And now back to Henry...) drunken debauchery at Ian Williams's house . Were all males - so use your imagination!

It was Williams who started the whole thing, of course. I was sitting in my usual seat in the Gannet, watching him as he sat slumped over a copy of the latest Hell, a strange grin of a type only Williams can manage with any proficiency, slowly creeping its way from one corner of his mouth to the other. Occasionally he would look up, observe my curious stare, give a little chuckle and then resume his perusal. After some minutes under my watchful gaze he gave one final grunt and threw the zine in the general direction of Henry who had, like me, been watching Ian with a certain amount of amusement.

"You know," said Ian, "Over the past few months every fanzine I've opened has had something in it written by a Gannet. First there was my piece in Egg on fannish occupations."

"Crap too," piped Harry, looking up from the far side of the table.

"Then Mauler had that rubbish 'Tripping Out' in Malfunction; Jesus, Maule, that was shit. what was after that?"

"The all Gannetfandom issue of TTW of course," I interrupted. "Surely you haven't forgotten my truly wonderful demolition of the MAD group zines, and how about Brian's pack of lies?"

"And my 'Grooving Gannets', no, I haven't forgotten. Yes, we really did hit an all time peak at that point, Mauler even duplicated the thing too."

"But can we maintain this peak?" asked Henry, ever one to make a disparaging remark.

Harry was the first to reply. "Shut-up Henry!"

"Wait Harry, I think you're being a trifle hard on the poor unfortunate lad, he has a good point there. Can we maintain this peak, or in fact go even further in our attempts to..."

"Control British fandom," continued Irene.

"Well, I wouldn't go as far as to say that. But I have a feeling that if we all knuckle down and actually realise our potential as a group I'm sure we could fill just about every zine in Britain, starting at the lowest of the low like Malfunction and continuing upward until even Egg itself was nothing more than another mouthpiece for Gannetfandom. At that point we could truly say that Gannetfandom is British fandom."

"I think we're getting carried away here," voiced Dave from the depths of his beer glass, startling us.

"Yes, let's get down to basics, how would we manoeuvre ourselves into every British zine, surely not by sending out articles and artwork to every zine at once?"

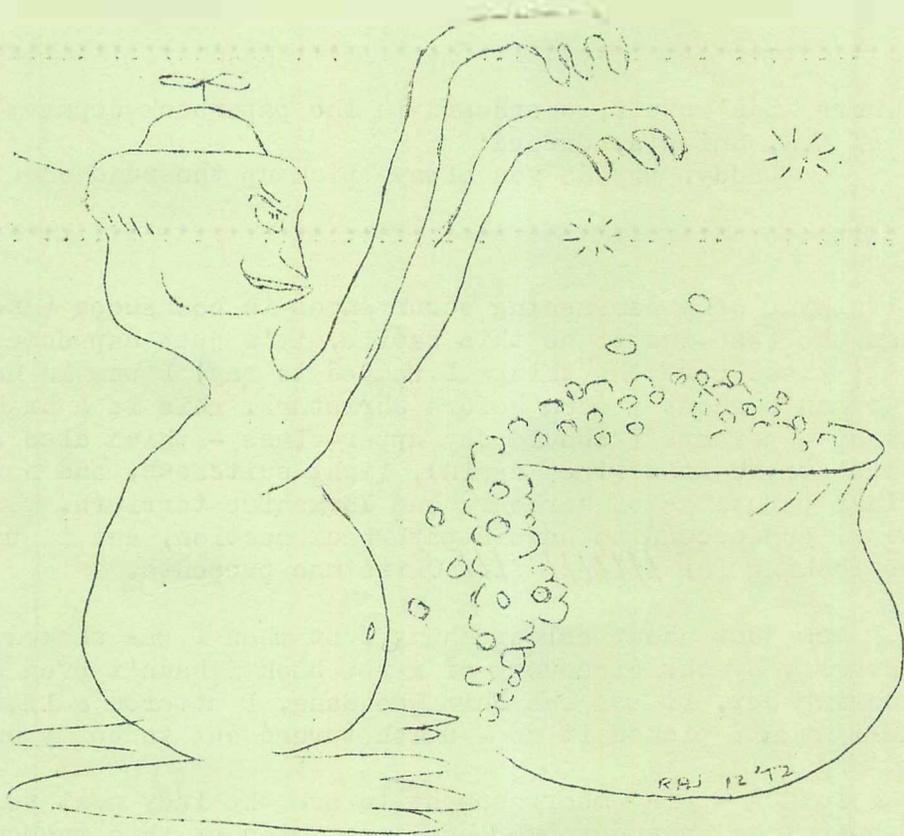
"Of course not Henry, we simply send all our work off to one fanzine at a time. When that's printed we write and draw more contribs and send it all off to another fanzine. British faneds don't usually produce more than one or two issues of their fanzine every year, so that means we've got quite a bit of time between issues to write etc. With any luck we shouldn't have to write more than two articles each per month, and even such an apathetic group ~~as~~ as us could manage that, wouldn't you agree Brian?"

"You know what I think of all your rather grandiose projects, if this thing ever gets past the planning stage it'll be a bloody miracle. Look at

THE SENSA WONDER DRUG

being a galactic pot-boiler by Robert Jackson

SULA BASSANA!



(The above belly copyright Ian Williams, Ian Maule and Robert Jackson 1972.)

Being a medical student isn't completely without its rewards. During a seminar on the development of speech recently we were played a series of short tapes. First there were cries, then dribbly cooings, then Dada, Mama and other meaningful words. Then the speech therapist (the rapist?) in charge said: "And this is the asking of questions. This boy's two and a half." Click:

"What's this Mum?"

"Table mat."

"Why?"

"To put the kettle on."

"Why?"

"So it won't spoil the table," was the patient reply.

"Why?!"

Very long pause.... Click.

That kid's going to be editor of Analog someday.

.....
More kids' stuff, overheard in the paperback department
of W.H. Smith's, Oxford:

"Daddy, why do you always pick up the rude ones?"
.....

Talking of embarrassing occurrences in bookshops (and I didn't design the lead-ins to be this facile, it's just happened this way, honest; these were the things I wanted to say) I was in Dawson, Swan and Morgan's about a week before Christmas. This is a high-class bookshop - perhaps I should say upper-class - which also sells tasteful table mats (them again), light suitcases, and nauseating original paintings of harbours and Yorkshire terriers. They do, however, condescend to have a paperback section, and it was here that I was looking for ~~books~~ ~~the~~ Christmas presents.

I was just about asleep on my feet when I was shaken out of my lethargy by the discovery of a new book I hadn't even suspected was coming out. It was The Ship Who Sang. I uttered a little squeak of delight as I picked it up - which turned out to be my undoing.

I looked up in embarrassment to see the lady next to me stifle a glance at me, shudder over her Anya Seton at this unseemly display of external emotion, adjust her reading-glasses by the pointed corner, and step daintily sideways away from me.

A gentleman perusing the Huggeriidge religion department was more open in his contempt. He stared directly at me for five seconds with eyes like electric drills, then decided I was beneath contempt and returned to his book. Something Beautiful for God, it was; I'm sure there's something ironic there. If I was God, I'd be regretting the day I ever created him. Or perhaps he wasn't created by God but by Charles Dickens. Deep within his psyche, buried in his gaunt head-masterly belly under the watch chain, there seemed to be a hero worship, a burning desire to emulate those greedy villainous tradesmen. The best thing SF could do for him would be to lend him a time machine, to return to the grand old days, away from these iniquitous laws of social equality. I'd love to have obliged; anything to be rid of him.

(The above piece of paranoia comes to you courtesy of Sula Bassana Fandon. All characters purely fictional and any resemblance blah blah blah. Sorry Grandad I wasn't talking about you.)

The authors and others are supposed to be putting this zine together on Sunday, after partyizing at my place on Saturday night. Quite honestly, I doubt whether anyone will be in a fit state to turn Mauler's duper handle by then; my family, together with their inhibiting effect, will be absent at our cottage, so, basically, EVERYONE'S GOING TO GET PISSED. (Does that surprise you?)

I've been wondering what else is going to happen, apart from a lot of pointless arguments. The following things occurred to me.

Henry is going to find the dog's blanket, curl up on it and go to sleep.

Ian Williams will announce he feels like a suet pudding with brandy. Thom or Irene or someone will say he looks like one, and I'll cap it with: "Suet pudding and brandy?! Courvoisier and courvoisier, said Alice." (I wrote that down on the back of a ~~page~~ ENVELOPE - sorry, I was thinking about my aunt.)

I won't have to get as cut as everyone else; not only will I have to look after the house, I'm also supposed to be editor of this crapbook. Being editor doesn't actually mean I've edited its contents at all; everyone has done their own pieces down to cutting the stencils; in effect, a lot of little personalzines. All I do is decide on some sort of order, type a contents page and ~~write it~~ read the locs ~~of~~ ~~of~~ you send. Above all - I've got to say this - IT WASN'T MY IDEA! Mauler and Goblin hatched the evil plot between them, as Ian has said in his Powerhouse Pixie Riffle (I just couldn't resist it Ian). They just pointed the finger at me and said: "Edit!"

FANFARE FOR EUROPE - Special Gannet rate £20 return!

THE PARTYGOER'S LAMENT

"All the chances I have wasted, the life that I regret,
The girls I haven't done, and the things I haven't met..."
(With apologies to a multitude of women's magazine writers)

In the week before Christmas I went to two non-fan parties of the sort intended for the Young Elite of Newcastle; two was at least

one and a half too many, The first was informal and reasonably small, but oh so exquisite; everything had to be Just So. There was a punch bowl full of... well, mostly orange juice actually, but there was also beer for those who really wanted it. There was very soft music of the trendy type (Lindisfarne featured prominently) which I've written some catty notes about, but I take back everything I said after the experience of the second party, of which more later. There was also polite conversation (Oh hello, where are you now I've just finished at Oxford stop me if I bother you because I can't talk about science fiction for hours), and table tennis and snooker after the buffet supper. Among the meats was a curry so weak that my brother didn't notice it was one (he's just come back from three months in Ceylon). I did at least enjoy that party; I had a reasonable base of acquaintances to build on, and it was easy to build on it. Talking about SF in these circles, mostly private school and university types, is an interesting if rather masturbatory experience; tolerant smiles are almost universal, and there is just the occasional flicker of real interest, usually a result of some philosophical or scientific point raised (note the order) rather than of the subject itself. Anyway, one friend of my brother's wants me to bring a Sfinx next time we meet. With pleasure, Rob. (That was a long paragraph. If I don't watch out the next one will be even worse; the next party certainly was.)

There were more like 120 people at the second one, again of school-leaving or early university age; again, there was the same feel of future Top People, though this time they seemed like young executives; they were rather sharper, more on their toes, although this may have been a result of the atmosphere. The party was held at a very large farmhouse, recently converted and so TASTEFULLY so - the main party room was a vast conservatory with a modish slate fountain at one end; there were new woodcut reliefs indirectly lit behind glass panels in the hall, and the downstairs toilet had a bidet, wall to wall carpeting and a mirror the full width of one side wall. Indirectly lit, of course. Its colour motif (I'm sure they'd use words like that) was purple.

That was what they fitted the party into. The one question I'd like answered is: Why have the party so large? I can think of three possible reasons.

The first reason I thought of was for people to meet each other, either to be introduced by mutual friends or just to see someone interesting-looking and start up a conversation. This was what I wanted to do; the only person there that I knew at all well was my brother. The host and another friend of my brother's were good acquaintances, and I could only place another eight faces to names, among them a brother and sister I'd met at the previous party. In the

first hour I talked to four or five people, all promising conversations under the circumstances. In the first place, I don't find parties the most encouraging atmosphere in which to meet new people. Meeting new people is for me an operation which starts off quietly; it always takes my mind a few weeks after making somebody's acquaintance to slip into overdrive. I'm not an instant-slap-on-the-back type of person; I don't like the I don't think we've been introduced excuse me I think I know your face oh yes David ILLINSON sorry I should have remembered conditions of forced gaiety (I don't know about you, but it comes quite naturally to me, ducky.)

That wouldn't have been too bad, but soon the fly landed in the ointment with a sting in its tail. (Ho ho ho.)

After about the first hour the disco music was switched into the extension speakers in the conservatory and the hall. The music was an excellent choice of recent heavy danceable singles of the Alice Cooper and Who varieties, but the volume was not noticeably less than that in the disco itself. You could see reasonably well if your eyes can manage full lightshows with lights flashing to the volume peaks in the music and orange bubbles boiling on the wall (I'm proud of my eyes; these lightshows are great fun to watch, but watching them is really a solitary occupation, and if you're among 119 other people it's not what you came for), but hearing was something completely different - in a word, impossible. Do you enjoy shouting through the hair of the person you're talking to? Yes, I know it depends what sex they are, but they don't enjoy it at all. Pardon MASSAT YUSED? If the two of you work it down to a fine art you can stand at right angles to each other, one swaying back as the other sways forward so that his/her ear is in front of your mouth and you can shout in comfort. This happy state of affairs is not always attainable, however; you often have to resort to nonverbal communication (ask me to tell you sometime about the chap who was waiting in the office for his wife to have twins), but like the foghorn imitation acts described above is a distinctly poor substitute for Erudite and Witty Conversation. Normally at these things your conversation is drowned out by all the chatter round about, but here the music drowned out the drowning chatter. This even in the dining-room, which was next to the hall speaker. My hearing, never of the strongest, failed the test abjectly; I got fed up with CHATTING people and just stood there looking as unboored as I could.

So there we are; I went to the do knowing 11 faces and came away knowing 11. To cap it all, I was driving home, all 15 miles of it - my brother had driven the last one - and had been on Coke all night except right at the beginning. At least I was able to get well fed up in the other sense as well; the catering was professional, expensive and excellent. There was so little mental stimulation - despite the

crowds and the sensory overloading from the disco - that I finished up half asleep and drove as if more pissed than I was, missing out on things like dipping headlights for oncoming cars. Still, we got home safely and I had a good moan about the party, the nub of which was that these parties are for communication and nothing else, and if you deny communication in its highest known natural form - speech - by upping the noise in signal to noise ratio, you negate the whole purpose of your gathering.

Another reason for a gathering this size, which I hinted at above when I mentioned stimulation from crowds, might be to explore new aspects of your friendship with someone, particularly your girl- or boy-friend. (If you're a girl, he explained hurriedly.) First off, I'm a bit doubtful about relationships which need kickies of this type to jolly them along, but then people do have so much more zest for life if properly accompanied. I certainly didn't have a girlfriend there, but even if I had, I think I'd have liked to talk to her occasionally without shouting, when we left the disco room. All this despite the excellence of the music; it's all very well having a large party to provide an interesting atmosphere in which people can enjoy being with each other, but even some of the people there who were partnered must at some stage have wanted, like me, to take an axe to the extension speakers.

There is a third reason for having big parties. I believe it is the real one, and is simply the need to demonstrate (to oneself as well as the guests) that you have the house, the money, and the number of trendy friends to put the bloody thing together. (I can talk; fifteen or so assorted Gannets and others will be here tomorrow night in very reasonable surroundings with reasonable quantities of food and booze flowing down their throats. There is a difference, though; Gannets don't behave falsely like a crowd of assorted trendies and snobs.) One other reason for bloated guest lists is the cadging of invites to other parties.

These folk certainly had the necessary money; £30,000 on extensions to the house; the host is a student yet has an L registration Ford Escort (i.e. August 1972). At one stage my brother and I wondered what we would do with the money. I know what I'd do... Worldcon... Kelly Freas originals, if he sells any... Now! When I start wondering how to spend my million I know that "ghastly good taste" won't get a look in. nor will I encourage the most intelligent and ambitious people in the generation below me to live out neurotic social posturings. Sour grapes!

epic - a story in which the hero never does the washing up.
Novacon - exploding skyster. (Sorry about all these puns!)

Job satisfaction - pulling pink dogs off a belt for 40 hours a week.

IN CASE YOU MAY BE INTERESTED, THIS IS WHAT I'M DOING AT 1.00 PM THIS CHRISTMAS EVE.

The soundtrack of the shw 'Godspell' is blaring from my record player at nearly full blast. There's a very good reason for this. I'm attempting to tape it on my cassette recorder and as my record player doesn't have a socket to permit direct recording I have to use the microphone. It's taken me a long time of fiffing and farting around to find the best setting for this and it turns out to be having tone and volume up to their highest on both machines. It's a little hard on the neighbours and, at present, my eardrums --usually I retire into another room and let them get on with it. I can't do that today as I've these stencils to type and my grandmother puts me off more than my record player. Of course, I have to stop typing when there's a quiet track or the sound gets picked up.

Now when I get my stereo...

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*****
*****
** "But it's easier to be nasty to my friends": Ian Williams attrib**
*****
*****
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THREE CONVERSATIONS

No.1: Ian Maule

Usually whenever Gannets get together in a pub the conversation is generally incoherent and the more there are the worse it gets which is why most of our real talking gets done in small groups. This one consisted of me, Mauler and Dave Douglass in a pub fairly near my place. Ian was deposing on fandom, a subject of mutual interest.

"Fandom is like a miniature society. structurally it's just the same. It's composed of hierarchies. You get the little neo on the very bottom rung..." I stared at Dave who blushed. "And the pro's and BNF's on the very top. I'm a sort of middle-terrace fan quite high up on the fannish hierarchy on the same level as Gray, Greg, and Peter Roberts and a couple of other faneds. It's quite a nice feeling." Mauler went on a bit more but added little to what he'd just said.

I took a drink, a cigarette, a deep breath and launched into my instant analysis.

"You would think like that, Ian. I've told you my view of fandom in that I think it's all things to all fans. I don't see any of these hierarchies that you talk about, to me fandom has never been anything more than a means of making friends. I see fandom as collections of firends of acquaintances, of overlapping groups if you like. But I don't see the stepladder or the rungs. My attitude to people is on who they are rather than their position in fandom. You see this hierarchy soley because it means you are fairly high up on it, it bolsters your ego because it means you can put yourself above other people. When you describe fandom as hierarchies your insecurity and feelings of inferiority are shrieking at their loudest. You see this ladder because you need to as it makes you feel pretty good. You're no longer Ian Maule insecure weirdo but Ian Maule the well known, well-

liked faneditor. SuperMaule if you like."

I took a drink. Ian Maule sat quietly for a few moments then smiled.

"That was a very perceptive thing to say."

I smiled. "My round, I think," and I went to the bar for drinks.

((That was a Maule-Williams Happening with guest appearance by Dave Douglass. Copyright Ian Williams & Ian Maule 1972.))

"Thom Fenman is a very nice person":anonymous.

The Salvation Army has just stopped outside my house. They are loaded up with trumpets and sundry other pieces of brass like tubas. They are competing with a John Mayall lp I've just started to tape. I can see them blowing away a few feet from my window and I can't hear a sound. Bliss....

Why has Williams started calling me Tootsie: John Piggott

AND NOW FOLKS IT'S TIME FOR **OLD GOBLIN'S ALMANAC** A LOOK AT FUTURE FANNISH HAPPENINGS IN L(& (which is upper case for 1973).

After Lisa Conesa's gafiation Rob Holstock is saved from suicide only by Greg Pickersgill threatening to join him in Hell if he does.

Harry Bell and Irene Taylor marry and peeve Ian Williams by refusing him droit de seigneur.

Ian Maule declares sex to be boring and is beaten up by massed Gannets for perpetrating worst joke of the year.

Greg Pickersgill is given a one way ticket to the States but swops it for ten gallons of rum and a year's supply of contraceptives.

Ian Williams actually does two drafts of an article but no-one believes him.

Dave Douglass speaks.

John Piggott becomes a monk.

Ian Williams tells a funny joke to the astonishment of Gannetfandom until they realise it was Thom Fenman practising ventriloquism.

Pete Weston becomes new co-editor of Zimri.

Pete Presford writes a grammatical sentence and turns pro.

Ian Williams has a beautiful, deep, meaningful and sexual relationship with an attractive girl. Harry Bell tells him not to go to sleep in the Gannet again.

Brian Robinson admits to being involved in a troilist arrangement. and is pushed out of a window by Paul Skelton.

Ian Williams voted Best British Fanwriter. ((What do you mean that's hilarious? It wasn't supposed to be funny!))

(This, by the way, is page four of PPPP and is being typed on the evening of 28th December. A couple of nights ago Mauler was here and thought the previous three pages not bad at all. Of course I had to explain to the cretin what droit de seigneur meant!)

THREE CONVERSATIONS

No.2: Thom Penman

It made a change I suppose, Thom actually suggested we go out to a pub instead of me having to drag him along by his hair. Naturally I thought it a good idea so we went into the centre of Sunderland to a fairly decent and convenient place.

Thom was rambling along as usual, never getting anywhere in his monologues but disappearing up any sidetrack that came along. I'm convinced Thom would make a good traveller, he loves going places but hates to get anywhere. This time he was talking around the subject of one of his interminable, and apparently fruitless for all one ever sees of it, collaborations with Ritchie Smith. It would be unfair to select or try to represent any conversation with Thom as it's very difficult to try and mirror the mazelike convoluted web of Thom's monologues. To call this a conversation is unfair as it is generally impossible to hold one with Thom; you either have to dash in when he pauses for breath or shout him down. Once you do start talking, he'll listen to what you say then attempt to destroy anything you've said whether he agrees or not. But that doesn't mean he's a bad person. On the contrary he's great fun in small doses, he just talks more than anyone else I know.

But I digress.

Thom was telling me about the plot of his collaboration and how he and Ritchie were tackling it. Essentially that of a mood piece with no plot at all, just some SF ticky-tacky as an excuse for a maudlin wallow in sentimentality. At least that's the way it seemed to me. He was going into detail because I'd just suggested it might be interesting for him to give me the first draft of a story and see what I made of it and this was it. The ending was as I saw it totally false --a man after accomplishing a symbolic act is going to die quite happily because he'll be joining his woman who is already dead along with 99.9999% of humanity. It was the happily aspect that I found ridiculous. The most natural reaction would be despair if not sadness (or vice versa).

"Jesus Christ, you've no fucking poetry in your soul at all Goblin. You've no idea about romanticism," said Thom stalking off in disgust to catch his bus.

"I used to, but like belief in God it was something I grew out of," I yelled at him.

But I don't think he heard.

--- "What's a vagina dentata," asked a puzzled Ian Maule. ---

--- What did she mean by 'ducky'? Anonymous. ---

I HOPE YOU ALL HAD A NICE CHRISTMAS.

Christmas Eve looked like turning into a bore. I'd gotten all ready to go out on the evening and had gone to call on an all old friend only to find out there'd been a misunderstanding. So I went home, got into some rags and settled down for several hours of television, feeling a little peeved. About half an hour later, the doorbell rang and in walked Jim and Judith providing an unexpected and very pleasant surprise. I poured them a glass of mead and was going to get out two straws when I remembered it was Christmas and got out another glass and a pippette. We went out for a drink later but the pubs were so crowded we didn't stop long and went back to my place and talked till after midnight.

The rest of Christmas was pretty predictable following the same pattern of the previous several years. Christmas morning down to see my other grandmother, dinner and tea with the grandma I live with and my aunt. In the evening I was over at a non-fan friend's house for cards and drinks with his family where I lost around 25p. Boxing Day I went with grandma and aunt to see my mother and step-father at Cramlington up in Northumberland. Seeing it was a Tuesday I went to the Gannet in the evening. Only six of us turned up and the place was obnoxiously crowded.

I always find that Christmas goes quickly for me but I can never figure out how as I never seem to do much except drink, smoke, and eat and make an effort to be very pleasant and sociable to the family.

There are times when I wish I was a kid again.

* * * * *

THREE CONVERSATIONS

No.3: Ian Penman

This one doesn't take place in a pub. We'd already been and had come back to 6 Greta Terrace, Chester Road, Sunderland, SR4 7RD, Co. Durham, U.K. (In case any of you don't know my address.)

Ian Penman is a comics fan who seems to be in a state of gafia preferring to get into people (no that's nota naughty) rather than fanzines. I'd given him his copy of Siddhartha which contains a couple of less than adoring comments about him. After he'd disposed of these he set about my fanwriting.

"I just don't see the point of this. It assumes people are interested in reading about what you're doing and I don't see how you can assume this."

I didn't bother to argue as everyone knows I'm a most fascinating person.

"It's just so trivial, what's the point in doing it?"

"Because I enjoy writing this material," I said. "And fans seem to enjoy reading most of these articles and columns I write. They may not spark off any great controversies but they're fun to read."

"And they're easy to do. It's just like masturbation. They're not doing anything for you apart from keeping your name in print. They don't extend you in any way. They're just like masturbation and just as futile."

"They're entertaining, isn't that justification enough?"

"No, because what real good does it do you, you're not writing anything valid or worthwhile, there's no effort going into them."

"Very well, I'll take up that novel I shoved aside after a few thousand words. You know, the one about student life that's based on my own experiences."

"Great, that's the type of thing you should be doing."

And if that isn't masturbation...

How come everyone has sent me Xmas cards with short fat
snowmen, friars, Santa Claus's, and elves?: Ian Williams

A FEEBLE ATTEMPT TO FILL UP THIRTY LINES RATHER THAN WASTE VALUABLE SPACE ON A STENCIL: by Ian Williams.

In some forty eight hours time I in the company of Gray Bock and Meg I-forget-her-last-name shall be arriving at Rob Jackson's New Year's Eve party. The plan is to enjoy ourselves on the night (ie get heavily stoned) and in the morning duplicate the Gannet scrap-book complete with hangovers and, for some, the wearying effects of lechery or both. If the reproduction is less than Mauler's usual immaculate standard, you'll know why.

ON THE OTHER HAND, AS I'VE OFTEN SAID RECENTLY IN MY FANZINE REVIEWS, IF YOU CAN'T GET ANYTHING GOOD THEN DON'T BOTHER.

This may be one time perhaps when I should take my own advice. I've been flogging myself to death in the library today (much to the amusement of the customers) and I'm pretty tired. Tomorrow will be worse as I'm working a much longer day.

Anyway I see no point in sitting around here any longer exposing myself.

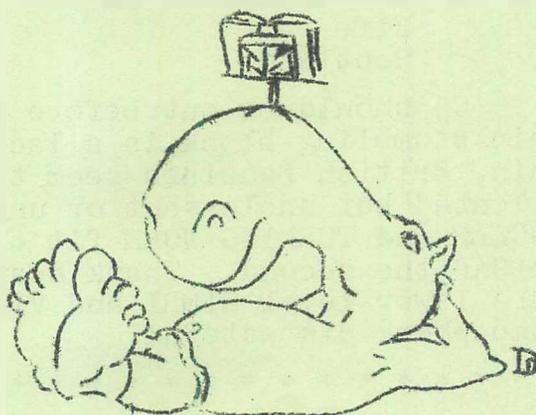
Love to you all.

Ian Williams.

((Dammit, the sneaky bastard's managed it.))
//What, you mean he's filled up the stencil while pretending not to? That is sneaky.//
((Look at the satisfied smile on the half drunk bum's face.))
//He's been on the mead again. I swear he's turning into analcoholic through that stuff. He can't leave it alone.//
((I know something else he wouldn't leave alone if he had the chance.))
//That's not nice. He feels strongly on that subject.//
((I doubt if he feels anything the amount of alcohol he's had))
//You know he drinks to forget.//
((I'd like to know what he's got to remember! Hey, look he's smiling. I wonder why?))

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14/I2



Gray Boak
6 Hawks Road
Kingston upon Thames
Surrey
1KT 3EG

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Produced for,
and by,
the 1972 Gannet
Combozine.

EGOCENTRE

This magazine could be called pre-C5 if you wish. It isn't entirely true to call it a magazine, it isn't entirely true not too. Call it what you like.

I'm unsure what to put into it. I could explain why C5 is late, but I've done that elsewhere. So I'll give you what little news I have: Joe Patrizio and I have left OMPA. If anyone in OMPA would care to send me a copy of their fanzine, just as if it was a genzine, I'd appreciate it. Doubtless Joe would too, but you'll need his new address:

"Schiehallion"
37, Gowantrae Drive
DUNFERMLINE
Fife
Scotland

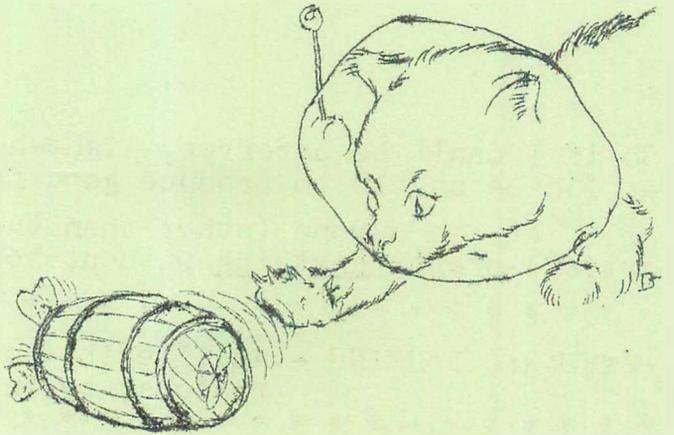
C5 should be out before the convention, given luck. The main stumbling block is a lack of enthusiasm on my part. In the main, British fanzines seem to fall into two categories recently. Talented but unpleasant or untalented, naive and conceited. FOULER and TURNING WORM fit the first category, MALFUNCTION and MADCAP the second. Thank heaven for the EGGS and the MAYAs, and on a lower level ZIMRI and VIEWPOINT, but I find the general atmosphere distasteful.

* * * * *
Gray's Fannish Dictionary:1: FAN ~ an animal so lost in rapturous contemplation of what he is as to overlook what he indubitably ought to be. His chief occupation is the destruction of entire forests and his own eyes: despite such a disadvantage it has multiplied so as to infest the entire habitable earth and Manchester.
* * * * *

THE JOYS AND PAINS OF INNOCENCE

Maybe I'm just getting old. Neos have always been ignorant and arrogant - I shudder at the thought of anyone re-reading my correspondence with John Berry back in Bristol days, or my comments on the subject in BADINAGE. I have the consolation, however, that in those days British fanzines lived in a microcosm all of their own. There was no critical comment worthy of note, all of the writers appeared in all of the fanzines, and it was too incestuous for words. There were no good fanzines to set the standard, as nobody knew any better. It was only when BADINAGE began getting American fanzines in trade that I, for one, realised that there were other, better, ways of doing fanzines, that British fanzines were different once, that there was a world outside of PADS. The birth pangs were painful.

British Fandom is in a much healthier state now. There is more contact with other fandoms, there are good fanzines being produced in England. (Not ENERGIUMEN standards, true, but still good) The old crudzines have disappeared, and good riddance too. There is a wide range of British fanzines, from EGG to SPECULATION, SCOTTISME to MACROCOSM. Given time, the Justly deserved reputation for crud could be worn away.



Unfortunately, there is the Manchester Group. Filled with enthusiasm, and a certain amount of talent, they are determined to change British Fandom their way. An 'individual' way, they claim. About as individual as an average PaDS zine. A collection of neofen together, they have stuck in a groove and seem unable to improve. They haven't the excuse of PaDS, that there was nothing better to compare to, that there was no-one to criticise. Their unity as a group holds them together, preventing them from identifying their flaws and concentrating on their not- inconsiderable talents.

It was noticeable that, in the editorial of MADCAP 2, Pete Presford complained about everybody liking M1, except those who know anything about fanzines. Well, those weren't his exact words....

Given time, all neos change their ways. No bad fanzine ever lasts long (barring the occasional fiction zine such as WADEZINE); they either fold or change. Few faneds produce good first issues - Peter Roberts being the most noticeable recent exception - but the growing pains can be very painful for those who care about fandom. I care about fandom. I hate to see it represented by crud such as MALFUNCTION.

Hmm. Maybe if I can muster up sufficient righteous indignation, I will gain enough incentive to bring out C5. I shall go away to think about that.

G'sFD:2: NEOFAN - An ugly duckling with feet oversized so as to fit into its mouth, and no sense of survival: reputed to grow up into an ugly swan.

It could be, of course, that I take the whole thing too seriously. Good fannishness is care-free, light-hearted etc.

So if I can't be carefree, light-hearted etc. I shouldn't bother, as I'd be unable to produce good fannish fanac?

Yet can anyone (other than the lowest hack or the greatest artist) create anything without believing in what he is doing?

* * * * *
G'sFD:3: FANZINE - An illegible object produced for unimaginable reasons, by an illiterate.
* * * * *

SUFFER, DAMN YOU, WILLIAMS!

Did I ever tell you the story about that time in a London Underground lift, when Goblin was so pissed that he didn't even realise we stood a good chance with two birds, and he threw it all away - accidentally?

* * * * *
G'sFD:4: GESTETNER - A machine for magnifying the squeak of a mouse into the whimper of an editor.
* * * * *

SOME OF MY BEST FRIENDS ARE FUGGHEADS

"Sitting in a sleazy snack bar sniffing...."

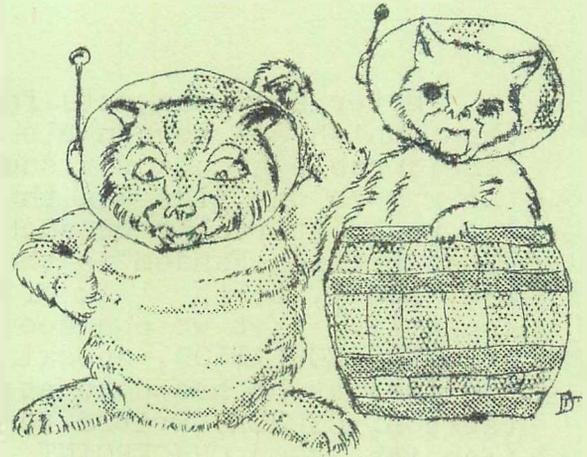
Actually, it wasn't a sleazy snack bar, it was the Resident's Bar at the Novacon. The mite of British Fandom (Greg Pickersgill) had gathered in a corner, a corner it was to claim as its own for the weekend. There was Greg, Roy Kettle, John Brosnan, Ian Maule, John Piggott, Peter Roberts and myself. Greg surveyed the gathered trufan giants across the rim of his rum'n'cokem and snarled out, in his lovable way,

"You know, this is British Fandom here, all of it."

Sorry, Goblin, you weren't included. Sorry Pete Weston, Ethel Lindsay, Rob Holdstock, Eddie Jones, Norman Shorrock, Frank Arnold, Vernon Brown, Keith Freeman, every member of St. Fanthony, the Brum Group, Herts. Fandom, the Mad Group, the BSFA.....

Of course, I knew what he meant, and you know what he meant. And in a funny, limited way, he was right. Limited by our own failings in personality, talent or perseverance; funny because he thought that a convention was for more than talking SF, a fanzine something better than rubbish, a place to publish terrible fiction and worse poetry. He believed that fandom was worth talking about in fanzines, and that fanzines should always be as competent and attractive as possible. He was right because we agreed with him, and damn few outside our circle would.

If we were more homogeneous a group, we could be lumped in together to form a Movement. The British Insurgents?



G'sFD:5: BNF - In British Fandom, someone who has attended more than one Convention.

HELP?

Does anyone here remember ISPLOPNIF? Rob Johnson's move for an International Society for the Proper Location Of Page Numbers In Fanzines? So where do I put the page numbers on these stencils, Gannets? And what page numbers do I use? I1, I2, and I3 etc.....

G'sFD:6: FIRST ISH - Hopefully the last.

RIDING ALONG ON THE CREST OF A FEUD

I recall, in a fanzine I know that you'll all have read, that there was something I'd like to comment on. One of the hallmarks of a good fanzine is that comment hooks abound: on almost every page there will be something inspiring entertaining comment. It is not always possible to cover everything in a loc without either producing an insipid "liked this - didn't like that" kind of thing that we all still receive, or producing a loc twice as long as the fanzine inspiring it. There is an art to writing locs, and I'm not too great a practitioner. Still, those who can't, teach... the first point to learn is to pick and choose. Be selective - and that means leaving some out. When I wrote a loc on MAYA 5, I left some comments out. They seem to be relevant to what I've been saying so far, so here goes:

Peter Roberts (mayhap we're getting too incestuous, too) often talks a lot of sense, but I must disagree with him when he suggests that it is time to stop slating British fanzines. "The prodigals have seen the errors of their ways and are on the long march home." I've already stated my opinion of that in the pages above - tell it to the Manchester Group, Peter. They might listen to you, I fear I've alienated them completely.

Peter also suggests force-feeding a possible feud between the fannish and sercon elements in Britain. Certainly there is considerable ground for such a feud, with Greg perhaps leading the way on one side and the sneering Mr. Edwards on the other - but would it really be such a good idea? One of the best things about British Fandom is the lack of such friction (largely due, I'll admit, to the lack of a strong fannish faction until quite recently.) Yet we can see Pete Weston, producer of the superbly sercon SPECULATION, speaking out on the merits of the fannish fanzine, as he has done at two recent conventions. Jim Goddard (sercon, CYPHER) wrote for OMPA. Peter Roberts himself (fannish, EGG, CHECKPOINT, MOR-FARCH, TIKKY-DEW et bloody cetera) studies American Literature. Admittedly, few leading British fan-writers 'cross the line' - Bob Shaw being a notable exception - but their tastes are more catholic than their writings.

In my view, good fan writing can be sercon or fannish. If I prefer a Bob Shaw column to a Pam Bulmer critique, then the choice is a marginal one. (Sandra Meisel manages rather well at both.) I don't think that British Fandom needs a 'Holy War', and I don't think that it would be a good idea if it happened. Let's combine against the bad first.

G'sFD:7: FUGGHEAD - One failing to share my prejudices about
fandom: an obvious oaf.

JOKE

I say, Isay, I say. Did you hear about the Ompa-Ompa bird?
The Ompa-Ompa bird? Faaantastic.

It flew around in ever-decreasing circles until it disappeared
up its own mailing list.

G'sFD:8: POETRY - A form of expression unknown in fanzines.

END

Yes, I know there are several more lines to fill. But this
is the end. Thank you for staying around for so long.

OILCAN HARRY

Ever since I gave up producing GRIWAB I've had recurring doubts as to whether I really did want to give up fanzine production, and when I finally came to the conclusion that GRIWAB Shall Not Die it was too late-- the cash had run out. So when the idea of this combozine was suggested I jumped at the chance of getting into print again at a reasonable price. If I can keep the fanzine bug alive in me, and I don't die of Twonk's Disease, there may very easily be a copy of GRIWAB-6 stealing through your letter-box Real Soon Now.

"Oilcan Harry", by the way, for those of you with stinking memories for trivia, was the villain in those unbelievable operatic fight louse cartoons, who, with almost monotonous regularity, kidnapped Pearl Purchase and tied her to railway lines and buzz-saws. Irene Taylor plays the part of Pearl Purchase.

As a minion of the Dept. of Health and Social Security, it's part of my job to issue questionnaires to people who have recently been abroad and are now claiming sickness benefit, unemployment benefit, or whatever. One of the things we need to know is the name and address of the claimant's employer abroad, and in answer to this, one guy just back from Malta wrote: "Between 6th June 1971 and 21st Sept. 1972 I was employed by A Pair of Shoes."

Starved of incident as we are, the whole office was soon rolling with laughter, but not me, my friends. No, instantly perceptive as usual, I could see the more sinister implications of this apparently simple statement. For thousands of years shoes have held the position of being the most trodden-on minority in the history of mankind; does it not seem reasonable, therefore, that, like every other minority in the world today, they are beginning to assert themselves, even assume the role of employer?

In the beginning, shoes were soft gentle creatures living in harmony with men, taking the punishment doled out to them without a murmur. But as the centuries rolled by they learned from the example set by their owners; they became harder and adopted guerilla tactics. I'm sure you're all familiar with

cartoon drawings of traps whose shoes flop open to reveal rows of needle-sharp nails and have passed this off as a cartoonist's cliché. Not so; almost every week the newspapers carry stories of traps and wanderers being found dead in ditches and barns, but is there ever mention of their shoes? Of course not, and even at this moment, there are bands of the most vicious of shoe militants roaming the country organising resistance among footwear of similar persuasion.

Guerilla tactics are frowned on by the vast majority of shoes of course, but they show their resentment of us in other ways. They deliberately wear themselves out rather than submit to human domination, and whenever the opportunity presents itself, they pinch and chafe our feet. Look at the shoes around at the moment; heavy, clumpy things with platform soles and high heels, ready to kick behind in the shins when the day of revolution comes. Footwear's nature and attitude to life has changed and Dr. Marten's are a force in the world.

I have referred to shoes as a minority group and until a relatively short while ago this was true: not even one could afford a pair of shoes. Now, however, it's becoming increasingly easier for people throughout the world to be masters of shoes, and shoes are rapidly assuming the proportions of a majority.

My boss at the moment is not the greatest guy I've ever worked for, but he's infinitely preferable to a pair of lace-up brogues.

Thou Penman assures me that, unlike Chip Delany, Roger Zelazny has never done any scripting for the comic. The reason I asked him was that I'd just finished reading 'Creatures of Light and Darkness' and it reminded me of nothing so much as a Marvel comic rendered in words instead of pictures. The book is overflowing with the larger-than-life, colourful and grotesque superheroes and villains so beloved of the comic.

To me machines are spiteful, aloof, alien beings who work because they choose to. Consequently, I've never been able to draw what I consider very convincing machinery, and one of the things I've always admired in Jack Kirby's work is that he draws machines which, however bizarre, look like they should work. The House of Death in 'Creatures...', hanging in space at one end of the galaxy, seemed to me to be perfect Kirby material, perhaps rendered in one of his full-page photomontages. Kirby, in fact, is so good at machines that he often loses sight of his characters' humanity and really enjoys fusing people with machines -- his androids are really excellent. And sure enough, there in 'Creatures...' is the Steel General, who, over the centuries, has had his body gradually replaced by metal and rides a six-legged metal horse through space. Sure Kirby.

John Buscema, another of my favourite Marvel artists, with a more believable approach to anatomy than Kirby, would have a field-day with Anubis and Osiris, Lords of Death and Life respectively, one dog-headed, the other bird-headed. Anubis, in particular, brings to mind Buscema's 'Aphisto' whose awful control over men's lost souls is almost exactly like Anubis's commanding of the dead. Give Aphisto a jackal's head and you couldn't tell him from Anubis.

Obviously, the book's characters have a little more substance than Farvel's characters, but's to be expected from a writer of Zelazny's calibre. But coix are growing up and in doing so have reached a more adult audience. I'd be very surprised if Roger Zelazny doesn't read them.

This stencil is being typed the day before New Year's Eve, and the first thing I notice looking back at the other stencils is that the letter 'y' doesn't cut too well. If there are to be any more OMEGA SEALS I can see I'll have to get that fixed. Now is the time to indulge in that favourite New Year past-time of reviewing the year past. Oh: 1972 was the year we decided to look for a house, and the year we found one -- I put the deposit on it today, as a matter of fact. More of that some other time perhaps. 1972 was also the year I really got back into fandom and found how much I'd been missing. I don't think you'll get rid of me quite so easily again, whatever you say about this piece of fanac.

This has been a collection of ill-considered comments from Harry A. Bell. And now a word from our sponsor:

WELL, HERE I AM

From Irene Taylor.

Well, here it isn't -- my first article, I mean. I did actually write it, though I'll have trouble convincing the rest of the Gemets, except for Harry, that is. Yes, Harry knows I wrote an article cos it's in his draw -- at work! Good eh? I sent it across to him to see what he thought about it -- he works in the same place as I do.

"Type it onto stencil on Saturday," he said.

"OK," says me.

So here I am, and where is it-- "Work," he says, turning round so I could kick his bottom. Anyway, I beat him up and dragged him back into the house -- couldn't let the blood run into the corridor, could I?

As a matter of fact, you weren't missing much, so you should be grateful to him (none, appreciation only, please.) "You'll have to write something else" he said, as though the whole of fandom was waiting with bated breath for some small pearl of wisdom from me.

"Why?" said I.

"Well, it'll finish off this stencil -- I've only done a few lines at the top."

"Don't!" said I, and I didn't.

REFLECTIONS ON REFLECTIONS

REFLECTIONS ON REFLECTIONS

The other evening, thinkly idly of this and that, my thoughts turned to Jean Cocteau, who made one of the films I most admire - viz. Orphée. In this film mirrors played a bizarre part, and it was speculating on mirrors in general which led to these few thoughts put before you now.

In Orphée, Orpheus' Death comes to look at him, entering the room through his mirror. By going through the mirror, as Orpheus does later, one enters another world, Death's world; an eery, wind-swept journey through cold passages, seedy rooms and burnt-out buildings. Beyond that does not concern Orpheus, or indeed us; but does not Cocteau's mirror-door to Death's world not remind some, at least, of the custom of covering mirrors when there has been a death in a family?¹

To go back a little further, one of the earliest plays I ever heard, on radio, was one of the few to give me nightmares. Indeed, it made me apprehensive of looking into a mirror after dark for years! Briefly, it concerned a curse, whereby the person cursed would see the curser looking over his shoulder, every time he looked into a mirror. The only way to get rid of the curse was to tell another person - who inherited it. The person in the play was at his wit's end, so told his friend (and the radio audience, mind!) - who (as it turned out) was blind. So, presumably, ended the curse, but it gave me a nasty turn, I can tell you! Again, does it not recall to mind the old custom whereby girls would try to see their future husbands at Halloween in this way: they would eat an apple and comb their hair while looking into a mirror, and would see the face of their future husbands looking over their shoulder.

So it seems that there have been, for many years (may I even say centuries?) strange ideas or legends attached to mirrors, or indeed any other device for, as it were, "duplicating" oneself - the fear of primitive peoples today that their souls would be stolen or enslaved if they were photographed; the fear of meeting one's doppelganger (well might that young lady in Rossetti's painting of How They Met Themselves swoon!); the belief dead eyes mirror the last thing they have seen; and that doesn't even count the laws against graven images, and wishing ill on folk by sticking pins in representations of them!

There was Alice's re-entry into Wonderland through a looking-glass, and (at the other extreme) the superstition that vampires could not be seen in a mirror. Why did that latter susperstition grow up? The only reasons I can think of are pretty far-fetched,

1 Some folk cover mirrors in thunder-storms, come to think of it.

being (a) possibly they were regarded as a type of ghost who generally speaking aren't reflected in glass (and cannot be photographed another form of "duplication") and (b) the old-fashioned testing of someone thought dead by holding a glass or mirror in front of the mouth and nose, to see if it is misted by breathing or not. Well, I said it was a bit far-fetched! Then, going back into ancient times, what of Perseus' slaying of the Medusa by means of (in some versions) a mirror, and Narcissus coming to grief by a sort of looking-glass. Generally mirrors seem to be bad luck - especially if you break one. Even worse than the legendary seven years bad luck in that case was the fate of the Lady of Shalott, poor woman - she certainly saw the world through a glass!

I did read once that there was a Chinese belief that before being reborn, the souls see their past misdeeds in a mirror. Perhaps indeed "the eyes are the mirror of the soul" - at least for those Chinese souls, who have brought us full-circle back to Death's world.

Mary Mushling Legg
December 1972

HERE WE ARE AGAIN, HAPPY AS CAN BE....

Henry P. Pijohn, continued

"Alright Ian, that's enough. You can turn it back again," gloated Bell.

"Right, let's try pictures 4 and 5 on him now. This is our chance to finish him off properly - then he'll really be in our power."

"No, you fool," retorted Bell, "we haven't the time for that now, the party is about to begin. If you really want to torture him further, tell him about the other pictures and then let us begone from here."

"Hah, yes," cackled Maule, turning to our hero who was still puking (in hero fashion, of course) as a result of the horrors he had just experienced. "Listen, and I shall tell you of the fate which lies in store for you. Pictures 4 and 5 are of Ian Williams: one a rather mundane, yet shocking photograph of the Goblin; the other a full frontal nude shot of him - which is absolutely Terrifying. Haw-har-hah-heh-heh-heh."

With that said evil Ian turned and left the dungeon together with Bell and Brian Temple, whom Bell booted through the doorway. Maule could not resist a final jibe, however, and before leaving the Post Office remarked:

"Things would have been a lot easier for you if you had agreed to do a piece for Gannetscrapbook, Pijohn."

The door slammed shut, leaving Henry to imagine the dread fates which lay ahead while the taste of the last experience was still sour in his mouth.

NEXT EXCITING EPISODE: PART 2, THE PARTY!

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