

NEOLITHIC

Borogove in orbit

No. 14, February, 1961

"I'm not rebellious, just wilful."

Neolithic is a bimonthly mag, going to people who send articles, write letters of comments, trade, or subscribe. Subscribers get numbers after their names on the address. The number is the number of the last issue their sub is to bring. People who trade (and a few who can't get off the mailing-list no matter what they do, because they are overweeningly noble) get Neol almost indefinitely. Writers are supposed to write every other issue (in the idiomatic, not the literal, White Queen sense of "every other"). Last issue without response____. If that space is checked, you are a letter-writer (or article-writer) from whom I have not heard for five or six months. People who sub and write get a few issues with no number on their name, and count as letter-writers, and then get their numbered issues unfailingly. The subs are two issues for 25¢ or ten issues for \$1. Neol comes from the basement of Ruth Berman at 5620 Edgewater Boulevard, Minneapolis 17, Minnesota.

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Jolly St. Valentine's Day!

Honest, Happy Washington's Birthday!

Even Honester, Happy Lincoln's Birthday!

Pleasant Purim!

I'll reach you in time for one of them!

EDITROOLINGS: on the art of reading while doing something else

The deepest pleasure in reading is not always to be found in settling down to spend an evening simply reading. For example, a book is almost always pleasanter if one eats while reading it, and sometimes a book may be pleasanter still if one reads it while eating a meal. There is, however, an art to reading while doing.

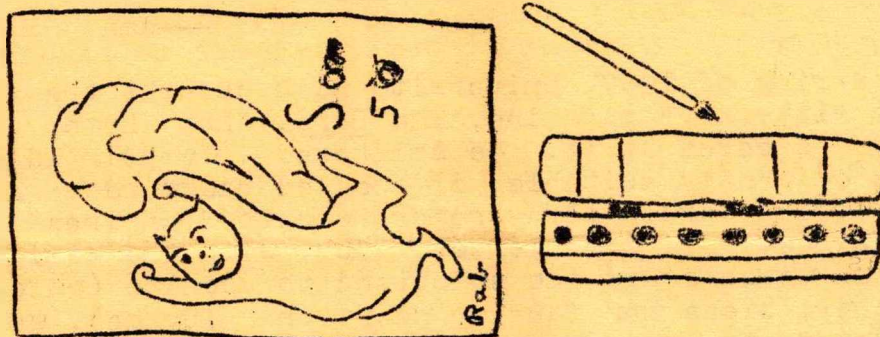
In the first place, the book must be carefully suited to the action. As, Morley said, one "still finds Sherlock Holmes the perfect bathroom reading." Non-fiction books and poetry, by and large, are not suitable for reading while doing, and neither are the heaviest classics; they require too much concentration. Thick, bulky books are invariably excluded, because they are too hard to handle. The exciting book one is reading for the first time is not really suitable for reading while doing, since it may pull one's thoughts away from the action entirely. To be sure, one may have to take the new book along to the table or the bathtub simply because it is too exciting to put down, but it is better to leave it behind.

The very best book for reading while doing is the familiar, loved one. It should be a book one has not re-read recently, so that one may have the pleasure of re-discovering forgotten pleasures. Let the book one reads at table or in the bathtub be much loved, yet long neglected, and the pleasure will be greatest—provided the copy is not valuable. It is not just that valuable books may be soiled; the fear that they may be soiled destroys the pleasure.

In the second place, the action must be suited to the reading. It is obviously impossible to read at table if one is eating lobster. Actions which need to be overseen by the brain make reading impossible, and so do actions which cry out to be savored by the mind. Eating lobster falls into both categories. Yet the action must be pleasurable. A dull or painful task, such as waiting for a bus, may be lightened by reading, but the deepest pleasures will be canceled.

A pleasant, undemanding action and a familiar, much loved book make the pleasantest reading. For the book, almost anything will do, mysteries, fantasies, short stories, what you will. Of actions, the two most suitable are bathing and eating. I have found a third which, though limited in application, is sometimes even more pleasant. It is to read while coloring the pictures. It is rather sinful. Nathan Bengis once wrote an article on book collecting in which he said that one should not mark a book at all, except perhaps to put a dignified bookplate on the flyleaf. Mr. Bengis certainly would not approve of coloring the illustrations, yet in doing so, one gets the pleasure of re-reading as one

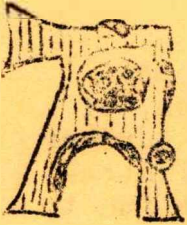
goes along and of making the book more beautiful. It may not be more beautiful, but it will always seem so. This action, of course, is limited to books with pictures. Usually it is further limited to children's books, since these have the most illustrations and are easiest to color. The Oz books are the most fun to color, though the Mary Poppins books are more delicate. It is also possible to color fanzines. Atom and Bjo illoes are easiest.



Do you recall the story I was asking about in NeoL 8 of the man who landed on a planet of colored lights? It's found! Fred Galvin discovered it. It's quite an elusive story. He told me that a few months before he had remembered the story and hunted all over to find it. He did find it then, but couldn't remember what it was. However, he took his hard hat and light, went through his collection again, and found it. It's a story by Jack Vance in The Startling Story Anthology, edited by Samuel Mines.

"I hear of Sherlock everywhere," and the diversity of the sources is amazing. One expects the Baker Street Irregulars to do things in the month of January, since twelfth night is Holmes's birthday, so I was not much surprised when Dean McDiarmid, the Sigerson of the Norwegian Explorers called a meeting January 26. I was rather surprised at the diversity of people who attended the meeting. The NE being the organization it is, it was not very surprising that a large number of deans and faculty members from the University came, but it did seem odd to meet people from the University radio station and the University theater there.

Basil Rathbone came to Minneapolis last month to give a program of poetry readings, and very well he gave them. The selections included Vincent Starrett's "221-B," and I think Rathbone read that one best. Of course, I'm prejudiced. And the January issue of Fantastic has a story by Arthur Forges called "Dr. Blackadder's Clients." One of the doctor's clients killed his wife because she tore up his first edition of A Study In Scarlet. Another of the clients is a BSI who wishes to read the shocking affair of the Dutch steamer, Friesland. Alfred Hitchcock's Mystery Magazine for February has a Solar Pons story, and Superboy of March has (quick, Watson, the brandy!) a letter suggesting a story in which Superboy inspires the first Holmes story. Gulp.



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publishing fan, name of Ruth,
Cried "Heavens and Hades, forsooth!
Are Karg and ea
Around me to stay?"
(From here on her words are uncouth.)

—caa

In the spring of 1957, University High brought the first issue of its "literary" magazine, The Bard. Ron Whyte, Eleanor Arnason, and I sneered at it. We snickered. We pointed out that its name was eminently suitable, if spelled backwards. At the same time, I was coming across stray references to "fanzines" in science fiction magazines. So, in November, 1957, with the timid blessing of our English teacher and the school ditto machine (which the English teacher, bless her fannish heart, ran for us), we three and another student, Barry Hansen, put out a fanzine. We knew no fans, so it was passed out only to friends and relatives, and we did it mainly to show the Bard staff what a literary magazine should be. Thank heavens we didn't take ourselves completely seriously! We were better than the Bard, but— Anyway, the four of us put out a fanzine called WHAB (from our initials), but none of us was willing to be editor-in-chief. So we made up George Karg. He got to have quite a personality, did George. He was mainly eaa's creation, and towards the end eaa and Karg began to seem equally real. Certainly they're equally likely. Or unlikely, as the case may be.

In the spring of 1958, we put out a second issue. Barry had stopped working on it because he didn't have enough time, and we changed the name to ALL MIMSY, but continued the numbering. The third issue came out nicely, but when it came to the fourth issue, it happened that Rowhy and eaa were out of town, and I was left with the publishing. Somehow, I'd never gotten a copy of AM3. The fourth issue of the magazine is also labeled AM3. Life went on. The fifth issue, AM 4 came out on the ditto machine of KUOM, the University radio station because we'd been kicked out of the school ditto. AM5 came out part on the KUOM ditto and part on an aged monster with teeth instead of a clamp hidden down in U. High's Shop department. And AM6 came from the basement here. It was fun doing, and I thank whatever gods there be ~~for my~~ ~~for my~~ that few of those early numbers are floating around fandom.

—RB

I asked eaa about Redd Begg's remark concerning her incomplete digestion of minor Victorian poets. Her reply was: "I never read any. Unless you class Tennyson?..." walks like a publisher. "We don't," describing the adaptation. said "The story is still. She thought a moment. "Of course," she said, "I may be a minor Victorian poet. And not know it." She laughed two or three times over the rhyme and departed.

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN
by Mike Deckinger

"It could have been a good fanzine," Steve said to me. He said it with his eyes as well as his mouth. He looked at me, and even had he not spoken, I could have told how he felt.

"Yes," I answered slowly, keeping my gaze at the floor, "it could have been a very good fanzine."

Steve got up and went over to a window. I could feel the anger and frustration I knew he was experiencing as if it were a tangible thing. He lifted the shade ponderously and peered out. He looked around slowly, not really searching for any specific thing.

"There have been good fanzines before." He talked without looking at me. "I wanted to put out a good fanzine now. I tried, I tried, and I would have succeeded." He carefully released the shade and walked back to a chair. He regarded it for a moment and then sank into it. He leaned back and shut his eyes.

"Don't feel bad," I began, "you mustn't feel this way. It isn't your fault."

"No." He leaped up and his eyes were alive with fire. "No, it isn't my fault, so tell them. Tell all of them it isn't my fault. Tell the whole goddamn world it isn't my fault and see what good that will do. See if they look at you with any more respect. Tell them."

"Now calm down," I eased lightly, "getting mad won't solve anything."

"It makes me feel better."

"Not really. You may think you feel better, but deep down inside you, getting mad only makes it worse. What you've got to do is change your opinion, channel your energy into something useful, not release it like a firecracker on the fourth of July."

"Some things I can't do," he said wearily, "Some things I just can't do no matter how I try, and, believe me, I try. I tried hard in a lot of things, and some I accomplished, and some I didn't. But the ones I didn't, at least I failed with some dignity, with some meaning I could use as consolation. It's very bad to hate something and not be able to do anything about it, except continue hating."

"Do you really hate?" I asked.

"Don't I? Don't I hate what I am supposed to hate? Are men so fallible that they can dismiss injury and personal dislike?"

"Are we? Are we?"

"I guess not."

"You're damn right you guess not. What's left for us?" He stood up and went over to a table. He picked up a fanzine and began to leaf through it in an irritated, hateful manner. He was not looking for anything, he just wanted something to do, like leafing through a fanzine.

I got up and walked over to him. Perhaps I shouldn't have. Perhaps I should have stayed in my chair and not bothered with him until the poison that filled his mind was gradually drained away and replaced by common sense. In time, he'd have forgotten his utter hatred and the thought of the fanzine that might have been. He'd have devoted more time to a healthy, meaningful fanatic. But now his hatred dominated him completely.

I clasped him on the shoulder in a gesture meaning friendship, but he pulled away from me as if my hand were a live coal. "Stop it!" he cried, "stop trying to get me to forget it, to shrug all this away because you feel I should forget it."

"Shouldn't you?"

"I will. If I should, I will, and I won't need any help. That's the trouble with this blasted world. Too many people don't know when to mind their own business. Too many people don't know when they're not wanted. They're not wanted plenty of the time, more than they know. It's just that the others are too damned kind to tell them so."

"Are they?"

"Yes, yes they are. We all are."

I walked away from him. He continued to leaf through the fanzine, and I could see my stay was accomplishing nothing. Perhaps I should never have come in the first place. It might have been the best thing, I thought. I was in no hurry to leave, but I could not stay if he didn't want me to. I approached the door and turned the knob.

"It could have been a good fanzine, couldn't it?" he said softly.

"One of the best," I said, "one of the best."

EXPRESSIVE GLANCES
Ruth Berman

And so, a review column. This is to be a rather capricious column. I shall not cover the whole field. I don't read the whole field of stf. Neither do all the stories I read interest or infuriate me enough to comment.

A new book by Poul Anderson has come out. It is Twilight World, distributed by Dodd, Mead & Company but published as "A Torquil Book," copyright 1961. The book is not well put together. A little under half the book is taken up with two sections, "Prologue" and "Chain of Logic." Both of these are prologues to the main story, "Children of Fortune," but only one character from the "Children of Fortune" appears in the earlier part of the book, and there he appears as a child. It is a little hard to leave Hugh Drummond of the "Prologue" and Roderick Wayne of "Chain of Logic" to follow the grown-up Alaric Wayne and his band of mutants. The effort is worthwhile. Alaric Wayne is the most living character in the book. The characters in the earlier sections are left behind too quickly to establish themselves well in my mind as people (or as GOOD CHARACTERIZATIONS, in the fine critic's cliché), and the other characters in "Children of Fortune" seem rather stiff next to Alaric Wayne, but Alaric is very convincing. He is also convincing as a mutant, which is usual with Anderson. One of the mutants who should be well characterized, Jim Collingwood (through whose eyes "Children of Fortune" is told, though the story is still in third-person), doesn't come off for my taste, because he seems to me like a caricature of Andy Griffith.

The plot is not strikingly original: people rebuilding after an atomic war, many mutations, the mutations finally becoming the race of man. Ideas-to-chew-on are not so much provided by the conflicts between human and mutant, as by the ponderings of the mutants, comparing themselves with the humans and each other. I wish the book could be re-written to tell more of Alaric Wayne and less of "Prologue" and "Chain of Logic." I like Alaric Wayne--and he is stuck in my head as one of the Characters-I-will-remember-whether-I-like-it-or-not.

The February ANALOG has the the conclusion of the latest Kenneth Malone story, "Occasion for Disaster," by "Mark Phillips." I like it. Except the last line, which is built up as a gag-line but isn't very funny. The thing has a silly plot. Too much teleporting all over the place, too many big crowds, too many characters thrown in and out of the story, it's too hard to keep straight just what is going on in the story. Yet the Malone stories have a sort of charm. I used to think it was "Queen

Elizabeth" who made me like them, but she doesn't play a very large part in "Occasion for Disaster," so I suppose it's Malone who provides most of the interest.

The same issue has a story called "The Plague" by Teddy Keller which infuriates me. Of course, it could have been coincidence, but...here's A. A. Milne in "The Watson Touch":

There was a time when I began to write a detective story for myself. My murder, I thought, was rather cleverly carried out. The villain sent a letter to his victim, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope for an answer. The gum of the envelope was poisoned...I picked up a magazine in the Mess one day and began to read a detective story. It was a very baffling one, and I really didn't see how the murderer could possibly have committed his foul deed. But the detective was on to it at once. He searched the wastepaper basket, and, picking an envelope therefrom, said "Ha!" It was just about then that I said "Ha!" too, and also other things, for my half-finished story was now useless.

And assumming it was Heard's Reply Paid that Milne had just read, there is also a short story I read somewhere about a disgruntled mystery writer whose mysteries were never accepted who killed several editors by sending them poisoned return-envelopes. I think it was in EQMM. Anyhow, it was when the pretty girl who'd just fallen ill said she'd written to her mother that day that I said "Ha!" too.

The February issue of F&SF has another of Robert Young's stories about a woman who should be the savior of the hero, but is not. This theme was interesting the first time round, but now I'm tired of it. Let's see, there was the one in Fantastic about the world ruled by scientists in which the girl couldn't be the man's savior, but she was willing to marry him and perhaps their children could help re-build the world (Her name was Mary and his name was Joseph), and the one about the man in love with a mountain shaped like a woman, and the one about a man in love with the dryad of the tree he was cutting down, and the one about the man who was in love with a robot school-marm (those three were in F&SF), and perhaps some more that I've missed. The only story by Robert F. Young I've seen that seemed really good was, I believe, his earliest, "Emily and the Bards" which departed from his now-usual theme. In that story, the lady saved herself and also convinced me that she was so likable that it was worth my time to be interested in whether she was saved or not. I wish Robert F. Young would write about something else. He writes so beautifully, and most of his stories are so dull.

The same issue of F&SF (February, if you weren't listening the last page but the paragraph there) has a peculiar story by Marcel Ayme called "The Ubiquitous Wife." It strikes me as a wonderful story, yet I suspect that a good many people will feel it's too cute. Even as it is, it edges over to that thin line where I stop using "whimsical" as a compliment and use it as an insult. It's the sort of story to which Wilde's preface to Dorian Gray applies:

All art is at once surface and symbol.
Those who go beneath the surface do so at their peril.
Those who read the symbol do so at their peril.

I should love to spend several hours some day analyzing this story (preferably in the original French so that I could get extra credit in French class). I suspect that I should go daffy reading the symbols of this story of the sin and repentance of a sweet little lady with 56,000 bodies, but I would find out a lot--about myself, mostly.

The January issue of F&SF has a story by Robert F. Young which is, if not Young at his best, at least Young having fun. "Hopsoil" is a fine parody of a Martian sf writer somewhat like our own Ray Bradbury, and Mr. Young is to be commended on his fine translation. I wonder if Mr. Young has a Martian-language class, and if he got extra credit for his translation. I'm sorry to say that Robert Mill's ungrammatical introduction to Foul Anderson's "Time Lag" is a good description of it. He might at least have said "H e r e i s a new demonstration of Foul Anderson's particular mastery of the battle tale...[etc]" instead of "A new demonstration...[etc]."

F&SF seems to be going in for poems as well as Feghootisms. The January issue has a poem by Lewis Turco, "A Great Grey Fantasy." It's free verse, spread in an appealing pattern over two pages, and it reads like bitter man's Bradbury. Mainly it reads this way because all the images seem to have come straight out of "The Pedestrian" and "The Exiles." Of course, the February issue didn't have any poems, but the December issue had "Infinity" by Rosser Reeves. It seemed good to me, but it suffered the usual fault of sf-by-outsiders. Not only was the main idea well-worn; I've come across most of the images (including the one which should be the poem's climax, "Somewhere Christ hangs upon a hill in Calvary.") in sf stories.

And that is the end of my little coups d'oeil for these two months. Except to note that all sorts nice things are appearing in paper-back. A Canticle for Leibowitz is now out in a thirty-five cent (splits down the middle as soon as it gets an eyetrack) edition, John Collier's Fancies and Goodnights is out as a seventy-five cent Bantam classic, and Avalon (bless its heart) has put "Wall of Serpents," last of the Harold Shea adventures, into book form.

CLAY TABLETS

from RON WHYTE, undated
West 421 Cascade Way, Spokane 53, Washington

The new Neo is grand, but I must admit to loathing people who mutter things about 'Every author must go through this stage, I suppose'. It may all very well be true, especially the progression of sequences in plot technique and handling, but it is undeniably irritating. Just as some hideous female at the Library today intimated that Tarzan was just as third rate as the Hardy boys (Minor explosion hastily followed from Ron), and her only counter to the attack was "You'll think differently tomorrow," and a too sophisticated nod of her head. I don't know. I still feel tarzan has charm, just as the Mars books do in sections, and a really well edited collection of Edgar Rice Burroughs would perhaps help to wade and weed out the better than average writing in his slop. If no one gets around to it in the next ten years, I shall. I promise. (Cross my heart and hope to use proper grammar).

you cannot fathom how pleased I am about the borogove bit. More people seem to be dropping their cookies over it. Yuck. Even dale got caught in the trap, and after hastily plumageing [plumageing?—RB] through her copy of Alice, muttered something about Borogrove being the only Proper way to write the word, which is as good an excuse as any.

from DOC WEIR, 20th December, 1960
Primrose Cottage, Westonbirt Village, Nr. Tetbury, Glos., England

I have to start by thanking you for the last number of ALL MIMSY, and the temporarily reduced NEOLITHIC [#12]. The contents of the former were all good, but why E. A. Arnason thought an androgyne gherkinosaurus appropriate to the cover passes my understanding! [Mine, too, put that way—RB] I was interested in the borogrove versus borogove discovery; you're not the only one, since I also had always read the last syllable as "grove" — I wonder whether it was the bush-like appearance of the bird in the famous Tenniel illustration that led us unconsciously to associate "grove" with it.

I don't know whether you read Science Fiction at all (after all, Conan Doyle wrote a good deal of very good S-F) but if you do, have you ever tried to get hold of the British S-F magazine NEW WORLDS, which is now being distributed in the U.S.A., or its bedfellow, published by the same people, SCIENCE FANTASY? I would really like to hear the candid opinion of a U.S. citizen on them — best of all, if they'd criticize every issue month by month for a year. Do you know anyone who would "oblige"? [No, but if someone will, I'll publish it here, two months at a time, and be honored to do so—RB]

from FRED GALVIN, January 2½, 1961
840 Algonquin, St. Paul 19, Minnesota

Why The Neolithic? For some reason, when you say THE neolithic, it leads me to expect another word, the neolithic something. [Others have brought up this bit of pilpul. Are you all pleased now?—RB] I seem to recall reading something in The Annotated Alice to the effect that borogoves don't have any wings. [Borogoves don't orbit, either—RB]

I tried to figure out if you met more cats or people in "and back again" but I lost count. I wonder what kind of stories you tell your cousin's children. Van Vogt? Heinlein? Bradbury? Holmes? [Poo-noo and the Dragons—RB] This was interesting. So was "radio diatribe". Speaking of radio, did you see "Conjure Wife" on tv this summer? Also like "Alfred". ??? I thought you said Eleanor Arnason was real and George Karg was imaginary, now here it says they are both imaginary. What gives??? [Jon Arnason gives, and, though real, he's of a Kargish humour—RB]

Now why in hell did you go and print that letter of mine are you trying to make everybody think im an idiot? Ech. Gaak. Now everyone who reads Neolithic knows that I read True Romance magazines, have goofy ideas about politics, and don't even know how to spell borogove. Oh well. I hope no one I know reads it. Have to be more careful what I write from now on. Wipe that sense of wonder off your face? I like that! [And now they'll all know that you can't punctuate, either. I guess "from now on" was to be the limit of an exclusive function $t_1 < f(x) < \infty$, yes?—RB]

from MARIAN ZIMMER BRADLEY, January 3, 1961
Box 158, Rochester, Texas

My kid brother lent me a copy of THE HOBBIT over Christmas holidays, and I read it aloud to Steve and I am LOST, LOST, LOST... dammit. I didn't WANT to become a Tolkien fan. I wanted to be Different. I hate whimsy! But, alas, I have succumbed; I am utterly lost. It started out by reminding me of THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS, which was the thin end of the wedge; by the time we got halfway through we were saying solemnly to my bearded husband "May your beard never grow thin," and breaking each other up by inquiring solemnly "What has it got in its nasty little pock-etses?" —to which he broke us all up by replying in a hissing voice "Holeses."

from BRUCE PELZ, 4 January, 1961
2790 West 8th Street, Los Angeles 5, California

Anguished moan that I had to get stuck on the Southern return route from Pitt. Plague. Fox. Pfuipfuipfui. [By the way, through you're right about my having a falsetto ("What's really bad is

when he starts singing 'Poor Wandering One'...Dickensheet), I don't have a bass — it's a baritenor. Sure wish I'd been able to use it on G&S duets and trios.] [Bruce, since when do you have a typer with brackets on it?—RB] I remember a few of your quotes from Pitt — ifun.

from ELEANOR ARNASON, January 16, 1961
Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania

I've found a mention of S. H. in the Once and Future King, though I'm not sure it's the one I was thinking about when I talked to you. It's in Chapter 17 of the first book, page 157 of the pocket book edition: "Merlyn put his fingers together like Sherlock Holmes..."

I've been reading Fandora's Box in back editions of Imagination, and The Urge To Publish is beginning to grow within. I'll have to ask the parents for a second-hand mimeo for next Christmas, or start looking for one myself.

The more I think of the fan, the better I like the whole lot. They're amorphous enough to include almost everyone who likes publishing or contributing to publications in an amateur way, and who likes any 'imaginative' fiction. That makes for variety and zaniness, both very A-I qualities for people. They are also amateur, which is great, especially today when almost everything gets the slick, professional treatment. It makes for (with hideous exceptions: a lesson to us all) a casual, humorous approach. I'm generalizing too much. Anyway: I approve. All very vorch.

from NORM METCALF, 22 January, 1961
Box 1262, Tyndall AFB, Florida

To object to a few minor errors in your con report: I reached Leman's five hours before the Caravan. Wend-Over should be Wendover. But I like this version better because it's longer. [It could be worse. I have Hawlins spelled three different ways in my notes, none of them right, and it wasn't till I got home and scoured through fanzines looking for Leman's address that I found out how to spell it—RB]

Dick Ellington's address is now P.O. Box 310, Canyon, Contra Costa County, California [Ghu! what alliteration!—RB] (not too far from Orinda).

Concerning Ellison's stories, one of my favorite quotes comes via Don A. Thompson.

"Have you read Ellison's last story?"

"By God, I certainly hope so!"

from DEAN DICKENSHEET, 24 January 1961
348 North Ogden Drive, Los Angeles 36, California

The Cult is going to the L. A. County Museum this weekend, accompanied by the ~~insufferable~~ ineffable Paul Stanbery. Shirley and I will transport, then ditch them to attend an exhibit of Arte Nouvea.

Re Ted Johnstone's article on radio, first, television has the same disadvantage in dramatic presentation as do "Classics Illustrated": prepackaged, preformed, predigested ideas. Oz, Shangri-La, Fairyland, Mars, Alpha Centauri, Lilliput, Atlantis or Middle Earth can be presented to the complete satisfaction of many more people with voice, sound effects, and a theriman. Everyone has his own concept of a favourite character, story, or setting, and rebels at having someone else's concept (with allowances for technical, budget, clearance and sponsor problems) ramrodded into his consciousness. Second is flexibility and scope. On radio no story has ever been warped because of the difficulty involved in filming action at the bottom of the Caribbean Sea, the brink of the Reichenback Falls, or the Crater of Copernicus. The last factor is cost. If I may use an example close to my heart; the radio series "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes" ran for ten years at a production cost which (exclusive of time charges and salaries) could not have been too much greater than that of the 39 films in Sheldon Reynolds TV series. Television should concentrate on programming of a visual nature, and allow a return to dramatic radio and the exercise of the imagination. [I get the feeling that a rather telling point was made against television during the production of Mary Martin's Peter Pan last December. TV Guide (the magazine that walks like a publisher's blurb), describing the adaptation, said "The story is still James M. Barrie's fantasy..." Underlining mine—RB]

from ADRIENNE MARTINE, January 30, 1961
3 Fairmont Hall, Redlands University, Redlands, California

I enjoyed Neol. The Hibbit II with its galaxy of cats was quite charming. I spent Wednesday and Thursday with the Dickensheets and met Ted Johnstone, who is quite charming. I shall be seeing more of these people, I suspect. Dean says he's going to protect me from becoming a fan because "I'm too nice a person." I don't know whether he is protecting me from fandom or t'other way round.

from JUSTIN SCHILLER, January 24, 1961
2038 East 64 Street, Brooklyn 34, New York

Mr. MacFall has just brought the Baum Biography to Heilly & Lee, so it should be published in late spring. By the way, we [the Oz Club] are having our first official Convention this summer (c. September 14th) at Harry Baum's Oz Lodge, right out of Chicago.

from KEN CHESLIN, February 1, 1961
18, New Farm Road, Stourbridge, Worcs., England

Ruth, Ruth? hmm, now what does that remind me of?...I seem to have a dim recollection of a Biblical Ruth, and something about a well.....and then of course there's the Ruth, called Nancy, from the Arthur Ransome books....

Sayyy, have you ever read the Arthur Ransome books? [Not yet. Those and E. Nesbit's minor books are ones I hope to eye-track soon—RB] Pigeon Post, We Didn't Mean To Go To Sea, and more. They're all children's books, slanted for, well, say the 10 to 14 year olds. I read them all a long time ago, but I still remember them and feel (wait till I get the dictionary) nostalgic about them...I bought a couple of them for my senior niece's last birthday...because I'd enjoyed them so. I had a look thru' them again before I passed them on...the same old sense of wonder, tho' mayhap a little tempered with regret and cynicism.

Regret that I had to grow up, and away from that little world of words....and cynicism? maybe I'm just getting old.

And then there was the Dr. Doolittle books, by Hugh Lofting, many a story set around a vet who can speak with animals...I never did read them all...but only because the library didn't stock all the books. I guess this must have been my first groping after S/F & Fantasy...(I joined the library as soon as I was old enough... I could read when I was 4 or 5). I wouldn't at all mind having the whole set on my shelves, maybe I'll get around to searching them all out one of these fine days. They'd appeal to anyone with an intact SoW too, maybe Alice and/or Oz fans.... darn you Berman...all your fault for having Ruth as a name...why don't you change it something harmless, like RonEllik, or Fred, or Wally Weber, or...or something...

Ah, Ted Johnstone, on radio v TV, there is much in what he says. I myself prefer to listen to the radio rather than watch TV, not only because we have such shockingly bad TV programmes, but also because ~~with~~ radio there is more scope for imagination. The Goon Show is a good case...you couldn't dot the 64 rosewood pianos, or the weird machines that Crun mucks about with, or the antics of the steamed Count and Gryptite Thynn...the elephant stampedes and the wurlitser races, the floating Fentonville Prison, the dreaded Red Bladder and his blood crazy tribesmen and the oafish Eccles.

from OWEN HANNIFEN, February 7, 1961
Esgaroth on the Long Lake, 16 Lafayette Place, Burlington, Vermont

The story you mentioned is "Noise" by Jack Vance, and first saw print in the August, 1952 issue of Startling Stories—the one with Phil Farmer's "The Lovers."