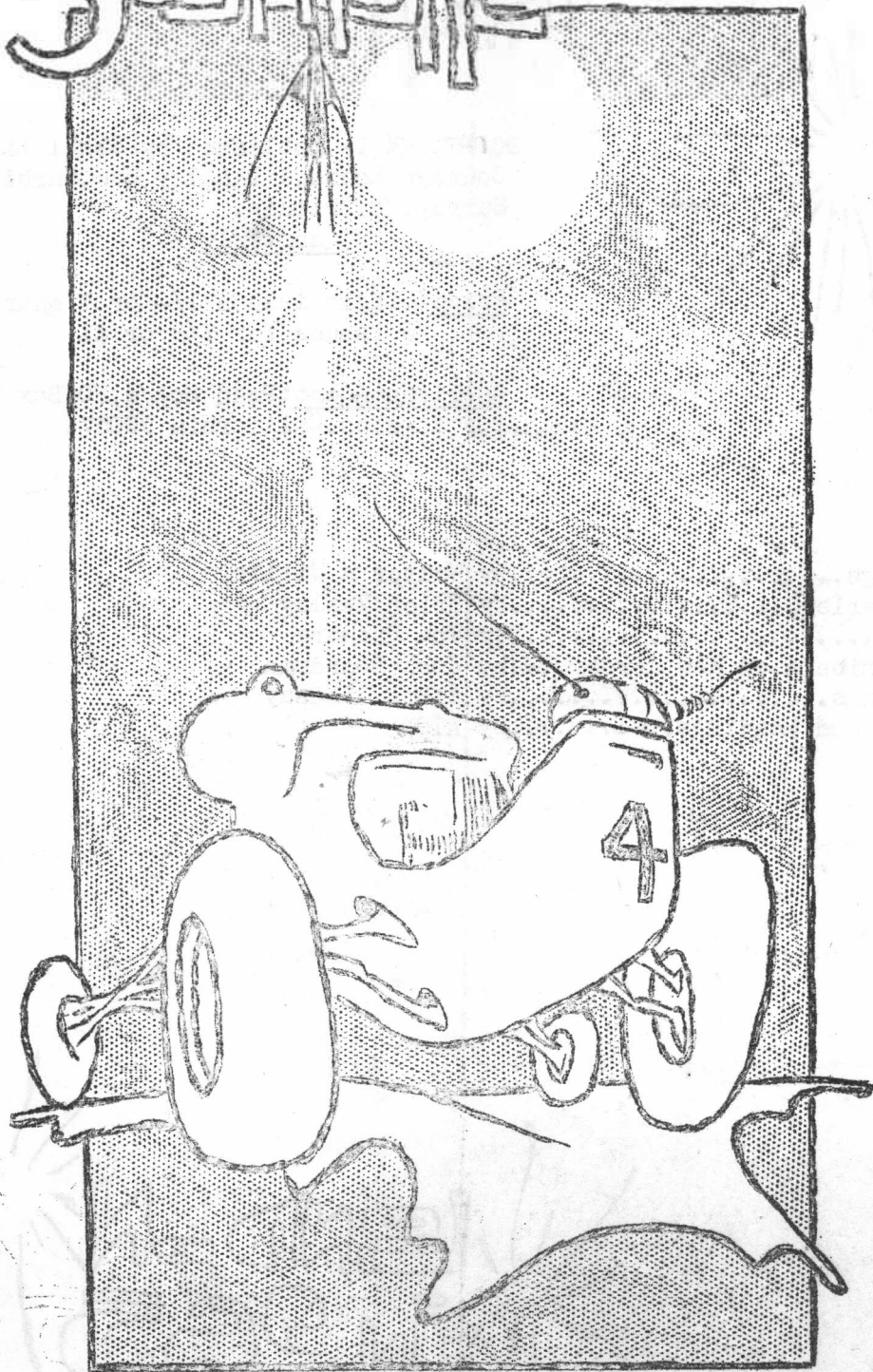
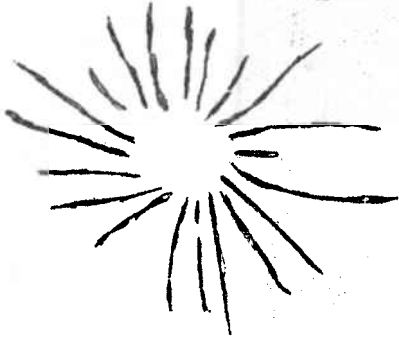


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SCOTTISH



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SCOTTISHE is published by Ethel Lindsay
Courage House, 6 Langley Ave. Surbiton.
Surrey, Gt. Britain.

Quarterly

Price: Single issues 1/- or 1 quarter
5 issues for 7/6 or \$1

American Agent: Redd Boggs, PO Box 57242
Los Angeles, California 90057.

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LONDON
VIN 965

Warblings

Walt
Willis

Lee Hoffman, in 1952, used to date her letters "The Year Of Not Enough Time". For most of us survivors of Sixth Fandom the following year was the one of Not Enough Energy. By early 1953 the strain of the American Trip had finally caught up to me, and in March I was writing to Chuck Harris.....

"I went into the office that Monday with the sole purpose of borrowing the stapler and they sent me home that afternoon. Went to bed, next day sent for the doctor, temperature 102, sulfa drugs, no good, medical science baffled, doctor collapses with flu, second doctor says penicillin nurse comes in daily with garden syringe, 600000 international units, finally after eight days temperature gets back to normal, after 11 stagger downstairs, start weakly to send out /s, too much for me, back into semi-coma.

I still don't feel so good, but I'm a hell of a lot more cheerful than I was. That second doctor sent me down to the Mass Radiography place for an X Ray. They called me back for a larger one, and then recalled me again for a medical examination yesterday. This did not make me happy, because I've always had a thing about tb, and I had already metally drafted a gallant message to fandom and was wondering whether I should make a joke about the fanatarium. However the bod says for his money it's nothing but a post-influenzal inflammation of the lungs so I may live awhile yet"

I feel something like that at the moment, which is why this instalment is briefer than usual and less controversial than I had intended. I had thought of embarking on a study of the first phase of the Great Mackenzie W-r; but the research needed is beyond me at the moment. I had also thought of doing a survey of the notorious fanzine INCINERATIONS, the only

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fanzine to my knowledge ever to have been actually banned by the Postal Authorities, but I lack confidence in my ability to indicate exactly why it was banned without bringing the same fate to Scottishe. Why, last time I merely tried to answer some criticism in what I thought was a good-humoured and tolerant way, and was immediately accused of being "snide to neo-fans". Obviously I am losing my touch. It's a pity, because INCINERATIONS would have showed what "snide" really means. Maybe by the time the next deadline comes round and the hospital has found out what is wrong with me I will feel more enterprising.7 Meanwhile, back in 1953, I see I was so sunk in lethargy as to have doubts even as to the future of Omgs, which was then just a gleam in Vinc Clarke's eyes....

"Now here I am left at the top of the page with all the enclosures tucked away and all of a sudden nothing left to comment on. Don't tell me I'm going to be reduced to thinking of something original to say. Recently it's begun to alarm me the way you and Vinc and Paul seem to spend your fannish existence writing witty letters to one another. I seem to have lost the habit some time during the last year, when I was forced to work on the principle of the Conservation of Energy...that is never waste anything in letters which you might be able to use in print. Or rather, since prior apperance in a letter has never been any ban to subsequent use in print, only write letters when for some reason, such as complete mental exhaustion, you can't write a coln or something with a higher crifanac index. This is utterly wrong and unethical, and not only that but not much fun. I intend once I recover from my present state of mental torpor to join your happy circle. Maybe even my carbon copies will be worthy of circulation in this congenial group. Which is incidentally the nearest thing I think we need to a British Fapa. Who else do we want? Why should we waste time duping mags for a parcel of cretins when we can reach all the people we want with a few carbon copies. I think this British Fapa idea is crazy. Just look at Initiative Inc. which died away with less than half a dozen particioants. The truth is that there is just not enough talent in Englis fandom nor likely to be in the forseable future to make it self sufficient. I don't see why it should be anyway. I think our job is to integrate British fandom with the main stream in America and have one strong fandom instead of one fairly strong one and one epicone one. Look at Australian fandom as a horrible example. It has been going on for some twenty years and never yet has produced one single issue of one fanzine of the slightest merit nor since it's never produced one worthwhile fan, probably not even one original sentence. The whole of Australian fandom with all the rivers of ink and reams of paper it's used had just been a complete waste of time. No, what we should do is become members of a new world fandom. For a start you and Vince should join SAPS. I can stay in FAPA and we can exchange mailings and contribute to each other's mags."

Before I throw away the rest of this old letter there's a reference to an ethical question which arises from time to time in fandom and is never discussed. It arose this time because Forry Ackerman had offered Chuck Harris in some way a present of books or money or something to the value of £5, and Chuck had refused.

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"I don't know if you were right about 4e. I know how you feel alright --it's the same in miniature as his wanting to bigpond me; but isn't this one of those occasions when you've just got to weigh the damage to your own self respect against the possible hurt to Forry's feelings. Forry really likes to be generous, and isn't it maybe a bit selfish to value one's own amour propre above the pleasure it gives him to be bountiful. Sometimes it's almost as blessed to receive as to give...though more difficult to do gracefully. If I see Forry as I do now, if that bigpond situation arose again I don't know I wouldn't accept. Forry just loves to be generous...and incidentally is surprisingly introspective about it, speculating to me, in a wry sort of way, about it's being a symptom of psychological insecurity..and the way I behaved over the bigpond affair really shook him. I believe it sort of struck at the root of his psycho, at the deeply held belief that there should be none of this debit/credit nonsense among friends, and all along the journey from Chi to IA was sort of timorous. I'd been expecting trouble with him standing me things and maybe announced a bit too firmly my intention of paying my own way...meals, drinks and whatnot. Anyway he was sort of cowed about it and almost leaned over backwards to avoid offending me by pressing anything on me. Though when he saw the opportunity to do something---as for instance when at Grand Canyon I was eyeing a stereoscopic viewer as a possible present for Madeleine and he jumped in and bought it himself for her---he took it with glee. It's awfully hard to know what to do in these affairs, when to draw the line. I accepted one of Forry's shirts in IA against one that had been lost in the wash, and before I knew it I was being fitted with an entire outfit...jacket, trousers, shoes...which were supposed to have belonged to Alden Lorraine and which of course they were just going to throw out since they didn't fit 4e. They did fit me perfectly, and by this time I'd come to have a revised outlook on Forry's make up, so the next time you see me I'll be wearing a jacket that used to belong to Alden Lorraine Ackerman, and maybe trousers and shoes too. If I can do that, you can accept five quid. Who are you thinking of, yourself or 4e?"

And finally, a piece of gossip.....

"Lava Firestone wants details of British fmz for an N3F checklist. I'm gonna give her NIRVANA. Did I ever tell you about Eva and GO.Smith? One day GOS was wandering thru a convention with his feet about two inches off the ground as usual, when someone stopped him with "George, give us a dollar." George generously obliges, whereupon the other says "Congratulations George you are now a fully paid up member of the National Fantasy Fan Federation." "NOOO!" screams George falling to his knees. But there was no escape. Muddled mimeographed mutterings began to come through his mailbox. And also letters from well-meaning old ladies calling themselves the Welcommittee. One of them, Eva, was helpful with advice as to how to get on in fandom. Comment on fanzines, she exhorts him, write letters, articles, be active" George replies, deadpan, that he's sorry he wouldn't have much time for fan-activity--he's too busy with his professional writing. Back comes a congratulatory letter from Wyoming. "I'm so glad," she says, "to hear that you are trying your hand at pro writing. Just keep trying," she advises him,

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"and one of these days I'm sure you'll crash the prozines." This GOS assured me, is the absolute truth."

Chuck's six-page reply was as fascinating and as unquotable as ever. To show I'm not hogging the limelight I shall send the whole letter with what I regard as the quotable bits indicated, and let her quote the whole six pages if she likes.....

"If Doglor was ever equipped with a conscience, he must have felt just like I feel right now. If only I'd known you were ill I could have bombarded you with letters, 'get-well' cards and medical dictionaries. Instead, I thought I'd been pariahed and I maintained a haughty silence. I'd been frantically re-reading my old carbons trying to find out what I'd said.. I shall write to Vince tomorrow and try to find out if he's sick too....I'm sorry you've got influenza. For my money it's an under-rated infection. It can be damn dangerous (Ol' Job used to love my bedside manner). Whatever you do, don't go back to work in a hurry, and don't be overly energetic. Even after all the symptoms have vanished there is always an aftermath of a terrific sense of depression. The best cure for this is lassitude. That is you just sits.....I agree with you about a British FAPA. It was Vince's idea at first but I think it was mainly constructive. It never struck me that we could cover the elite by using carbon copies. I half-believe that you are a genius too. I think you are a little harsh on Australian fandom. One original sentence indeed! How about "one-handed readers"?...They're building a Full Gospel church down the main road...Up on the caravan site somebody's kid fell in the cesspool when they left the manhole open and his mum dived in and saved him...Do you think I would look a fairy in a red corduroy jacket?...I've got terrific fat during this winter.. Mainly around the gut. Haven't reached Elsberry stage yet -- I only look about four months gone...After I've posted this I have to pollinate the peach tree. It's too early for bees so I do an imitation with a twist of cottonwool stuck on a piece of bamboo. It's not a very exciting. Bees have a very dull existence. I would rather be a female spider with hubby as a post-coital snack."

----- W.A.Willis.

FOR SALE

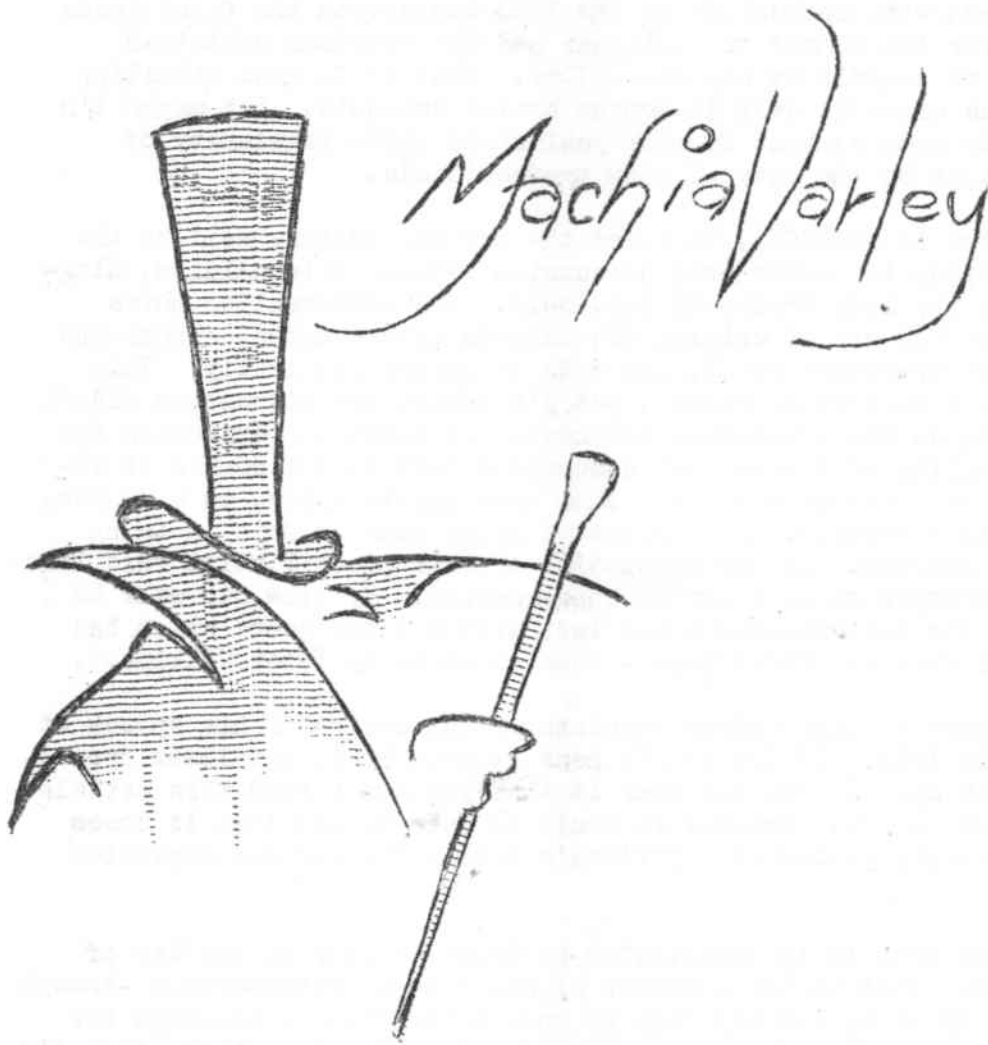
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VOTE FOR THE TAFTMAN OF YOUR CHOICE!



Spring has come a little late this year. By my reckoning it arrived on the 24th August when the Spring (and first) issue of SF HORIZONS was pushed through our letter box.

Apart from suffering from surprise, shock, and utter amazement, I also registered a twinge of pique. I had already written about two thirds of an article about SF HORIZONS, a sort of review "in absentis" which was brought on by the blurb on the back of a Penguin book by Harrison which credited him as being joint editor of the critical review SF HORIZONS. If Penguin considered it worthy of mention then who was I to ignore it? It would also have scooped all the other fanzines--which is no mean feat.

Now I find myself faced with the reality instead of the splendid myth; all of which is rather saddening. What can I say about the actual which wasn't better said about the imaginary? To start with SF HORIZONS is a fanzine in the real sense of the term. Admittedly, if you want to be dogmatic about it, a fanzine cannot be written, edited and produced by professionals, but the material is such that you can find it's equivalent in several fanzines. Even the beginnings were fannish in nature.

Propagandised with enthusiasm at the 1963 Convention the first issue was promised for the summer of that year and Tom Boardman solicited subscriptions as eagerly as any neo-editor. True to fannish tradition the first issue came out over 12 months behind schedule. But maybe I'm being unfair to some current fanzine publishers whose regularity of publication might be the envy of many professionals.

The main item in HORIZONS, at least the one the editors sell on the cover, is a taped, three-cornered discussion between Brian Aldiss, Kingsley Amis, and the late Professor C.S.Lewis. The conversation moves through the how and why of writing SF; extends into a mutual abhorrence of the critics' treatment of SF, and ends in whisky and levity. This may seem to be a cursory appraisal, but I'm afraid the discussion didn't come over to me as was presumably intended. At least one criterion for judging the quality of a broadcast discussion must be the degree of involvement of the listener - and the same must surely apply, to a degree, to the transcribed version. An impulse to argue back or join in is an indication of success. At the conclusion of this piece I still felt like an idle eavesdropper to an in-group conversation. My view may well be singular, but the fact remains I was left with but one query which had lasted through from the first page - "Who on earth is Peter Wilkins?".

Harry Harrison's contribution consists of the script of his speech at Peterborough in 1963. If you didn't hear it this is an excellent opportunity to catch up. If you did hear it then you won't read this article to refresh your memory. However it would be fair to add that it loses something in print, presumably Harrison's rather chaotic and explosive delivery.

An excellent article is contributed by Geoff Doherty on the Use of Language in SF. This is not a rehash of his talk at Peterborough - though come to think of it he did say that he hadn't the time to develop the theme he had prepared. If this was intended for the convention, then I'm glad I didn't miss it altogether.

What Geoff has to say can easily be said of any kind of fiction - a good use of imagery; onomatopoeia or other devices to convey an atmosphere are essential adjuncts to good creative writing. Needless to say, such good writing is the exception rather than the rule in SF.

The longest piece is Brian Aldiss' JUDGEMENT AT JONBAR. In this he dissects Jack Williamson's LEGION OF TIME and uses the dismembered corpse to analyse the anatomy of science fiction in general. This is a good piece of writing which I enjoyed as an exercise rather than the critical survey it was intended to be. This piece, more than any other, fulfils the editorial promises of serious criticism. Science fiction, it tells me, is a serious form of literature and must be treated and written as such. No doubt the editors of SF HORIZONS subscribe wholeheartedly to this view and one cannot blame them. After all writing SF is their living and the more people who take it seriously, the better off they should be. The trouble is that if publishers, editors, reviewers and readers did accept SF as a serious artform, then at least 50% of our present day pros would find themselves collecting rejection slips instead

MachiaVarley 3

of cheques

So it depends upon your viewpoint whether you think JUDGEMENT OF JONBAR, or indeed SF HORIZONS itself, is necessary as the editors claim. Personally speaking I read SF as a form of light relief in just the same way as I read thrillers, detective stories, and all other forms of escapist literature. If I want stimulation, thought-provoking cerebral literature the last place I shall look is in AMAZING or GALAXY.

Are the pros, I wonder, misled by the very existence of fandom in believing that sf is a special case? In my experience of fans the majority of them came to sf because they were ardent readers. They are the people who always carry a book or magazine with them..who would rather be caught without their trousers than reading matter. Agreed all fans - or nearly all - read sf: but then they'll read anything!

Brian Varley.

#####

((((THIS IS IMPORTANT))))

Do you have a copy of THE LINDSAY REPORT?

You haven't!

Then you are the cause of the 30 copies which are still cluttering up my already jampacked one room home.

Why not be nice and buy a copy - only 7/6d or 1 dollar. All the proceeds go to TAFF

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Thank you!

Ethel Lindsay



Archie Mercer
70 Worrall Rd
Bristol. 8

"SCOTTISHE 36 for instance. "This issue" it says here, "is dedicated to Ted Forsyth without whose bullying it might never have appeared." Reading MachiaVarley's piece, for once I began to think it'd be better of Ted hadn't bothered. No doubt those in the know, and those who enjoy reading things they don't understand, will consider the article a brilliant piece of superfannish wit. I merely found the deliberate obscurity annoying. It's the sort of thing that makes me react by

Letters 3

Ivor Latta
10 Merrytown Ave
Glasgow. W5
Scotland

"The books you mention do not, I feel, justify the term "new wave sf". There's no point in swapping sf definitions back and forth, but, having read all but one of the books you mention I would think that they would be better described as documentary fiction, that is fiction where the story-line is given weight by the authenticity of the background. In this category we have seen the Madison Avenue novel, the Big Business novel, the Army novel, and several others. We now have the Political, or White House novel, initiated by Allen Drury's "Advise and Consent" in which the main interest arose, not from his ideas of possible future political crises but from the description of the interplay of political powers in the Senate, and between the White House and the Senate. All the other novels you mention have been attempts to follow up A&C's success, with varying degrees of competence. One weekend "quality" reviewer suggested that this batch of Political novels in America was prompted by those motives which gave Kipling's Imperial stories such success in this country: a recognition and celebration of the country's dominant power. I would have thought that it was simply that the American public was becoming more and more interested in the exercise of politics and, above all, the personality of the President, especially considering the amount of publicity given to John Kennedy during his all-too-brief term of office. The fact that these novels are set several years in the future does not place them in the sf field, any more than Anthony Hope's invention of Ruritania places "The Prisoner of Zenda" in the fantasy field; it's merely a device to clear the way for the author's imagination. All the events described in these books or most of them, could take place today. The sort of book more suitable to your definition "an author sits down and thinks..I wonder what would happen if.." would be such as "Monkey Planet", by Pierre Boulle, or "Only Lovers Left Alive", by Dave Wallis.....The reason that we Scots look back to Bannockburn and other glories of the past can be too easily belittled. Of course all this kilts, haggis and tattiebogle nonsense is farcical, and this covers the manufactured pseudo-event of the 1314 anniversary. But we are a nation with a separate history, culture, traditions; separate at least up to the 19th century. Today there is no such thing as a Scottish culture we are a hybrid of English and American cultures, and good or bad, they are not ours. The trouble is, we still feel ourselves to be a distinct people and there is nothing in our lives to support this belief; politically, we are as much a nation as is Yorkshire; socially, we have lost our Scottish tradition, and have nothing to replace it; economically, we are a depressed area, with our destiny in the hands of others. If we look to the honourable past it is because today we can see nothing in our country at which we can point with pride. The war against Edward I and Edward II was the time of our greatest triumph as a nation, and whether we cherish its memory or ignore it, depends upon whether one thinks it worthwhile to keep stoking the fires of national pride. If so, this will have to do, at least until we have something better to replace it." +++Ten thousand Yorkshiremen headed by Ron and Colin need not write in to tell me that they are too a nation! I'd rather they made some comment upon the other parts of this very interesting letter+++

And that's all the letters this time round..the poorest bag that SCOT has hauled in yet! Mind you, I've had plenty letters shoaling in from good and faithfully friends--but they all chose the same time to forget to comment on SCOT. I view this philosophically..except when I read the letter from Harry Warner who commented upon HAVERINGS instead. Although the nice things he said were balm to my ego I am not quoting them here or in HAVER. That fanzine gets a letter column over my dead body! I wouldn't quote them here because comments on the excellence or otherwise of a fanzine are of interest to the editor only.

However, in lieu of all those non-existant letters I have an article sent me by John Boardman. I'm sorry that it lacks a proper title..but my staff artist is busy meantime gadding all over America and only stopping briefly to send me postcards that make me melt with envy.

THE CANNIBALS OF NEW JERSEY

by John Boardman.

One of the symbols of America which is first on the list of the European visitor is the Empire State Building. A trip to the top, usually in the company of a New York host who has never been there in his life, is part of his itinerary. But, even allowing for the diversity that characterizes American life, he will be shocked to learn that from that vantage point, on a clear day, he can see a place where cannibalism is still practiced.

The swamps and pine barrens of New Jersey, off to the southwest, are still uncultivated land. The soil is too poor for farming, or too wet to be drained easily, and these regions have been left to deer, wild dogs, and small game even though they lie in the middle of one of the greatest urban concentrations in the world. Outcasts from human society live there too. And thereby hangs a tale.

During the American Revolution, New York was the center of British military operations in the northern states. General Washington's army, after pitched battles in Brooklyn and Harlem, had been driven out in the first year of the war. But enough revolutionaries remained in the city to provide Washington with ample information on British troop movements, and to make life difficult for the redcoats who held the city. Many of the amenities of garrison life were in short supply for the men who had taken King George's shilling.

Among these amenities of life were, of course, women. The great concentration of British troops, whose generals were reluctant to take them into the countryside for fear of the deadly skirmishing tactics of the Americans, found themselves short of such soldierly comforts as prostitutes. Morale inevitably fell, and finally an officer was detailed to go to London and recruit girls to meet the need.

This officer anticipated an easy time of it. At that time gin had recently been introduced from Holland, and London was full of "gin mills" - taverns where men and women with skinsful of cheap gin were laid to rest in sheds amid heaps of straw. (Hence the tavern signs: "Drunk for a penny, dead drunk for tuppence, clean straw free.") It should have been an easy job

The Cannibals of New Jersey 2

for the recruiter to dredge penniless women out of the gin mills and send them to relieve the needs of His Majesty's troops in unfriendly New York.

Unfortunately, this officer had not reckoned with the Wesley brothers. These pioneers of Methodism were evangelizing the London poor so effectively that many of the denizens of the gin mills forswore drunkenness and became self-supporting members of the community. This diminished the supply of available prostitutes, and the uniformed procurer had trouble meeting his quota. After signing all the prostitutes he could get, he simply bought the rest at the slave market, and returned to New York with an integrated cargo.

In his absence, the military situation in America had deteriorated. French aid to the revolutionaries rendered their victory likely, and the New York garrison had a serious desertion problem. Some of the men availed themselves of the liberal American offers to deserters, while others felt that with all this land available they might do better in setting out on their own. Consequently, many of the military prostitutes brought over from London joined deserters in heading for the swamps and pine barrens of New Jersey.

In 1783 the war came to an end, and the British garrison in New York moved out. No one at headquarters cared about the fate of the deserters and their women, and the Americans also left them in peace. Gradually two tribes were recognized, the "Jackson Whites" and the "Jackson Blacks", depending upon the coloration of the female co-founders of the group. How the name "Jackson" became attached to the tribes is unclear; some say it is the name of the officer who brought the women over, while others will tell you that Jackson was the leader of the deserters. Eventually, by natural processes, the Jackson Blacks were absorbed by the Jackson Whites.

Their descendants still live a semi-savage life on lands that nobody else wants. They live by desultory farming and hunting, and in hard times have been known to engage in internecine strife resulting in cannibalism. They keep packs of half-wild dogs, which help in the hunting or, if hunting is bad, contribute to the food supply themselves. Strangers are not welcome, though there have been no reports in the present century of outsiders being eaten by the Jackson Whites. Self-preservation keeps them from molesting people in neighboring farms, and the present authorities of the state show no inclination to do anything about them so long as they keep to themselves.

John Boardman.

PS. On reading the manuscript, Perdita tells me that it sounds like fiction. I assure you that the Jackson Whites originated in the described fashion, and still exist. Little enclaves of this sort are scattered through America such as the North Carolina Turks, the Sea Island Gullahs of South Carolina, and a Florida Indian tribe which still has the technical status of an independant nation.

Letters contd.

That's right...letters..some more came in and its a shame to waste them, especially the first one----

Robert Coulson,
Route 3
Wabash
Indiana. USA

"I think you should apologise to Ian Peters. He isn't anti-American; he just doesn't like the country. There's a very subtle difference there which I'm sure you'll appreciate if you think about it for 3 or 4 days. Rick Sneary should know

that the government has never got its money for the war effort from taxes, so dropping the income tax wouldn't change things a bit. In fact the government doesn't bother to take in enough money to support its projects; that's what the term "deficit" spending means. The US government has been bankrupt for 30 years, but as long as no one calls them on it they figure to keep on doing it. (I'm not in favour of dropping the income tax; I am in favor of a balanced budget.) "Negros did not come to the 'home of the free of their own free will'. Neither did the first Australian colonists, and so what? Peter should read some of the comments of American Negroes who have returned from Africa on visits, business, or politics. An American Negro is a lot closer to an American white than he is to an African Negro..... Ken Cheslin and I differ in what we want from government. "to ensure the health and happiness of its subjects" he says. Health yes, Happiness, no. Nobody, individual, group, or God, can ensure happiness. Also, he seems a bit mixed up about "equal opportunity" since he thinks that if everyone could pursue the career of his choice we wouldn't have anyone to empty the dustbins. "Equal opportunity", Ken, has no bearing on either equal ability or guaranteed success, and neither does it mean "exactly the same schooling" for everyone. An opportunity is the chance to make the most of your own capabilities. Equal opportunity means that everyone has the chance to go as far as he can; no more, no less. The man with an IQ of 75 may dream of becoming a college professor. He should have the right to enroll in the required educational courses. That's his opportunity. The fact that he lacks the mental ability to succeed, and will eventually end up emptying dustbins is irrelevant. He had his opportunity; his failure is not the fault of the system. The government could, of course, "ensure his happiness" by allowing him to believe that he had succeeded; give him a degree and a salary, and send him to a phony college with a group of robots programmed to act as his students. That's pretty ridiculous, but it's the scrt of thing you get into when you start talking about the right to happiness. Nobody has a right to be happy; in this country they are supposed to have the right to pursue happiness. Nothing is said about catching it....As a devout conservationist, Prebble's line about "nothing more than a national park" roused my ire. If we do get to the place where nobody has to work, a place to vacation, look at trees and see grass growing is going to be a lot more important than a few more factories and slag heaps."

Stan Woolston,
12832 Westlake St
Garden Grove
Calif.92640.USA

"I am not sure what part of the country Eric F. Russell came to in the US, but there is a theory that NYC is not part of the US anyway. It is a separate principality known as New York City. Of course blatant dishonesty may not be limited to

that place; but inasmuch as it exists it's a discouraging thing for most people here too. I do wonder how Mr Russell found out he could get any cop

More letters cont

to direct him to a brothel for two bucks. He might write a handbook for visiting fans....Ian Peters speaks up that Socialism and America are by definition mutually incompatible. Maybe so--but I wonder what he thinks of such mutual incompatible groupings as "science" and "fiction". Humans seem to be able to get along with contradictions, mixed-up definitions and attitudes that don't appear to be contradictions at all to someone else with another approach or way of thinking...."

Beryl Henley,
59 The Fearnings
Crabbs Cross
Redditch.Worcs.

"Freedom" is, I venture to suggest, one of Stuart Chase's "blah-blah" words. Taken alone, it's an abstract which, as Ken implies, can mean anything one wants it to mean. To give it true perspective one must add "to" or "from". To quote one-who-shall

be-nameless(because his name invariably seems to stir up a roar of controversy) - freedom in its true sense can only be achieved among barriers. One of the most important - and the most difficult lessons that parents should learn(and all too often don't)is that, within reasonable limits, children should be granted the right to make their own mistakes. It's a terrible temptation to interfere, unmasked - but, unless the imminent error will obviously be lethal or near-lethal to the child or others, a nasty experience is the finest "teacher" of all. It's worth more than a dozen admonitory lessons from Mum! I have often wondered what the results would be if this kind of freedom were more widely extended. Go on Ken, extrapolate! "

This is definitely the last of the letters. I'd like to use up this here space by mulling over something. A while back I read a definition of the word "liberal" from Elinor Busby...I can't track down the reference to give her exact words but it was widely different from my own definition. When I tag the word "liberal" onto a person I mean --someone favorable to reform and progress, unbiased, one who favours freedom in politics and religion.

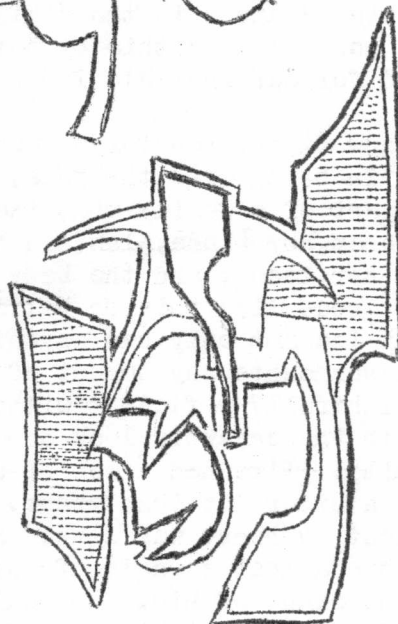
Liberal is another of these abstract words whose meaning seems to change all the time. It would be interesting to see what definition you would give. I'd add to British readers that giving the definition "A member of the Liberal Party" would count, in my estimation, as dodging the issue! No prizes are offered if you write in--but it might be very interesting.....

Special note of apology to the readers and Walt Willis. I did it again! Half an hour to spare--so slam the stencil on the duper--and I didn't check first! I could kill myself for page one.

Ethel

NATTERINGS

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This year for the first time I ventured into Europe; and because of this I became aware that I was a drug addict.

I went to Germany in the company of fans Peter Mabey, Dave Barber, Eddie Jones, Norman Weedal, John Humphreys, and John Roles...not forgetting Ina and Norman Shorrocks and their five children. This was my first experience of being surrounded by people who spoke a language I did not understand. Of course there was the time I went to America; but the theory is that we share a common language..the Americans just bend it a little. This sound of German talk which I could not understand constantly teased my ear; I was always listening carefully to see if I could guess what was being said. Often I was sure that by the tone of the voice; by the expression of the face; by the gesture of the hands - I was receiving the meaning if not the exact words used. In a way it is easy to guess, for instance, what a mother is calling to her child; or what a husband is remarking to his wife as they stand before a shop window.

Our hotel was smack in the middle of a busy holiday centre; and a constant stream of German holidaymakers wended their way past our hotel to the lake. There they stood patiently in queues waiting their turn to sail round the lake and hear it's famous echo. Or they would be dressed for climbing the mountains with heavy boots and knapsacks. Sometimes they were headed for the swimming portion of the lake where-to my surprise-they were

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charged a fee. Lots of them wore the Bavarian costume - lederenhausen for the men; dresses gay with flower patterns and matching aprons for the women. I never tired of watching these holidaymakers and so was not one of the grumblers at finding our hotel in such a situation.

I began to notice what seemed like an abnormally large amount of men with one leg amputated. On reflection I realised that there would be no more than could be found in our own population..the difference might be that our National Health Service provides artificial limbs free. Yet, Germany is renowned for its advances in the making of artificial limbs; and indeed our country has acknowledged this by obtaining from Germany all the special limbs needed for our Thalidionide babies.

Another new experience for me was being a part of such a large group. Not so much in being with the fans, for that I have experienced before, but in being a part of a family that included five children. The Shorrocks children are - Janet, Roy, Linda, Alan and baby Gavin. Janet, the oldest is just coming into her teens; and the baby is only 18 months. To organise the taking of a group like this on holiday requires a formidable amount of organisation--but Ina not only has organising ability, she also has a cheerful nature that surmounts any amount of work. The older children help of course, and are delightfully efficient without losing their youthful zest. I never saw them with the careworn look one sometimes sees in the older children of a large family. I've had a lot of dealings with children in my work..but I never met a nicer lot than these. I will confess, however, that the one to whom I lost my heart was Alan. He is at the very nicest age for a male--two! Alan has a most engaging face; I noticed that wherever we went folks smiled at the sight of him. You only had to turn your back on him for two seconds to find him clutching a sweet or biscuit. When you enquired where he had got them - the reply always was -"A lady gave it to me!". Germans everywhere cooed over him..in the streets...on the trains..even on the top of the mountain. Oh yes, we went to the top of the mountain by chair lift baby and all. It's a pity Ina isn't in the United Nations..she'd soon sort them all out.

When, like myself, you live to all intents and purposes alone to suddenly be a part of a family like that is a delightful event. My only fear was my habit (common to nurses) of automatically assuming all children as under my care, might offend Ina. Her reply when I voiced this fear was - that she welcomed the help! I certainly never saw her bridle when I acted in this way. Have you ever seen a mother bridle? I've noticed, however, that it does not seem to be a characteristic of fan mothers.

One day I wandered off by myself and sat in a small garden which overlooked the crowds of tourists heading down the road. As I sat, a young girl came and joined me. She began to talk to me; I discovered her English was very good. She told me that she was a student of medicine on vacation with the job of acting as guide to busloads of tourists. Each day she went out with a different party; she was having what she considered a well-earned rest as her charges sailed round the lake. She was Austrian and informed me that she "hated Germans". "They just sit there" she fumed, "and never even crack a smile when I try to make a joke....Oh, but they are so stolid" As I sat

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and watched the laughing and chattering crowds passing by; I remarked to her that I had not observed it to be so. But, like folks everywhere, she had her mind made up about what a whole race of people were like.

I did not find the Germans stolid, especially the fans we met. In a group sitting in a smoke-filled room (someone had lit a fire in the grate for the first time in years and the smoke did belch out), I watched them argue heatedly, laugh immoderately, and down their beer enthusiastically. Many of them tried to talk to me with a halting English that made me ashamed that I had no German to enable me to meet them halfway. But a smile is a smile in any language! Some, with more fluent English, we got to know better. There was Thomas Selueck; he seemed to have the strongest sense of responsibility that I'd encountered since I last saw Ron Elik. He shares with Ron the faculty to carry this lightly. I was amused to see how everyone looked to him to figure out what to do for those visiting British fans; and how quickly we learned to "ask Tom" when we encountered any difficulty. Franz Ettl was another that attracted my attention; he had done the major part of the con organisation; without him it would never have taken place. I was told that he was so good at organising that the word 'organising' had been replaced in German fandom by 'Ettling'. He is a small, plump man who gives off waves of good-nature and energy. Walter Ernsting, that dean of German fandom, also belied the Austrian girl's estimation of the German people. Walter always seemed to be laughing, he had the most attractive wife.

There seemed to be more women at the German con than I had observed at our own conventions. I am not quite sure but I got the impression that most were along as wives or girl friends, rather than as femmofans in their own right. If so, they seemed to take very cheerfully the attendance at something that was not of primary interest to them. They certainly helped the social events go with a swing.

My former impression of the majority of German fandom being very 'serious' proved to be wrong. They spoke in German...and that was the only difference I could see in them from the fans in Britain and America. They did, however outdo the British when it came to the fancy dress turnout. Of course there was a programme devoted to sf. I attended one item a talk by a well-thought of German author who discussed the kind of criticism that sf gets from the general critics. I sat beside Tom who translated what was being said to me in whispers. I gathered that critics in Germany, like so many of our own are liable to criticise sf for the wrong reasons.

I seem to have wandered a long way from my starting point..that my visit to Germany revealed to me the fact that I was a drug addict..but I'm coming to it!

I discovered this surprising fact one day at breakfast. I suddenly had the feeling of missing something. "Isn't it odd without any newspapers?" I said. Someone replied that one of the joys of being on holiday was "to get away from it all". To this there was general agreement in which I joined only half-heartedly. I felt this was the right spirit alright; only I still hankered after something to read. Although I was enjoying myself I still felt it queer to spend a whole day without reading anything. By the end of

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that first week I was reduced to peering at German newspapers in an effort to make out a familiar word--any word!

By the middle of the second week I was in a sad state really; though I could forget about my newshunger for hours on end - it was a constant gnaw in the background. One day I was walking through Berchesgarden with Peter when I suddenly came to an abrupt halt. Passing a newsagent's shop my eye had automatically caught some print I could read. I am of the type who, if all else fails, reads the label on the sauce bottle--so it was easy for me to pick out the readable type from the midst of the foreign. To Peter's mild surprise, I backed huriidly and fell with glad cries upon a day old copy of The New York Times. I carried it off in triumph. This paper was passed round the whole party and they seemed to enjoy it - but I carefully collected it back and late that night sat and blissfully read it from cover to cover..adverts and all. To be sure there was one news item that made me snort with disgust but for all that it was a beautiful sight to see.

And so it was proved to me--I was a drug addict just couldn't live without newspapers nohow! The fascinated and exasperated me; they put my blood pressure up and down at an alarming rate..but I still doted on them and without them I didn't want to be. Now how did I get in such a state?

At home my Father, being a staunch Labourite, took THE DAILY HERALD and for years this was all I saw of a national paper. The other paper that came into my home was THE TELEGRAPH, a local paper published by Thompson's of Dundee. The owner of this paper was a byword in the publishing world, being a militant anti-unionist. No member of his staff might belong to a union. The word was that nevertheless many joined, though I could never see what good that could do them when they had to do so secretly. Thompson was able to get away with this high-handed way as there are so few newspapers in Scotland. No doubt there will soon be less now that another Thompson--from Canada--is threatening to enter the field.

In hospital the newspaper addict can have a happy time. Most hospitals have an arrangement with the local newsagent whereby they send someone round the wards to sell papers to the patients. As a junior nurse there ample opportunities for me to latch onto all this lovely free material--but alas, what with exams and studying little time to read them. Not till I entered the Eye world of nursing did I have that time--and there the free material dried up. Eye patients are not allowed to read.

I went shopping for a newspaper--which to get? Feeling very loyal I started out by ordering THE DAILY HERALD. This paper died only recently but the seeds of its destruction were sown a long time before. It was a newspaper that fell between two stools. On the one hand it supported the Labour cause; and on the other it tried to attract an audience for the 'popular' type material. It was neither a 'serious' nor a 'popular' one but a horrible hodge-podge of the two. I quickly became disgusted with it.

Now I looked around for a decent paper that was not strongly Conservative(as is the majority of our papers); My friends from the North advised me to try THE GUARDIAN.. There I found my meat..and with this paper

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I have stayed contentedly ever since. It is as nopathy as it is possible for a paper to be. If anything it is a bit harder on the Conservatives than on Labour..probably because of their long term in office. It does. have a snese of ethics..at the time of Suez THE GUARDIAN opposed this action despite the sure knowledge that this would lose them readers. This is quite unlike THE DAILY MIRROR for instance, which conceived of itself as pro-Labour till it was thought to be unpopular to be so..when they quietly dropped their Labour sentiments.

With THE GUARDIAN tucked under my arm I am ready for the day..and as I enter the diningroom I drop it onto the back of my chair. Then I head for the papers that are supplied from our Anenity Fund. There is THE DAILY EXPRESS - a 'popular' paper for the Domestic staff; and THE DAILY TELEGRAPH - a 'serious' paper for the Nursing staff. This is one of those little touches of class that everyone takes for granted in Britain. I quickly glance through the EXPRESS and then sit down to go more slowly through the other two. It has often amused me to see how these three papers handle the same news item. What the EXPRESS will plaster across its front page in large headlines "Prince Charles returns to school" will have a dignified report from the TELEGRAPH and be buried in a small paragraph in the GUARDIAN. What the GUARDIAN headlines may not even get a mention in the EXPRESS.

Not that these are the only papers I see. One of the maids in Courage House is addicted to a dreadful rag called THE DAILY SKETCH. Huge attention is paid here to the most trivial of events whilst a small column is assigned to World Events. One of the sisters brings in with her THE DAILY MAIL which is another 'popular' paper of a vast mediocrity.

One thing though all these papers have in common; they are not be be wholly trusted. Just as we all see things through our own film of prejudice, so do even the best of reporters. Should you share my addiction to newsprint; then I can recommend to you DANGEROUS ESTATE (The Anatomy of Newspapers by Francis Williams. This traces the newspaper history in Britain from the days of the illegal Press, and the battles with Church, Crown and Parliament into the fantastic mass-circulation battles of the twenties and thirties. It is also intensely dramatic and packed with colourful characters.

It was Germany for my holiday this year; and it will be London next year. Yes: we have won the bid for the 1965 Worldcon; and I have arranged to take three weeks of my vacation at that time. This is, not only so that I can cope with the many details that will come my way; but also because I want to be around when many other fans from overseas will be holidaying in London. We are not sure how many will come as yet..some have said thirty from the States..and some have said more! I know, also, that many German fans will be coming and Axel Melhart assured me (hand on heart) there would be fifteen from Austria!

I dont want to be at work when all these fans are around! I'd like to be free to enjoy their company both before and after the con. Besides, I hope this way to see a lot more of London than I have in the 8 years I have spent in England. When I first moved down to Surbiton it was with the intention of taking a job back inside London in about two years time. Yet here I am still. The main reason for this is Courage House. I am so comfortably and

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conveniently housed here; able to run my duper and conduct my fanac without fuss in a way that would not be possible elsewhere. So I have stayed on year after year. I guess I'm anchored now till I can collect my superannuation and then take off for parts as yet unknown.

Yet, each time I go up to London with time to wander around its streets; I regret that I do not live there. If I could choose I think I'd pick on somewhere near the river to live. George Locke has a very conveniently situated flat near the river. Another whose location I have envied is Pat Kearney whose home is next door to the BEA Terminal right in Westminster. The rest of London fandom are rather scattered round the fringes--Ella to the far North and ATOM in the Deep South. Undoubtedly, Arthur's home is the most difficult to discover; Norman Mansborough tried to get there for years without success! I have only managed to get there with the aid of two stout guides (Ted Forsyth and Joe Patrizio) and have no hope of ever being able to get there on my own.

When I have a day off and head for town with time to spare I usually gravitate to Charing Cross and Tottenham Court Roads. I browse my way through all the bookshops till I reach Foyles - where I disappear for hours! If it is a fine day with the sun shinging; then I have a few favourite spots to sit. In the middle of Leicester Square for instance..a small green square surrounded by traffic. Another spot is the Embankment Gardens down by the river where sometimes a band is playing and where I can always get a cup of tea. I also like St. James Gardens because the sparrows there are so tame they will eat out of your hand.

I like to wander through Selfridges' store; I like to walk across Westminster Bridge; I like the street markets; . . . I even like Waterloo Station! I like to watch the City as it empties at night. As I wait for Ella coming out from her work - I never weary - there is always the passing crowds to watch. London excites me! I think I'd even enjoy my holiday if no fans came at all! I certainly hope they will though..and that some British fans will also choose a holiday like this. Anyone want a free guide or a gawking companion?

Ethel Lindsay.