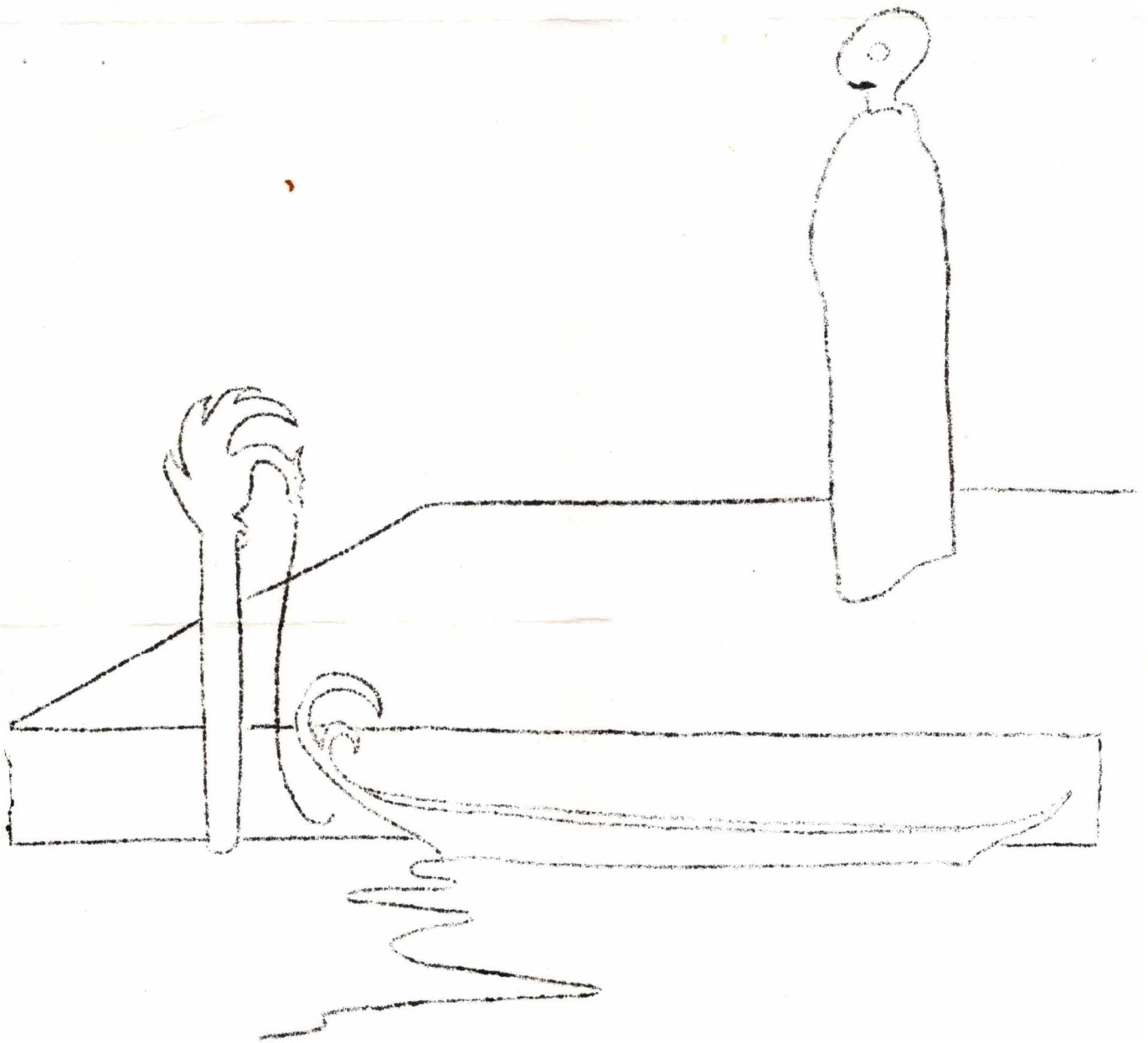


1 Nov '61

19

NEOLITHIC



This is NeoL 19 from the basement of Ruth Berman, 5620 Edgewater Boulevard, Minneapolis 17, Minnesota. October, 1961, bimonthly. One gets it by trading (all for all), writing (once every two issues, more or less), subscribing (2/25¢), or by being stuck on the mailing-list.

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EDITROOLINGS

CORRECTIONS DEPARTMENT: It was Wally Weber, not Wally Gonser who introduced Harlan Ellison (cf. Elinor Busby's letter), and Barbi Johnson made paintings for The Enchanted Forest, not The Enchanted Journey. Anyone have an eidetic memory for sale?

A KLUG ZU COLUMBUS'N: I got up this cloudy Columbus Day morning at 8:30, planning to go down to get a little to eat, and then come back up and spend the morning studying. On the way down, I spotted a puzzle dumped out on the floor. That was the end of my virtuous plans, because puzzles are my own special opiate. As I crouched there, hanging pieces, half hour after half hour went by. Why half hours? Because my little brother had the television on in the room across the hall, and I heard a loathsome set of quiz programs all morning long.

Ordinarily, I wouldn't care much. I can shut out most of the blatherings of the idiot box—especially with an uncompleted puzzle sneering at me. However, there was one bit which did manage to get my attention. I do not know the program's name, but it was unceremoniously mastered by Hugh Downs. Downs introduced, with appropriate awe for the academic mind, three young ladies from college. These three sweet innocents had more in

common than just being in college: each was the president of a sorority. "An academic sorority?" inquired Downs politely. Oh no, a social sorority. Downs asked the first one what some of her sorority's special activities. "Well," she said sweetly, "there's the TGIF Club."

"What is that?" said Downs.

"The Thank Goodness It's Friday Club."

Oh really?

Again, ordinarily, I wouldn't much mind. Television seems to atone for its sex, sadism, and stupidity by censoring the fine points. The difference here was that this child seemed to mean it. She sounded as if she and her friends really did spell out "TGIF" as "Thank Goodness It's Friday." Reverence for the name of God is not the same as being coy.

Still, it is nice to have a holiday. I can spend the whole afternoon doing nothing at all, outside of studying, writing, mimeoing, and memorizing lines. In the evening I must go to a rehearsal of Ozma of Oz. I am, of course, an Oz-Baum fan, and I was quite excited when I read in the September 24 Minneapolis Sunday Tribune that Theater St. Paul was holding tryouts for Ozma. I went over with my little sister, Jeannie, not really expecting to get a part. But the following Wednesday the phone rang, and my father answered it because Jeannie and I were out, and my father told Theater St. Paul we'd call back, and when we called back they were out to dinner, and at 8:00 they called us back. Jeannie and I had both gotten parts! Jeannie is Princess Evanna, a small speaking part, but I am TikTok...and I am loudly pleased at having the third largest part and at the fact that the play opens on a bare stage with me in the middle of it. Ah Egoboo!

Felice Rolfe has an addendum to her reviews: "Math Book Can Be Funny Department. Rainfille, Elementary Differential Equations, second edition, p. 272: 'If $x = x_0$ is a singular point but is not a regular singular point, then it is called an irregular singular point.' That's what I like, a good, clear, concise statement of the obvious..."

And, in the same department, I always liked Ball's choice of words in Mathematical Recreations, when he mentioned "Watson's Theorem" and added, "the proof is by no means elementary."

GIANTS in THOSE DAYS

by Redd Boggs

PREFACE

I'm not sure that the history of fandom in Minnesota needs to be written. Certainly fandom has never developed characteristic identities circumscribed by state boundaries, and even regionalism has been largely lacking, despite the formation of the Southern Fandom Group and early attempts to organize the National Fantasy Fan Federation along regional lines. It is convenient, however, to consider fandom in Minnesota as an entity in itself. Such a segment is small enough to cover in relatively brief space, and large enough to contain a great number of interesting people whose achievements are worth chronicling.

While Minnesota has never been the home of teeming fan groups such as those in California, for example, Minnesota fans have played prominent, if not leading, roles in the Immortal Storm since the mid-1930s, and some of the top fanzines have been published here. Minnesota authors, many of them former fans, have contributed more than their share to the body of science fiction literature. Above all, the science fiction personalities in Minnesota have usually been unusually fascinating people—"altogether lovely, but slightly wacky," as Jack Speer expressed it in the original Fancyclopedia—and it would be a shame if they were forgotten.

Most of them are gone now: gone from the state itself, and gone from fandom. This article is an attempt to tell a little about the fun they had long ago, when they were still fans, back in the state of Minnesota.

Age of the Letterhacks

There was at least one science fiction fan in Minnesota even before the founding of the first science fiction magazine, Amazing Stories, in 1926. We can state this with some assurance on the basis of black-and-white evidence, for in the June 1935 Wonder Stories Edward R. Manthey of Minneapolis stated that he had been a science fiction reader ever since the days of the Electrical Experimenter and Ralph 124C41 (i.e., 1911 or thereabouts). Manthey is the first Minnesota fan your Gibbon knows about, though Manthey's only fannish activity consisted of writing a couple letters to Wonder. With his second letter, September 1935, Manthey was encouraged, in an editorial note, to become a regular letterhack of the likes of Don A. Wollheim, but apparently he never wrote again. Both letters written by him were extremely interesting.

Various other Minnesotans must have begun to read science fiction at least as early as the first issue of Amazing. John J. Kelly, Jr., 1493 West 6th Street, St. Paul, asserted in the September 1928 Amazing that he had been "a reader" of Amazing from the first issue," and Edward C. Magnuson, 1206 East 9th Street, Duluth, reported in the January 1931 issue, "I am sixteen years old, a junior in high school....I have read Amazing Stories since it was first published and have a complete library of it." In the February 1931 Astounding Magnuson said that he had read Astounding from the first issue as well.

There must have been hundreds of other eager neofannish converts who started back in the 1920s or early '30s, and we can name some of them by exploring the early letter columns. Douglass L. Benson, 209 North Linden Street, Northfield, wrote (Amazing, July 1928): "I've been following your Amazing Stories for the last two years." A. O. Ueland, Halstad, stated (Amazing, July 1930): "Since I first saw your magazine, and it was one of your very numbers, I haven't missed an issue." George Eastman, Hibbing, had been "a reader for several months," according to Amazing January 1930, while William E. Peck, 1220 Powderhorn Terrace, Minneapolis, declared that he had read Amazing "off and on, ever since that first April issue" (Amazing, June 1931).

George Baskin, 2909 Tenth Avenue South, Minneapolis, appeared with a letter in the January 1933 Astounding, giving his age as 15. In the May 1933 Amazing, he said he had been reading that magazine "rather sporadically" for five years. Blake Nevins, 169 West Broadway, Winona, was another 15-year-old and "an ardent reader...for some time" (Amazing, January 1932). Donald Kahl, 260 Selby Avenue, St. Paul, had two letters in the April 1931 Astounding, and in the following issue, L. B. Knutson, 629 Third Avenue South, Minneapolis, asked for correspondents, promising to answer all letters. Earle S. Troupe, 717 15th Avenue S.E., Minneapolis, reported in the July 1932 Astounding that he had read the magazine for three years, and in the November 1934 issue requested copies of the magazines containing the first to "Skylark" stories (Incidentally, Troupe is one of the few dawn-age fans still discoverable in the Twin Cities area, now living at 1100 24th Avenue S.E.). Frank J. Peters, 2622 Third Street North, Minneapolis, wrote a very fannish and amusing letter to the July 1934 Amazing, but unfortunately gave no information about himself, and seems not to have appeared again.

The relative lack of feminine readers of science fiction in the early days has often been commented on. Apparently the earliest femfan letter-writer from Minnesota, and one of the few who ever appeared, was Ellen Laura Nightingale, 228 South Main Street, Fairmont, who asserted in the October 1930 Astounding that she was "only a mere girl...only ten years old." She had

started reading the magazine, she said, with the issue containing Part One of "Brigands of the Moon" (March 1930).

There were others, including Robert W. and Richard O. Conrad of Rush City, Clarence Gunther of St Paul, Truman Tyler of Minneapolis, and Robert Lord of St. Paul. Many of them were fans in the early sense of the word, carrying on their primitive fanatic by reading at least two (and perhaps all) of the prozines, corresponding with fellow enthusiasts, and collecting back issues.

Though some of these fans wrote two or three letters apiece to the prozines, none of them was a true "letterhack"—the term had not yet been invented—who wrote regularly to the magazines. Perhaps the only Minnesotan to qualify even halfway as a letterhack was William McCulvy, 1244 Beech Street, St. Paul, a fourteen year old who had letters in astounding for November 1930, April 1931, and March 1932.

Not till the mid-1930s did real letterhacking develop among Minnesota fans, and nearly all these letterhacks later became fans in a more modern sense, playing active roles in organized fandom. First of the great Minnesota letterhacks to appear was Oliver Saari, 1342 First Street S.E., Rochester, whose letter in Amazing, November 1934, was probably his initial effort. He soon followed it up with letters in Amazing for February, April, May, and August 1935, and February 1936. By the time he wrote the last-mentioned letter he was residing in Minneapolis at 1712 East 34th Street. He also wrote some letters to wonder, and numerous letters to astounding, including two published in a single issue, November 1936.

Born in Finland, Saari came to the United States in 1927 at the age of nine, and first began to read science fiction two years later, in the summer of 1929. One of Minnesota's first trufans, he also became one of her first science fiction writers when in 1937 he sold three stories to the Tremaine astounding: "Stellar Exodus," "Two Sane Men," and "The Time Bender." During the next few years he sold stories to Captain Future, Super Science Stories, Future Fiction, and other magazines. During the 1950s he made a comeback, and sold to Campbell and elsewhere, but has disappeared again in recent years. A graduate in mechanical engineering from the University of Minnesota, he lived at last report in Chicago.

The first fan letters of Douglas Blakely, another famous Minnesota trufan, began to appear late in 1935. The October and December issues of astounding published letters in which he revealed that he was 14 years old and eager for correspondents. In a later letter (March 1936) he reported that he had been reading science fiction about two and a half years. His address at

first was 4615 Edina Boulevard, Minneapolis, later 2800 Irving Avenue South. During those years he was still a junior high and high school student, and in the December 1936 Amazing Dr Sloane roguishly scolded him for being a "naughty schoolboy" because he confessed that he read sf magazines at school behind an open notebook. Most of Blakely's later fan activity was on a purely local scale, but he became famous among Minneapolis fans as an impromptu entertainer and as an actor in the numerous skits recorded by the fan group. He also played alto sax in various orchestras around the Twin Cities. His only professional writing was with "The Time Bender," which was largely Blakely's work but was given a rewrite and final script by Saari and published under the latter's byline.

The same Amazing (December 1936) in which Blakely was chided by Dr Sloane also contained a letter from John Chapman, another of the famous Minnesota fans who were beginning to emerge. He had opened his letterhack career in the June 1935 Astounding (an issue which also contained a Saari letter), but at that time was living in Minot, North Dakota. By the time of his next letters (Astounding, February and April 1936) he had moved to Minneapolis, and was living at 500 15th Avenue S.E. In 1937 he lived at 1521 Como Avenue S.E., which became a famous address to Minneapolis fans over the next half-decade.

Born in North Dakota, Chapman became a fan of Nick Carter at an early age, and attempted to write sequels to the stories in magazines, in which he put his hero through more and more dangerous scrapes than his creator ever imagined. When Chapman discovered science fiction, he started writing voluminously in that field, and finally sold quite a number of stories. Nine stories from his mill appeared in the early 1940s, and he sold others during the boom of the '50s. Like Blakely, Chapman was a musician of sorts, and played a "battered clarinet." He also collected a large record library that was famous among Minneapolis fans.

In April 1937 Arden R. Benson, 4011 Emerson Avenue North, Minneapolis had a letter in Astounding and at the same time joined the Science Fiction League; another famous Minnesota fan had made his bow. Benson, whose nickname was Buns, spelled that way but pronounced Bunce, had begun to read science fiction in 1934, and like most fans of the day carefully built up a comprehensive collection of the magazines published before he became acquainted with the field. He was once called "the tallest man in science fiction" and "perhaps the most amiable during his amiable moments." Like other local fans he became an engineering student at the University and owned a record collection—his consisted largely of old-time records—in the days before this was a common possession.

An interesting letter appeared in Astounding, June 1938. Signed jointly by Oliver Saari and Arden Benson, it begins, "Being the only science fiction fans in the city of Minneapolis (far as we know)..." and ends, "We should like to get in touch with other science fiction fans living in the Twin Cities. We hate to think that we may be the only two of that select society in these parts. So let's hear from you, fans!" This was a year after a disastrous attempt to form a SFL chapter in Minneapolis—an episode described later in this history—but it is not clear where the other local fans had disappeared to. Apparently some of them were still on the scene, for in the very next Astounding letters from both John Chapman and David L. Dobbs of Minneapolis appeared. August 1938 was the month I moved to Minneapolis from Fargo, North Dakota.

Dobbs, who lived at 2309 Cole Avenue S.E., letterhacked in Astounding during 1939 and 1940, and had had a letter published as early as October 1936. He had begun reading science fiction in May 1934, according to one of his letters, but he seems not to have taken a very active part in organized fandom in the Twin Cities.

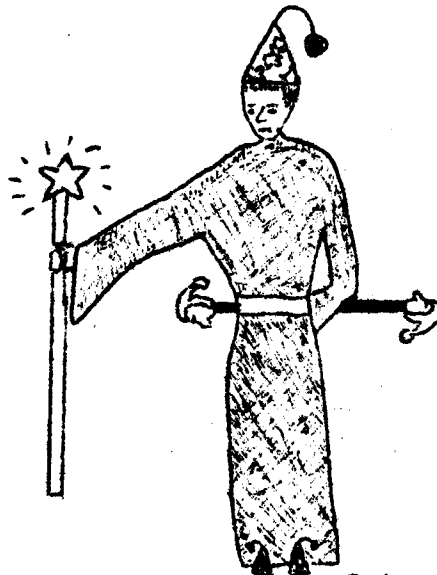
Meanwhile another letterhack appeared briefly from Duluth: Tony Strother, 5020 Dodge Street, who had letters in three successive Astoundings: October, November, December 1938. He wanted to hear from fellow fans "preferably in Duluth or the Twin Cities," but apparently he never visited any Twin Cities fans nor organized a sf club in Duluth. G. E.—who was probably George Eastman, referred to above—of Hibbing appeared in the December 1939 Astounding, mentioning that he was 31 years old and had been "a reader off and on for several years."

Following G.E.'s letter to in the December 1939 Astounding were two other letters of interest to this history. The first was written by Charles W. Jarvis, 2097 Inglehart Avenue, St Paul, who had become one of the most prolific and talked-about letterhacks in "Brass Tacks" since his first letter, April 1939. Jarvis dabbled briefly in fandom—he mentioned receiving news about "Grey Lensman" from the fan magazines in a letter published October 1939—and he attended a number of meetings of the Minneapolis Fantasy Society before entering the service during the war. Now a doctor in St Paul and one of the few old-time fans residing in this area, Jarvis told me in March 1961 that he gave up reading sf years ago—largely because of Campbell's espousal of Dianetics, apparently—though he bought Galaxy during its early days. Professional reading consumed most of his time at present, he said, but he mentioned some of the old sf "classics" such as "Triplanetary" and various stories by Clifford D. Simak with great nostalgia.

The other letter of interest in the December 1939 Astounding was written by Bill N. Campbell, 1015 West 32d Street, Minneapolis, who mentioned reading science fiction "for several years as a silent fan." Like Jarvis, Campbell attended some fan meetings, but never stayed around to play a very active role in fan affairs.

Despite the increasing activity on the part of Minneapolis fans as the 1930s drew to a close, it remained for a fan on the eastern side of the Twin Cities, in the suburb of North St Paul, to publish the first fanzine in Minnesota and thus become well known to leading fans around the country. He was Morris Scott Dollens, who had begun letterhacking with the February 1936 Astounding, revealing in his letter that he liked to color the interior illustrations of science fiction prozines using a box of water colors. His artistic talents were given a more public display when he published, that same year, a halfsize hectographed fanzine titled Science Fiction Collector, the first issue dated May 1936. (Sam Moskowitz' The Immortal Storm, pp 71-2 of the hardcover edition, describes the history of this fanzine. See also the checklist of Minnesota fanzines to be published as the final part of the present article.). After publishing 13 monthly issues of the Collector, Dollens turned the magazine over to John V. Baltadonis of Philadelphia and disappeared from the fan scene till early in 1941, as will be described in a later chapter.

To Be Continued



Rob
jester in hiding

GLANCES OVER THE POND
by Felice Rolfe

Since New Worlds has been running a three-part serial in its last three issues, we'll look at three issues of NW and only one of Science Fantasy this time. There is also another mag on hand—Science Fiction Adventures—and I will discuss it briefly.

First the serial, "Put Down This Earth," by John Brunner: the background is a Malthusian nightmare; world population has reached such a size and created such problems that national governments have turned their powers over to the U.N., and you can imagine how bad that would have to be. Into this situation, drops a drug called "happy dreams," apparently out of nowhere, which literally divorces its addicts from reality. Naturally enough, the U.N. Narcotics Agency is trying to trace down the suppliers of the drug. The details of the plot, centering about the Narcotics agent, are rather shallow, and the ending is definitely weak. I was reminded of the Christmas-wrapping clerk who tapes all the loose ends of ribbon out of sight beneath a symmetrical, ready-made bow. Nevertheless, the story is enjoyable because of the picture it gives of an overcrowded world, a picture which is presented with considerable skill in detail.

Other stories in NW #107: "Morpheus," by Robert Hoskins; "Jackpot," by E.C. Tubb; "Mantrap," by Kathleen James; and "Delete the Variable," by Jack Heath. This last deserves some comment. It is another of these here now thinkin' machines that gets intelligent and turns on its creator. It seems to me that the malevolent mechanical brain plot should be used for Grade 2 movies only. Nowadays, when every big corporation (even General Foods) is installing one or more of the really large computers, and every two-bit electronics firm has its own "computing center," anthropomorphization of a collection of tape machines, transistors, and other inert components is a little absurd.

In NW #108: "Trinity," by David Rome; "The Overloaded Man," by J.G. Ballard, a delicate horror story; "Junior Partner," by D.D. Stewart; and "The Trouble with Honey," by John Rackham.

Both #107 and #108 are average, worth the price of the zine, certainly, but with nothing that makes you stop and think for a few minutes before turning the page. NW #109 does much better. The lead novelette, Rackham's "Goodbye, Doctor Gabriel," concerns the creation of a synthetic man, as told from his point of view. To me, the plot in a story like this is irrelevant; I could almost enjoy it more if it were told in the form of a tech report, which is a good thing, because this plot is minor, and he do get a little schmaltzy at the end.

Silverberg's "Company Store" is probably the most technically competent piece in all three issues. The bit is that the advance agent for Planetary Colonizations, Inc., who has just landed on a wild planet, finds (a) that he's being menaced by a salesman-type robot which absolutely must make a sale, and (b) that the Company is about as benevolent as Sauron the Dark Lord. He uses (a) to defeat (b) in as neat a problem-solution as I've ever seen. #109 also contains Mike Davies' "The Ship of Heaven."

Science Fantasy #48: The lead story, "The Analysts," is by John Brunner. The protagonist is a "visualizer"; given a set of plans or a model of a building, he can visualize the actual building so well that he is aware of doorknobs that are an inch too high, uncomfortable drafts from badly placed windows, and so on. In this case, the visualizer is inspecting the model of a proposed building and discovers that all the subtle direction-indicating characteristics of the building point in a direction which is not normal. The plot then unfolds naturally in the search to find out just what is wrong. Brunner seems to have the knack of creating a person (or substance, such as "happy dreams") with peculiar properties, and these properties seem to make the story self-directing. Because of this knack, Brunner's tales are readable even when they're weak on plot or characterization—which "The Analysts" is not.

Other stories were: "Mr. F. Is Mr. F.," by J.G. Ballard; "Sacrificial," by Lee Harding; "The Food Goes in the Top," by Will Worthington; and "Parky," by David Rome.

Science Fiction Adventures: this is new to me. Vol. 4 #21 contains just two novelettes, "A Trek to Na-Abiza," by William F. Temple, and "No Longer Alone," by John Ashcroft. In many ways, "Trek" reminds me of Alice in Wonderland. It, too, is a collection of strange creatures such as the Melas tree, which reproduces by taking the images of its future states from the humanoid mind and making them present realities, or the Petrans, who must take their existence from other minds because they do not believe in themselves. If other issues of SFA are as good as this one is, I recommend it highly.

I've been getting these mags from J. Ben Stark, who is a Little Man, a chemist by trade, and a bookdealer by hobby. I mention this because he carries a good bit of British stuff, and he generally gives about a 20% discount. It is so in this case. He has subs available at reduced prices: NW, 12 issues for \$5.00; SF and SFA, 6 issues for \$2.50. He has back issues, too, and lots of other sf. His address is 113 Ardmore Road, Berkeley 8, California.

CLAY TABLETS

from BARBI JOHNSON, September 18, 1961
7546 Farnum Avenue, Cleveland 30, Ohio

The author of "The Enchanted Forest" is William Bowen. My copy was put out by MacMillan, copyright 1920, printed 1939. It's my favorite children's book. It's actually a series of short stories with the same characters. [I wasn't able to find a copy of it here, but I did come across another book by Bowen, The Old Tobacco Shop. This is a story about a boy who goes traveling with a set of unusual companions in search of the Island of Correction. The story is rather mixed: parts of it are excellent, but it is the only "It was just a dream" story I've ever read where the story is really like a dream—RB]

from JUANITA COULSON, September 23, 1961
Route 3, Wabash, Indiana

Actually, the reason for this missive is quite simple. Buck will never comment—review, maybe, but not comment—because of his Thing about Con Reports. I do not have the same phobia and I wish to get in my bid right now to say you write vastly enjoyable con reports...no matter what the 'But what really happened?' clods may say. Fair warning, you sound a great deal as I used to writing con reports. Oh yes, my dreadful secret...I did...and quite a several of the things...even a few for EISFA YANDRO back in the dear dead days. Ah my lost youth and all that nostalgia.

I would have liked it even if you hadn't bought my painting.

Actually, the painting just sort of grew...it was not planned to be anything like that at all. But whilst laying backgrounds down I suddenly ~~got~~ the storm cloud effect and the whole picture changed before my eyes and all of a sudden there was this feminine figure there gesturing it back and it could be no one but Glinda. Glinda is my second favorite, probably, of all Oz characters, second only to the Scarecrow. I'm well aware that there are inaccuracies. While an Oz fan I am not an Ozophile, but which read I enjoy the series and am an ardent plugger of same but do not own a complete set and am pretty ignorant on some of the intricacies of the Baum creations. I own several volumes, including the non-Oz MAGICAL MONARCH OF MO... the Gardner study, and have even done a Master's paper, quite tiny and blithery, on Baum and Oz. But I'm quite ready to concede my noviceness. [Hey, you wouldn't consider sending that paper to me or Justin Schiller for publication, would you?—RB]

from HARRY WARNER, September 24, 1961
423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland

I'm sorry that I didn't send you comments on the 17th issue more promptly. Your editorial could have been the topic for a quite extensive series of comments on what constitutes beauty and how much familiarity has to do with it and the skill with which manmade and natural objects can blend in a landscape and so on.

My own reaction to a scene is usually boredom or dislike if it's one that I've seen a number of times but haven't actually lived with. I find complete beauty in my surroundings only when they're almost completely new to my eyes or I've grown to know them through years and years of familiarity. However, you are to be congratulated for actually looking at the things around you. The other day I was out in an auto with another man, and commented that the air was exceptionally clear today and distant objects were so distinct and colors so deeply saturated. He looked at me perplexed. "You mean that sometimes things are clearer than other times?" he asked. "I never knew there's any difference."

Bob Lichtman would feel even worse about paperback prices if he were old enough to remember the more distant past. When the paperback deluge was in its first years, it wasn't unusual to get 400 pages or more for 25¢, and until about eight or ten years ago, the British paperbacks were even cheaper, fat ones selling for 14¢ or 21¢, our price. However, there is more justification for increased prices for paperback books than for many other things, because the cost of paper and printers' wages have risen enormously.

Your convention notes were most interesting and welcome, since I have not yet seen many accounts of that event and have heard it described vocally only once, and that on tape rather than in person. The mentions of Ella Parker in the letter column also have a special function for me: they give me hope that she may yet come through Hagerstown. I'd assumed that the silence from her meant that she'd gone the other way, but apparently she's just running a bit behind schedule on this goodwill tour of random.

from ELINOR BUSBY, September 27, 1961
2852 14th West, Seattle 99, Washington

Liked your con report, and am glad you had a good time. Correction: it was Wally Weber, not Wally Gonser who introduced Harlan Ellison as Toastmaster, "the fan you love to hate." Only Wally Weber would be THAT furshlugginer! I was frankly horrified, but Harlan took it in the spirit in which it was meant (whatever that spirit may have been).

Costume ball judging: I have never in all my years in fandom heard of a costume ball where everyone was pleased with the judging, and I never expect to hear of one. It must take guts to be a costume judge! If I remember correctly, the committee made it very clear that we did not want a group prize awarded, so Ella Parker made no mistake. If a mistake was made, it was by the Seacon Committee. However, I don't regret it particularly. When you put on a con, my dear Ruth, you'll do it YOUR way! [Fair enough...fair enough!? Elinor, n-no! You wouldn't make me put on a con all by myself, would you? The Secret Masters of Fandom wouldn't let you would they? Would they?—RB]

from FRED GALVIN, 24/9/61
840 Algonquin, St. Paul 19, Minnesota

It must be in "Broken Sword" that Poul Anderson explains away the magic of the leaves, since I read the book version of "3 Hearts & 3 Lion" and don't recall any explanation. [Yes, it was in the preface to Sword—RB]. On the contrary, I got the impression that the elves got their powers from the Demons of Hell.

All that poeticizing on page 3 is provoked by MINNESOTA? THIS Minnesota? Widswept elvish lines? Platonic ideals in a Platonic heaven? Golden mornings that look like late summer afternoon light, fermented, and mixed with honey??? You might as well have described the Gobi desert, or the wilds of Brazil, for all I recognized in your description as being anyplace I have ever lived in. [Well, you live in St. Paul. I admit I used hyperbolic description, in part—RB] You correctly pointed out that our winters are cold as Hell, [?—RB] the summers are intolerable, and the spring tends to be fairly unpleasant. However, we usually get a few nice days in the fall, and we're getting them right now. These last few days have been just about perfect, except when it's rained. Temperatures in the 40s, 50s, and 60s, patches of blue in the sky, leaves still green, and the flowers till in bloom.

I've acquired a copy of what I believe to be the first science fiction magazine I ever read: the Summer, 1946 issue of Startling stories, featuring "The Dark World" by Henry Kuttner. "Edward Bond enters a twin universe of black sorcery, where his evil replica, Ganelon, fights for a kingdom of slaves, infinite power, and two alluring women—Arles and Medea!" The Bergey cover is a variation of the usual fem-bem-bum cover: instead of the guy protecting the girl by fighting off a bem with his raygun, the bems are protecting the guy against the girl. I also sent for an old Capt. Marvel comic book, at some absurd price, and as luck would have it, it turned out to be the issue with that atomi-gedden story, #Captain Marvel Battles the Dread Atomic War!" October, 1946, No. 66. This issue also has the first Jon Jarl story.

from DICK MARTIN, October 5, 1961
53 West Burton Place, Chicago 10, Illinois

I think you're right about the shortcomings of TO PLEASE A CHILD—at least, so far as the lack of index and checklists are concerned. MacFall wanted both, but Reilly & Lee decided to sacrifice them in order to get the book out in time for their Fall list and to save money. I think you were a little hard on McF., though, in your comment that the 'novelizing' made the facts seem contrived—as a matter of fact, the 'file cabinet' explanation of the origin of the word Oz is correct; both Frank J. and Harry Baum declare that's how it came about. I think far too much credence is given to Jack Snow. He was the master propagator of Ozian knowledge: the "ohs and ahs" business he 'quotes' in WHO'S WHO is his own invention. [like the White Knight?—BB] Your report of your wanderings proves you covered a lot of territory in those few days—no wonder you fell asleep on the drive back to Chicago!

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