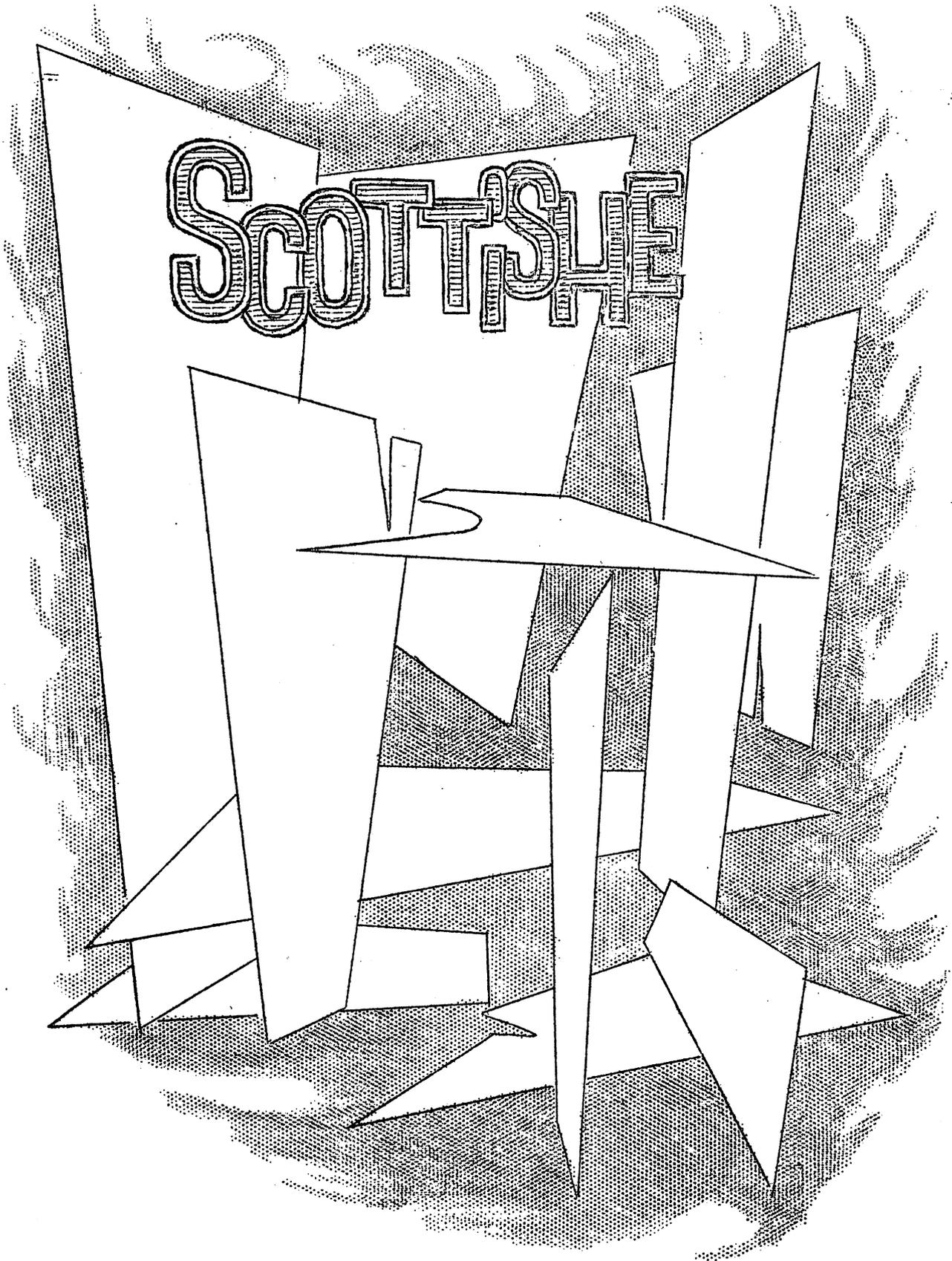


SCOTTISH



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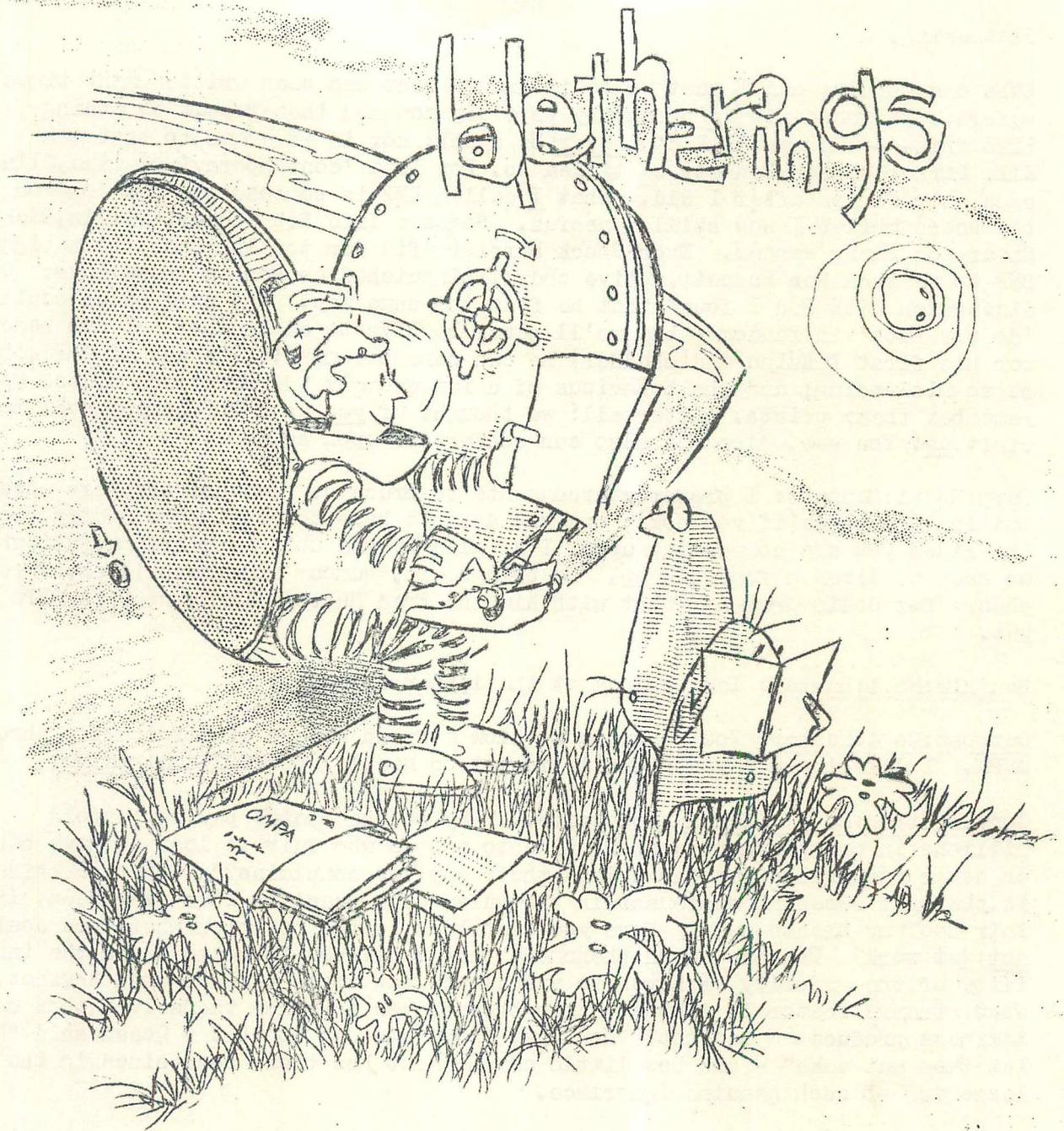
Bletherings.....by.....Ethel Lindsay
Con Man.....by.....MachiaVarlay
Warblings.....by.....Walter A.Willis
Letters.....by.....The Readers
Natterings.....by.....Ethel Lindsay.

Poems in the letter column by Brian Aldiss, John Baxter and Bill Wolfenbarger.

Credits

ARTWORK BY ATOM

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Being some comments upon the 35th OMPA Mailing.....

Sizar:No 9:Bruce Burn: Having SIZAR full of mailing comments when you promise other material in PARAFANALLIA seems daft to me; why not combine the two and put out an Onpazine? I used to holler for mailing comments-but I did not visualise them comprising the bulk of the mailing. Many of them I find rather dull.I don't feel impelled to answer any of your comments; but I guess if I don't answer the criticism you made of me, you will imagine I am peeved. Frankly, I was quite glad when you got to the critical bit; until then you were making me sound like a plaster saint. Of course I cannot tell if your criticisms are justified-if we could see ourselves as others see us--life would be a lot simpler! I would say that the period I spent as a TAFT candidate was the most self conscious in my life. Whilst with fans I felt as if my every action and word were being scrutinised. Although winning the trip was the most wonderful thing that ever happened to me; I'd not like to relive that waiting time again. You have raised this business of

BNFs once again; and I must write in answer what has been written many times before. In fandom it is necessary to every now and then repeat something like this-----To myself I can never be a BNF; nor if it comes to that can Ella Parker or Ron Bennett be titled so. Ron is a 'contemporary' of mine, Ella came into fandom after I did. What I call a BNF is someone who was long on the scene whilst I was still a neofan. Someone like Bob Tucker, Willis, Rick Sneary or Harry Warner. Even Chuck Harris (gafia for too long now) is a bigger BNF to me than Ron Bennett, active and distinguished as Ron is these days. On discussion with Ron I found that he felt the same way. The pair of us could 'do our nuts' in fandom - but we'll never be BNFs to each other. I can remember his first fanzine and (shudder) he can remember mine! The use of BNF can be so misleading; and the behaviour of a fan wrongly interpreted, unless you remember these points. After all: we thought of you as a BNF coming over to visit us! You see, distance also can confer BNF upon someone!

Burp:No 21:Dennett: I prefer your comments to Bruce's. Because they are entertaining I suppose (if you ask); and one doesn't have to strain the memory about the zines you are commenting upon. I am glad to see Colin appearing; just what we need to liven a few folk up. He brings wit, humour and fresh ideas. Three cheers for Colin Freeman, what with him and Fred Hunter- I may stay in OMPA yet.

Soufle:No 4:Baxter: Take a look at the letter column...

Outpost:No 4:Hunter: You continue to blow a fresh breeze of originality thru OMPA. I like the way you sturdily insist on keeping OUTPOST a magazine!

Conversation:No 21:Hickman: You write..."Why do the States pay out untold millions in unemployment compensation to people who quit to loaf or have babies or other ineligible reasons unless their employer complains?" That, I think, is the most sweeping statement in the guise of a question I've ever seen, It fair took my breath away! Have you ever been in the position where you could not get work? The one human phenomena that continues to amaze me is the inability of the majority of haves to visualise what it is like to be a havenot. What strange factor is it that makes those haves convince themselves that only laziness produces a havenot? How many years ago was it that a Queen said "Well let them eat cake" - and how little advancement has there been since in the lessening of such genuine ignorance.

Erg:No 15:Jeeves: Terry, I do like your zine; but the crosswords are too hard for me. How should I know what half a culture jelly is?

Anble:No 13:Mercer: It isn't the Doc. mailing that bothers me most-but the Sept one. Bang in the middle of holiday time; it's just a bother!

Compact :No 1:Parker: Welcome to OMPA. I liked the magazine style and particularly Arthur Thomson's column. I liked your own first column but the last one confirmed by dark suspicion that you spend too much time watching TV. It's habit-forming you know.

Savoyard:No 9:Pelz: Nice chatty comments-but watch it! Remember that some of your readers could be puzzled by them. Never treat OMPA as if it knew all the the ins and outs of American fandom; many of the British members do not.

Binary:100:Patrizio: I don't see why you should hate to admit you enjoyed the film SUMMER HOLIDAY. I enjoyed it too and will even admit (without hating it) that I like Cliff Richards. I also like Sinatra and Tommy Steele, and can even see what others see in Presley. An attractive personality is an enjoyable thing to watch; and becomes no less so because there is a section of adoring worshippers.

Morph:No 30:Roles: Your ROLLINGS this time obviously gives a favourite dream-back to the sylvan life. As you point out, it has often been used by SF authors. It usually makes me go poo! Sun and a beach and leisure yes..but I'd want all modern comforts as well. I appreciate your thinking about OMPA as a whole; and your complaint that it is 'getting too serious'. SCOT I hasten to say was not meant to be-just coincidence in two of the items. I think this 'seriousness' shows because everyone has suddenly decided to write long mailing comments. After years of urging folks to write some; I'm afraid I view the result with a leetle dismay. They went and overdone it! My totals for your quiz were-24 English counties and 35 US States! Desperately I tried Scottish counties--and came up with 15...I'm afraid to check!

Curiosity Shoppe:No 1:George Spencer: You ask me a most odd question-"Do I find it disillusioning to have an inside view of hospitals?". I never had any illusions to dis..there were no Dr Kildare series in my young day. You never did cross swords with me on the subject of 'culture'. Coward. I had my best laugh out of this mailing over your account of trying to cross the street.

Hex:No 2:Wells: You, at least, had some very sensible remarks to make on 'culture' I wish you had elaborated upon this more. Still: I do think you have a talent for concisness and at this rate you'll have all the interminable arguments in OMPA wound up smartly.

Post-Mailings:

Phenotype:CCIXetc:Eney: Would you give those horrid Roman Numerals up if I said pretty please? You ask why deafness should make anyone shy. Well, most folks are a bit shy anyway-even the most cocksure in manner has his moments of doubt. So any handicap adds to this shyness effect.

Compadre:No 2:Harness: Your 'poll' was the funniest one I've ever read.

Dolphin:No 4:Busby: I have been muttering in my beard all through this mailing about dull mailing comments. Then I read yours and have to retract. There seems to be a special knack in writing them-and you have it.

I wish I could put my finger on exactly why I found the first lot of mailing comments in this mailing tiresome to read; and the last lot highly enjoyable. Has it something to do with my mood? Am I the culprit? Or is there some specific ingredient which makes the magic difference? Can anyone help me decide?



Machia Varley

It's a strange feeling to attend a Convention again after a lapse of many years, part familiar, expected, part unexpected. A subtle change in the atmosphere has taken place, maybe room-parties still abound, drunken pro's still stagger through the corridors followed by their acolytes, Ken McIntyre still imbibes endlessly. The programme is always behind time, Norman Weedall's rosy glowing face still beams like a benevolent sun on all who come his way, yet still there is a change.

Children have appeared on the scene giving the air of a family party. Husbands no longer feel the need to lock their wives in chastity belts, single girls ('nice' ones like Ethel) no longer carry hat-pins clutched firmly in trembling hand. Zap-guns belong to the "good old days" and we reminisce, half-wistfully, of the Bonnington, the Supermancon, bottles dropped down chimneys and massed assaults by porters. No bottle parties now which, with considered cruelty, decree 'no charge' for young and lissom but 10 bob for the sad forties. The past is an echo and fandon, all considered, better for it.

The Bull is, in some ways, an ideal Con-site. No interference by the management, no complaints from the resident Rip Van Winkle. Part modern, part archaic, we were unfortunately given a room in the old section, a large and dusty room hanging over the main road and traffic lights. At 5a.m. that Saturday morning we were both shaken from a sound sleep, fought desperately to close an open window which, inevitably, had a broken sash-cord. Breakfast was taken quite early that morning, two shell-shocked wrecks seeking refuge, both immovably convinced that heavy transport MUST return to the railways.

However, back a pace to Friday, a busy bustle of arrivals, the swirling stream occasionally clotting as fans meet to rejoice or enter solemn conclave, delightful to see so many well-remembered faces. Terry Jeeves, suffering badly from asthma, but still the same cheerful, matey Terry. Ron Bennett, in a blue double-breasted suit, bighod! The Shorrocks loaded down with cameras, programmes and children and, of course, Ken McIntyre with his plastic portable bar, patiently awaiting opening time.

Frances and I escaped a while to view Peterboro' and, perhaps, obtain a cup of tea. A stroll down to the River Nene with a distant view of Bertram Mills Circus and the inevitable swans floating in the foreground. A cup of tea was taken, but virtually untouched, in the Granville Cafe. Stewed tea, battered cups, disgusting tablecloths and the electronic roar of a juke-box demolishing the ear-drums hurried us out.

What a change awaited us as we wandered under the arch into the Cathedral grounds. Impressive at first sight, set away from the traffic and surrounded by lawns and flowerbeds it does not disappoint on closer inspection. When some relief is needed from the smoke-laden air and alcohol fumes, then the whirling mind may well be soothed by the peace of the Close on the Cathedral's south side. This is indeed cloistered calm.

Back to the cluttered charm of the Conhall where Ken Slater bid us welcome, said a few appropriate words and handed over to Brian W Alldis who interviewed many notable personalities and initiated the well-known act of Alldis and Harrison, that lovable, knockabout comedy duo. Each interview was concluded with an attempt by the interviewees to identify a "famous last line" and many a heart was touched as Ted Tubb, with a tear in his eye, identified the last line of "Alien Dust". A poignant moment this. I might add here that Brian W Alldis has been engaged to provide a Con report for Hyphen. I understand that no effort is being spared to bring this out before the "London in '65" Con, which will, fortunately, occur in September of that year rather than the April.

The final item for the Friday was the first auction with Ken Slater officiating. A rather desultory and mundane affair this. Much literature changed hands at minimum prices and, no doubt, a profit will be shown by many in second-hand bookshops and through the Slater credit system.

After the auction closed we paid a flying visit to the Liverpool party, a free-for-all, everyone welcome, party where the products of the Merseyside Wine Club flowed generously. Soon, however, we gave way to our gambling

instincts and joined the Bennett brag-session on a convenient landing. Here I lost steadily, but was cheered to see Frances just as steadily, and more **speedily**, profiting. The game broke up around 2.30 causing me no little surprise as I had fully expected to re-join the game after breakfast.

The Convention got properly underway the following morning when Brian W Alldis introduced the Guest of Honour, Bruce Montgomery (Edmund Crispin). Mr Montgomery gave a most interesting address in which he stressed the need to keep science-fiction separate from the mainstream of literature and proceeded to outline three possible dangers in it's growing popularity.

Firstly, he said, there was the danger of placing too much emphasis on depth characterisation. The nature of sf is such that the individual is not so important; he is merely representative of his society and must, therefore, be to some extent a cardboard figure. Conversely, in "good literature" the deep characterisation of the individual is of prime importance.

Secondly as the genre became more accepted it would become, and was becoming the happy hunting ground of mainstream authors who produced bad novels with hackneyed themes - in effect non-too-efficiently reinventing incandescent gas and gunpowder. He named no names at the time, but later, quoted "On The Beach" as a prime example.

Thirdly, through the influence of television where there is little differentiation between merit and de-merit and through the association of the earth-satellite programmes it was becoming, in the public mind, a synonym for space-travel fiction. In actual fact only rarely was sf, concerned with space-travel as such, in the majority of cases space ships occupied the same position as the transatlantic liner or the railways in mainstream literature.

He then changed to a more optimistic note when he maintained that modern sf was wholly worthwhile and getting more so all the time. It was coming-of-age in a big way, many more novels were being produced than in earlier days and novel-length plots were **not** so frequently being cramped into novelettes and short stories. The flowering of the hard-cover novel was a good thing, especially as they were being published under more diverse and better range imprints, this making them acceptable to a wider audience. With a smile he added that it was a pity that sf authors generally were so poorly paid, which remark was greeted with heartfelt groans by certain members of the audience.

Ending on a high note Mr Montgomery suggested that sf had produced the only major literary revolution since Marlowe and Shakespear. He described it as a kind of 'origin-of-species' fiction in that it accepted the Darwinian theories of Man as but a small part of Creation rather than the focal point or end product.

After a brief period of questions Harry Harrison took the mike to give his talk, provocatively entitled "Sex and Censorship in Science-fiction". It is extremely difficult to do a fair report of Harry's speech, for despite the gag-a-minute approach it was obvious that he was dealing with a subject close to his heart. He started out by handing a large quantity of leaflets out, which on examination proved to advertise the Esperanto system and whilst these were being fought over pinned up his three exhibits. These were, a large-sized nude (Large in every way) a copy of an cartoon depicting two children seated on their pots. and an American pb entitled "Damn It!"

His main theme was the peculiar world of pulp publishers. Covers strongly suggested rape, captions promising vicarious thrills, yet inside the writing censored to a degree of unnatural purity. Pointing at Exhibit A, the nude, he announced that this was culled from a magazine which had deleted the word "breast" from one of the stories. Sf writers had been conditioned to this pulp attitude to sex; evidence Heinlein's "Stranger In A Strange Land" which

was supposed to herald the new 'liberal' Heinlein, untrammled, modern and without taboos. Whilst the story implied such things as free-love, and group copulation (in one great rotting heap, I think his words were) in actual fact the nearest the book approached to a direct description of sex was in the phrase "Their lips met".

Harry was explaining how, in DEATHWORLD, after the hero had suffered mightily for more than 200 pages he had felt it reasonable that he might put into the hero's mouth the word 'Damn'. This was excluded by Analog from the published version. It was during this part of the speech that Ted Carnell rather astonished this naive member of the audience by admitting that if a word or phrase offended him personally, then it was deleted. Ted, for example, dislikes 'Bastard' and, as Harry said, there are many more prurient minds than Ted's in editing.

This certainly touched off a response in me, for I prefer not to have my reading expurgated, having a reasonable desire to know in the author's own words what point he is making. By all means exterminate the filth for filth's sake, but let the magazines grow up by removing their suggestive covers and, at the same time, printing fiction written with an adult audience in mind, and uncensored. Kama Sutra anyone?

A second auction session followed, ending the morning programme and we wended our way out for lunch. We decided, for once, to give the Great Wall a miss and instead went next door to the Wimpy bar. In the thirty minutes it took to provide us with our Hamburgers, the debate on the Harrison talk flourished. The main protagonists were Ella Parker and Bobbie Gray with occasional encouragement from Ethel, Frances, Ken Cheslin, and I. Many of the expurgateable words were given an airing. I can well appreciate Ella's objections to censorship, if you carry it to the logical conclusion she might as well cut her tongue out.

The afternoon's proceedings started with the third and final auction, this time presided over by the master salesman, Ted Tubb. It is useless to try and report a Tubb auction, indeed dangerous. A good quote may well cost you five bob with a copy of New Worlds thrown in if Ted catches you. Anyone who has seen Ted in action needs no report from me, anyone who hasn't should make it a number one priority-but come along prepared to pay for the pleasure. Without any doubt, one of the highspots of the con.

After half an hour or so Ted's place was taken by Ken Slater, a sad anticlimax, nobody, but nobody, should follow Tubb in this game. We sat in embarrassed silence whilst Jeeves "Soggy" illos were auctioned off at a tanner apiece. Even worse was the sale of the original typescripts of the Aldiss novels HOTHOUSE and NONSTOP. One was sold at the ridiculous reserve price of £1 to Jimmy Groves and the other, for which no offer at all was made, was later disposed of privately to Mike Rosenblum. The price that these would have raised on the American market make this a farce, a \$100 might easily have been obtained. I feel strongly that any future acquisitions of this type should not be restricted to sale at the Con, but should be offered to the American market as well. The effective sale of these two manuscripts alone could and should turn a moderate loss into a good profit.

The afternoon, according to the programme, was given over to an 'Open House' where the people of Peterboro' were invited in to meet fandom. The populace streamed uncaring past the Bull and fandom, left to its own devices, talked read, drank tea, and even wandered out to inspect the town. The most unsuccessful part of the programme, and one that does not require a repeat.

The programme began again rather wearily, rather late, with a slide show JOURNEY INTO SPACE given by Peter Hamerton of the Lincoln Astronomical Soc. This may well be described as a Child's Tour of the Solar System and we were

hard put to not doze gently though the performance. Well-meaning I suppose, but not good convention material.

Back to the Great Wall for dinner which was soon overflowing with fandom escaping the rigours of the Bull-pen. Harry Harrison called loudly for a pot of tea and Brian W disturbed the managements Oriental calm by insisting on having two tables pushed together, then ordering such a variety of dishes that the cook must have had heart failure. One thing is certain, fans generally eat just as well as they drink.

The evening was set aside for the Fancy Dress party. For a long time the hired band plugged away in an empty room and throughout the whole evening only one couple attempted to dance on the carpeted surface. All in all the band appear to have been pointless, a tape-recorded background would have been cheaper and better. As it was, those nearest the band, had to shout to make themselves heard above the din. Slowly however, the fancy dresses started to appear, Alan Rispin and Ken Cheslin being among the early arrivals, followed closely by Ethel attired in a torn evening gown, loaded with jewellery as a drunken looter "after the end". (Who was it said to me, "Isn't Ethel coming in fancy dress then?".)

A sensation was caused by the arrival of the four Salford/Manchester lads, first time con attendees, Harry Nadler, Chas. Partington, Tony Edwards and T. Holt in really excellent costumes. It occasioned a great rush of amateur photographers. There was no surprise when Harry Nadler won the prize as "Best Monster" and was subjected to great attention by Press and ITV cameramen. Pity was they all couldn't get an award. A special prize was given to Janet Shorrocks as a young she-devil. Unfortunately Ina was prevented from appearing in her costume by bairn trouble.

I felt that the "theme" dismayed several of the entrants and the prize here went to Tony Walsh wearing a sandwich-board with the slogans "Prepare to meet your Beginning" and "The Beginning is at hand". To quote Ken Slater, this prize was awarded for it's simplicity. Perhaps if the other entrants had been given the opportunity of a parade and a proper introduction, describing the aspect they were portraying, the judges might have reached a different conclusion. Ted Tubb, surprisingly, arrived in costume, but too late for the judging. He certainly deserved commendation for originality, a patriarchal beard a gown of tattered manuscripts and a selection of placards bewailing the lot of the poor author. It took me a few moments to realise that it was Ted inside the garb.

The party faded out after the parade and the next stop was the party in 258 open-house held by Ella and Ethel. The start was rather delayed due to large numbers of people disappearing to watch TWTWTW on the telly. When it did get going the party was a roaring success, too successful in fact. An astonishing number of bodies jammed themselves into the room and the scene gradually faded in a pall of smoke and steam. Every so often the seething mass swirled and in one of these Frances and I were erupted into the passageway where Aldiss and Harrison were in full cry, eventually disappearing down the fire-escape. This was, we discovered later, part of a deep laid plot which led to the Case of the Missing Pork Pies. Great rivalry had broken out between the Burgess Pie Marketing Board and the Aldiss Combine. Returning up the fire-escape the two anti-heros had broken into the Burgess hideout and, discovering the stock of pies laid out on the bed, had secreted them in the wardrobe. This occasioned Brian no little discomfiture and his heavy tread and dirgeful voice were heard throughout the night as he searched for the missing provender. One up, indeed to Aldiss, but beware the wrath of Burgess in '64!

Unaware of the high drama being enacted elsewhere we had entered a draw-poker school and again my better-half (better indeed!) was scraping it in whilst I was quietly losing our fare home.

Sunday morning we missed breakfast and also the heavy traffic noises of the previous day. Still we were all present and correct when Ethel opened the programme with her TAFF talk supported by Ron Bennett and Eric Bentcliffe. The three TAffers were almost inundated by a brag-school set up by Phil Rogers on their table, the rest of the space being taken up by the Lindsay tea-tray. The session began some fifteen minutes late, in front of a surprisingly good audience, with Ethel giving a resume of the history and purpose of TAFF and outlining ambitions for the future.

Being very controversial for such an early hour Ted Tubb proposed that the administration should consider amending the voting system by allowing fans to buy more than one vote, paid for by doubling up so that, in effect, one vote would cost 2/6d, two 5/- and three 7/6 etc. After a heated discussion a vote was taken and only three hands were shown against this proposal being considered. A motion was also passed proposing that the voting subscription should be doubled to 5/- whether or not the Americans doubled their contributions.

Archie Mercer was then invited to the table to put forward a proposal. Firstly Archie stressed that he was not anti-TAFF, but rather against open elections. He reasoned that in one year it was possible to have two excellent candidates competing against each other, yet in the following year have two second-rate contestants. The results were obvious to all as was the risk of bad feelings between the nominees. He therefore proposed that a panel of selectors be set up, consisting of three fans-in-good-standing, plus the last two trippers. This panel would select the most deserving fan to benefit from TAFF.

The proposal was discussed and eventually defeated, mainly on the grounds that a) a pressure group could still work on the panel and b) the voting and the contest brought in the cash. Ken Slater, worried at the delay in the programme interrupted the proceedings with a proposal that the present system, which apparently had the support of most fans, should be retained. This proposal was passed and the meeting closed by Madam Chairman.

Next in line was the B.S.F.A.-A.G.M. Having had enough of earnest discussion we retired to the lounge for a long-awaited pot of tea, but rallied ourselves sufficiently to creep back for the closing minutes. The officers were being elected and Bobbie Gray, from the chair, was explaining at horrendous length why she couldn't explain why she couldn't be next year's Chairman-if you see what I mean. I think that all present got the point and were truly thankful that she couldn't explain why she couldn't take..oh hell, y'know what I mean. To crown the event she took on the job of Vice-chairman with Tony Walsh as first reserve. The meeting closed with everyone proposing a vote of thanks to everyone else, a most fraternal sight.

Silence fell as Ken Slater got up to announce the Doc Weir Award for this the first year and tumultuous applause greeted the announcement that Peter Mabey was the winner. A well-deserved award for one of the busiest backroom boys of fandom. Peter was unable to attend, and the job of passing him the handsome trophy was given to the SFCoL who promised to make a ceremonial presentation.

This is, perhaps, an appropriate moment to mention the Art Awards. The Best Colourwork and SFCoL Special Award went to Jack Wilson. Eddie Jones got top marks for the Best Black and White work. Terry Jeeves took the Cartoon Award. Marc Ashby's Conhall backdrop was highly commended by the judges which, in their opinion contributed greatly to the success of the convention.

The photo competition was won by Jhim Linwood, but this is of miniscule interest; nothing on show deserved a second glance and the next committee should consider dropping this item. It suggests, in view of the large number of fan-photographers present, that they just are not interested or woefully incompetent. Even the Artshow proper was disappointing, there was little of it, and not much of merit. It suggested to me that the standard of artwork in Anglofandom was at a very low ebb.

After lunch Geoff Doherty gave his talk "New Lamps for Old". Unfortunately with the programme running late, this had to be drastically cut and so, what turned out to be one of the highspots of the programme, was reduced to a miserable half-hour. Considering the tedium induced by the following item it became, in retrospect, an even greater pity. He started by stating the obvious; science fiction is an entertainment and is, therefore dismissed by many. In fact the question of entertainment is really irrelevant. Many books produced solely for entertainment have proved to be of lasting value. He referred to his own anthology, "Aspects of Science Fiction" produced as a reader for schools. The kids like sf, read it with intelligent interest. It held their attention where the normal school reader would fail. It was somewhat surprising to note that Tom Godwin's "Cold Equation" was their favourite story in the reader. He went on to say that a writer can only write about that which he feels and knows. Thus the experiences in sf must come within the spectrum of our own experience. The science is only a kind of backdrop to these understandable experiences. At this point Mr Doherty explained that he was going to cover some of the ground already covered by Bruce Montgomery. He agreed with what had been said; sf was different from other types of fiction. However there was an affinity between, for example, PILGRIM'S PROGRESS, PARADISE LOST and sf. In all three examples Man was seen as a part of a wider system or philosophy and they are not concerned with the individual, as is current mainstream literature. There are people outside the field who would write stories akin to sf. Huxley had no interest in the genre when he wrote BRAVE NEW WORLD and could not be classed as an sf writer under any circumstances, but it was natural that, with the advancement of science, writers would become more and more prone to write similar books. Mr Doherty ended by saying that he was often called upon to justify his interest in sf which as a teacher he is compelled to do in the face of mainstream literature. His justification was that sf was an approach from a different, wider aspect, that this was a new attitude and one that is going to grow.

The discussion prompted by this talk was cut off, virtually stillborn, to make way for the Pro-panel. There was such an abundance of professionals around this year it had been decided to ring the changes on the panel every two or three questions. The result was nobody really was able to get warmed up, those who were making a show were unceremoniously ejected and many follow-up questions died unspoken as the speaker they were intended for left the platform. As group after group of writers trooped up to the platform the listeners slowly began to filter away. As one writer fumbled his way through a semantic barrier, trying to express his thoughts a voice murmured in my ear "More cock from Moorcock". This may well have been true, but certainly wasn't fair. Many of the experts were tongue-tied, inarticulate or just inaudible. There seems to be a mistaken view that because a man can write adequately he can also express himself on the public platform. That this is not so was unquestionably proved by the majority of the panellists. Future programme organisers might care to

take this to heart and select only one panel, chosen, if possible, for their gift of the gab, but in any case it would allow them to get warmed up to the job. The panel should be there to entertain the audience, not pander to every professional ego. Mind you it is only fair to say that many of the questions asked were not conducive of sparkling wit and so, in part, the audience were to blame.

Following the Pro-panel was Eric Bentcliffe's GAFIA SHOW consisting of colour slides showing scenes from Liverpool fan-life and shots taken during Eric's TUFF-trip, including the fancydress ball and fangroups. These were padded out with holiday snaps of Rumania and Venice which were of no fan-ish interest but which provoked a deal of worthwhile audience participation. This isn't by any means the ideal Con slide-show. What I wonder, happens to all the film exposed at conventions? Presumably it disappears into private archives, but surely these could, and should, be collected and presented at the succeeding convention.

The finale was the traditional film show consisting, this year, of Jean Cocteau's "Orphee" and Fritz Lang's "Metropolis". There is a convention in Anglofandom to groan whenever "Metropolis" is mentioned, but in actual fact it was in 1951 that the film was last shown. Not many of these present were around in fandom in 1951 as was soon proved by the incredulous joy with which the majority of the audience greeted it. The film was actually made in Germany in 1926 and some of the scenes, especially that of the flood, are remarkable even by today's standards. However the overacting of the silent era induced audience participation and slowly the hilarity grew until devastating shafts flew from all sides. The identification of one burly bearded character with Archy Mercer was the source of much humour, the pity being that Archie himself was not present. The film ended in a tumult of laughter and there was a general agreement that this was one of the brightest items of the whole convention. There would seem to be a lot in favour of producing another silent epic for next year, for example the 1919 version of "The Cabinet of Dr Caligari".

After the film, which finished shortly after midnight, there was a small gathering in 258. A dozen or so fans spread comfortably over chairs, beds or floor, a drink in hand, good conversation and a pleasant atmosphere made it a joy to be there. We learnt the Aldiss method for finding plots and this is now available to aspiring writers, price ten shillings, and will be forwarded under a plain brown cover. We would also like to offer Mack Reynolds's method but he was too busy trying to persuade someone to play with his toes. Tom Boardman was holding forth on the publishing life in general and the peculiar habits of certain writers in particular. John Brunner was holding forth... Altogether a very pleasant evening and a most enjoyable end to the convention. There is an opinion, widely held, that all parties should be open to all comers, and there is much to be said for the spirit behind this. Personally though I can only truly enjoy a party if there is room to breathe and move in. I attended both parties in 258 and must say that the Sunday evening "closed" session was infinitely more preferable... but then I am speaking from the Inside.

To sum up then, it was a good convention and I am positive that there are few who would disagree with me. Witness to this is borne by the fact that on the Monday morning when, with most of the Londoers we left to catch our train, over 50 registrations had been made for 1964. At this stage I would like to express my appreciation to the organisers for putting on a most en-

Con Man 9

joyable show. They must have worked exceedingly hard indeed for our benefit.

Bouquets and brickbats? Well, for me, the star turns were Ted Tubb, whether as auctioneer, panellist or the Dior of the Fancydress parade; the Doherty talk; Metropilis; Aldiss both as MC and as himself; Harrison for his rampaging humour; the Hotel staff who, though not always available, gave cheerful service for hours of noise; the four Salfordians as a sign of the future of fandom, but above all the sociable atmosphere created by all those attending.

Brickbats? Well if I haven't said it already perhaps it's best left unsaid.

One final thing before we end. Why, in Ghu's name, do we bother with the moronic reporters who turn up every year? The only decent report appeared in the only decent paper, The Guardian, and this was done by Geoff Doherty who just listened and then reported. The others were a waste of time and effort. As Harry Harrison said when he saw Monday's "Telegraph". "Four bloody hours for seven lines - and then they've misquoted!"

PETERBOROUGH IN 64 ANYONE????

Brian Varley

SALES TALK

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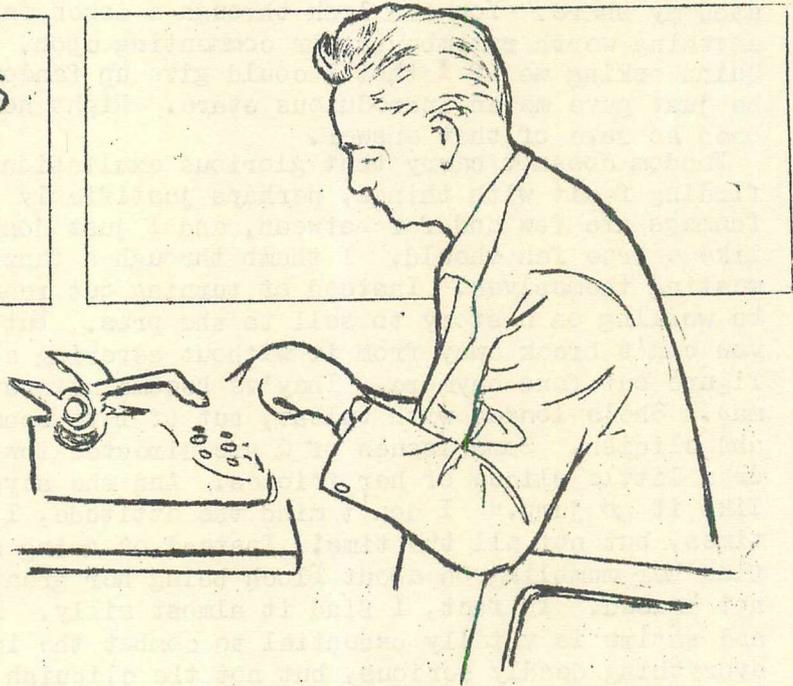
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Warblings
Walt
Willis



Since I'm still toiling on the Great Trip Report, which is getting to be so long it'll take nearly as much time to read it as it did to live it, I think I'll let this instalment be taken over by the rest of the two letters which comprised the great Elsberry/Willis correspondence of early 1953.....

Dear Walt,

Oh, God, Walt I've just got to write! I could jump on my foot, bang my head against the wall, cut off my arm with a rusty knife, smash my knee-cap, gouge out my ear with a broken beer bottle, smash myself in the face, pulp the flesh with an old sludgehammer, kick my teeth out, stick lighted matches under my fingernails. Maybe even pinch myself. I'm mad. Bitter! Yes, bitter! And all because I haven't written to Walt Willis for so god-damn long!

What set me off, and finally got me wound up enough to write is Confusion #13. I had a card to Shelby in the typer, and I decided to comment on Fusion and so I pulled it out of the stack and began to look through it. First I got p.'od with Dave Hammand, and almost stopped to dash off a short article kicking him in the gonads; but I held myself in check. The I read

Willis's article. "This Ackerman fellow isn't such a bad guy after all," I said to myself. "I've got to tell Walt about it." Of course, I knew I wouldn't. Not yet anyway. Then, suddenly, I found a reference to myself. A loan intense man inside me, eh? So that's what Boggs was talking about! I thought he was just being cryptic again. I immediately propelled myself upward from the bed, tossing Confusion to the winds, tore the postcard out of the typer and began to write this letter. That's the way it happened.

Of late, I've been wondering if its worth it all. Fandom, that is. I've found that if I don't read the promags I don't really miss them. The same with fanmags--probably because there are so few good ones. The majority of fan material of late has been truly cruddy, and I've probably contributed my share. You can look through a dozen fan mags without finding anything worth remembering or commenting upon. I remember at Chicon, Tom Quinn asking me if I thot I could give up fandom, I told him yes, and he just gave me an incredulous stare. Right now I don't think I've ever been so sure of that answer.

Fandom doesn't carry that glorious exultation any more. I find myself finding fault with things, perhaps justifiably so. As I said, the good fanmags are few and far between, and I just don't have the time to fan like a true fan should. I thumb through a fanzine and see good fans wasting themselves. Instead of turning out roams of fan crud they could be working on a story to sell to the pros. But it's a vicious circle, you can't break away from it without severing a lot of ties. I can't figure out fans anymore. They've become aliens of some sort. Take Hoffman. She's loaded with talent, but of late seems to becoming cynical and cliqish. Some issues of Q are directed toward just one or two people or a little clique of her friends. And she says, "So what. If you dont like it go jump." I don't mind the attitude, I employ it myself sometimes, but not all the time! Instead of doing something worthwhile I find her mumbling on about Bloch being her great-grandmother etc. I am not amused. In fact, I find it almost silly. I like humor, and fan humor and satire is vitally essential to combat the insidious fanzine that takes everything deadly serious, but not the cliquish type. Like I say, I cant figure Lee out. She isn't the fan she was a year ago. Now, somehow, she is remote and aloof. Fandom is above her. Q has slipped badly. I've read whole issues of late and found nothing in them. I'm lost. It seems that a new fandom has arisen, and I'm not in it.

Dear Rich,

I've been down with a real 1919 type flu. After eight days with a temperature of 102 I tottered downstairs with the thought of a week or so of full time fanactivity in which I might actually get up to date with everything and get onto a sort of day to day level--only one day's mail to deal with--and started to get organised. (I wish I had that peculiarly fannish ability not to bother with things...I should be a lot happier...but I will persist in keeping letters, not only keeping them but filing them and even answering them.) Started with the business type ones and worked up to the more important ones, mailing out Slants and Hyphens the while, and then of course found myself in such a state of complete exhaustion that for the last week I've only been able to read and doze all day. I haven't felt so browned off with fandom since I came into it. Maybe it's just post-influenzal

depression, but the letters I get seem stupider, the new fanzines seem more completely devoid of merit, and the general standard of fanzines in corpore seem more depressing than I've ever noticed before. The only encouraging thing is that the few people of worth in fandom seem to belong to the inner active circle, the True Fans if you'll excuse the expression. But a census of them makes you realise how horribly precarious the position is. I suppose if you count the number of people without whom fandom wouldn't be worth belonging to...well let's do it. Reading from left to right, Sneary, Burbee, Laney, the Coles, Calkins, Boggs yourself, Vick, Hoffman,...oops Bloch, Faulkner, Tucker, Silverberg (there must be more I can't be bothered totally recalling fandom) and on this side Clarke, Harris, Bulmer and Enever.....there couldn't be more than a couple of dozen altogether. It makes you wonder what fandom will be like in a couple of years, now that the prozines have virtually withdrawn their support and the rate of recruitment is starting to drop. On the other hand quite a large proportion of the good fans have been in fandom a long time and look like staying in it more or less all their lives. I don't think myself I'll ever completely withdraw from it: it's far too interesting to watch. Another reason is that fans like ourselves have an extra interest in the timebinding qualities of fandom. We get not only egoboo out of it, but immortality. That is assuming that fandom is still extant in another twenty years, and fans still have this interesting tendency towards fancester worship, there will be eager neofans fingering with awe hallowed copies of the Elsberry OPUS or the Willis Q and writing goshwowoboy articles about us legendary giants. It's a fascinating prospect and makes me wonder should we not in our own interests rally round the N3F, which after all does do the drudgery of digging up potential acolytes.

You wonder why people think you're bitter. Well, you do give that impression. But as you imply yourself it's not so much what you say about things but the things you select to write about. You're inclined to select the things which should be criticised and criticise them effectively, neglecting the things which should be praised. In the OPUS report you dissect with surgical dispassion and efficiency a number of things that deserve it, but you don't praise a number of things that equally well deserve to be praised. Of course I know it's hard to be interesting when handing out compliments, and criticism is more fun both to read and write--I had the same trouble myself, which is why as you say my report was better when it wasn't about the con--and there's really nothing to be done about it. The best conreport I've ever written per se was the one on the 61 London and that was because it was written at a time when I didn't know the people I was writing about very well and had the neofan's idea that pros were semighodlike creatures with no ordinary human feelings. I tore into them without restraint and started regretting it almost immediately. Apparently I disrupted the London Circle, brought the 15 year old feud between Gillings and Carnell to a head so that Gillings retired from publishing and incurred Carnell's eternal distrust. Since then I've been more circumspect, and of course in any case as a guest it wouldn't have been ethical for me to have been really rude to anyone at Chi. Which is one of the reasons your conreport is a better one than mine.

Warblings 4

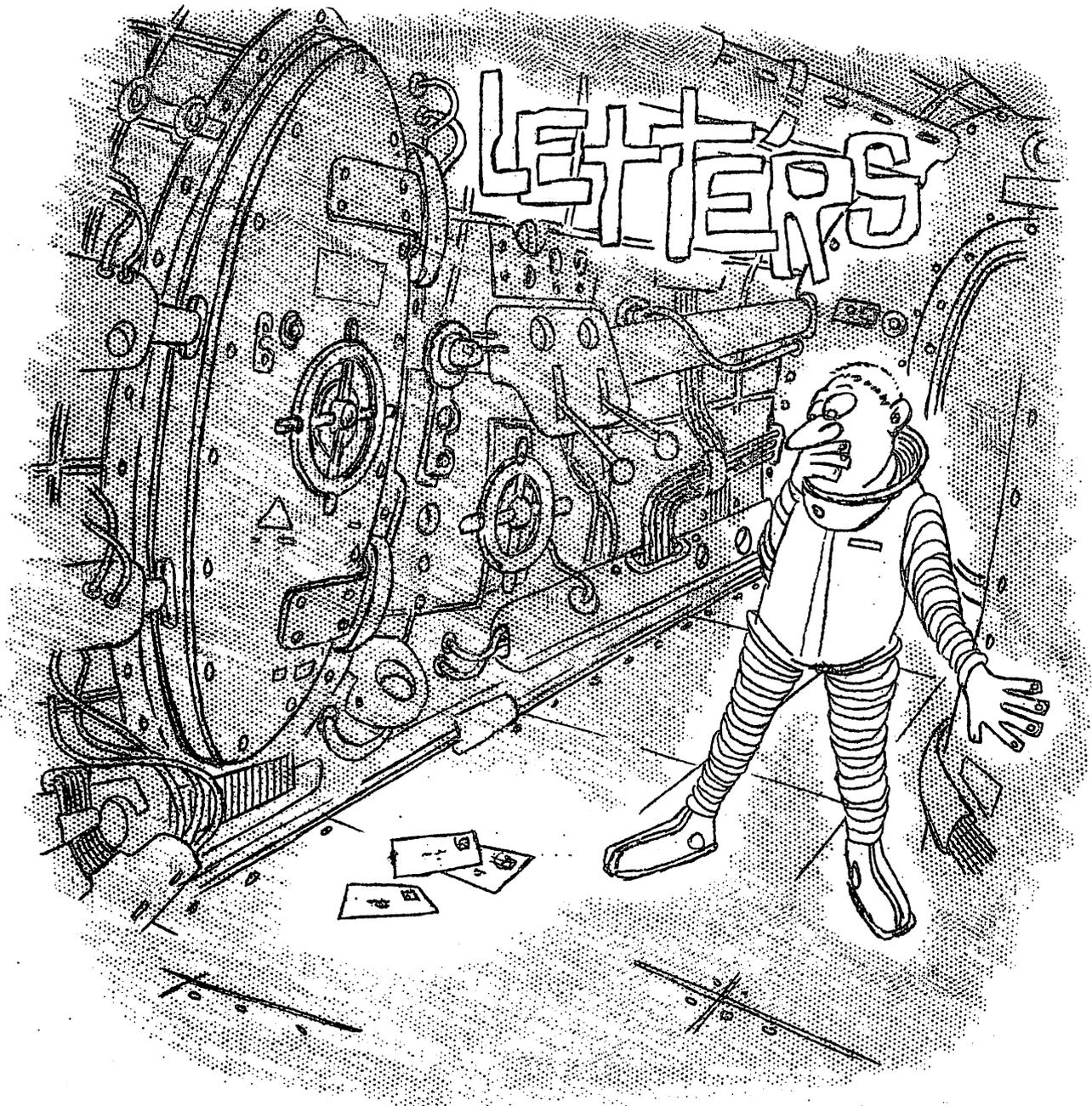
Of course I think sometimes your reputation precedes you and people attribute to you bitterness beyond the call of duty. As for instance when Chuck comments; "I thought it was wonderful too. Elsberry would insult anything except the Mpls.U. He must have a hell of a job fitting a little stinger into every paragraph. I bet Kyle passes around his Chesterfields at the next Convention." Whereas it hadn't occurred to me that you intended any dig at Kyle at all.(((Note:It is not customary in America to pass cigarettes around.)))

This letter has already taken me two weeks so I guess I'd better not try to finish this page. That flu seems to have really taken it out of me. I get up about eleven, read for a while until my conscience begins to hurt, send out some 4s and maybe write a note to somebody, and then feel so tired there's nothing I can do the rest of the day but read and doze. Ah well, I guess it's about time I had a rest. I've been active in two fandoms for too long without a break.

++++
++++

Thank Ghod I'm not feeling now as I did then. That sort of mood was endemic in fandom at the time, as if everyone had had pneumonia(which it turned out to be in my case) and we were entering the long and difficult convalexcence known as Seventh Fandom.

Walter A.Willis.



Sid Birchby
40 Parrs Wood
Didsbury.
Manchester

"It's all very well for you to print my new address, but you didn't get it right on the envelope of Scot 31! There is a Parrs Wood Avenue, a Parrs Wood Lane, a Parrs Wood Road, and a Parrs Wood Road South. Busy man that Parrs was. On the old maps of the last century, there appears "Parr's toll-bar", so it seems that he had the concession for collecting turn-pike fees round here. However, the point I am stressing is that you merely put '40 Parrs Wood' and the following happened. The GPO crossed out the 40 and substituted '327' (Don't ask why!) Then someone crossed out '327' and wrote in big letters 'Not 327' followed by 'Try Withington end' (Again, don't ask why. Withington is a couple of miles away) Finally it got here. Only the fact that I am notorious for the bizarre mail from all quarters that fandom sends me could account for that!" +++Can't understand why I forgot the Didsbury-my one and only Uncle has lived there for years. If you meet a tall melancholy man with a broad Scots accent--that's my Uncle. +++

Roy Kay
91 Craven St.
Birkenhead
Cheshire

"Thanks for sending me SCOTTISHE. Yes, I think 'open letter from Frances Varley' is very funny indeed, you would almost think it was actually true...I think it might be a good idea for fandon generally if someone were to invent an ego-slitting machine. Part "a" would be engaged in active fanaticism, "b" say

on serious writing, "c" on the social round..and so on. And the rest of us could just lay back while little ghost replicas of ourselves flit around the place." +++If you ever get around to making one of these machines-let me have the first one. I need it in the worst way.+++

Keith Otter
149 High Rd.
Willesden Green
London.NW10

"I think John Roles should do some more investigation into Estate Duty before he declains it as "criminal robbery of the rich". Estate Duty is known by taxation specialists as a "voluntary tax". It can be avoided with the minimum of effort and if any criminal robbery is occurring it is only

the rich who are criminals. Estate Duty is only paid where the deceased was too mean to give his money to his heirs before his death. If he gives his money to his heirs more than five years before his death no Estate Duty is payable when he dies providing certain other conditions are complied with. I once toyed with the idea of a man giving all his money to his son in that way and the son then claiming Dependant Relatives Allowance against his tax assessment; but decided that those "certain other conditions" would prevent him getting away with it. So far as I can see, the best thing for the heir of a multi-millionaire can do, after coming into his inheritance, is to die quickly so that his heirs can claim Quick Succession Relief." +++There is a book-POKER AND I by John Coates which describes very amusingly the efforts of the Earl of Tintagel to avoid death duties. He said "I was born in 1880 if my heir is born in 1950, and his heir in 2020, we'll have to pay death duties once every seventy years." He married five times and fixed it so that he never had a legitimate heir at the wrong time.Highly recommended this book++

Robert Coulson,
Route 3
Wabash
Indiana. USA

"I thoroughly agree with you about "Death Duties". I am in favor of rugged individualism; I even agree partially with Ayn Rand's reactionary theories that the government has no right to step in and, through excessive taxes, deprive a man of the right to become a multi-millionaire, if he wants

to be. But, I see no reason at all for someone who has done nothing to earn the money to be handed a million dollars simply because his father was industrious. If he wants a million, let him earn it himself. If he can't earn it himself, then he can jolly well do without it. If I was running things, any part of an estate running over--oh say \$50,000--would be confiscated.(That, of course, is a rough estimate, and I will sneer at any quibbling over the exact amount). My theory is that a man is entitled to exactly nothing, simply because he's a man. I would graciously allow everyone the minimum for survival(if I was running things that is), but if they wanted more than that, they could get out and dig for it.+++ There is the point that a man might live where there is no jobs. That minimum allowance would need to include enough to allow him to move where there was work. Also he might need re-training... As a rugged individualist, you might not approve of the schemes this would surely require+++

Bill Danner
RDI
Kennerdell
Pa. USA

"Do you know Harry Turner? Did you ever see Now and Then, the printed magazine he used to publish? It was a big loss to amateur journalism when he folded it, and I still like to think he may revive it someday. He sort of half-hinted

at doing an article for me called "I Ate At the Table Next to Michael Frayn's in the Guardian Canteen" or some such thing. Needless to say, it would be most welcome, but I'm not holding my breath." +++That's good! Otherwise you would be blue in the face wouldn't you? The Trouble With Harry is - he went Bats on Brubeck and decided fandom was childish..The last time I saw him he was jiggling round the room, snapping his fingers, with an ecstatic expression on his face as he listened to Brubeck. Eyeing him carefully, I decided that it was too soon to try to argue him back. But I've been working on it....+++

Ian Moffatt
10202 Belcher
Downey
California,USA
"CULLODON sounds like my kind of book. And I certainly agree with you that a world with only one culture would be pretty dull. A united world, with all nations striving together to keep peace and promote progress, is a fine ideal--I'm all for it, but I'd hate to see individual national cultures erased in order to obtain the "One World" ideal.+++Right: there would be little point in any TAFFER going to America if all he found was more of the same; and vice versa. Long live le difference!+++

Colin Freeman
41 Mornington Cres.
Harrogate, Yorks.
"I was a little surprised by your cover last time. It looks more like one of Coulson's. In fact I can't recall ATOM having drawn a woman before, but there must be an awful lot of his work that I have't seen. It strikes me that there is a consistent similarity in the fannish type of woman (artwork I mean). The oriental eyes, the pony tails, and the sensuous lips that convey an expression of seduction combined with cynicism. Fans have so many things in common--do you think they also share a dream of their ideal woman? And do you think she might be something of an impossibility; possessing both innocence and experience?RON BENNETT DOLL:-WIND IT UP AND THE ACE OF SPADES DROPS OUT OF ITS SLEEVE.+++I'll leave Ron to sort you out for the Doll crack, but as regards your questions--- I think I think that the ideal woman that all men dream of is an impossibility. Fortunately for the human race they are usually willing to settle for a living breathing woman.+++

Stan Woolston
12832 Westlake St.
Garden Grove
Calif.USA
"In the letters I get the idea some deplore politics as unfit for humans; the fact is it is a sort of human hobby. It is apt to grow away from a majority of people unless they become involved enough to counter such a trend, and I have an idea some "politicians" desire that, trying to pretend that they are experts in the field and the people are butting in to areas they have no right to be. If people avoid politics, then it can become a sort of private property of the few--and THAT leads to "divine rights of kings" and dictatorship." +++It always saddens me to find an intelligent person (like Ken Potter, for instance) who takes no interest in politics at all. I also became mildly infuriated a while back, when a university student airily said that she thought what our country needed was a dictator.+++

Brian Aldiss
24 Marston St
Iffley Rd
Oxford
"Thanks so much for sending me on John Baxter's poem; I really loved it and thought it tremendous. All the same, "I don't see that's any reason to let the dog get away with it! Accordingly, I've knocked out a rather Pope-like reply--Alexander, I mean; I hope it's not too pontifical..If you could print my reply side by side with John's, that would be lovely--mine means little standing alone.+++No sooner asked than done. Stand back everyone..this is a friendly fight!+++

SF - A Proposition:

How comforting to drift along and say
That these things just don't count;
To ramble on about "a dream unfurled",
Or say that sf is a fount
Of blazing concepts, bright as jewels,
And turn your eyes from style and taste,
And sense and depth, as if but toys for fools

You wallow there like a slow sodden whale,
Feeding from the stream.
Each pale soft slug-like tale you chew
And, sated, lapse into a troubled dream
Where fantasies, like belches ripe,
Rumble through your tangled guts
And shake your squalid flesh into false life.

Too lazy and too dull to look around,
Your fallow mind invents
Bright childish fairy-tales to pass the time.
And so, without regard for sense,
Adventures wild and battled royal
Entertain your empty days
And take your mind from thoughts of mundane toil.

Yet all the time, before your stupid stare,
The world is burning free
In thrusting duel, wit meets bladed wit;
A rich word-woven filigree
Challenges the questing mind,
And men of clear unclouded eye
Discover joys that dreamers never find.

John Baxter.

SF -An Imposition?

Behold how BAXTER'S "clear unclouded eye"
Catches me napping gently o'er sci-fi!
In wrath, since of "the world" he fondly prates;
My inward-looking eye he castigates,
As if reality were only things
You touch! And "slugs" and insults next he flings,
For he who sets a musing world aright
Will rarely set his Muse to be polite;
He christens me "slow sodden whale", although
If those beasts dream, does only BAXTER know?
Has only BAXTER found dreaming a crime
And sf "fairy tales to pass the time"?
Why, yes! - If his the "wit meets bladed wit"
With "rich word-woven filigree" to fit
(Though what such Scrabble babble means, enquire
Not here!) If self-praise could to truth aspire,
Humility and "mundane toil" would squelch
BAXTER'S ill-gotten notion whales could belch,
While lexicons his "questing mind" would prime
With knowledge "jewels" put by "fools" won't rhyme.

Let us on sf feed our dreaming still,
That myths may baste our reason and our will;
Let him the "burning world" and heaven scan-
For one thing's sure: his poems never can.

Brian Aldiss.

Bill Wolfenbarger "I hope you like NIGHT QUESTIONS and publish it. If
602 West Hills St however you do not publish it, please return it to
Neosho.Mo.USA me by return mail, so I will be able to submit the
poem to another publisher.

+++Bill, very few faneditors have time to write by return mail! Keep a copy
and ask them just to drop you a card. It's not that I wouldn't like to pub-
lish more..it's just (says she darkly)that I have folks in this fanzine who
don't know when to stop! +++

NIGHT QUESTIONS

1

What passing graveside gloom
Could ever bring forth
Eternal sleep
Wrapped tightly 'round the womb?

2

The moon; far north
Of us, will keep...
When the freeze of Winter is graying,
What will the nightmares be saying?

Bill Wolfenbarger.

Letters 6

Betty Kujawa "ATTENTION ..now..in Scot 31 Seth asks for a book which
2819 Caroline gives us info on The British..I give three books to you..
South Bend 14 LOVE AND THE ENGLISH by Nina Epton,World Pub.Co.this one
Indiana. USA for history of love and sex and social high-jinks. EXPLOR-
ING ENGLISH CHARACTER by Geoffrey Gorer,Criterion BooksNY.

a basic must one you should have yourself for heaven's sake.LIFE IN BRITAIN
by J.D.Scott,Wm.Morrow & Co...another basic 'must'. This last one's remarks
as to Soc.Medicine would warm your heart..well put, not overdone nor propa-
ganda..just examples in family lives so we here can understand.+++Thanks,
Betty, and welcome back+++

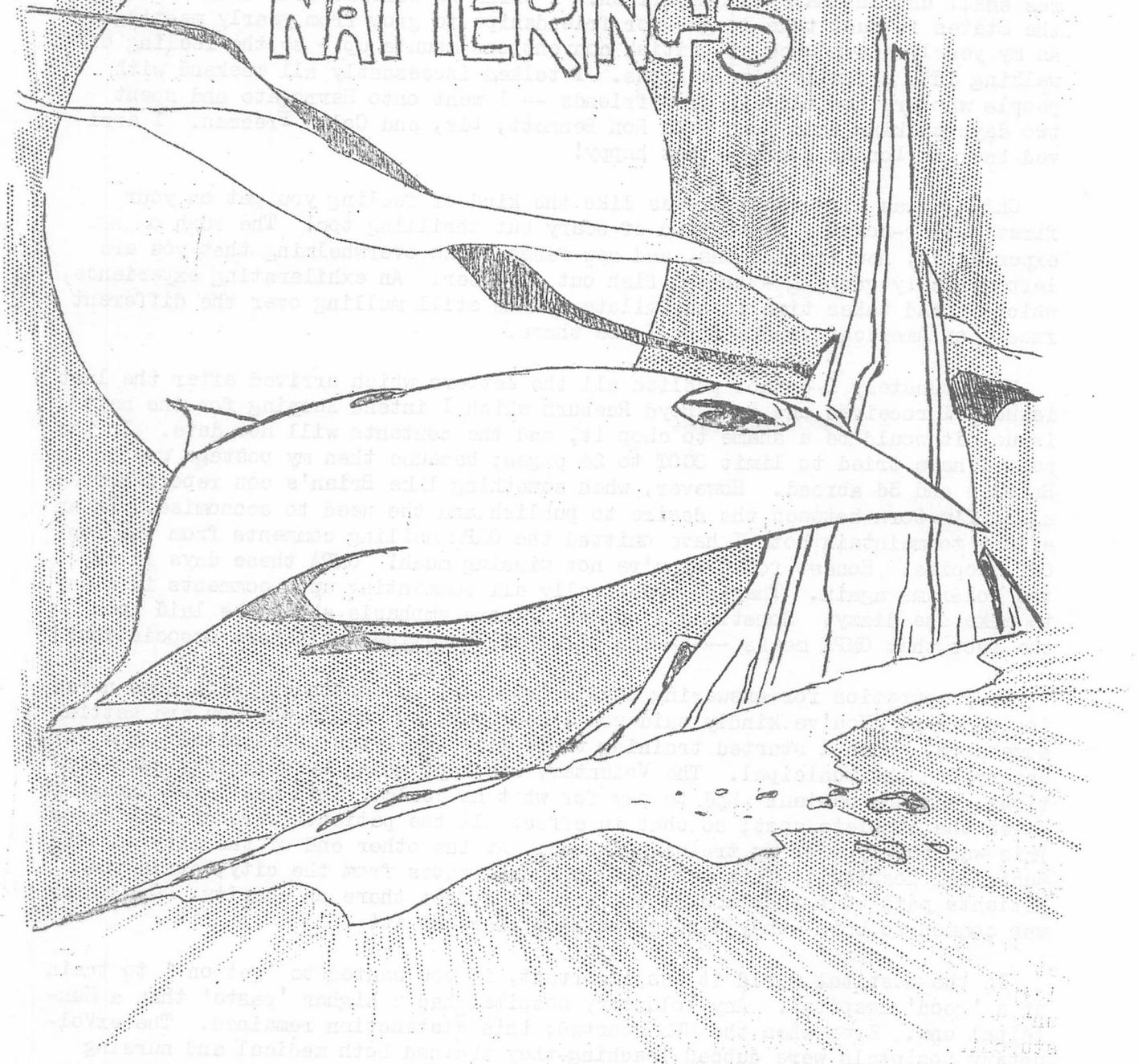
Harry Warner "Honesty has won out over vanity and I must confess that I'm
423 Summit Ave not totally aware of the meaning of certain things in your
Hagerstown. review of CULLODON, because of my ignorance about some of the
Maryland.USA basic facts of Scottish history. I imagine my ~~embarrassment~~
would find some companionship if most Britishers tried to
read some of the flood of publications about the American Civil War that is now
flowing off the presses. There are things that the Civil War chronicler seldom
bothers to explain"..However, I've noticed one small thing about your past 2 or
3 issues: that your return address ends with Gt.Britain instead of England.
Again I'll show off my ignorance by wondering aloud if this is a new post office
directive or an expression of your personal convictions."+++Ha! Ron Bennett
spotted this before you, and objected that it was 'silly'. However should I
persist, says he, it must be Great Britain to be correct. It is correct usage
alright; but, I don't know why..is rarely used. So - I'm using it.*+++

Ian Peters "..your CULLODEN review was excellent, I couldn't have done
88 Newquay Rd a better job myself! So much so that I feel that any reply
London SE6. I could make to Colin Freeman's remarks would be superfluous.
In the main he and I have no quarrel, but this blind spot of
his concerning the supposed synonymity of "Britain"and "England" is all too
common...In answer(I have a bad habit of taking facetious remarks more serious
than intended)to Roy Tackett, I feel that as a fairly typical Pict, my own
views can be taken as a fair sample. I base this on the following: the Picts
are simply the people who during the centuries when the word was used, formed
the majority of the population. Probably every Scot with 100 years of Scottish
ancestry to his credit has a good deal of Pictish blood in him. The purest
Pict blood exists in the N.E. Fife, Perthshire and Inverness-shire, the district
that bred the tallest folk in Scotland. Since both my parents are Fifers, and
as a family we average just under 6 feet, I reckon I am entitled to speak for
the Picts." +++I was born across the river from Fife..we have a saying.."It
taks' a lang spoon tae sup wi' a Fifer"....it's no meant to be a compliment+++

Wim Struyck "I very much liked the "open letter" from Frances Var-
WilleBrorDusstr 33B lay. Poor Frances! Being a husband myself, however,
Rotterdam 11 I'm afraid that it is all very exaggerated and that in
Holland the end Brian is the one who gets the worst deal.That's
what husbands always get, in that kind of skirmish. When we think we've won
and after we've bought the flowers to wipe her tears away, that's the time to
get suspicious." +++Sir! I fear you are a cynic!.....and a fan too.....+++

WE ALSO HEARD FROM..and regret no space to publish..Dr Dupla. and
Boyd Raeburn. All letters, published or not, are passed on to the contribut-
ers. Thanks.....+Ethel.

NATTERINGS



The timebinding element in fandom - that Walt Willis is so fond of mentioning - has been rather to the fore in my mind recently. After cutting all nine Machia-Varley stencils, I then moved on to cutting Walt's latest instalment. With my mind still fresh from the first; all sorts of things struck me forcibly about the second. Walt is showing us letters that were written ten years ago; and he is discussing with Rich a convention report. His words could just as easily be directed to Brian...ten years later!

In the light of my own recent visit to Chicago, Walt's last two instalments have been fascinating to me...I dearly wish I had read them before I went! The

main thing that impressed me in Chicago was the vast number of attendees. This year's British convention, although having our largest attendance yet, was small and intimate in comparison. I think we benefit from this: over in the States it must take longer for friendships to grow from yearly meetings. As my yearly attendance at British conventions mounts up - so the feeling of walking into a family circle grows. I talked incessantly all weekend with people who are now old and dear friends -- I went onto Harrogate and spent two days talking some more with Ron Bennett, Liz, and Colin Freeman. I arrived back in London hoarse -- but happy!

Chicago was different: it was like the kind of feeling you get on your first roller-coaster ride; kind of scary but thrilling too! The rush of new experiences, new impressions, and new faces is so overwhelming that you are left mentally gasping - like a fish out of water. An exhilarating experience, which I find takes time to assimilate. I am still mulling over the different facets of American fandom that I saw there.

Unfortunately I cannot publish all the letters which arrived after the last issue. I received one from Boyd Raeburn which I intend keeping for the next issue, it would be a shame to chop it, and the contents will not date. In the past I have tried to limit SCOT to 24 pages; because then my postage was 4d in Britain and 3d abroad. However, when something like Brian's con report comes along I'm torn between the desire to publish and the need to economise. In an effort to maintain both I have omitted the OMPA mailing comments from the non-OMPA copies. Honest folks--you're not missing much! OMPA these days is in the doldrums again. They're practically all commenting upon comments in a way to make one dizzy. Sometimes I wonder if more emphasis should be laid upon the fact that OMPA means -----The Off-Trail Magazine Publishers Association!

In preparation for answering Boyd's letter, I am continuing with some nursing remarks. You've kindly said you liked them..so that's why you are getting some more! When I started training there were two types of hospital - the Voluntary and the Municipal. The Voluntary was kept going by voluntary subscriptions, and the patient had to pay for what he could. This was never enough to cover the complete cost; so that in effect all the patients were charity cases. This was the type of my training school. At the other end of the city was the Municipal hospital. This was kept up by the rates from the city, again the patients paid what they could, but were in effect there on charity. One thing was common to both--they were often made aware of it!

In the hospital world it was important, if you wanted to 'get on' to train at a 'good' hospital. Any Voluntary hospital had a higher 'caste' than a Municipal one. Even when the NHS started; this distinction remained. The exVoluntary hospitals were dubbed Teaching--they trained both medical and nursing students. The ex-Municipal were dubbed non-Teaching, and trained only nurses. The Teaching hospitals benefited by having only a Board of Governors between them and the Minister of Health. The non-Teaching hospitals had a House Committee, a Hospital Management Board, and then a Regional Board..before they reached the Minister. So the subtle elan produced by being trained at an ex-Voluntary hospital remained.

This distinction still counts! Even after years of nursing...it helped me when I came down to London...that I could name an exVoluntary hospital as my training school. It still counts...which is why there is never a nursing shortage at St Thomas's Hospital opposite the Houses of Parliament, whilst at Kingston-upon-Thames just down the river-there is always a shortage.

What will change this irrational and unfair position is the new ten year plan laid out by the Minister. With his new scheme of large district hospitals; there will be such a shakeup in the hospital world as will eventually blur these old dividing lines.

At my training school I used to hear.."If you are trained at the DRI you can go anywhere!". When I left I often used to hear this remark about other hospitals..but I noticed they were always exVoluntary ones! One thing was sure about them all -- train there and everywhere else would seem like easy work. Never again, once you left, would you do such hard work, such long hours, or be treated so badly. Pervading the whole hospital was the notion that it was doing you a favour to let you work; that grave doubts arose whether you could keep up the high standard; that you were dashed lucky to be there in the first place!

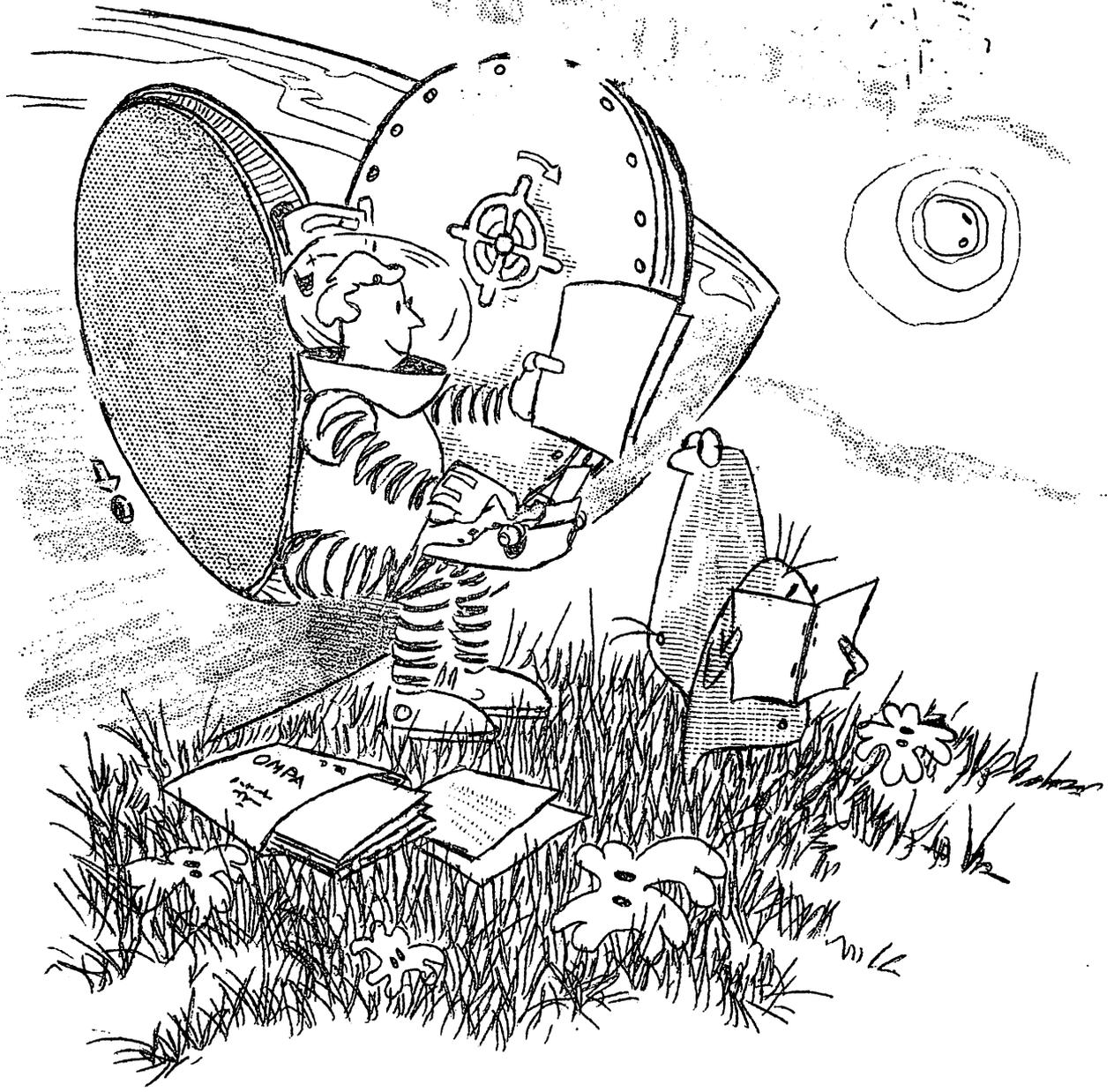
The ironical fact about this is: a lot of it was true. You were being trained to be a conscientious nurse. You were expected to put your work first; and I have to admit that a nurse who does not, is of little use. Now that I watch young nurses coming into hospital life; I find myself measuring them against the standards that I was taught to achieve. Now and then I find myself fairly appalled!

Of course many of the standards have been lowered because they were quite ridiculous in their demands upon the nurses. One demand from my school was that you never inconvenienced the hospital by going off sick; and if you did then you were probably malingering. In my four years of training I suffered badly from heavy colds, but it never occurred to me to report sick. Nor did it ever occur to anyone to send me off; even when I had lost my voice or was running a temperature. I was also back on duty the day after I had every tooth in my head extracted. The Matron informed me that it was not possible to provide me with special food.

This regard for the nurses health was, of course, shortsighted in the extreme. It is one of the traditions that one could see go without a pang. Nowadays a very careful check is kept upon a nurses health. This is one of my present responsibilities.

Mind you, so strong is early conditioning that I still cannot go off sick with "only a cold" without a strong feeling of guilt!

.....Ethel Lindsay.



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TAFF TRIP REPORT 1962

This is a TAFF News Item issued by Ethel Lindsay
Courage House
6 Langley Avenue.
Surbiton.Surrey.Britain.

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I have finished writing a report of the TAFF sponsored trip I made this year to attend Chicon in Chicago, Illinois. I spent thirty one days in America.

The report will consist of at least 50 pages of text, and will be illustrated by ATOM. It will be sold for seven shillings and sixpence or 1 dollar. All proceeds will be donated to TAFF.

I have begun to transfer the report to stencil. It would greatly help to have an idea of the number of copies that will be required; so I am sending you this order form which can be returned either to myself or to the American representative Ron Ellik.

Please support TAFF by ordering a copy; as an added inducement I proffer the fact that, thanks to the kind help of Dick Eney, there will be a photo page!

SUPPORT TAFF! FANDEM'S OWN GOOD NEIGHBOUR FUND!

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