

LES SPINGE



LES

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The Waters of Babylon (Editorial)	2
Because They're There (Mike Ashley)	3
The Point of Perfection (Rob Wood)	7
From Guinea Pigs to Autobahns (Pete Weston)	8
Another Artist's Lament (Terry Jeeves)	16
Worcester Sauce (Ken Cheslin)	19
The Anvil Chorus (Readers)	23
The Field (Fanzines)	27
War Tears (Jim Grant)	30
The Last Round-Up	31

COVER by Santos (Martin Pitt)

INTERIOR ART by Santos (9, 23, 26, 30, 31)
Jeeves (16, 18, 20, 22, 32)

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DARROLL PARDOE

EDITORIAL

As you can see from the cover, this issue was going to be out at Christmas... well, there's plenty of precedent for fanzines being two months late, but even so, I'm sorry, folks, especially those of you who have written and asked when it was going to appear. I hope it's worth the wait. I have money troubles, y'see...

British fandom has been strangely quiet of late. We seem to be going through one of those periods of interregnum between one 'wave' and the next. The last one, as I recall, was the PaDers, who have now settled in and are quietly producing masses of mimeography. I wonder who or what the next lot will be? Or perhaps the feeling of calm is an illusion, fostered by the absence of that sterling publication SKYRACK, which no longer appears ten times a month, like it used to (it seemed like it, sometimes...ah, those were the days). Or perhaps it's the lack of general-circulation fanzines around at the moment...

One region, though, in which the calm is about to be rudely shattered, is the BSFA. Now, the BSFA has been steadily improving itself for a number of years now, and gradually building up its membership. The last year in contrast has been terrible, and it would not surprise me to find the membership substantially down on the figures for this time last year. The main trouble is VECTOR; Steve Oakey should never have taken on the job of Publications Officer if there was the slightest possibility of his being unable to carry out his duties. Surely he must have had some suspicion? A substantial part of the membership sees only VECTOR in return for its shekels (I'm not suggesting this is a good thing) and will surely not renew if it doesn't get even that. I don't want to see the BSFA fade away; too many people have worked extremely hard toward its welfare, and it plays a useful role, and could play a much greater and even more useful one in the future, if given the chance. Something Must Be Done, and it should be the job of the Annual Meeting this Easter to sort out what. I hope the situation will be well ventilated there. This supposes a reasonable, clear-headed attitude on the part of the members there present - not a shambles like last year's A.G.M. I wonder if the membership is really capable of it?

In conclusion, two things I've not mentioned elsewhere in this IS. First, the illo on page 21 is a four-dimensional parrot. And second, the * sign on page 29 is an especially recommended fanzine. OK folks, Spinge is before you; now read on. See you at Bristol, I hope. Slainte!

B E C A U S E ** T H E Y ' R E ** T H E R E

+++++by+++++

+++++MIKE ASHLEY+++++

I'm an ardent fan of SERGEANT CORK, the latest series of which (boo-hoo) has recently concluded. I don't know if you like it or not, but then I don't really care whether you think it stinks to high-hazel, since my mentioning it is only a means to an end. The series is meant to be chronologically accurate, and up to one episode quite some time ago now, I had seen no mistakes. In fact, I've still seen no mistakes, but in this said episode old "Chalky White" was muttering about something, as he always is, and he mentioned the word 'robots'. Well, this series is supposed to be taking place around the mid-1890s, and since the word 'robot' didn't appear until Karel Capek's play "Rossum's Universal Robots" was first performed in January 1921, it was somewhat of an anachronism. I was in two minds whether to write to the TV TIMES mumbling about the author's slackness, but just never did. However, I still scanned the "Viewerpoint" page to see whether anyone else wrote in and moaned about it. Since I can't believe the whole nation is as lazy as I (or is it me?), after several weeks had passed and nothing was said, I finally concluded that the non-stf public are totally ignorant as to where many of the words they use did originate.

For a start, look how many words came from some sf story, or such. Robot I've already mentioned. Then there's 'utopia', from "Utopia" by Sir Thomas More - and the fact is that had not More originally written this in Latin, the name may never have come into existence. Instead we may have ended up calling such places ere-whons or some such - which we don't.

One point is that whilst 'utopia' has been in the language for just 450 years, the word 'robot' has existed for just 45, yet both are used as if they originated with our other Saxon, Greek and Latin words. Even more amazing is the word 'Shangri-La' also passed into the language (especially as house names) after only 35 years. '1984' has become a regular term now for a future of extreme Socialist rule, and that has integrated into our language after just seventeen years. Everyone knows where '1984' came from but 'Shangri-La' is not as well known - surprisingly, since it came from James Hilton's "Lost Horizons", a best-selling book made into a hit-film in 1937.

In fact, the origins of most commonly used words in science or sf today are rather obscure, yet their geneses are really quite interesting. 'Sputnik' for instance didn't just come into exis-

tence in 1957. Indeed it's almost seventy years old, as it was first coined by Konstantin Tsiolkovsky in his article "The Exploration of Cosmic Space by Jet-Propelled Instruments" written in 1898, although it did not appear until 1903 in the Russian magazine SCIENTIFIC SURVEY.

'Utopia' and 'Shangri-La' have already been mentioned, words meaning almost the same thing. 'Paradise' is another word, but this time it was not coined by an author. Indeed, its origin is somewhat obscure, but most etymological dictionaries mention two possible sources. One is the Greek word 'paradeisos' which meant literally pleasure-ground, an interesting idea. The other is even more obscure, and that is the two roots derived from ancient Persian, 'pairi' meaning 'around' and 'diz' meaning 'to mould or form'. Thus paradise means to form around! What link this has with a place of bliss is hard to imagine, but there must certainly be one. Any ideas?

The word 'Atlantis' originated in Greek mythology, and first found in Plato's "Timaeus" where he informs us the legend was told to Solon by the Egyptian priests. The whole story of Atlantis is but a myth, yet there is actually an Atlantis Society, which shows how much some words do become part of the language.

Besides such words as these, which originated in ~~sf~~ or similar, there are words in the English language which have paradoxical or otherwise peculiar origins. The word 'nice', for instance - it comes from the Latin 'nescius' meaning 'ignorant'. Apparently then, nice people are ignorant. There may be some sense in it, at that. One interesting one is the word 'father', which in its present state comes to us from the Saxon 'faeder' meaning simply 'the feeder'. The same with the Latin and Greek word 'pater' since the root 'pa' means 'to feed'. Obviously then the father is the one who feeds the family. I doubt if ornithologists will agree, though. The slang expression 'cheerio' comes to us from the days of the Sedan Chair. As the person left he would cry "Chair Ho!" much as one might cry "Taxi!" nowadays. It just shows how sloven the English language is. Sedan chairs as a mode of transport practically vanished at the end of the eighteenth century, yet here we are two hundred years later still calling for a chair whenever we leave!

The greyhound has a tautological name. It comes to us from the mediaeval word 'greihund' which had entered the English language because of those innumerable Danish invasions. It comes from the two Icelandic roots 'grey' meaning dog, and 'hundr' meaning hound. And since hound comes from the Saxon 'hund' meaning dog, a greyhound is a dog-dog!

Whilst on the subject of dogs, the dachshund is German, literally, for badger-hound (so if your garden is being invaded by badgers, buy a dachshund).

For the macabre-hearted, the word 'vampire' is a simple translation

of the Serbian 'vampir' which means blood-sucker. Wizard isn't as simple however. Its direct origin is the old French word 'guis-chard', brought into our language when William of Normandy decided Harold had had enough fun. Guis-chard itself is derived from the two roots 'vizhr' meaning 'clever' and 'vita' meaning 'to know'. So all a wizard is really is someone who is very clever. The word 'witch', although spelled very differently from 'wizard' in modern English has extremely close associations. Since a witch is a female wizard, it's quite logical that it should be derived from the feminine of 'guis-chard'. Well, actually, it isn't; a typical example of the English language. Instead it's the feminine of the Saxon word for wizard. Oh yes, the Saxons had wizards before William of Normandy came rowing across. The Saxons called them 'wiccae' - that is, a wizard was a 'wicca' and the feminine witch was a 'wicce'. Thus the Brilliant English stick to the Saxon for witch, but wait for the French, for wizard. That's probably why we call medicine-men witch-doctors, when by rights (rites?) they should be wizard-doctors! Or warlock-doctors. The word warlock which (uhm!), which nowadays means the same as wizard, originally meant something slightly different. Once again its origin is a Saxon word, 'waerloga', meaning a truce-breaker. Naturally, a wizard broke the truces of Christianity, but the stupid Saxons called those 'waerlogae'.

Whilst we're on the supernatural, many of the words have very interesting origins. A griffin, as you undoubtedly know, is a mythical creature with the body and paws of a lion and the head and wings of an eagle. Well, I suppose the fact that it has the head of an eagle is enough for us incredibly stupid English to latch on to the French word 'griffon'. I wonder if we realized it came from the Greek 'grupos' which meant just 'hook-nosed'! How about the wyvern, the dragon with the tail of a serpent. It originated in Latin with the word 'vipera' meaning obviously viper, which the ignorant Gauls transformed into 'wivre' still meaning viper. When William waded up to Battle, and later settled into England, the word was twisted into 'wyvre' still meaning viper. Suddenly it becomes 'wyvern' meaning a dragon with a serpent's tail, of course! The word dragon actually comes from the Greek 'drakon' - meaning dragon!

Then there was the Sphinx, that winged lion with the female face and memory of riddles. It comes from the Greek 'sphingein' transformed by the legions of Rome into 'sphinx' and in both cases meaning simply 'the strangler'. Indeed, it did strangle all who could not answer its stupid riddles, but then the sphinx originated in Egyptian mythology, and in that case did not have wings. The Greeks purloined it later, and for some unknown reason added wings. This addition is pointless, since we all know the sphinx eventually met destruction when it hurled itself from a cliff. Hence its wings were of no use whatever!

One word for which the etymology is totally unknown is the name penguin. This is a great pity because besides being a bird, a penguin is also a wild pineapple, and the origin of both words must be a mighty peculiar one to link pineapples with those waddlers of the ice.

With some animals however, their names have simple origins. John Cleese's favourite beastie, the ferret, for instance, owes its name to the fact that it hunts out rabbits and it in a way 'steals the nest'. Hence, its origin ('fur' is the latin for 'thief', corrupted by those ignorant Gauls again into 'furet' meaning ferret, the thief)

Whilst on the weasel family - the name 'weasel' comes from the Saxon 'waesel' meaning 'weasel' - there is the stoat from the Scandinavian 'stoat' meaning 'stoat!', and the stoat's twin, the ermine, which comes from the French 'hermine' meaning 'weasel'. Explain that if you can!

As we all know the word 'monkey' comes from the Italian 'monna'. That may seem simple (except explaining why on earth an Italian word should be in the English language) except that both 'monna' and the word it is a corruption of, 'madonna', both come from the same source, the Latin 'mea donna', and all mean 'my lady'. The French 'madame' has the same origin. Why?

Talking of Italian words in English, that is but a broken twig to the enormous trees linking some derivations. The word 'tea' is a Chinese word. The actual word is 'tschar' which is where we get the expression 'cuppa char' from, and it has nothing to do with char-ladies. There the 'char' comes from the Saxon 'cerr' meaning odd jobs. Whilst on char, the other words we have in our language, char meaning a fish (of the salmon family) and char meaning to burn, each have separate origins. The fish char comes from the Gaelic 'ceara' meaning red. Whereas char, to burn, is an abbreviation of charcoal. The trouble is no-one knows where charcoal comes from!

Hell comes from the Saxon 'hel' which originally meant 'that which hides'. Later it became 'helan' meaning 'to hide'. Any clearer?

Going around full circle, Gulliver visited Lilliput in "The first Voyage of Lemuel Gulliver" written 240 years ago by Dean Swift. Since then the word lilliputian has passed into the language. It simply means a dwarf. The word dwarf itself came from the Saxon 'dweorg', which meant a small animal or plant.

I mentioned earlier we had words in our language from all over the world, but did you know we had one from the Abenaki? I've not even the foggiest what the Abenaki language is, but they have a word, 'seganku' from which we derived 'skunk'!

The word 'goblin' comes from the Old French 'gobelin' meaning an elf or a spirit. Ah, but what about the word 'hobgoblin'? Well, you

see, the word 'hob' was added for a special reason. Hob is a corruption of the words Robin and Robert, and it means an elf, hence a hobgoblin is an elf-elf, whilst a goblin is just an elf!

Well, I could go on and on. But I won't. You just grab hold of an etymological dictionary and see for yourselves. The English language is a collection of some of the most pointless words possible, and people don't have the foggiest reason why they use them. You could always say "because they're there."

(++ my own favourite is Torpentau Hill in Cornwall, which works out as hill-hill-hill hill! And I don't know about goblins being the same as elves. Tell THAT to Tolkien. ++)

THE POINT OF PERFECTION (by Rob Wood)

The point of perfection comes at different times for different people.
And for some it never comes at all.

For some it takes all life, and for others it takes yet longer.

And for others not so long - but some will never know

Whether they have reached or will ever reach it.

Then, may others who understand them be said to have reached

The point of perfection.

(R.A.W. 1965)

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FROM GUINEA PIGS TO AUTOBAINS

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by PETE WESTON

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One weekend Rog Peyton and I decided to go along to Bristol, and visit the Walshes and Mercers. We were greeted cordially by Tony and Simone Walsh, and invited in for a drink before going to surprise Archie and Beryl, at whose place we'd be staying, if we stayed anywhere.

"Coffee?" said Tony.

"Black, please" said Rog.

"Are you going to be difficult?"

"It's easy to make black coffee."

"Not with milk, it isn't" replied Simone, emerging from the kitchen.

We stayed only a short time, just long enough for me to give Tony a copy of my latest NEXUS (which Simone remarked was an anagram of UNSEX, and was that Significant?) and to tantalise him with the news that I had the addresses of several Bristol fans he hadn't contacted for his Group.

We found the Mercers' flat without difficulty, for as Simone had said, and we hadn't believed, it was a large decaying place, the only house in its road. Mysteriously Victorian, too; we soon heard that the building presented three windows on the exterior of the first floor and yet from within there were only two windows. Archie seemed concerned, and was heard to mumble about spacewarps and Sturgeon's story, 'Yesterday was Monday'.

Beryl and Archie were surprised to see us. "We didn't know you were coming," said Beryl, "but I thought you might, and bought some sausages, but Archie's just eaten them because you were so late."

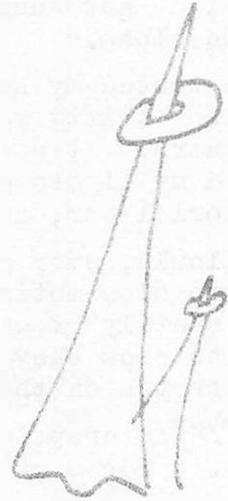
I made some non-committal remark that it was a shame about the sausages, but was interrupted by Beryl telling us that we could have a Vesta chow-mein between us, and did I like it?

While Beryl did mysterious things with the cooker, the rest of us followed her into the kitchen and got in her way. A vast pile of tinned foodstuffs rested in a precarious pyramid on a two-inch wide mantelpiece of a boarded-up gas fire. After we'd knocked this down a few times, we told Archie that such a system seemed odd, in view of the empty space in the rest of the flat, and the looming vastness of the kitchen. But Archie gave a logical-sounding explanation about the necessity for keeping everything jammed together rather than putting up shelves, and though I can't quite remember his reasoning, it was very convincing at the time.

As preparations for the meal went on apace, I became more and more uneasy about the food I was going to have to eat. At about the half-way point in the fermentation, I asked if I could have a couple of sandwiches instead. A good-natured argument immediately sprang up, as to who was going to eat the two-person meal that was cooking. Finally Rog Peyton volunteered to eat the lot. The meal consisted of soggy-looking things, floating around in a thin onion-smelling broth, along with little burnt hard things and a mess of a main dish. Beryl is a good cook, but a packaged Chinese meal can resist the most skilful preparation. Honestly, I like Chinese food, but this do-it-yourself stuff looked nothing like the real pukka thing. I was content to let Rog tuck in.

As he worked through the meal he began to look more and more desparate. I tried to help him along with cheering comments, as I put away some very tasty sandwiches. "Keep it up, Rog" I said, "There is only twice as much left as when you started."

After tea, we explored the Mercatorial Mansion. It really is a fabulous place; and big - these fans had a fanzine library in the one room, nothing else but sixteen years' accumulation stored in green-painted orange boxes. And this wealth of material huddled in a tiny corner by a window, a mere blot in the booming vastness of the room. The next room had a sixteen years' collection of books and prozines sort of spread about the walls, to try and convince that the room was just of the correct size for such a collection; a book here, one there, three or four on a mantelpiece, more in odd alcoves and cracks in the plaster. The next room had no particular use, the next was a bedroom, followed by a living-room-cum-fanden, and still it went on. The hall itself was enormous, and one entire side was studded with doors opening into various caves of mystery. It took quite some time to get used to the labyrinth - I'd ask Archie which door led into the bathroom, and he'd say "Tenth door" and I'd shout back "Counting from which end?" And then I'd lose patience, and flinging open a door would leap squarely into a broom closet.



It really is a fabulous place.

We finally thought we'd better get along to the meeting in the Walshes' back room. It was about half past seven when we started out, and about eight when we arrived. Since the journey normally takes five minutes at most, I'm still wondering what happened. My car was parked outside the house, drawn up behind the Mercers' Triumph Herald with the scratches down the side, and the discarded Mercatorial scooter, rusting its substance away into an ever-

widening stain of corrosion on the gravel.

I was parked facing uphill, the other car was facing downhill. In a fit of indecision, I asked Beryl and Archie if I should turn about. Oh no, they assured me, you go straight on, turn left, drive till you pass the first road on your left, then stop, and we'll come out of that. Fool that I am, I obeyed. I should have turned around!

After I'd followed instructions, with Rog Peyton in that sag in the passenger seat that he created, I waited for the Mercers to appear. And waited, and waited...

Eventually, a car appeared out of the night. It crept ever so slowly up the side-road towards the main road, then slower still to stop completely halfway on to the main thoroughfare.

"There they are," said Rog, "They have stopped. Why have they stopped?"

"I do not know, Roger," I said, "perhaps they are waiting for us to come along."

I tooted my horn gently to show the Mercers that I was waiting no more than thirty yards further down the road. They remained perfectly stationary. I sat and waited a while, grew impatient, tooted again, flashed my lights on and off, crept backwards till I almost touched the Mercatorial car, and tooted again, loudly.

Slowly, ever so slowly, like a glacier descending to the sea in majestic slow motion, the Mercatorial motor began moving, swept past me in stately grace, and dwindled down the road without so much as a flash to show they were even aware of my existence. I guess Archie concentrates on the road, when he drives.

Archie crept around a corner, and turned up a hill. We followed meekly. For want of anything to do, Rog watched the leading car.

"Look, Pete," Rog yawned, "their back wheel is wobbling."

"That is an optical illusion, Roger Peyton," I said, "it is like wheels of stagecoaches that seem to go around in reverse. Their back wheel could not wobble."

But one wheel was wobbling, and we watched with fascination to see whether it would fall off completely and roll away by itself.

"It just shows" I said, "that cars are unreliable brutes. I mean anything could go wrong, or fall off, and you'd never know about it up here at the front, not until you crashed. Not you, car," I said hastily, and patted my car lovingly on the dashboard. I don't really love my car, but reckon that it is as well to keep in with the gremlins.

At the Walshes, we forgot cars, and all went into the Walsh back room, which was full of three members of the Bristol Group. There was a quiet little chap called Alan somebody, who reminded me of the Brum Group Ollie, who used to say nothing all night. There was another lad there, whose name was Brian; he was a student at the University.

Finally, a new chap was present, by the name of Bob Franklin, a student of philosophy at Bristol University. Bob was to prove a very pleasant and intelligent chap who so enjoyed the evening that he made immediate plans to attend the YarCon and even said nice things about ZENITH.

As we entered, Brian was talking to Simone, and we caught the tail-end of a fascinating conversation.

"Was that the girl whose budgie you killed?" he said

"It was a hamster not a budgie, no I didn't kill it, and it wasn't her, it was my sister!" said Simone dead-pan.

"Try again" advised Tony, "all you got right then was the language.

We were immediately co-opted for a film that the enterprising Bristol fans were making that evening - or at least, a bit of a film. The story was evidently settled to everyone's satisfaction but neither Rog nor myself were able to get more from the natives than a garbled something about wizards and spells and dry-ice. With the last remark, Tony dramatically opened a thermos-flask, and held it up so that white fumes cascaded down its sides and eddied around.

"I've got the dry-ice," he said with quiet pride, in much the matter-of-fact manner that an alchemist might mention that he'd bought a good supply of virgins' blood, or something equally unlikely.

"Will you be wizard, Pete?" Tony asked.

"Not much of a wizard if he wears glasses," sniffed Simone.

I resisted the urge to throttle Simone.

A long black student's gown was draped over my shoulders, and a sort of mutilated shawl wrapped around my skull. I thought I looked quite effective, with my tie drawn up into a sort of bow and my face drawn up into a sinister sneer. The lack of glasses made me thrash about a little, but I was successfully steered to the French window and shoved outside.

I mention in passing that the windows were open at the time, and that it was an exceedingly wet evening. I stood in silent misery, clutching my robes in mute protest.

"When I shout 'freeze'" said Brian, "you come in through the curtains."

"Will you shout 'thaw' afterwards so we can relax?" said Simone seriously.

Time went by and I began to think they'd forgotten about me. Finally the call came, and I valiantly put my best foot forward.

I still think I made a grand entrance. To rip the curtains from their rail probably added to the impact of the scene, and my graceful trip over the carpet to send glasses and table flying in all directions was magnificent. I liked the way Tony kidded that

he was mad with me, pounding the wall with his fist, vein throbbing in his temples, and I liked the way he told the others to "Belt up." Tony is so masterful - calm and reasoned, yet instantly angry and chiding at his group when they act foolishly. He'll kid you he doesn't like commanding people, but he enjoys exercising an Iron Rule.

The second time, things went much more quietly, and the scene went without a hitch(cock). I stepped slowly and impressively forward, waving my hands and chanting to my victims. I was supposedly quelling my audience, but since this was a silent film they refused to be quelled, and enjoyed a pleasant jeer at me. I cursed fluidly back at them - if you ever see the film you may wish to read my lips!

After I'd mesmerised the rabble, I opened a flask and tipped a potion into their goblets. Prepared lumps of dry-ice in the glasses gave out clouds of swirling vapour when wetted. And then Brian shouted once more to "Freeze!"

Simone muttered something defiantly to the effect that she was frozen already with that damned window open, but was ignored.

I stood before a mirror, admiring my costume before discarding the robes. Archie came up behind me and quipped,

"Sit Pete on a pile of bricks and he could go to the fancy-dress ball at the FarCon as the Merlin Wall."

The filming was over, and the debris was swiftly cleared up. And the discussion resumed. I've no idea at this late date what we talked about - when a roomful of fans hits top gear, you know yourself what happens. Several other fans came in, but I have only the vaguest memories of their faces, and they added little to the conversation. That conversation was superb - it sparkled and sprang from one subject to another, without rest or let-up, each mind working smoothly and brilliantly to cap the offering of the one before. I was cursing quietly because I couldn't think of a single pun, while Archie was on peak form, and filled the air with incandescence.

I do have a memory of talking about guinea-pigs (I keep one, you know - I'm known locally as The Fan Who Took A Guinea-Pig To A Convention) and within two sentences talking about autobahns, the transition being accomplished logically without break in the flow of words. I've since racked my brains to think of anything that guinea pigs and autobahns might have in common.

Someone mentioned the Ken Dodd Show.

"I never watch it." said Rog

"I mean the radio show"

"I never watch that, either" said Rog smugly.

Tony produced what he called his 'superball', which bounced with astonishing enthusiasm around the room. He dropped it again, and we bluffed each other with talk of the 'bouncivity coefficient of rubber' and like that, until the superball plopped neatly into the roaring fire.

Shaken from our calm, we converged on the fireplace in a panic-stricken mob, fighting for tongs, poker and shovel, and poking at the glowing coals, as superbball hissed and spluttered, filling the air with the stench of burning rubber. Tony jabbed with a shovel and fished a smoking lump from the ashes. Superball was afterwards rather black and soggy, and it didn't bounce nearly as well as it had before.

Conversation resumed, and became so sparkingly original that I just had to scribble bits down for posterity.

"Just think," I said, "over there in Ireland there's Good Old Walt Willis, living up to a reputation and surrounded with John Berry who takes down his weakest pun and makes an article about it. And over here, we've had good old Archie (he's British, by ghod!) filling the air with little gems, and having no-one around to report them save taking them down himself, and you know he'd never do that. Highod," I said, "he must have been frustrated all these years without egoboo. He needs a Bristol John Berry."

"We've got one now," said Simone.

"Well, thanks..." I simpered modestly.

"Yes," she interrupted rudely, "The Somerset John Berry comes to most of our meetings now. He doesn't write much as yet, but.."

Back at the Mercers', Rog lost any sleepiness and fell into a mood of fannish enthusiasm. I felt a bit seedy by now and cast around for something to sleep upon. Archie dismembered his bed-settee to produce two long, narrow mattresses, one twice as wide as the other. Rog used the wider of the pair as a base for his sleeping-bag, while I heaped blankets and such on to my long narrow bed (presumably they consider me to be a long, narrow person). It felt like a straitjacket, when I finally wriggled into the cocoon, but at least it was fairly comfortable.

At an unearthly hour in the middle of the night, I woke up with a premonition of disaster. Normal people pass through this limbo without a thought for the wonders of the wee hours - whether or not houses and roads and things are still here with no-one to see them (Thank you, Bob Shaw). However, normal people do not awake with feelings of doom in their hearts.

As I lay staring into space, awaiting the end of the world, I became aware that my bed was slowly tilting from the vertical. I could not move an inch, because of the blankets so tightly wrapped around me, and I lay helpless as slowly, with grace and a sort of grinding, crunching noise, the bed tipped over and I slid out on to the cold floor.

I have a dim memory of staggering to my feet, of switching on the light, and of cursing at the mess. I have faint recollections of dragging the broken carcass of the bed to one side, and of flinging it disgustedly up a corner. While I tried to make a

vaguely comfortable nest out of blankets and things, Rog Peyton snored peacefully on, his tranquillity only disturbed by the occasional belch and smell of onions.

The next morning the Mercers were torn between mirth at my troubles, and concern for their bed.

The Chinese restaurant we usually go to in Bristol is called the 'Lunar', situated half way up Park Street. It's recommended to the gourmets who will be descending upon Bristol for the '67 Con. This time we ordered what seemed a reasonably priced meal, and were disappointed to discover that it was a meal for three persons. We had some difficulty in splitting three bowls of rice and three egg rolls into four portions, but otherwise had about the right quantity, and enjoyed it immensely.

The only difficulty was the water. Now restaurants these days seem very reluctant to put water on the tables. I imagine they hope you'll be intimidated by the wine list they bring around, and will order something expensive when you're thirsty. So when ordering, we ordered water all round. The waiter brought the stuff with a sneer, no jug, just four glassfuls. Archie, being difficult, drank his in one swallow, like Rog does with beer. Then he ate part of his meal, and discovered he was thirsty again. The cast eyes at Beryl's ration then finally pinched it and drank the lot in one gulp. Meanwhile, hoarding my glassful like a desert-crossing Arab, I took tiny sip after tiny sip to try and last throughout the meal. It was no use, I couldn't do it, and I signalled the waiter again.

More water, please, I said. He gave us a wonderful sneer and came back with four more glassfuls. We went through the same pantomime, and ended up with eight empties on the table. Then Archie said he was still thirsty.

I imagined a vision of a table littered and piled high with mounds of dirty glasses, while a frantically-sneering waiter tried to keep up a shuttle service from the kitchen. I imagined all the other thirsty people in the restaurant having to drink wine through straws or out of saucers, looking resentfully at us and muttering. I thought we'd better leave. Funny people, the Chinese. I guess they never heard of jugs.

I sneered back at the Chinese waiter, as we left, and we went down the stairs to ground level, chatting about the food and this and that, in the complacent manner of gourmets. Then I mentioned how strange it was for all the Chinese to come over here and open restaurants. I reckoned that it would be a good idea to open up an English Restaurant in China. "You know?" I said, "I can just imagine all the hungry Chinese coming in, and looking at a foreign menu, and sort of ordering hopefully at random, like we do now. Then I would serve their orders of sausages with jam, and roast beef with custard, and would sneer at them and think, 'if only they knew!'"

After lunch we went along with the Walshes to have a look at the

Bristol Zoo. At the beginning of our tour, we came upon the snake house. There was quite a crowd in there, and an awful lot of scaled horrors of all shapes and sizes. Beryl whispered that the exhibit looked like a Con room-party, with all the inhabitants of the room squeezed on top of each other, and Archie answered loudly;

"I suppose the nearest we come to eating snakes is mock-turtle soup."

A little nervous-looking woman standing next to Archie gave him a most peculiar look before scuttling out of our vicinity. She followed Archie around at a safe distance for the rest of the day.

The same mood overtook Archie at the next cage, a bunch of crocodiles and alligators. It was really Archie's afternoon.

"Look at those 'gators" said Beryl.

"I wouldn't like gators around my legs" replied Archie.

"I wouldn't like to be a bishop, then," said Beryl brightly.

"Or even an Archbishop" he replied thoughtfully.

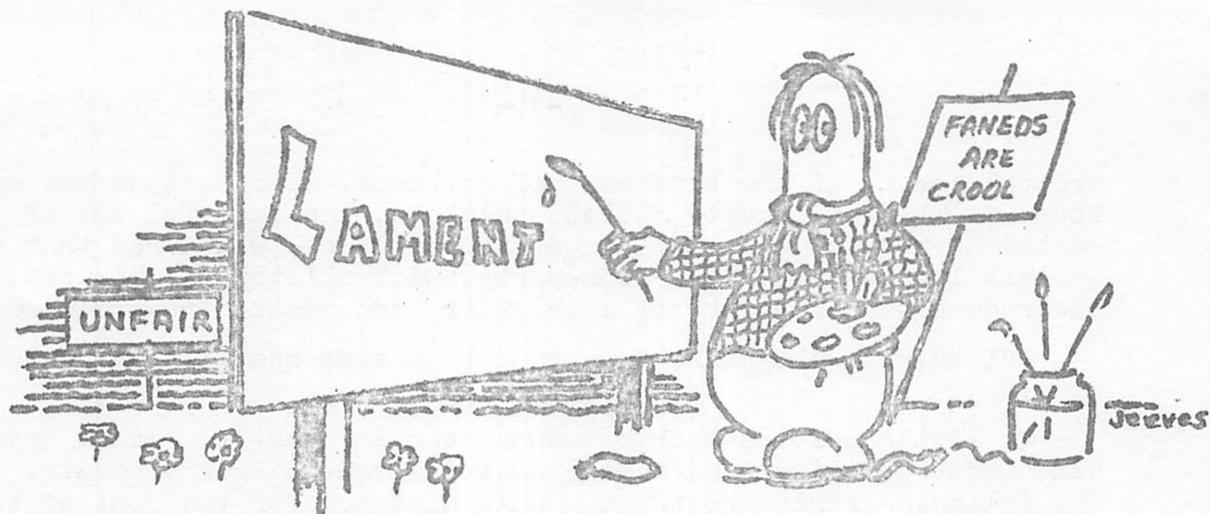
The Rhino enclosure was noted only for its strong smell. It was deserted, as was a small cage just down the path. We all stood around this enclosure, which was only a little wire box on top of a big boulder. Archie said deliberately,

"Ah look, a genuine European pebble, the only one in captivity"

The only other thing I remember vividly from the visit was the elephant enclosure. Elephants are wonderful beasts, I have always thought, so strong and huge yet so gentle and intelligent. They have very 'knowing' eyes, and you can't help but like them when they look at you out of their comically-ugly faces. But Tony had to spoil the peace of the moment, by sniffing and saying "Lend me your handbag, Beryl, I want some of that for my rhubarb!"

Then I began to freeze to death by degrees, wearing only a light summer suit. I persuaded everyone to go back to the Walshes', where we had some tea. As I was about to leave, Tony approached me with a couple of envelopes, and asked me if I had those addresses of Bristol fans that I'd earlier mentioned. Tony is almost too good to be true, for at some time during the crowded weekend he'd sat down and had written several very pleasant welcoming letters to be sent to the strangers.

And then we left gay Bristol, fannish mecca of the south-west, and hit the road back to grubby Brum.



In his lament, Martin Pitt dealt with the problem of the insensitive faned, who won't print your good stuff, but latches on to the droppings in the waste basket. Bad as this is, there are far worse demons in the tribe Fanedus Pizzicato - thuswise...

The first approach of the faned is all too often in the form of a little tick in a box on the back page of his fanzine... the box is labelled "Will you contribute artwork?" The less sophisticated faned just slips in a note saying "How about some artwork?" Rather like nipping down to the bookshop for six feet of hardcovers to fill an old shelf. SUCH FANEDS ARE NITS. Yes, I know this will make me some enemies, but it is high time somebody stood up to be counted in this fanart lark, and here's why. One looks at this request for 'artwork' - the immediate question is, "What sort?" ... comic, serious, cartoon or what? Fanednit didn't say. OK, so you peruse his zine and decide anything goes. Now comes the \$64 question. HOW is it to be reproduced... stencil obviously, 90% of the time, but how will it get on to the stencil? There are four basic ways, let's examine them.

1. The artist cuts the stencil himself. For hand-cut stencils, definitely the best way... if the artist knows how. If he's wanting to be a fanartist, he darned well ought to learn. However, a delicate point arises... who supplies the stencil? Obviously the faned ought to... does he heck. Not without a struggle. Once you have written back to the faned, coaxed a stencil out of him, and mailed it back, you are up the creek for an hour or so's work...plus two lots of postage. Big deal! The last time I was hooked on this one, I had to supply the stencil, and the artwork was acknowledged (itself a rare thing) and a stencil promised 'next time'. So I'm down the cost of that stencil. Method 1 has its drawbacks, obviously.

2. Someone on the editorial staff cuts this illo. He has never done the job before, his tool is a blunt nail, and the result looks like a spider tangoing with an ink bottle. I do not like method 2.

3. Method 3 involves someone on the editorial staff, who knows how to do the job, and does it well. Harry Turner, and Phil Harbottle are two names which spring to mind. I have no qualms about either of them cutting my drawings. A good system is number 3.

4. The electrostencil. Whereby if the faned can afford it, a stencil is cut electronically from your illo, and reproduces virtually anything you can draw. This is the top method.

Back to fanednit, and his plea for half a yard of artwork. Does he say which method is to be used? Does he heck! So either you write back and ask for details... which he seldom bothers to give, or you look at his zine and try to find out. Heh, heh. If the faned employs step 1, you can't tell, so you must assume he uses one of the other methods. If he uses step 2, you either send him your crud, or send nothing... which is why cruddy fanzines generally stay cruddy, at least in the art department. If step 3 is used, (Allah be praised) at least your artwork should get good treatment, and assuming the zine ONLY uses this method, then your troubles are minor. If the zine only uses step 4, you're in heaven. Sad to say, most zines combine 2 and 3 or 3 and 4, or even 2, 3 and 4. Which means you can't plan your artwork to suit the zine. Why turn out your best black and white work with delicate cross-hatching, if some clot is going to hack it with a rusty nail?

So, to fanednit the world over I would say, "Rephrase your request thusly,

Would you submit some artwork to be reproduced by..... sizes 3" high by 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide."

Fanedwise would also write in FULL details of HOW he proposed to get your illo on to stencil, and everyone would be happy.

Like heck they wouldn't. If I go to the trouble of supplying a faned with artwork (solicited by him) I expect at least a copy of the issue containing that artwork. Most faneds keep this bargain, but some (such as Joe Fekete, who I hope reads this) don't. For instance... eighteen months ago, Joe Fekete wrote asking for two story illos, 8" x 10" and to be given the very best reproduction by photo-offset. I spent about five hours on those two illos... plus 2/6 postage for them and the manuscript, to the States. Since then, not a damned thing, no reply to letters, nothing. Another example? I sent several dollops of artwork and written pieces (unsolicited this time) to Shangri l'Affaires over a period. They were never acknowledged, nor returned.

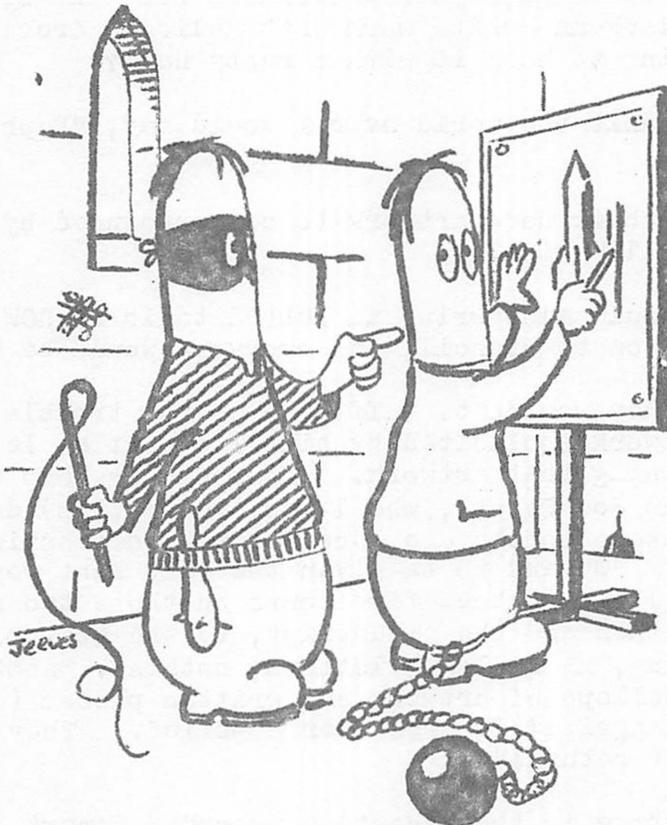
The final straw is the reception accorded fanart anyway. Look through the lettercol of almost any fanzine. Fan A haggles with Fan B over whether Ballard is battier than Bradbury, or trying to

prove that fandom has lost its way (did it ever have one?). How many people comment on the artwork?

Now, I like drawing, and I'm lucky enough to be able to make quite a tidy sum at it professionally in my spare time. So, if I devote say one hour to fan drawing, which I like, I'm blown if I see any reason for passing up my two or three guineas on the professional market, if the alternative is... a badly mutilated reproduction, in a tatty crudzine, and no other comment.

Nope, I'm NOT asking for lolly, I'm NOT getting bigheaded, but I would like to see a fair deal for ALL fanartists. Namely, a clear statement of requirement from the faned, a fair deal on the repro side... and if only the fans would do their bit too, a little more appreciation (or the reverse) in the lettercols.

Surely not too much to ask.



TRADITIONAL SPINGE FANARTIST

LES SPINGE

by KEN CHESLIN

When I was a young and enthusiastic fan, and the world was young and green, and a very beautiful place to be... at least in retrospect... I used to publish a general circulation fanzine by name LES SPINGE.

Ah, the old days... I considered myself unfortunate to have missed the hey-day of RETRIBUTION, but even in my day... says he, stroking his long grey beard, fen were fen and fanzines were still as unexpectedly alive as bombs (which they frequently resembled in content anyway). As I was burbling...

Back in those days I was very new, and right away, shattered by the impact of fanzine fandom rushed into print. I was much (yes child, much) madder then than now, in my sober old age, and used to go about saying and writing all sorts of queer things (no, no, queer strange) such as 'boDoiig!' or 'Sapristi!' or 'Spon!' and so on. Amongst these was a non-word, probably pinched from the Always-To-Be-Remembered-With-Awe-And-Deep-Affection-Goon Show, this was... SPINGE!

There were three of us then, Michael Kilvert, Pete Davies and me. Mike drew the first... er... "cover" of a Spinge, ever, and got dragged away from us into the army, from whence he sank for ever into Gafia. Pete, in that same issue, perpetrated the... the... well, he plagiarised a crud SF story, passing it on to me as original. I believed him, it was that bad.

Mike "Tripod" Kilvert, Peter "Tea" Davies (self-bestowed title after somehow winning a tea drinking contest at the Bruncon 1) and Ken "Spinge" Cheslin. Oh, how excruciating it all seems now.

Anyhow... to stretch a short story out... we went down to London for some fantastic reason... account in Spinge 1 I think... and in the course of conversation with fans at the Globe (blessed be its name) we were told that there had already been a fanzine called "Who Knows", the title we had selected for those hopes that resulted in Spinge. But, Ella Parker (yes, it's Ella you have to blame) said words to the effect that Spinge was a good enough title. Well, I guess it was. But we thought we would titivate it a bit. We thought of Le or Les. (Le Gruesome Zombie was in our thoughts at the time, and by Tucker, it was a tight fit I tell 'ee...ar,ar) We finally decided on Les and evolved a long, involved, and highly unlikely tale to tell about the title...it was supposed to be named after a fabulous Harrison-like local fan called Leslie P.Hinge. We worked out his family, job and background... but it never came to aught.

Ah, those were the days of Stourbridge Fandom. The SADO. (we were crazy on initials then). Many a time me and Pete have

walked three miles home from Tony's house at 2 o'clock in the morning. Those were the days of hectic doings. Crazy nights drinking Strong-bow (or a similar liquid) and playing 'Risk' or 'Galactic Trader'... Pete once lost three ships on one voyage, each worth 500,000 Credits - a record never equalled by any of us. Or we would sit and talk...ah, mighty talkers there were in those days. Tony would regale us with tales of his days at boarding school (some day those tales must be told) and we'd talk science-fiction and make brave new worlds. We even, on Tony's instigation, built ourselves a Hieronymous machine...(results also published in an early Spinge) and played around with that. And we started on a couple of tape plays... I've still got Tony's script for one lying around somewhere... into which we worked the Hieronymous Machine. The sound effects at this time, as well as later, in 1964, provided hours of fascinating research and sounds... all of Daphne's household equipment being tried (the vacuum cleaner was superb) and many things improvised... one of the best results we got was from the vacuum cleaner, a lot of tin trays, and a comb being plucked.

We had some fun with tin trays... they supplied a variety of gong notes which we utilized as an accompaniment to pseudo Russian and Chinese songs...my Yangtze Boating Song received, if I say so myself, a very gratifying reception. We even went mad one night and got a couple of rolls of paper... one red and one yellow, if I recall... and on these we "wrote""Chinese" characters interspersed with an occasional cryptic "subscription" or "fanzine". We wrapped these around a note of very low denomination...they might even have been fakes, a Yen I think... and mailed them out to half a dozen fanzine editors. We never found out what happened to them, I suppose the recipients were too dazed to react to them.

Ah, yes...

I only published six Spinges, y'know, the first six. The period under Dave Hale was the real "Golden Age". Better material, bigger zine, better layout, fantastic artists... ah, dear old Dick Schultz. Good old Dick. I don't think anybody really appreciates him. I don't know what I'd have done without him back then. Our first cover, as I've said, was drawn by Mike Kilvert, with some illos by me (shudder) and even then, we blundered...we had Ron Bennett run the magazine off for us, and sent him tatty little sixmo stencils...such was our inexperience... and Ron cut all the stencils again for us, bless his old elephant hide socks... but Dick, he did a lot for us - he's not as brilliant as the top fan artists, as he'd tell you himself. But he was willing and enthusiastic, and has drawn some stuff that has a native vigour of line that I find quite attractive... and we began corresponding. Many a ream he wrote me, and many have I sent to him, in the past. The covers and illos he's done. For my ompazines too, that one on WHIMTSIT 3, and scores of interiors. I've never been able to recompense him, for those services and for other things. We were quite good friends... maybe we might be again if I can ever get the energy to un-gaffiate.

Those were the days when Alan Rispin and Jhim Linwood were the epitome of the young fans... I remember visiting Irlam one time and

cooking breakfast at some ungodly hour for a dozen of slowly reviewing fans... the smell of cooking woke them. Ah, that must be the time when Alan had me paged over the public address at the railway station... I arrived on time (they do you know) but couldn't find Al, and wandered up and down... thinking all sorts of panicky thoughts... I had forgotten his address anyway... how he missed me- and vice versa - I don't know... but anyway I got called over the tannoy. I wondered what had happened... anyhow, it was OK. We had a look round Manchester; it was quiet... that day or the next was a Sunday. I think we must have been to the Shorrocks one night... the Saturday... I remember bodies all over the floors and stairs, and one or two in the bath, I think. Ah, you can't beat a Shorrocks party.

Ah, those were the days. . I wrote enthusiastic letters to fanzines, subbed to some, even tried writing... mad, far out fannish things... got one in Cactus, but can't remember ever having anything else printed... still, if it's any comfort, you don't have to do anything to get called a BNF, I never did anything except survive 4 or 5 years, and by that time even I seemed impressive to the neofans.

I enjoyed publishing Spinge... I never did much that I think is any good, but I had fun publishing, and that's enough for me... to see the drums go round, hear the drone and clack and hiss of paper as the sheets fly out.. the thrill of creation... and even when things go wrong, it's always good to look back on... like "you remember the trouble we had running off that illo on page 5?" and so on. And I enjoyed helping Dave to produce his versions, too. I suppose he might even have got a SKYRACK poll lead, or a Hugo, if we could have pubbed as often as we would have liked. It's grand to see Spinge revived.



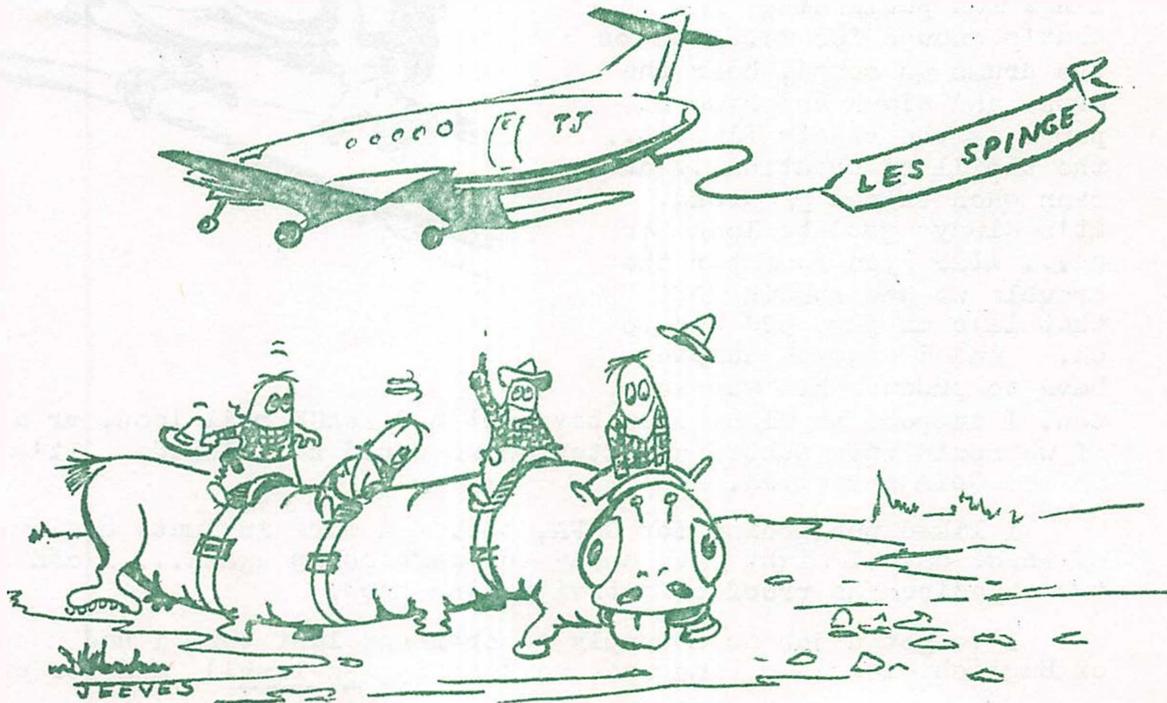
I liked publishing for OMPA, too. A more intimate medium. One of these days I might even apply for membership again... I can show two magazines as proof of activity, you know.

I've got a job as a supply teacher and last term I had a couple of English classes. (Imagine, me teaching English!) and for one of

the classes (2A) all about 12 or 13, I started a magazine. We called it 2A Zone, and it contains sundry items. Some fiction, some poems, a couple I like, and various articles on sport and pets, and accounts of school activities and trips. The Head and staff were impressed, but then, they don't know fandom. I wouldn't have sent the zines out generally or through OMPA. But mundania has different standards. It was New, Exciting, Original!!! for them. So I've been lumbered with the school mag.

Teaching is great. Exhausting, but great. I only wish I'd had the luck, sense, what have you, to have got into this years and years ago... it might have done me a lot of good. Mostly I try to teach History. This is a secondary school and they only let me at the first and second years. It's a bit frustrating sometimes. But I enjoy it mostly... I have amusing incidents happen, and er... interesting work submitted. One little girl last year drew me a lovely picture of a battle between Britons and Saxons... with swords floating away down the river... and another one I recollect with fondness, concerning the differences between the Normans and the Saxons was something like this: "The difference between the Normans and the Saxons was that the Saxons were very rude and used to go into battle shouting things." Neat.

As I said, I've got five History classes, and one English, this year (plus a period a week Technical Drawing, so help me). I have a first year bunch for English. I've learnt a bit since last term. I'm very soft-hearted, and the kids soon found out. THIS year, trusting
(++ continued on page 31. I did my sums wrong. ++)





T H E

A N V I L

C H O R U S

ROJE GILBERT
Cambridge

This fanzine is extremely bad. The main reason is that it did not print even one letter from Chelmsford fandom. Besides, not to print a LoC is a heinous crime and quite unforgivable.

(++ But some LoCs say nothing of interest, and others are merely full of egoboo for me, and who wants to read that ++)

Now the best way of killing wasps, Barbee, is to creep up on them while they are getting rid of their inhibitions on the window pane, and snip off their abdomens with a pair of size 2 dissecting scissors. They find it paralyzingly bad for them.

Who says fen are introverts? I'm not, as far as I know, nor is Barbee, nor is Mushling, nor is David Copping. At the Con, besides meeting Barbee (Barbara Hace) and Harry Bell, I got to know Rog Peyton, Steve Oakey, Trevor Hearnden, and many others, mainly on the last night of the Con. I don't understand why people don't like them.

(++ He's quite a name-dropper, this lad. Trouble is, they're all the wrong names...well, almost all. ++)

GRAHAM CHARNOCK
Wembley

Martin Pitt seems to suggest that artists have scruples and editors don't. This of course is sheer rubbish - nobody has scruples any more these days. He also suggests that editors have no taste - that's probably nearer the truth. Of course the whole piece rests on the premise that fan-artists (and fan-writers, for that matter) occasionally produce something worth publishing. Pull the other one...

(++ I disagree. I also have scruples ++)

MERY REED
Banbury

I wasn't so keen on the artwork thish. In fact, I think the cover would have been better without the man thereon. I did, however, like the unusual verdigris colour of ink used;; reminded me of liquorice whorls.

(++ the colour was the result of not cleaning the green ink off the screen properly before putting the black through. Looked all right in the end, though. ++)

Well, there'll be fen who stick to their own groups and those who try to make friends outside their groups - arguing about it won't alter fens' ways, so it's rather pointless, isn't it?

ARCHIE MERCER
Bristol

Overall, LS is showing its new colours. The justification of right-hand margins is a hell of a chore which makes virtually no difference to a 'zine's appearance. (Usually I don't even notice until I see comments on the matter in a subsequent lettercol). Your headings about which you solicit notice are neatish, but so far as I'm concerned simply typing them in is far easier all round.

(++ well, Archie, I don't agree about the justification. I think that it makes a vast difference to the appearance of the page, but as you say, it's a hell of a chore, and regretfully I've had to abandon it on the present occasion; maybe if I have the time when I'm doing LS18...)

(++ the next feller is talking about LS15, by the way ++)

ED COX
Arleta

Enjoyed Pete Weston's column. Actually, it sort of gave me an idea as to who he is other than the man behind ZENITH. In fact, who is Darroll Pardoe? In fact, ...well, other than a few of the longer time fans over there, I don't really know many fans over in Britain. Sort of a great gap in my fan experience in late years. I'm sure I've been missing a lot of Good Stuff since I do get to see some hint of what's been going on as I accrue more and more fanzines.

(+++ Darroll Pardoe is me, SPINGEditor, chemist, M, drinker of Guinness, and member of the great Diaspora, to wit, Stourbridge Fandom In The Wilderness ++)

Say, in SCOTTISCHE, Bangor was spelled Bangour. The hospital, anyway. I wonder if Bangor, Maine was named after the one in Ireland? (++ or after the one in Wales, look you? ++)

(++ and here comes the other member of the Dynamic Duo...++)

BERYL MERCER
Bristol

So Pete's gone true-blue has he? Well, I seem to xxxxx xxxxx (heck, I think I'm still drunk - went to Jim Groves' farewell party in London last weekend. Either that or me typewriter's been at the corflu again...) remember reading an article in PANTHEON (Burkhard Blum's OMPAZine) some time ago, by Rolf Gindorf, in which he purported to show that fannish and political interests are often very close. Personally, I can't for the life of me see what they have in common, since the Tories and the Socialists consistently (and often vitriolically) oppose each other, neither side being prepared to yield an inch to the other. And the Liberals disagree with everybody- even each other.

Now the viewpoints of fans may be diametrically opposed on any subject, but on the whole I find that they are usually willing to be tolerant about this, as per Voltaire (or whoever it was that dealt out that much quoted "I will never agree with what you say" etc)

In any case, both Burkhard and Rolf have now **given** the lie to the latter's theory, since both have given up fandom in favour of politics!

I sincerely hope that this doesn't mean we're to lose Pete eventually; quite apart from the sterling worth of ZENITH, his less formal writings in NEXUS are a pleasure to read, and have improved consistently.

Mike's article was quite interesting; it certainly bears out the theory (fascinatingly substantiated in Arthur Koestler's 'The Sleepwalkers') that every major discovery and invention is made by at least two people at approximately the same time. It's almost as if some 'force' operates to ensure that every discovery is made at its 'proper' time.

(++ I am doubtful about the truth of that idea. One would tend to ignore the discoveries made by one person only, and concentrate on the multiple ones. After all, the world is so full of a number of things; you couldn't examine ALL of them. ++)

HEATHER TIMMS
Alvechurch

That typewriter thing was informative; one of the things I've always wanted to know was who invented that abominable machine, but I've always been too lazy to go find out. Many thanks, Mike Ashley! By the way, who did invent carbon paper?

(++ well, Mike?)

Don't know that I appreciated the cover. Sorry, an' all that, but the little spaceman looks so lost and lonely all on his own. If something else had been put in his place, it'd have been very good.

(++ and there were lots of nice comments in the letter which count more as personal egoboo. And splendid handwriting, too. Thanks, Heather. ++)

HARRY WARNER
Hagerstown

I have never been mistaken by even the most material-hungry fanzine editor for an artist. But Martin Pitt's plaintive little article applies equally well to the poor fanzine article hack, if a few words here and there are chosen. The two pages you dashed off a half-hour after falling sound asleep one night win plaudits and praise, nobody recognizes that there were 79 really serious errors of fact in the article, and a typing mistake on the part of the editor which has altered completely the meaning of the climactic paragraph to make it contradictory to the remainder of the item. Yet the essay on which you spend three evenings of research, rewrite four times, and have checked by several friends for style and content receives only one mention in a LoC, from someone who says he would have read it if two pages hadn't been omitted from his copy. Martin fails, however, to mention a fate that fanzine artists suffer almost exclusively. How often have we seen a listing of art credits in which one or two little pictures are not credited to anyone, because the editor received them fourth-handed, and the artist didn't sign the sketches, and by the time they are printed,

the artist whoever he may have been has gaffiated and never sees his work in print nor learns of the reaction to it? I imagine that such mysteries are insoluble by any natural means and it pains me to think how badly we'll upset future indexers and compilers of statistics when fanzines are recognized in the mundane world as the source of all important contemporary wisdom and aesthetics.

Mike Ashley might have added to his article the due tribute to Gutenberg that is deserved by his courage in plunging right into fantasy at a time when nobody could be sure if it would sell in hardcover form. One other note about a pioneer he mentions; Mark Twain not only was an early friend of the typewriter, he also lost a fortune trying to finance the first linotype. He backed the wrong horse, but conceivably without the competition the practical linotypes might not have come into existence for a while longer, and the history of prozines and paperbacks might have changed.

(++, an intriguing thought. Why, fandom itself may never have come into existence, and I might be editing a magazine loosely based upon clog-dancing instead of sf, or worse still, no magazine at all ++)

++ The exigencies of space, and the number of people who wrote letters of less general interest mean that that's the end of the letter column for this issue. WEALSONHEARDFROM:

Tom Jones (Doncaster), Leland Sapiro (Saskatoon), Mike Ashley (Sittingbourne), Martin Pitt (Nottingham), Rob Wood (Shenfield), Arthur Hayes (Timmins, Ontario), Tom Milton (Huntington, W.V.), D. West (Bingley), Felice Rolf (Palo Alto, Calif.), Barbara Mace (Leeds. Thanks, Barbara), Brenda Piper (Bethnal Green), Terry Jeeves (Sheffield), Arnie Katz (Buffalo, N.Y.), John Muir (Manchester), David Copping (Chelmsford. Ta for egoboo), Tom Milton (again), Fred Hollander (Pasadena), Ann Ashe (Freeville, N.Y.), and Old Uncle Bilbo and All, and All, Old Uncle Bilbo and All. Thanks folks. I read them all, and appreciated them all.



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I've been truly overwhelmed with trades since the last SPINGE and I can't possibly hope to review them all here, so I've chosen four which I have various reasons for specially wanting to review, and I'll just mention the others I received at the end.

NIEMAS 17 (November 1966) comes from Ed Meskys and Felice Rolf, the British agent is Graham Hall. (57 Church Street, Tewkesbury, Glos.) Niemas is a truly resplendant fanzine, big, well-produced and crammed with goodies. They even have to print some parts in specially small typeface to get it all in. The best thing in this issue was the Glossary of Middle-Earth by Bob Foster, or rather, part of it (A-F). So far as I can see it seems to be comprehensive, and it will form an indispensable part of the library of every Tolkien student from now on. The page numbers are to the Ballantine edition, which makes for some confusion when I actually want to refer to the Trilogy from the glossary, but that's a minor quibble. I haven't seen the Ballantine version, so I don't know if it is a reprint of the first or of the second edition of 'The Downfall of the Lord of the Rings' but the point is an important one, since several new placenames have been introduced in the new edition. Maybe someone who has the PB version could check.

Another good article on this issue of NIEMAS is an article on the various translations of the 'Thousand and One Nights'; from this article I was astonished to learn of the extraordinary changes that stories from the book have undergone during the process of translation. The business of the translator should be to translate, not to 'improve' upon the original. The removal of the more overtly sexual passages from the tales is quite indefensible, and I agree with the author of the article that Burton's translation is the best available, since his principle was to change nothing, and to render the original faithfully into English. An admirable aim. I myself hold that no-one was ever corrupted by reading such a work, and to water down the translation is an act of dishonesty toward the reader. The 1001 Nights deals, in any case, essentially with normal sexuality and should form an instructive example to certain present-day authors, who seem to deal in nothing but extreme perversity.

COMPASS 1 (Winter 1966) is from Robert Wood (27 Rochford Avenue, Shenfield, Essex) and I suppose could be classed as a fanzine, though the sf connection is slight or non-existent. Like in SPINGE, perhaps. This first issue is in itself of mediocre quality, but I am reviewing it here because I think it promises well for the future. The main grouse I have with it is the usual first-issue one, bad duplication. Patchy inking, and a gallant but unsuccessful attempt to cut illos on to stencil. Cunning old Pardoe has avoided that by total electrostencilling of all illos, the only really satisfactory way of reproduction. But people WILL try...

The contents of the issue under examination are interesting and cover a wide range of topics, though all items are relatively short, and are mildly serious. An article on the Baha'i world faith appears, and I bet most folk won't ever have heard of the Baha'i world faith. So, get COMPASS and read about it. Me, I'm waiting for the second issue; I hope Rob doesn't get discouraged.

RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY comes from Leland Sapiro (Box 82, University Station, Saskatoon, Canada) and I am grateful for the whole stack of issues I was sent. The most recent is number 3, volume 2, dated November 1966. RQ is the stateside equivalent of ZENITH (sorry, Pete...SPECULATION) though I feel that they complement one another rather than compete. For serious writing about sf and fantasy, you can't beat these two. The issue under consideration has part 4 of Alexei Panshin's Heinlein book, and for myself the thing has suffered greatly from the fact that I've read it bit by bit, jumping about at random among the chapters as they appeared. Surely it's intended to be read from part 1 through to the end, and would seem more logical that way. Perhaps I should read it again, when all of it is available.

The 4th part of Barbara Floyd's analysis of 'The Once and Future King' by T.H.White appears in this issue, and I feel that she has been on the whole fair to White in her critique of the work, which I consider the best re-rendering of Malory yet, though nothing can compare to the beauty of the original 'Morte d'Arthur'. White's book does perhaps seem more real, full as it is of exquisite detail of mediaeval life, though perhaps the Arthurian legend shouldn't be made to be too real-seeming, or it loses much of its impact. Merlin's a fantastic character isn't he? And those of us who've been fortunate in knowing Cambridge can perhaps read a bit more into certain bits of the book than most people.

I have a minor quibble with the poems. York Minster is York Minster, not 'Yorkminster Cathedral'. Reverting to Cambridge for a moment, that's like saying 'Peterhouse College.' Not Done. But I did like the poems.

PHILE 3 (undated, but arrived in mid-February). Graham Charnock, (of 1 Eden Close, Alperton, Wembley, Middx.). PHILE was quite a promising fanzine for its first two issues, but the present offering sends it right back to square one. Duplication and layout are poorer than heretofore, and the contents are inferior, except maybe to the more rabid followers of Ballard. There is a nonsensical article on 'non-linear forms of fiction' by Charles Platt, who appears to think this (ie Ballard-type writing) actually SUPERIOR to the more normal forms of story-telling. Come off it, Platt. And come off it, Gray, you can do better than this - we know you can. Better next time, maybe?

The other TRADES I received are as follows:

*AUSTRALIAN SF REVIEW 4	John Bangsund, 19, Gladstone Avenue, Northcote N.16, Melbourne, Australia
COSIGN 4	Robert Gaines, 336 Olentangy Street, Columbus, Ohio, 43202, USA
CRABAPPLE 5	Mary Reed, 71, The Fairway, Banbury, Oxon, UK
ECLIPSE 2	David Copping, 121 Springfield Park Road, Chelmsford, Essex, UK
GRIMMAB 3	Harry Bell, 28 South Hill Road, Bensham, Gateshead 8, County Durham, UK.
HIPPOCAMPELEPHANTOCAMELOS 4,5	Fred Hollander, c/o Lloyd House, Caltech, Pasadena, California, USA. He doesn't give the ZipCode number.
HUGIN AND MUNIN 1	Richard Labonte, 971 Walkley Road, Ottawa 8, Ontario, Canada.
HO-EYED MONSTER 9	Norman Masters, 720 Bald Eagle Lake Road, Ortonville, Mich. 48462, USA
HOPE 3	Jay Kinney, 606 Wellner Road, Naperville, Ill. 60540, USA
PROTEUS 3	Tom Jones, 27 Lansbury Avenue, Ross- ington, Doncaster, Yorks, UK.
SATYR 3	John Berry, 35 Dusenberry Road, Bronx- ville, New York 10708, USA.
*THE SCARR 111	George Charters, 3 Lancaster Avenue, Bangor, N.I., UK.
STARLING 8	Hank Luttrell, Route 13, 2936 Barrett Station Road, Kirkwood, Missouri, 63122, USA.
TRUMPET 4	Tom Reamy, (British Agent, Des Squire, 24 Riggindale Road, London SW16)
THE TWILIGHT ZONE 20	Leslie Turek, 56 Linnaean Street, Cambridge, Mass. 02138, USA.
*APPALLING STORIES 19	
THE VILLAGE IDIOT 3	Paul Shingleton Jr., 874 South Walnut Street, St Albans, W.V. 25177, USA.
XERON 5	Mike Ashley, 8 Shurland Avenue, Sittingbourne, Kent, UK.
*YANDRO 163, 165	The Coulsons, Route 3, Hartford City, Indiana 47348, USA.

and one I forgot:

MEMESIS 2

Roje Gilbert, 92 St Fabians Drive, Chelms-
ford, Essex, UK.

WAR TEARS by Jim Grant

What is the false glory of the day,

When mother's tears

Shall spread the globe...

"My son, he's gone to fight the wars

"Away,

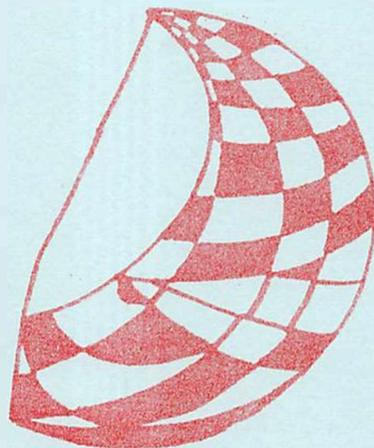
"Perhaps he's even dead,

"My husband has gone to bomb

"The country of another mother's son

"Who now shall buy my bread?"

Jim Grant; Sept. 1966



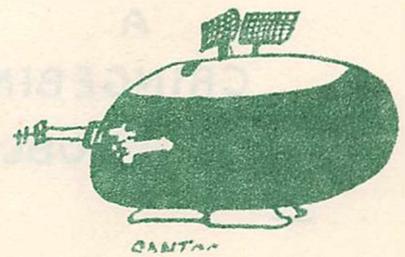
(++ continued from page 22 ++)

to the fact that I was an unknown quantity to the new children, I resolved to keep better control of my classes by pretending to be fierce, and to an extent it has worked. They do some quite good work, most of them. Today for instance I got them acting MY version of Julius Caesar. They did from the Soothsayers' warning, Calpurnias' dream, through to the actual assassination. One of the boys was late turning up for class, so I had him murdered twice by five very enthusiastic little girls. Great fun..."So perish all tyrants... get off me foot" "You, too, Brutus, wait till it's my turn" and so on. He died quite convincingly. Ah well, press on, another day tomorrow.

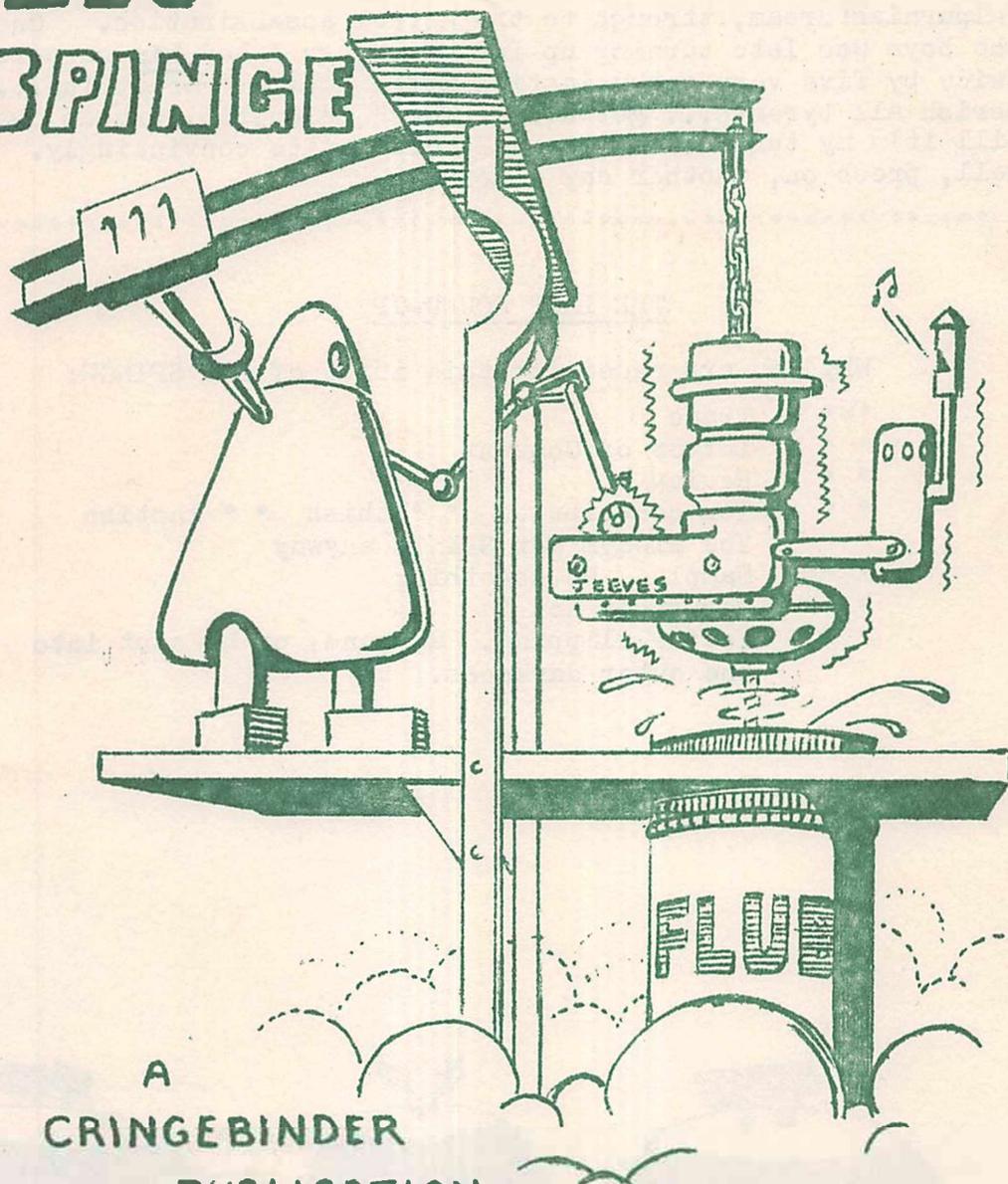
THE LAST ROUND-UP

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